INDIGENOUS RESISTANCE IN THE EL PASO BORDERLANDS: THE TIGUA INDIAN LAND DISPOSSESSION AND THE SALT WAR OF 1877

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I dedicate this to my wife Maria Jesus Correa de Comar, to my son Joseph Lee Comar, and to my parents, Lee and Sheila Comar.
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by

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Abstract

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This essay offers a synthesis and rearticulation of El Paso borderlands history. It merges elements of new mission history and new Indian history within a theoretical framework that applies concepts of hybridity and hegemony. This essay investigates the Tigua Indian land dispossession during the second half of the nineteenth century and examines how tensions peaked among the region’s indigenous inhabitants as American expansion increased. Exploring the history of the region’s indigenous people, this essay examines how the Suma, Manso, Piro, and Tigua in El Paso’s lower valley communities of Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario became dispossessed of their lands and cultural lifeways. This essay reveals how El Paso’s transnational mission Indian communities resisted the incursions of the expanding U.S. political economy. It connects the San Elizario Salt War of 1877 with indigenous resistance through the examination of kinship, identity, and the meaning of space.
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Introduction

The Tigua Indians of Ysleta del Sur received official recognition by the state of Texas in 1967. They received Federal recognition through a process that began in 1968 and ended in 1987. Although the Tigua became recognized as a sovereign people within Texas and United States territory, their sovereignty was based upon compliance with Texas law and a one-eighth blood quantum requirement for tribal membership.\(^1\) The sovereign space that belongs to the Tigua was once much larger than it is today. It included thirty-six square miles around Ysleta on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, as well as a vast communal landscape that spanned from El Paso to Presidio counties in west Texas. During the tribal recognition process of the 1980s, Attorney Tom Diamond gathered numerous affidavits. These testimonies reveal how the meaning of space is intertwined with identity, and that both are engrained within the Tigua historical memory through their connection with the landscape. Jose Trinidad Granillo was sixty-two years old when he testified that his father, Aseto Granillo, “was at one time a war captain, was also a governor, and was also the Cacique of the Ysleta Tribe here in Ysleta, Texas.”\(^2\) As Granillo reflected upon the significance of the land he stated:

I know that the Tiguas own much of the old land around here and I believe that the northwest corner was marked by the Loma de la Tigua. The boundary extended from the Loma de la Tigua to the Paulo Calavado. Then from these two markers down to the river. This amount of land constituted the immediate Pueblo of the Tiguas of Ysleta, Texas. The land just described was of course Pueblo, but the Tiguas also claimed much more land which they would hunt on. Much of the hunting ground even extended into the Waco mountains. As I understand it, the Indians owned this land from time in memorial and were free to use it for whatever use they needed. I don’t exactly know what means they used, but the white people came in and took over the land which belonged to the Indians.\(^3\)

Jose Granillo’s testimony refers to the communal land that the Tigua once utilized for their subsistence economy. These references to indigenous land tenure in the El Paso borderlands
are evidenced throughout the historical record. A 1971 *El Paso Times* article reported that a Spanish land grant to the Ysleta Mission might have been the first in North America. The article states that in 1692 Don Diego de Vargas Zapata Ponce de Leon, governor of Nueva e Mexico, journeyed to Ysleta and granted to Fray Joachin de Hinojosa, Franciscan jurisdictional president, the “possession of the church missions at Senecu, Socorro, and Ysleta” (i.e. “actual church property”). Subsequently, de Vargas granted all of the “adjacent tillable land sufficient for the raising of wheat, corn, and vegetables, ‘with preference over all other neighbors or natives,’” meaning that he granted all of the proximate land around the mission to the indigenous peoples who lived there with the intent that they would agriculturally flourish. The article goes on to say that Don Diego de Vargas then did the same for the missions at Socorro and Senecu. This gave the Tigua of Ysleta del Sur, and the other indigenous peoples of the region, legal possession of the adjacent land under the Spanish crown. Tigua legitimacy was again established in 1751, when a subsequent land grant verified their legitimacy as communal land holders. More recently, a 2008 *Express News* article notes that a U.S. Report backs up a Tigua land claim to the thirty-six-square mile 1751 Ysleta Grant. These recent redefinitions of space rearticulate the socio-historical, economic, and geo-political, landscape in the El Paso borderlands region.

Jose Granillo’s historical memory, the federal government’s recognition of the Tigua, and the public discourse on indigenous land claims all reveal a rich history that has often been marginalized within the grand narrative of El Paso borderlands history. This essay’s objective is to replace this marginalization of indigenous peoples, illuminate Tigua resistance to the dispossession of their land, and illustrate their effacement from local historical memory in the process. Connecting the bureaucratic dispossession of Tigua land, Texas’s incorporation of Ysleta, and Tigua resistance to the privatization of the Guadalupe Salt Flats, I place their history
within the larger borderlands context of westward expansion and the formation of the nation-state. Using an eclectic approach that draws upon concepts of hegemony, identity, and hybridity, my overarching argument contends that the Salt War of 1877 was part of a larger process that dispossessed the Tigua of their land. In addition, I argue that indigenous resistance was implicit in the conflict, as various Tigua, and other indigenous peoples, reacted to the privatization of their communal land. Within this framework, I propose that kinship ties between the region’s Tigua, Piro, Manso, Suma, and mestizo peoples enabled their collective response and resistance during the Salt War.

The silencing of Tigua voice and agency in borderlands history was not an accident. Several scholars have produced influential works that have contributed to the disappearance of the Tigua from the historical record and obscured their significance in the region’s formation. Many late nineteenth century residents and observers of the El Paso borderlands held a common view that the Tigua and other mission Indian groups had disappeared into Mexican society. The 1878 U.S. government report, *El Paso Troubles*, masked Tigua participation in the Salt War. Local newspapers also ignored the persistence of the Tigua, Piro, Manso, and Suma in the region’s lower valley communities of San Elizario, Socorro, Ysleta, Senecu, and San Lorenzo. In 1902, anthropologist Jesse Walter Fewkes observed the Tigua, dismissed their cultural persistence, and concluded that they had become Mexican. As such, the era’s popular, scientific, and governmental publications set the stage for the historiographical erasure of the Tigua from the borderlands landscape. This process continued into the twentieth century, as some of the most popular books on El Paso’s history contributed to the erasure of the Tigua from local historical memory. For instance, C.L. Sonnichsen’s 1961 book, *The El Paso Salt War of 1877*, exposes the agency of El Paso’s lower valley inhabitants but describes the insurgents as Mexican
and does not mention the Tigua, or any other indigenous peoples. He refers to the conflict as being caused by the differences between the collective Spanish and private American land tenure systems, yet does not mention the meaning of the land itself in relation to the region’s indigenous.\(^7\)

Sonnichsen’s 1968 classic, *Pass of the North*, illustrates El Paso’s history from the late sixteenth to the early twentieth century. Yet Sonnichsen does not mention the Tigua in this work either. His references to indigenous peoples are limited to seventeenth century interactions between the region’s Piro, Suma and Manso Indians, and the Franciscan missionaries who sought to convert them to Christianity.\(^8\) Even when explaining the Spanish exodus from New Mexico during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, Sonnichsen does not mention the Tigua! When he mentions Indians, he breaks them into a dichotomy in which “Apaches and Navajos” are diametrically opposed to “Christian Indians.”\(^9\) Gradually, as Sonnichsen’s narration progresses into the nineteenth century, Indians vanish from the narrative. His descriptions of the participants in the Salt War rebellion of 1877 include terms such as the “Valley people” and the “mob.”\(^10\) This terminology obscures indigenous agency and marginalizes El Paso’s lower valley inhabitants in the process. For Sonnichsen, the Suma, Manso, Piro, and Tigua Indians of El Paso’s lower valley pueblos are seemingly assimilated into Mexican society by 1877.

by Mexicans on both sides of the river. Although he recognizes Tigua sovereignty, he overlooks the land dispossession and its connection with the Salt War. For Timmons, the significant factors in Tigua history involve self-determination, the 1881 Jesuit takeover of the mission of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the 1895 tribal constitution and bylaws, and tribal recognition in 1967.

Both Sonnichsen and Timmons greatly contributed to the borderlands grand narrative as their work became engrained within the local memory as popular history. Yet Sonnichsen overlooked the Tigua and expunged indigenous peoples from El Paso’s historiography, and Timmons perpetuated a Eurocentric discourse in which the region’s Manso and Piro seemingly vanished. Anthropologist Nicholas Houser conducted research that proved otherwise. In Volume 9 of the Smithsonian Institution’s *Handbook of North American Indians*, Houser’s work in the 1960s and 1970s as tribal anthropologist for the Tigua reveals the continuity of both Piro and Manso peoples. Houser writes that “many Tiguas are descendants of the Piros, who married into the Ysleta Pueblo” and that “[d]escendants of both tribes, including the Manso, can still be identified within the El Paso-Juarez area.” Houser has researched the region’s indigenous for over forty-years and his work contributed significantly to Tigua tribal recognition at both the State and Federal levels. In 1993, he accompanied anthropologists Howard Campbell and John Peterson on a trip to Juarez, Mexico that confirmed the existence of Manso tribal identity.

During the 1990s, some Native American historians began to increase their focus on the Tigua. Bill Wright’s *The Tiguas: Pueblo Indians of Texas* and Randy Lee Eickhoff’s *Exiled: The Tigua Indians of Ysleta del Sur* both discuss the dynamics of tribal identity, land dispossession, resistance, and resilience. Wright’s work is an ethnographic narrative that illustrates Tigua history, rituals, people and places. Emphasizing culture, Wright briefly mentions the Tigua land
dispossession in unison with the Salt War. Eickhoff also discusses Tigua culture, yet he merges it with the land dispossession and the persistence of identity. Using ethnographic sources, such as Tom Diamond and various tribal leaders, Eickhoff illuminates the Tigua historical memory. In one interview, former Tigua governor Joe Sierra stated, “We have three cultures that we are trying to fit into: our own, the Spanish, and the American.” Sierra’s statement reveals how the Tigua negotiated within and between the dichotomies of colonization. Although Eickhoff explains how El Paso’s elite Anglo minority dispossessed the Tigua of their land, *Exiled* does not connect the Tigua land dispossession with the Salt War.

More recent scholarly works on the Salt War and the Tigua begin to draw the connections between them. In *Salt Warriors: Insurgency on the Rio Grande*, Paul Cool illustrates the Salt War of 1877 in expressive detail. Building from the work of C.L. Sonnichsen, Cool continues to focus on Euro-American and Mexican involvement in the conflict. Describing the insurgents as a conglomerate of regional “Paseños” who retained “a warrior culture” by defending themselves against Apache raids, he sidesteps the discussion on how the region’s indigenous peoples made up the majority of the insurgents who played an active role in the Salt War. Although Cool acknowledges Tigua participation in the revolt, he does not fully investigate the connections between the Tigua land dispossession and the Salt War. Nevertheless, *Salt Warriors* offers significant leads into indigenous involvement in the revolt.

Recently, S.K. Adam’s *Extinction or Survival: The Remarkable Story of the Tigua, an Urban American Indian Tribe* offers a complex assessment of indigenous identity that dispels the myth that the Tigua vanished and became “Mexicanized.” For Adams, Tigua identity persisted in, adapted to, and emerged in the face of the dominant society. Linking the meaning of place with identity and culture, Adams connects the Tigua with the landscape of the Guadalupe
Mountains, the Salt Flats, and the 1877 rebellion in San Elizario. Yet the focus of Adam’s work is Tigua identity and culture as they both reacted to and related with the essentializing and political expectations of colonial Spain, Mexico, and the United States.\textsuperscript{19}

Although Indian literature has improved, much of it has marginalized the Native American into obscurity. W.W. Newcomb Jr’s 1961 volume of \textit{The Indians of Texas} reduced the Tigua to “Pueblan fragments,” who were “brought to missions in and around El Paso at the end of the seventeenth century by Spaniards. They were thoroughly Mexicanized by the beginning of the twentieth century, and are presumably extinct in a cultural sense.”\textsuperscript{20} In this vein, Newcomb discursively dispossesses the Tigua of their culture. This type of writing that oppresses already marginalized peoples is known as “epistemic violence.”\textsuperscript{21} Considering that Newcomb’s only source for this alleged epistemic dislocation was a 1902 article written by J. Walter Fewkes, the tainted nature of hegemonic influences are significant in his work.\textsuperscript{22} Although Fewkes used language and religious assimilation to rationalize the cultural diminishment of the Tigua, he also recognized various elements of Tigua culture, such as dance and folklore, which actually validated its existence, as well as the persistence of identity. Ironically, this closer interpretation of Fewkes’s article actually contradicts Newcomb’s conclusions, which were made a half-century later.\textsuperscript{23} Newcomb’s presumed assimilation of Tigua culture into Mexicanization is explained by Gyan Prakash as a “marginalization” of the “other.” For Prakash, history is viewed as “a theoretical category laden with power.”\textsuperscript{24} This notion of Western history as being a locus for hegemonic discourses demonstrates how power is transformed politically, culturally, and academically. In contrast, this essay addresses not only hegemonic acts of “epistemic violence” but also the dispossession of indigenous land and culture, considering that the two are largely
25 This approach rests within the domains of what Linda Tuhiwai Smith proposes as a project of reframing indigenous histories in “pursuit of social justice.”

The term El Paso as a place name differs in meaning throughout this essay. During the Spanish colonial period, settlers and conquistadores referred to El Paso as the Pass of the North, through which they passed into New Spain’s northern territories of New Mexico and Colorado. As settlement increased around the Guadalupe de los Mansos mission (in what is now Juarez), the pueblo in its proximity became known as El Paso Del Norte. In 1850, Texas established El Paso County. The first County seat was San Elizario. In 1873, the Country seat moved to Ysleta. And in 1884, because of the railroad, it moved to Franklin, which is present day El Paso. El Paso Del Norte in Mexico changed its name to Juarez in 1888.

My intention is to resituate the Tigua land dispossession and the Salt War of 1877 in relation to indigenous kinship systems, land utilization, and identity through the antecedent research of tribal anthropologists Nicholas Houser and Allen Greenburg, as well as various other primary and secondary documents. Through this baseline of analysis it became apparent that although hegemony was omnipresent throughout the history of the North American southwest, its expression in Western colonialism was compartmentalized within and between Spanish colonial and United States domains of power which eventually collided in the Texas- New Mexico- Mexico borderlands. Within this space of contestation, the Tigua became incorporated into a hegemonic cultural crossfire between Spain, Mexico, and the United States, which eventually led to the bureaucratic socio-political dispossession of their lands. At the same time, the changes experienced by the region’s indigenous peoples enabled them to adapt to the world in which they lived. This cultural negotiation, however, did not fully insulate them from the tensions of the expanding political economy in which resistance is also a part of their story. The
El Paso region’s indigenous peoples did not exist in an isolated and anachronistic space of homeostasis. Instead they interacted with others around them and experienced a perpetual metamorphosis of culture and identity. This dynamic is critical for understanding indigenous resistance during the Salt War, which involves the defense of indigenous lifeways, spatial meaning, and their connection with the landscape.
Historical Background

In pre-colonial times, around 10,000 B.C., groups that archeologists refer to as the Clovis and the Folsom occupied the New Mexico region and hunted mammoths and other large animals. By 7,000 B.C., large game was extinct, and the region’s inhabitants hunted small game, gathered vegetables, and increased in population as they formed a desert culture. Around 1 A.D., the Anasazi Jornada Mogollon formed pithouse villages in which they subsisted off corn, beans, and squash (see Appendix, Figure 1). After 1000 A.D. centralized indigenous communities emerged near the Chaco Canyon and in northwestern Chihuahua. Rex E. Gerald writes that “by this time the Tiwa were apparently already old residents of the middle Rio Grande area.” Between 1200 and 1450, indigenous peoples, such as the Pueblo and Jornada Mogollon, interacted with each other. However, the Jornada Mogollon disappeared from the historical record after 1500, when various Athapaskan groups, such as the Navajo and Apache inhabited the region (see Appendix, Figure 2).

THE SPANISH AND MEXICAN PERIOD, 1540-1848

The disappearance of some of the region’s indigenous peoples during the early sixteenth century was not solely the result of one factor. In 1540, Francisco de Coronado explored northern New Spain in search of mineral wealth and new converts for Catholicism. Scholars estimate that diseases such as smallpox preceded the Spanish advancement and eventually wiped out approximately 90% of the region’s indigenous peoples. During the 1580s, two early Spanish expeditions encountered “the Abriaches, Otomoacos, Caguates, and Tanpachoas” groups just south of El Paso del Norte. Subsequently, the Antonio Espejo expedition of 1582 encountered three of these same groups between El Paso and La Junta, which is near Presidio, Texas. Spanish missionaries eventually renamed the initial four groups the Julimes, Cholomes, Sumas, and
Mansos. Jack Forbes argues that these groups and others in the borderlands region spoke various dialects of the Apache language: Athapaskan (see Appendix, Figure 3). In this sense, it becomes apparent that the region’s indigenous peoples merged and evolved with others around them as different groups interacted with one another.

The Spanish began to colonize the Tigua and Piro Pueblo peoples after 1598, when Juan de Oñate arrived to the region. The Tiwa (Tigua) and Piro of New Mexico moved into the El Paso region in the diasporic aftermath of the 1680 Pueblo Revolt of New Mexico, in which the northern Pueblo Indians united and expelled the Spanish. The Tiwa and Piro Pueblo Indians originally resided in Isleta and Socorro, New Mexico, respectively. As Spanish colonial dominion increased, both church and state oppressed New Mexico’s indigenous peoples in the mission system. Indigenous resistance led to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, which forced the Spanish to retreat twice and caused two waves of migration, one in 1680 and another in 1682. Within this transition, New Mexican Governor Don Antonio Otermin and Fray Francisco de Ayeta brought approximately 695 Tiwa and Piro Pueblo peoples with them from Isleta to El Paso. During the exodus, some Jemez, Tompiro, and Tano peoples also accompanied the Spanish, either as captives or refugees. Eventually, these groups settled along the river further south of El Paso in an area that is now known as the lower valley.

The arrival of these Pueblo Indians into the El Paso region caused the unsuccessful 1684 Manso revolt against the Spanish and newly arrived Tiwa. Anne E. Hughes gives inferences to the interconnections among the region’s peoples by presenting that ten indigenous groups participated in the armed resistance against the Spanish missions and military rule. She writes that “the revolt comprehended ten nations—the Mansos, Sumas, Janos, Julimes, Conchos, Apaches, Jocomes, Chinaras, Salineros, and Dientes Negros.” In the aftermath of the revolt, the
Spanish relocated the Tigua and Piro missions of Ysleta, Socorro, and Senecu closer to El Paso Del Norte for greater security. The region’s Mansos, Sumas, and other indigenous peoples fragmented after the revolt. Some settled in the missions of Socorro and Senecu, while others continued autonomously or merged with their Apache neighbors who lived in the surrounding countryside. In 1691, New Mexico’s governor, Don Diego de Vargas, wrote a letter that stated that there was significant intermarriage among the Apache, Suma, and Manso peoples in the El Paso region.34

By 1706, many of the Manso and Suma had settled with the Piro in the missions of San Antonio de Senecú and Nuestra Señora del Socorro. The Tigua lived near a mission called San Antonio de la Ysleta. Together in the El Paso region, the Tigua, Piro, Suma and Manso peoples, among others, began a process of “tribal synthesis” through intermarriage and the amalgamation of “identities, lifeways, and cultural spaces.”35 A map derived from Franciscan missionary records, entitled “Indios Del Rio Grande 1598-1690,” indicates that the Apaches, Mansos, Piros, Sumas, and Tiguas, among other indigenous peoples, all co-existed within the region during that time period (see Appendix, Figure 4).36 Thus, the indigenous peoples in El Paso’s borderlands did not remain static; they fluidly interacted within the world in which they lived and developed ties to both their neighbors and the land.

The period after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and the Manso Revolt of 1684 is also important because Spain officially recognized the region’s indigenous peoples as the inhabitants of the land. In 1692 Chihuahuan Governor Diego de Vargas granted Fray Joachin de Hinojosa the lands in close proximity to the Franciscan missions of Ysleta, Socorro, and Senecu. To exempt local Indians from the labor of the mission system, he omitted them from the grant. This was because De Vargas noticed that the “Spanish and the Indians were living peacefully side by
side, and neither could exist without the other.” As such, De Vargas indirectly recognized that
the community of indigenous peoples surrounding the missions utilized the land and proclaimed
their right to it “with preference over all other neighbors or natives.”37 This grant gave the land,
which surrounded the missions of Ysleta, Socorro, and Senecu, to its Manso, Piro, Suma, and
Tigua inhabitants (see Appendix, Figure 5). Hinojosa, dissatisfied with the lands immediately
surrounding the Church, pushed de Vargas to grant these adjacent lands directly to the Church,
intending to incorporate Native Americans into the mission system. De Vargas refused, stating
that these indigenous peoples lived “in mutual enjoyment of their lands without legal
complications.”38 With the Hinojosa Grant confirmed, de Vargas’s act recognized the Tigua,
Piro, Manso and other indigenous of the Spanish missions in El Paso as the primary occupants of
the Paso del Norte region.

Spanish recognition included a surprisingly large amount of land. A league of land is
three miles by three miles, or nine squire miles. A Spanish land grant of one league extended one
league in each direction from the mission or presidio center. Thus, a grant of one league was
actually four square leagues, or thirty-six square miles, around the center of the grant.39 In 1751,
King Ferdinand VI of Spain granted the Socorro mission four leagues of land. By then, the
Socorro mission was mainly inhabited by the Piro, with some Tano and Jemez people. Ysleta,
primarily Tigua, was also granted a league of land in 1751. Senecu, where Piro and Tompiros
resided, was granted “four square leagues” of land in 1754. (And, San Elizario was granted four
leagues of land between 1772 and 1774, after Marquis de Rubi visited and established it as a
presidio.)40 In 1766, during the Bourbon reform era of Spanish colonization, Marquis de Rubi
assessed New Spain’s northern frontier. Rubi was accompanied by his engineer, Don Nicholas
de La Flora. “[I]n his diary,” La Flora described El Paso’s indigenous people:
The inhabitants of the Pueblo of Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe [currently Ciudad Juárez] are Spaniards, Mestizos, Mulatos, and Indians of Tigua, Zia and Genizaro (captive nomadic Indians) nations. In San Lorenzo are the Zuma (Suma) Indians. In Senecu (are) the Piros; in La Isleta, the Tiguas; In Socorro, Piros also; and in all of them are the gente de razon (Spaniards). Those living at La Hacienda de los Tiburcios (San Elizario) are of the latter class.41

La Flora’s writing establishes a context that is crucial for understanding the degree to which indigenous peoples inhabited the region. It also illustrates El Paso’s missions as places of diversity and heterogeneous interaction.

The Tigua of Ysleta practiced sedentary agriculture and assimilated well into the region’s colonial political economy. In this sense, they became exempted from the rigors of the traditional mission system, which involved forced labor and military oversight from an adjacent presidio. Aside from limited mineral wealth and its peripheral location on New Spain’s northern frontier, another reason that the indigenous in El Paso’s lower valley missions became exempted from forced labor involved Franciscan successes in teaching them religion and agriculture. J.J. Bowden points out that this is one of the primary reasons why Spain granted the Tigua (i.e. “inhabitants of the Pueblo de Ysleta”) “a league of land” in 1751. Because the Spanish “measured one league in each direction from the church entrance,” the Ysleta Grant actually gave the Tigua four square leagues.42 That is thirty-six square miles, or three miles in each direction from the mission’s 1744 location, which was just south of its present day location in Ysleta, Texas.

From the 1680s to 1750s, El Paso was situated in the middle of Apachería, or Apache territory, which extended from the Pecos River, down across the Rio Grande Valley, and west to Arizona. As stated, the Suma and Manso peoples of the Rio Grande Valley spoke an Athapaskan dialect and fluidly communicated with Apache peoples. By 1750, the Comanche had moved south, disrupted the Apache hunting and subsistence patterns and pushed the Apache south and
west of El Paso. This Comanche expansion caused the Apache to increase slave and cattle raiding in El Paso’s lower valley communities and placed El Paso in a buffer zone between the Apachería and the Comanchería.\textsuperscript{43} In response, the Tigua helped Spanish and Mexican soldiers track Apache raiders. When Mexico gained independence in 1821, it recognized the territoriality of the Tigua and granted them the Rancho de Ysleta Grant in 1828 (See Appendix, Figure 3).\textsuperscript{44}

The American Period, 1848-1871

Aside from the shifts in Comanche and Apache territory, another geographical change that held significant implications for the Tigua was the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War. The Treaty redefined the border and enveloped everything and everyone north of the Rio Grande River into United States territory. It divided the El Paso borderlands, cut socio-economic subsistence patterns, and politically divided kinship networks that had existed long before Spanish colonization. Article VIII of the Treaty declared that

\textit{[i]n the said territories, property of every kind, now belonging to Mexicans, not established there, shall be inviolably respected. The present owners, the heirs of these, and all Mexicans who may hereafter acquire said property by contract, shall enjoy with respect to it guarantees equally ample as if the same belonged to citizens of the United States.}\textsuperscript{45}

The Treaty marginalized the Tigua of Ysleta del Sur in that although Articles VIII and IX recognized them as legitimate landholders due to the Ysleta Grant, the Rancho de Ysleta Grant, and the Mexican Plan of Iguala of 1821, which considered Indians as citizens, they did not retain the same political legitimacy under the new American power structure. The Tigua were not considered Mexican as defined in Article VIII, yet they did not quite fit the profile of the “savage
“tribes,” as defined in Article XI. Consequently, they became trapped within an ambiguous borderlands space as non-Indians, non-Mexicans, and non-citizens. This dilemma became compounded when Texas sovereignty merged with federal Indian policy: the U.S. government was responsible for Indian policy, yet federal jurisdiction was limited in Texas because upon its annexation into the Union, “Texas retained exclusive jurisdiction over its public domain.”

Thus began a power shift and spatial metamorphosis that redefined tribal status within the American nation-state paradigm. Antonio Gramsci describes this shift as being “the birth of new parties of dominant groups, intended to conserve the assent of subaltern groups and maintain control over them.” Yet under the fading security net of Spain’s imperial hegemony, the Tigua of 1850 temporarily resided in a political chasm between shifting borders and domains of state and federal control.

After the U.S.-Mexico War, the State of Texas continued to Texas Republic’s claim to the land east of the Rio Grande River to the 103rd meridian. This claim included the eastern half of New Mexico and extended as far north as Cheyenne, Wyoming. Texas gave up its claim to New Mexico in the Organic Act of 1850, which was part of the Compromise of 1850, in exchange for $10 million in debt relief. The Compromise admitted California as a free state, banned slave trading in Washington D.C., endorsed the Fugitive Slave Act, and applied popular sovereignty in U.S. territories. As part of the 1850 Compromise, the Organic Act of 1850 created the current Texas-New Mexico border at the 32nd parallel. This actualized the isolation of the Tigua by “jurisdictionally” dividing them from their northern Pueblo counterparts, who lived in the federal New Mexico territory and thus became eligible for protection under the 1834 Intercourse Act, which protected Indian land.
In 1849, a flood finalized the shift in the Rio Grande River, changed the international boundary, and placed Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario in the United States. Because of the sporadic nature of this river shift, some of the original land from Ysleta ended up on the Mexican side of the river in Senecu, and some of the land from Senecu ended up in Ysleta (see Appendix, Figure 6). Thus, in 1854 Texas granted the inhabitants of Ysleta the land from Senecu that had moved north of the river during the same river shift in order to compensate them for the lost land. This was the 1854 “Act to relinquish to the inhabitants of Ysleta, in El Paso county, a certain tract of land adjoining the town tract now held and owned by said inhabitants.” This Act was significant because it legally recognized the original boundaries of the Ysleta Grant of 1751.50

However, the 1854 “Act to relinquish to the inhabitants of Ysleta” also undermined the ability of the Tigua to lay claim to the land in that it obscured the identification of the original occupants by using the term “inhabitants” instead of Tigua, native, indigenous, or Indian, as it was stated on the original Ysleta Grant of 1751. The definition of Ysleta’s indigenous occupants in the 1854 “Act to relinquish” stated that the state of Texas recognized “the grant made to the inhabitants of the town of Ysleta, in the present county of El Paso, in the year seventeen hundred and fifty one, by the government of Spain.”51 This word play was a ploy by government officials to establish perfect title to the land. Nicholas P. Houser, an anthropologist dedicated to Tigua history, notes that local officials knew that the 1751 Ysleta Grant made the Tigua the legitimate owners of the land, but “because of the presence of Hispanic and Anglo occupants on that land, [t]he local power elite must have searched for a mechanism or terminology which would conveniently solve the title chain problem.”52 In this sense, the changing ethnic landscape was accompanied by a new land policy apparatus that would pave the way for westward expansion.
As Euro-Americans encroached upon the land in El Paso’s lower valley, “Manifest Destiny” followed. During the 1850s, Texas chartered myriad railroads that envisioned El Paso as part of a rail line to the West coast. In 1849, Robert S. Neighbors was appointed to the office of United States Indian Agent for the state of Texas. He recorded a census of Indians on the border and distinguished the best possible route from San Antonio to El Paso. In the process of these two tasks, Neighbors neither documented nor acknowledged the Tigua of Ysleta del Sur.

Between 1850 and 1858, Texas superficially attempted to accommodate Spanish and Mexican land title recognitions per stipulations in the Treaty of 1848. Texas formed two commissions: the Bourland Miller Commission in 1850 and the Rio Grande Commission in 1854. However, the former totally overlooked El Paso county, while the latter totally overlooked the Ysleta Grant. The Bourland and Miller Commission rejected seventy eight land claims, fifty-one of which were from ejido, or common land holdings in Matamoros. From this trend, it becomes apparent that both commissions likely denied ejido land claims in favor of private holdings. The Rio Grande Commission attempted to have various El Paso county titles recognized by the State, but on August 23, 1856, Governor E.M. Pease vetoed the bill because it contained too may land claims. Interestingly, the veto occurred two days before the Texas legislature’s incorporation of the Memphis, El Paso and Pacific Railroad Company; moreover, documentation of the Rio Grande Commission’s recommendations subsequently vanished just before the approval of “An Act to provide for the Incorporation of Towns and Cities” (1858), which allowed for the first Ysleta incorporation in 1859. Also interesting is the approval of a reduced version of the Rio Grande Commission’s land title recommendations for El Paso county, which still excluded Ysleta, being passed right after the loss of the Commission’s initial findings.53
The 1859 incorporation of the town of Ysleta was a generic incorporation, justified upon conformity to the 1858 “Act to provide for the Incorporation of Towns and Cities.” It was the first incorporation of Ysleta. Nicholas Houser notes that although this incorporation sought to legitimize access to Tigua land, “a provision in the general act of incorporation [Section 43] …protected communal titles.” Section 43 states:

> [t]hat the act of incorporation under the provisions of this act, shall not be so construed as in any manner to affect the titles to land heretofore granted by the Government to the inhabitants of any said town, but the lands so granted shall continue to be held and disposed of by the corporate authorities so created, for the use and benefit of the inhabitants of the said town, for the purposes for which they were originally granted.

Although the 1859 incorporation did not rapidly commodify the land in Ysleta, it did exclude the Tigua from voting. Section 5 states that anyone who is a “qualified elector under the laws of the State, shall be entitled to vote.” This excluded the Tigua from voting as Indians in Texas. Moreover, the bureaucratic elites behind the incorporation itself knew of the railroad and its arrival. In 1857, Henry Dexter, the first mayor under the 1859 incorporation, wrote that “[o]ur Pacific Railroad is progressing finely and will doubtless reach El Paso in time.” Could he by any chance have been writing about the Memphis, El Paso, and Pacific Railroad that was approved by the Texas Legislature just two days after the Rio Grande Commission’s proposed Spanish and Mexican title recognitions were vetoed? Under the auspices of the 1859 incorporation, Euro-American land occupants sought to establish a “title chain,” which would prepare the land for sale to the railroad and legitimately dispossess the Tigua. However, the arrival of the American Civil War put this process of land dispossession temporarily on hold.

After the Civil War, the federal government recognized the Tigua as a group of Pueblo Indians but was unable to establish a reservation for them because Texas had retained control of its public lands when it entered the Union in 1845. Gary Clayton Anderson writes that “state
legislators in Austin claimed complete sovereignty and denied the claims of...large populations of American Indians, many of whom were indigenous to Texas.” As such, Texas did not recognize the Tigua and excluded them from the benefits of federal assistance that the Pueblos of New Mexico enjoyed. This became apparent in 1864, when President Lincoln gave canes (“Lincoln Canes”) and land patents to all northern Pueblo tribal governors. Through the land patents, the Pueblos of New Mexico had the privilege of holding land title. Consequently, the Tigua of Ysleta del Sur became obscured under State jurisdiction. This marginalization of the Tigua set the stage for the second phase in the bureaucratic land dispossession process.

By the 1870s, the socio-political disruptions caused by the War created a power vacuum in El Paso county, which was filled by capitalists, land speculators, carpetbaggers, and political factions. These new arrivals (i.e. northerners) conflicted with and impinged upon the land holdings of former Confederates, Mexicans, and Indians. The ascendancy of William Wallace Mills and Andrew Jennings Fountain as local political ringleaders coincided with economic development and westward expansion that would bureaucratically dispossess the Tigua through devices within the local and state government. This shift moved into play the second phase of incorporation, which picked up and accelerated where the dispossession processes of the 1850’s had left off.

The Piro Pueblo of Senecu had never accepted the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the 1854-58 Relinquishment Acts, which had separated them from most of their land. The river shift of 1849 had placed some of their best land on the other side of the border, and they wanted it back. Subsequently, the people of Senecu challenged the 1854 “Act to relinquish to the inhabitants of Ysleta” in Pueblo of Senecu v. United States (1870). The Pueblo of Senecu argued that the four leagues of land that had shifted to the east between 1832 and 1849, due to a
change in course of the river, belonged to them and should be honored as such per the Treaty of 1848. 61

Despite the shift in the river, the Indians of Senecu argued that they had always occupied the land in question, and that it was rightfully theirs because they occupied it during the time of the 1848 Treaty. Because the case was an international issue, it was a matter for the U.S.-Mexico Joint Boundary Commission, which was created in 1868 to judge U.S.-Mexican land claims and border issues. The petition presented the Indians of Senecu as “civilized” Mexican citizens who legally possessed the land at the time of the signing of the 1848 Treaty. The plaintiff (Senecu) claimed that the 1854 “Act” had deprived them of their best land. However, the Commission ruled that, “the claim of the people of Senecu does not does not raise an international question.” Although the evidence was overwhelmingly in favor of the Pueblo of Senecu, the Commission ruled against them and sent them back to the Texas courts. 62 As the court system solidified the region’s social and geographical borders, the state of affairs rapidly changed for the Tigua of Ysleta.
The Tigua Land Dispossession

On May 9, 1871 the Texas Legislature passed “An Act to incorporate the town of Ysleta in El Paso County.” El Paso County was originally established in 1850, and the first County seat was in San Elizario. State Senator and Chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee, Albert Jennings Fountain, was the main protagonist of the Ysleta incorporation. Fountain also incorporated San Elizario and Socorro into El Paso county on April 5 and April 26, respectively. The 1871 Ysleta incorporation differed from the 1859 incorporation (which was based on the 1858 incorporation format) in that it did not protect communal land ownership. Nicholas Houser writes that “[t]he second incorporation was a special incorporation designed for the three ancient pueblos of Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario, and provided the needed legislation required to divest communal lands.” The “Act to incorporate the town of Ysleta” affirmed

That the citizens of the town of Ysleta, in the county of El Paso, be and are hereby declared a body corporate by the name and style of “The Town of Ysleta,” and by that name may sue and be sued, may have and use a corporate seal, may hold real and personal estate, and may dispose of real estate in the manner herein-after provided, and in no other manner.

The 1871 Ysleta incorporation reframed the paradigm of land tenure by giving the Town of Ysleta the power to subdivide the land, issue land titles, and delegate property ownership under the criterion of citizenship. From its incipiency, it undermined the communal holdings of the 1751 Ysleta Grant. Sections 15 and 16 of the 1871 incorporation gave the “town council” total economic control over Ysleta. The El Paso Herald reveals the main participants in the land grab at the local level:

On September 26, 1871, the town assumed to act under its new charter with the following officers: Benito Gonzales, mayor; Jose Gonzales, Juan Garcia, Nicolas Padilla, Pablo Romero, Martin Alderette, Francisco Mayor, Jose Apodoca, Pedro Candelario, Narciso Loya, as regidores or alderman; Edward Elias, as secretario; Francisco Garcia, as tesorero; Matin Pais, as mariscal. In June 1873, Jose Maria Gonzales became Corregidor
and in August, Baptiste Mariany was seated as mayor and held office until July 1, 1874, about which time the special charter was revoked by the legislature.\textsuperscript{67}

A.J. Fountain acted in collusion with these local mestizo leaders, who anxiously sought to perfect title to communal Indian land. Fountain’s incorporation of Socorro, San Elizario, and Ysleta evidences his attempt to build ties with El Paso’s “Hispanic” lower valley politicians.\textsuperscript{68} Sections 24, 25 and 26 of the Ysleta incorporation outlined the mechanics of the Tigua land dispossession and empowered the town council of local mestizos the capacity to subdivide the land in Ysleta that was once held in common. Section 24 stated:

That the town council shall have the power, in the manner hereinafter specified, to grant or sell portions of real estate, the property of said town Ysleta, to any of the following person or persons, and to no other: First, to actual settlers on said lands who are citizens of the town of Ysleta; second, to any person or company for the erection of buildings to be used for mechanical or manufacturing purposes, or for the building of railroad depots or workshops; provided, that the land granted or sold shall not exceed the quantity to be actually covered by the erection of said buildings; third, to any person or persons who may desire to become citizens of Ysleta, and who shall become actual settlers on the land sold or granted.\textsuperscript{69}

The 1871 incorporation prescribed a process for acquiring a land deed that involved two steps: first, as described in Section 25, “whenever any person shall desire to purchase or obtain a grant of land …he or they shall make an application to the town council, at a regular meeting thereof.” Subsequently, the “town council” would vote as to whether or not to approve the “petition” and if approved would vote on the purchase price for the land. Second, the “petition” would be forwarded to the mayor for approval, and if approved, the mayor would issue a land deed, which presumably “considered in law and equity a good and sufficient conveyance of all the right, title and interest which the said town of Ysleta may have on the premises.”\textsuperscript{70} As a result, the approval of a “petition” by the town council and the mayor was all it took to legitimate ownership and dispossess the Tigua of their collective land.
The 1871 Ysleta incorporation excluded the Tigua, as American Indians, from participation in the emerging political economy. It was a policy apparatus that supported the special interests of the region’s newly arrived capitalists and speculators. As such, it temporarily served the power elite’s agenda by establishing a legitimate way for them to possess the land in Ysleta.\textsuperscript{71} It violated the Texas Constitution of 1869, which incorporated the 1862 Homestead Act policy that limited land grants to 160 acres and made “actual settlement,” not just the “desire” to settle, a condition for ownership.\textsuperscript{72} It put the supreme power of ownership in the hands of the “town council,” a body of local elites, such as Jose Maria Gonzales, who had their own ulterior motives and political agendas.\textsuperscript{73} Section 3 of the 1871 incorporation excluded the Tigua from land ownership and voting on the basis of race and citizenship. The Tigua should have been allowed to own land and vote under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and its obligation to honor the rights of Mexican citizens, which included Indians. But United States citizenship was predicated upon race, and Texas did not consider Indians as citizens. For this reason, many unrecognized Indians (i.e. the Tigua) identified as Mexican. Section 3 stated that “no person shall be a qualified voter in said corporation unless he be a registered voter in the State.” This not only excluded the lower valley’s mission Indians from politics, it also influenced the way they identified themselves in the emerging civil society of El Paso county. Overall, Native Americans could not vote in the United States until the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, which gave them the right to vote. Texas did not recognize the Tigua as Indians and thus exposed them to taxes that they often could not afford in Section 21, which economically discriminated against landholding Tigua peoples through the use of “taxes of every kind as they shall become due and owing.”\textsuperscript{74} Consequently, the 1871 incorporation legally institutionalized the geographic, political, and economic dispossession of the Tigua.
The land dimensions described in the 1871 incorporation conveniently fell within the parameters of the 1854 “Act to relinquish” and its 1858 amendment, which added the two leagues of land that shifted from Senecu to Ysleta during the river shift of 1832-1849. Yet the 1854 and 1858 legislation honored the rights of the original “inhabitants” of the Spanish Ysleta Grant, as defined by the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Because the geographical boundaries of the 1871 incorporation are practically the same as those in the 1751 Ysleta Grant, the paper trail signifies a blatant violation of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.75 The 1751 Ysleta Grant, which the Treaty of 1848 should have protected, contained two fundamental tenets that had been deliberately overlooked during the settlement of Ysleta. These tenets held that “[n]on-Indians were forbidden to reside upon Pueblo Lands” and that “Pueblo Indians held their lands in common, the land being granted to the Indians in the name of their Pueblo.” Because Mexico’s Plan of Iguala “declared that all ‘inhabitants of New Spain, without distinction, whether European, African, or Indian,’ were citizens of Mexico,” the Tigua and their land should have been protected per the Treaty of 1848.76 However, the State of Texas did not recognize the rights of El Paso’s mission Indians as Mexican citizens, and local politicians used state policy to dispossess them of their land.

The state’s legal viewpoint on indigenous rights became apparent when the plaintiff, Pueblo of Senecu, filed suit against the newly incorporated town of Ysleta in The Pueblo Of Senecu v. Corporation Of Ysleta (1871). The Piro of Senecu claimed that the two leagues of ejido, or communal, land that they lost during the 1849 river shift still belonged to them. From a legal standpoint, the case was hopeless because the 1854 Relinquishment Act, the 1848 Treaty, and the 1870 case, Senecu v. United States had already solidified the outcome. On behalf of the plaintiff (Pueblo of Senecu), Attorneys Watts and Howard wrote that the
Plaintiff admits that true it is that Defendant [Corporation of Ysleta] has resisted by force, threats and fraud the possession of parts of said land, by Plaintiff, and has forcibly ejected Plaintiff from the possession of a part of the said land…Plaintiff avers that said Defendant has taken, cut down and destroyed timber on said land to the value of Fifty Thousand Dollars, and that said Defendant has further dug up the soil, torn up and trampled down the crop and herbage, on said land and other damage done thereto, to the further damage of plaintiff in the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars and Plaintiff further says that the rents and profits of the parts of said land held by Defendant are reasonably worth the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars, for all which sums of money Plaintiff asks judgment against Defendant, and prays as in original petition for general relief.

The District Court ruled against the Pueblo of Senecu under the premises of the defense attorneys’ argument, which stated that the plaintiff was a group of Mexican Indians:

Plaintiff is an alien and cannot sue for real estate in this Court…Plaintiff is not a Corporate body with capacity to sue or be sued by the laws of Mexico nor by the laws of the State of Chihuahua. That plaintiff is not a citizen of the Republic of Mexico and has no capacity to sue in the Courts of the Republic of Mexico, nor in the Courts of the United States, nor in the Courts of the State of Texas. That Plaintiff is a dependant tribe of Indians, a ward of the Republic of Mexico, and has no capacity to sue or be sued in any Court.

The ruling legally reduced the Piro Pueblo of Senecu and any other mission Indian tribe or individual that sought justice in the Court system to non-citizenship status. However, it recognized the “Plaintiff” as “a dependent tribe of Indians” from Senecu who legally advocated for their land. Although the 1871 case ruled against Senecu on the merits of their “alien” status, it also acknowledged the Ysleta Grant of 1751. In his closing statement, the defending attorney stated that the land held, possessed, or occupied by the Town of Ysleta “is held under and owned by virtue of Grant from the King of Spain and by virtue of Patent from the State of Texas.” The Court documents in this case never mentioned the Tigua. Yet they did note how the defendant, “forcibly… has taken, cut down and destroyed timber [and] further dug up the soil, torn up and trampled down the crop and herbage, on said land and other damage.” Thus, the court’s decision reinforced the momentum of colonization that dispossessed both the Piro in Senecu and the Tigua in Ysleta. Alongside the largely mestizo Ysleta town council, El Paso’s Euro-
American settlers played a significant part in the Tigua land dispossession. The most famous of these is Albert Jennings Fountain.

Albert Jennings Fountain returned to El Paso in 1865 to recover from a wound he received from fighting Indians as a soldier in the U.S. army. He discovered Ben Dowell’s saloon, and it was there that he befriended local elites, such as Luis Cardis and Republican ringleader W.W. Mills. Within the wave of Texas’s post-Civil War reconstruction movement, Fountain’s political ties at Dowell’s enabled him to practice law and investigate old Confederate land titles, so they could be perfected and auctioned off.81 Among other properties, Fountain possessed the Overland Mail station and moved there in 1867. His relationship with Mills flourished, and he soon wielded local power as county surveyor and federal customs inspector. However, Fountain and Mills split on the issue of the Guadalupe salt beds. As a radical Republican, Fountain defeated Mills in a race for the Texas Senate in 1869. In the Senate, he was a member of the Public Lands committee, which was responsible for railroad “subsidies,” as well as the chair for the Indian Affairs and Frontier Protection committee.82 Fountain’s network certainly implicates him as a central conspirator in the Tigua land dispossession.

When Fountain investigated land title claims as a justice of the peace in El Paso, he regularly forced people from their homes. In 1869, Fountain and Sheriff J.B. Miller confiscated some real estate in El Paso and auctioned it off to his wife for $135.00.83 His involvement with the state enabled his access to knowledge about the railroad and economic development. This knowledge informed his actions, and it was no coincidence that the 1871 Ysleta incorporation coincided with the railroad’s arrival. The Texas and Pacific Railroad was chartered and given lands by President Grant on March 3, 1871. It was destined to run through El Paso because of the town’s geographical location on the 32nd parallel, but the Federal government did not have
access to Texas lands. Fountain, as President of the Texas Senate, surely knew this when he proposed the incorporation of Ysleta, which passed on May 9, 1871. Given Fountain’s political ties at the state and local level, it would be myopic to ignore the railroad’s influence on land speculators during the incorporation of Ysleta. 84

The Tigua of Ysleta del Sur became dispossessed of most of their land between 1871 and 1874. After the 1871 incorporation, Joseph William Tays, a friend of Fountain’s, surveyed the unregistered communal land in Ysleta. After the survey, the land was subdivided, and each subdivision was divided into smaller lots. When settlers or businesses purchased any land, they submitted a petition for that land to the town council. Land petitions had to be approved by the town council and then the mayor. Once the town council got the petition, it set a purchase price for the land. The Mayor could adjust the price, deny, or approve the petition. Upon receipt of payment, the Mayor would issue a deed. 85

Lands already inhabited by individuals who held title received deeds under the heading “old titles,” which transferred a perfect title into the incorporated town. Yet most of the communal land held by the Tigua did not fit this category, and speculators and local elites needed the land in Ysleta ready to sell to the arriving railroad. Between May of 1871 and May of 1874, the town of Ysleta made 304 land conveyances. However, the legitimacy of the Ysleta incorporation increasingly became an issue due to its violation of the Homestead provisions in the Texas Constitution of 1869, which “prohibited grants of over 160 acres without actual settlement or residence.” 86 The Texas legislature subsequently sought to correct resolve this dilemma.

On May 2, 1874, the Texas Senate passed “An Act to Repeal an Act to incorporate the Town of Ysleta, in El Paso County, approved May 9, 1871.” The “Act to repeal” was a short
(two section) piece of legislation that repealed the 1871 “Act to incorporate.” Yet the 1874 “Act” contained a clause in Section 2, which stated, “That this act take effect and be in force sixty days after its passage.” The 1874 “Act” was a superficial attempt to redeem the state from any notions of fraud and racketeering, but for the Tigua it was a disaster. The sixty day grace period allowed a rush of last minute land petitions to cross the mayor’s desk. In this sixty-day period, several hundred grants were issued, 254 in May alone. The 1871 “Act to incorporate,” allowed for the dispossession of over “23,000 acres of the Ysleta grant,” leaving three acres for the Tigua. This sixty-day clause in the law enabled the Ysleta Mayor and Town Council the means to continue to dispossess the Tigua of their land. This dispossession was bureaucratically facilitated to look legal, through the perceptions of legitimate land policy, but it really enabled the agendas of capitalist speculators in collusion with the local power elite.

Although some of Fountain’s local political ring made out well from the land grab, Fountain himself was excluded because of local controversy. Ben Dowell, the owner of Dowell’s saloon, was elected El Paso’s first mayor in 1873. At this time, the Franklin settlement that was located just north of present day Juarez was incorporated by the state of Texas and became known as El Paso. Also in 1873, the county seat moved from San Elizario to Ysleta. Through his saloon, Dowell was always at the center of local political power discourse, and his saloon enabled him to build a significant political network. This political capital allowed his privileged access to networks of patronage. Dowell was also “El Paso’s most enthusiastic railroad supporter” In addition, Dowell’s wife, Juana Marquez, was the daughter of Tigua cacique, Domingo Marquez. This connection enabled Dowell to have access to networks within the Tigua community of Ysleta, the Ysleta town council, and the political machine in El Paso.
(Franklin). After the 1871 “Act to incorporate,” Dowell acquired a significant amount of land in Ysleta through his networks and political capital.\textsuperscript{92}

Ironically, Fountain’s feud with Mills, and the factionalism it created among El Paso’s Euro-American politicians, excluded him from the land grab because it enabled Mill’s associates to form ties with Ysleta’s mayor and established community leader, Jose Maria Gonzales. Gonzales was the ringleader of Ysleta’s “local politicians such as Benito Gonzales, Juan Garcia, Pablo Romero, Nicholas Padilla, Martin Alderete, and Pedro Candelario.”\textsuperscript{93} With Jose Maria at the helm, this local group from Ysleta formed ties with W.B. Blanchard, J.P. Hague, Joseph W. Tays, and William Pierson. Together, this group petitioned, titled, and sold most of the land in Ysleta.\textsuperscript{94}

Looking further at Jose Maria Gonzales, it becomes apparent that he played as much of a role in the Tigua Indian land dispossession as did Fountain and Hague. Gonzales was the mayor of Ysleta between 1860 and 1862 under the first incorporation. He was also the mayor of Ysleta during the 1871 incorporation and served on the town council until the 1880s. Nicholas Houser describes Gonzales as someone who “could manipulate the residents of Ysleta, Indian and non-Indian, and make it work on the local level to defuse any challenges.”\textsuperscript{95} He was likely a mestizo who was able to negotiate all sides of the transitioning spectrum of land and politics in El Paso Country during the second half on the nineteenth century. In 1859, Tigua cacique Jose Domingo Marques and Juana Rite Marques granted and sold Gonzales two tracts of land adjacent to his own.\textsuperscript{96} These transactions allow for a reinterpretation of sorts in that Domingo Marques’s daughter, Juana, married Ben Dowell, and between 1871 and 1874 Dowell and Gonzales both participated as key players in the land grab. Considering that Dowell was El Paso’s first mayor, Gonzales was the mayor of Ysleta several times between 1860 and 1873, and that the both of
them are connected to Domingo Marquis, I conclude that elites at the top of all three societies participated in the subdivision and sale of the pueblo’s communal lands.

However, this conclusion is predicated upon the diverging intentions among the various participants who participated in the land grab. Domingo Marques’s intent may have been to establish title to the land so that his people could retain their rights to it. Ben Dowell, as a middle man between Marques and the Mills faction, may have played both sides to his own advantage. The Tigua may have expected Dowell to help them protect their land because of his marriage to a tribal cacique’s daughter. Yet Dowell could not reciprocate these types of kinship obligations because the land grab was larger than his ability to control it. As it looks, Dowell was complicit in the Tigua land dispossession. In this sense, Domingo Marques’s participation in the subdivision of Ysleta’s communal land surely backfired on him.

The Tiguas on the ground did not have a voice in the land petitioning process. In the view of many bureaucratic leaders they did not exist. This trend to marginalize the existence of indigenous peoples who had co-opted some aspects of civilization into their lifestyles was a part of the United States government’s agenda to assimilate indigenous peoples into the nation-state. Mission Indians, such as the Tigua, who had syncretically adapted some of colonial Spain’s socio-cultural norms, bore the brunt of this assimilationist ideology. This dynamic manifested itself in New Mexico, when the Pueblo Indians lost the right to federal protection of their lands in the Supreme Court case of United States v. Joseph (1876). The Court’s decision negated federal protection that had been previously guaranteed under the Intercourse Act of 1834. The ruling was based upon the differences in tribal lifestyles, which defined New Mexico’s Pueblo Indians as different from “those semi-independent tribes whom our government has always recognized as exempt from our laws.” The Court described the Pueblo as “civilized” and
therefore deemed them assimilated into the expanding nation-state. However, this assimilation also marginalized them as approximately 3000 Euro-American families settled on their land.\textsuperscript{97}

In a sense, the Supreme Court’s decision attempted to dispossess New Mexico’s Pueblo Indians of their identity under the precepts of civilization. Because the Court’s decision was based upon the dichotomy of the “savage” Indian and civilization, it incorporated the Pueblo into the latter, and the sovereignty that existed within the interstice of these two polar opposites became compromised. Thus, when the United States categorized New Mexico’s Pueblo as civilized, the latter lost both their federal protection and their land.

The above dynamic is relevant in understanding what happened to the Tigua because it exposes the middle ground that they occupied as mission Indians in Texas during the 1870s. The Tigua of Ysleta differed from New Mexico’s Pueblo Indians in that they had never enjoyed the protections offered by the 1834 Intercourse Act, and thus incrementally lost their communal lands that had been granted to them in 1751. Because Texas never recognized the Tigua, the latter negotiated the borderlands political economy for survival and was assumed to be assimilated into Mexican culture. In this sense, the Piro, Manso, and Tigua who had lived in and around El Paso’s missions disappeared into the national imagination and lost their ability to realize themselves as indigenous peoples. Yet this presupposition is misleading in that it denies the reality on the ground in El Paso’s borderlands, as well as the ability of indigenous peoples to continue being who they are though self definition.

In the context of El Paso’s borderlands, the local mestizo and ethnic Mexican elite worked in unison with the expanding United States capitalist economy, which disrupted the lifeways of the region’s indigenous inhabitants and dispossessed them of their land. Although
intentions diverged during this process, local elites from all factions participated in the privatization of the once communal land of the Ysleta Grant.

In the historical record, both nationalist Mexican dominion and Euro-American notions of Indianness placed groups like the Tigua into a marginalized zone of Mexicanness. However, indigenous groups in El Paso’s borderlands had always interacted with other groups around them; they functioned as heterogeneous communities and evolved through time as they adapted to and negotiated the environments in which they lived. They did not stop being themselves when they became participants in the culture of civilization; they just did not fit into the Euro-American stereotype of nomadic, semi-sedentary, or sedentary Indians who existed in some primitive form and practiced antiquated culture. Moreover, just because El Paso’s indigenous peoples did not practice the same culture as the so called “savage tribes,” this did not mean that they would sit still and accept oppression. Instead they resisted it as it manifested itself in the disposssession of land and its resources.
The Salt War of 1877

The Tigua land dispossession was a part of the process of United States westward expansion which incorporated both land and resources. The Salt War of 1877 took place in San Elizario, Texas. It was a reaction to American Westward expansion in which cultures and political economies clashed. More a war of resistance than national hostilities, the primary conflict erupted over Charles H. Howard’s privatization of the Guadalupe Salt Flats and the sale of salt to the inhabitants of San Elizario, Socorro, and Ysleta, Texas. Prior to Howard’s commodification of this community resource, the region’s indigenous peoples and residents of these El Paso pueblos had open access to the salt. Consequently, Howard’s actions caused the social upheaval known as the Salt War of 1877.

The Salt War did not happen in a vacuum. There were many other dynamics and resentments in play in El Paso’s lower valley by 1877. Father Antonio Severo Borajo and Luis Cardis eventually came to hate Albert Jennings Fountain and Charles Howard, as the former and the latter privatized both indigenous and former mission lands. Also, Borajo and Cardis had indirect kinship ties with the indigenous of the area through their affiliation with each other and the Church. A.J. Fountain, the State representative that facilitated the 1871 incorporations of Ysleta, San Elizario, and Socorro, easily became implicated in the dispossession and displacement of numerous Tigua, Piro, and ethnic-Mexicans. Yet the initial dispute between Fountain and Borajo and Cardis involved possession of the Salt Flats.

In order to fully understand Fountain’s connection to the Salt Flats, I will backtrack and elaborate on local El Paso politics and the desire of political actors to commodify the salt. C.L. Sonnichsen writes that after the American Civil War, various factions controlled El Paso politics, such as the Southerners, which included Ben Dowell and Joseph Magoffin, and the
Union men, which included William Wallace Mills, James A. Zabriski, Charles C. Ellis and Albert Jennings Fountain. Southeast of El Paso on the Rio Grande, in the County Seat of San Elizario resided Luis Cardis and parish priest Antonio Borajo. Cardis and Borajo both spoke Spanish and had significant political capital with the ethnic-Mexican community. Mills, Fountain, Dowell, Zabriski, Cardis and Father Borajo, among others, formed a political machine called the Custom House Ring, which controlled a good part of El Paso government during the Radical Reconstruction period of Texas politics. A.J. Fountain initially received significant patronage from El Paso’s State representative W.W. Mills. In 1866 Fountain surveyed the Guadalupe Salt Lakes for Samuel Maverick. Although Maverick was granted a portion of the Salt Flats, the local ‘Paseños’ and ‘Salineros,’ who inhabited la Isla, (San Elizario, Socorro, and Ysleta) still had access to the salt because of a mistake in the survey, which had left a portion of the Salt Flats open for communal utilization. Subsequently, the Custom House Ring sought to privatize the remainder of the Salt Flats, but because of resistance “among the native population,” A.J. Fountain decided not to pursue the matter, and the Ring split into two opposing groups: the Salt Ring under Mills and the Anti-Salt Ring under Fountain.

During the 1869 election, Fountain defeated W.W. Mills in the race for State representative because he had the backing of Father Antonio Borajo. Fountain and Borajo played on Mills’s connection with the Salt Ring and influenced El Paso’s lower valley inhabitants to support Fountain. Mills claimed fraud and set out to ruin Fountain. Fountain, attempting to fulfill his campaign promise of protecting the Salt Flats from privatization for the people of la Isla, proposed a bill in the Texas legislature to make the land public property. The bill did not pass because Father Borajo and Luis Cardis petitioned against it, telling the people of San Elizario that Fountain was attempting to dispossess them of the salt—Borajo and Cardis had split
with Fountain after the election because he refused to go along with them in a scheme that would have privatized the Guadalupe Salt Flats. As such, Fountain became embroiled in a conflict with the Mills ring and the Borajo-Cardis network: two major El Paso political machines. In reality, Fountain, Mills, and Borajo were all playing against each other for possession of the Salt Flats, yet their motives and intentions diverged significantly. This became apparent in 1871 when Fountain incorporated the town of Ysleta into the state of Texas and dispossessed the Tigua Indians of their land. Subsequently, Fountain moved to Mesilla, New Mexico in 1874, after he finished his term in office. He had worn out his welcome in El Paso. Mills had practically ruined his political career via a court case, charging Fountain with “eighteen felony indictments,” and Borajo and Cardis had threatened to kill him.

When Borajo and Cardis portrayed Fountain to the lower valley’s indigenous people as attempting to further disrupt their cultural lifeways by privatizing the Salt Flats, a threat on his life was inevitable. This is what caused Fountain to fear for the lives of his family and move to Mesilla, New Mexico in 1874. In short, the Tigua, under the influence of Borajo and Cardis, would have killed Fountain if he had returned to El Paso.

At the base of resistance to the privatization of the Salt Flats rested kinship and community networks that had been forged over generations. Within these intertwined networks, indigenous lifeways and identities had evolved with the changes that occurred over time. The fluidity of identity and co-optation of new technologies are crucial points to consider when investigating how the region’s indigenous peoples fit into constructions of Mexicanness and Indianness. In the El Paso borderlands, identities merged as members of different groups intermarried and adapted the ways of the other. Within this dynamic, I entertain the idea that the region’s inhabitants co-opted the identity of the other and formed hybrid identities that
transcended the invisible borders of racism, ethnicity, and nationality. This concept, which I have adapted from Homi K. Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*, offers new perspectives on indigeneity in El Paso’s borderlands during the 1870s. In this context, I contend that the Salt War of 1877 was the result of an amalgamated resistance in which indigenous and mestizo residents responded to incursions into their cultural lifeways that had been forged through a fusion of kinship ties and overlapping culture within and around the Spanish missions of the El Paso region. As part of my argument, I will clarify how indigenous resistance factored into the Salt War, as well as how indigenous identities changed to adapt to the shifting socio-political climate prior to 1877. I will also reinscribe the borderlands narrative by presenting that the execution of Charles H. Howard resulted from his violations of indigenous codes of honor, which required retribution and reciprocity for his incursions into their sacred landscape and the murder of Luis Cardis, a prominent figure in the indigenous community of the El Paso region. In conclusion, this section examines indigenous agency in the creation of the cross-cultural networks which enabled the organized rebellion known as the Salt War of 1877.104

In order to understand the immensity of the Tigua land dispossession, one must understand how land was an integral part of their identity, culture and community. Adolph M. Greenburg reports that the Tigua’s “subsistence activity” was rooted in a deeply “religious context.”105 When considering the commons, and in particular the Guadalupe Salt Flats, it is important to remember that the Tigua, Piro, Manso, Suma, and Tompiro, as well as other lesser known tribes shared these lands as part of a collective community that merged and diverged from within the spaces of the Spanish missions of Ysleta, Socorro, San Lorenzo, and Senecu. In reference to the region, Susan Deeds explains that “missions were never closed communities. They were transactional crossroads where ethnic identities, subsistence patterns cultural beliefs,
and gender relations were forged and changed over time in a frontier only slowly conquered by non-Indians.”

This characterization applies to the cultural interactions within the Franciscan missions of Guadalupe, Ysleta, Senecu, Socorro, and San Lorenzo and reveals how indigenous peoples navigated, or negotiated their identities within, or between, these missions and their own cultural lifestyles. James F. Brooks’s *Captives & Cousins* also helps us understand indigenous historical memory, consciousness, and identity in the El Paso borderlands at the time of the Salt War. Brooks writes that in the face of American expansion, “vestiges of earlier formations remained, primarily in quietly acknowledged kin connections, cultural celebrations, and a modern propensity to reclaim various mixed-descent identities.”

In this sense, the continuity of indigenous identity through kinship networks established itself in the consciousness of the region’s people and enabled them to define themselves in relation to the past and the present.

As cultures overlapped within the missions and settlements of the El Paso area, cultural attributes such as syncretized religion and similar land tenure methods complimented the formation of hybrid identities within the settlements of El Paso. The fusion of various indigenous, mestizo, and Spanish peoples and cultures created what Cynthia Radding refers to as spaces where “ethnic boundaries [acted] as transitional zones of cultural hybridity.”

Radding explains that because this fusion occurred through intermarriage, ritual sponsorship (*compadrazgo*), and informal conjugal unions, many Hispanic and mestizo settlers inserted themselves into indigenous kinship networks, living in the pueblos and squatting on mission lands. By the close of the eighteenth century, the Indian-Hispanic divide had become a zone of cultural hybridity and a site of conflict over land, local governance, and the meaning of community.

Although this quote from Radding focuses on eighteenth century missions and settlements in Sonora, the dynamics are almost identical to what happened in Ysleta, Socorro, and Senecu. In El Paso, mestizo and Spanish settlement on indigenous and mission land was a
common occurrence. Under Spanish jurisdiction, Pueblo Indians (i.e. Tigua and Piro) held their lands in common,” and “[n]on-Indians were forbidden to reside upon Pueblo lands” because Indians were “wards of the crown.” Within the domain of El Paso’s borderlands, indigenous communal land networks developed through kinship ties that were forged via intermarriage and alliances between the Tigua, Piro, Suma, and Manso peoples, among others. These indigenous kin ties also enabled the sacred and ceremonial use of the landscape, which is a significant aspect of indigenous spirituality.

Throughout the borderlands, exogamy increased among the region’s inhabitants as they banded together and formed kinship ties. In El Paso, the Suma and the Manso did not vanish; they intermarried with the newly arrived Tigua, Piro, and Mestizo peoples and passed their spiritual and geographical systems on to them via kinship. Within this amalgamation, identities merged and blurred. Howard Campbell describes this process as “Tribal synthesis,” or the way in which “[i]ndigenous lifeways and cultural ‘spaces’ have been reshaped and reformulated, often as a result of power imposed upon them through colonialism.” Rex Gerald points out that the Manso and the Suma either left the El Paso settlements and “joined the encroaching Apache,” or intermarried with the Tigua, Piro, Suma, and other peoples. Gerald writes that “[t]he mission Suma did not become genetically extinct, of course, they merely lost their tribal identity through intermarriage.” However, during intermarriage, indigenous cultural lifeways persisted and merged with the culture of the “Other” through kinship ties. Juliana Barr describes kinship as “the very foundation of Spanish-Indian relations.” Intermarriage placed outsiders to indigenous lifeways on the inside, making them part of the indigenous socio-economic and political systems of the tribe. Yet when outsiders intermarried into an indigenous group, they had to conform with the native culture of that group. This applied to any outsider, whether French, Indian or Spanish.
Barr notes that kinship categorized how indigenous peoples viewed and interacted with others, using “gender and age as the primary determinants of peoples’ identity, status, and obligation.”115 In reference to El Paso’s borderlands, this dynamic rearranges the colonial paradigm by highlighting how native belief systems and culture did not simply assimilate within the missions; the Spanish had to adapt to native culture and change their culture in the process. As time went on, cultural borders merged, blurred, and overlapped.

In this system, kinship ties diminished the dichotomy between indigenous and Mexican, often mestizo, socio-politico-economies. Moreover, identity that was solidified into either Indian or Mexican polarities was also interfused and navigated in an interstitial space within the dichotomy. This crossing over the binary, from one social construct to another, created hybrid identities in unison with an amalgamated tribal economy, which subsisted off the communal landscape.116 This dynamic illuminates indigenous involvement in the Salt War by offering a rearticulation of its determinants.

The terms Tejano and Paseño are often used as descriptors to imply a mesticized Hispanic-Mexican agency in opposition to its fundamental indigenous counterpart. This is illusive and to fully understand it, one must examine indigeneity within the ethnic construction of Mexican and Mexican-ness itself. The shift in ethnic identities that took place in the borderlands region during the late eighteenth century was demographically cultural, meaning that identity was predicated upon one’s cultural affiliations more than on one’s racial characteristics. Although census data for the eighteenth century El Paso borderlands is far from accurate, it allows for a general idea of the trends that shaped indigenous identity. Adolph Greenburg writes that a 1776 census revealed 353 Hispanic and 1,081 indigenous people residing in Ysleta, Senecu, and Socorro. A 1799 census of Ysleta alone listed 236 Tiguas and 138 Hispanics.
However, the 1805-06 census in Ysleta listed “226 Indians and 260 Hispanics and mestizo.” Greenburg questions the discrepancy and writes it off as unknown. Yet Ross Frank contends that this type of occurrence stemmed from the desire of those on the lower levels of the Hispanic socio-economic hierarchy to improve their positionality within the expanding colonial economy by being ethnically defined as “vecino” (or Paseño) in association with Hispanics, or españoles. Thus, as intermediate caste distinctions, such as genízaro, and coyote, increasingly merged into non-Indian ethnic constructs, as vecinos, or españoles, one’s status improved, allowing for increased social mobility, or at least participation in the expanding colonial economy. Gerald reveals a correlation to the above in his attribution to the shifting population figures in the Ysleta census to the expanding colonial economy:

These population figures do not reflect simply the biological success of the human breeding population in Ysleta, of course, but rather they also reflect the advantages and disadvantages of being identified with the subordinate ethnic group. The rapid growth of the non-Indian segment of the Ysleta population is not to be explained solely by the acceptance of non-Indian strangers into this relatively closed Indian society and the unrestricted fragmentation of their subsistence base, the irrigable land. Much of this growth was due to the voluntary rejection of Indian status by full and mixed blooded individuals such as is documented in the 1794 petition by two Indians of the Guadalupe mission to have their status changed to that of “vecino” or non-Indian citizen.

This transition into vecino-ness continued with Mexican Independence, the 1821 Plan de Iguala, which made all Indians Mexican citizens, and an 1824 Decree that eliminated racial categorization in all bureaucratic documents. These policies conflated ethnic and national identities and streamlined the politicized process in which identities shifted from indigenous to Mexicanized vecino, or español. In the eyes of Anglo-Americans, Mexicans increasingly became dichotomized into the two categories of mestizo and criollo, the former as the majority of the population that merged through years of miscegenation, and the latter the elite white Spaniards, which made up the minority of the population. After the Mexican-American War, most
nationalistic Anglo and Euro-Americans racially stereotyped ethnic-Mexicans as mixed breed “mongrels.”\textsuperscript{120}

However, Americans had no idea or consideration of indigenous kinship networks and cultural ties that were forged via miscegenation, nor did they understand indigenous connections with the communal landscape. Thus, Charles Howard, in 1877, must not have understood the social indigenous networks which existed in the communities of San Elizario, Socorro, and Ysleta, and was surely ignorant of their kinship connections with the mission community at Senecu, which was politically located in Mexico after the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.\textsuperscript{121} Moreover, the social construction of Mexican-ness as the primary determinant for identity and agency overlooks the significance of indigenous culture in the region during the 1870s, as well as its cooptation by mesticized Mexicans themselves.

Considering the mid-nineteenth century perpetuation of indigenous identities transitioning into Mexican-ness in Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario, I reason that the region’s indigenous negotiated identity choices in association to social position (i.e. property ownership and voting rights), and cultural influences, which caused identities to converge and diverge according to socio-political, cultural, and personal preferences. Articles 8 and 9 of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo influenced these identity choices in that they recognized Mexican property rights and granted rights of American citizenship to Mexicans who chose to remain in the United States with “all the rights of citizens of the United States according to the principles of the Constitution.”\textsuperscript{122} As such, the subsequent commissions that recognized land title claims, and the incorporations of those townships into Texas civil society in 1871 further required citizenship as a pre-requisite for voting rights and property ownership.\textsuperscript{123}
Mexican identity seemingly offered inclusion in the American paradigm, while indigenous identity, as Tigua, Piro, or Manso in Texas, did not. Martha Menchaca points out that the after the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Texas allowed the Tigua to continue to reside in Ysleta because they considered them a syncretic and heterogeneous people who merged with their Mexican neighbors. Menchaca also points out that the Bureau of Indian Affairs labeled Socorro’s indigenous peoples as Mexican and thus included them into the political, social, and economic benefits offered by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. However, in the end, both Mexicans and Indians lost their land as Euro-Americans encroached upon it. In this sense, the former mission Indian communities of El Paso’s lower valley became bureaucratically merged into the paradigm of the Mexican/American binary. Thus, some of the local and Christianized indigenous inhabitants of San Elizario, Socorro, and Ysleta chose to identify as Mexican, while others did not.

As individuals and families confronted new legal regimes that simplified their identification, they still retained their communal ties to resources, such as salt. As a mainstay of the borderlands economy during the nineteenth century, salt was an integral part of the social-economic kinship network that existed between the indigenous and “Mexicanized” peoples in Ysleta, Socorro, Senecu, and San Elizario. These inhabitants traveled regularly to the Salt Flats, bringing salt to their pueblos, and later hauling it to Chihuahua for trade and sale. The communal use of salt contributed to the ongoing intercultural relations and kinship ties that characterized the region. In unison with these intercultural connections, the Tigua of Ysleta, through intermarriage and kinship, emerged as an amalgamated organism of Suma, Manso, and Piro indigenous culture and identity in the region. In this context, the Guadalupe Salt Flats became shared spaces of indigenous cultural, spiritual, and subsistence systems. Eventually, this
system included local ethnic Mexicans through direct and indirect kinship networks that intertwined with the local economy. Greenburg illustrates this area as a “cross utilization zone” (see Appendix, Figure 7), and writes that the “Tigua involvement in the Salt War reflected local concerns shared with non-Indian groups over access to the salt flats because of attempts to privatize them.” He distinguishes between Spanish and indigenous communal systems of land tenure, noting that Tigua emphasized communal land rights, while the Spanish focused on usufruct land rights. In the usufruct system, Spain held sovereign ownership of the land under the “land, water, and mineral policies of the Spanish Crown” but allowed their indigenous wards access to these resources. 127 After the Salt War, testimonies to the U.S. government revealed the overlap in indigenous and Spanish land tenure policies. One witness stated that in 1656, Tomas Vélez Cachupín (New Mexico’s Governor) had granted the “Guadalupe Salt Lakes to “different towns on the river to be used in common.”128 Because these land systems clashed with Euro-American notions of privatized land tenure, the United States government largely perceived this difference in land tenure methods as a primary reason for the revolt.129

Communal Mexican legitimacy to the Salt Flats was real and should have been recognized by the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and determined as the property of the inhabitants of Socorro and San Elizario via the 1832 La Prieta Grant (see Appendix, figure 8). Accordingly, the La Prieta Grant consisted of “a three hundred twenty-five square league tract” that was awarded to “the citizens of Socorro and San Elizario” after a significant controversy over the utilization of land that was previously granted to the inhabitants of Ysleta, per the Rancho de Ysleta Grant of 1828. The Mexican government issued the latter Rancho de Ysleta Grant because the original Ysleta Grant of 1751 “had become insufficient, since all those lands had been appropriated and placed under cultivation.”130 J.J. Bowden illustrates that the La Prieta
Grant included the Salt Flats, as well as most of Hudspeth County, Texas, thus giving contiguity and legitimacy to already established land use systems.\textsuperscript{131}

Although indigenous legitimacy to the landscape is obscured within these nationalist paradigms, oral histories and ethnographic testimonies give substance to Tigua dominion and utilization of the Guadalupe region via territoriality, spiritual and economic subsistence, and kinship ties with preceding indigenous groups, such as the Manso and the Suma. Identifying indigenous territoriality via defense establishes the Tigua as possessors of the region in their defense against the incursions of various Apache bands, which also utilized the “Guadalupe Salt Basin” and “Diablo Plateau.” The Tigua often led and assisted Spanish, Mexican, and American soldiers, as well as Texas Rangers, in raids against the Apache and Comanche. They were skilled warriors on horseback and knew the territory well. They also had a strong understanding of contemporary nineteenth-century military technology, having access to guns and horses.\textsuperscript{132} Also, Tigua territoriality involved their connection to the cosmological landscape, which included all elements of the land. Hueco Tanks in particular was considered a “sacred place,” and was noted for its pictographs. Another aspect of the indigenous connection to the landscape was apparent through their use of various “place names,” which establish indigenous territoriality via the act of “claiming by naming.”\textsuperscript{133}

Tigua-indigenous lifeways linked with the faunal and floral environment in various ways. They used the land in the Salt Flats area for “seasonal livestock grazing.”\textsuperscript{134} The Manso and the Suma passed hunting areas of the Guadalupe Mountains, Pecos Range, and Plains River on to the Tigua, where they hunted buffalo and antelope. The Tigua collected various types of wood, traveling as far as the Finlay Mountains (Hudspeth, TX), and the Sacramento Mountains (near Alamogordo). They gathered medicinal plants in the Hueco and Guadalupe mountains, such as
manzanilla, ocotillo (to treat gonorrhea), peyote, sangre de Cristo (for cancer and heart problems), and yerba buena. They went as far as Carlsbad Caverns and Big Bend (Chisos Mountains, TX) to gather tobacco for religious and tribal ceremonies. The Tigua may have traded tobacco with the west Texas Jumano people, and both groups utilized this region.\(^{135}\)

The Tigua also utilized salt and gypsum from the Guadalupe Salt Flats. They used salt for preserving food, seasoning, trading, making drums, and tanning hides. Gypsum was collected “adjacent to the salt basin in the Guadalupe Mountains” and used for pottery and home building. They went to the Salt Flats twice a year and returned with salt, gypsum, and various types of herbs and wood, which they shared with the community. They also sold some of the salt.\(^{136}\) In an interview during the tribal recognition case, Tigua tribal member Miguel Pedraza Jr. stated:

My dad and I took several trips when I was young and when I became an adult over to the salt flats [Guadalupe]. He used to tell me stories of when he was younger, before I was born, that they used to go out there and gather salt for their own use. They used salt for consumption and for tanning…They used to bring blocks of salt from up there.\(^{137}\)

Pedraza’s account describes the indigenous connection with the resources of the Salt Flats and offers insights into how those resources formed an essential part of the tribal economy, which allowed for social participation within the world around them. Tigua-indigenous connections to the cultural landscape not only included the Guadalupe Salt Flats, but also its surrounding territory. This landscape was an “interwoven mosaic” of various tribal lifeways that had been passed on to the Tigua through kinship and reciprocity.\(^{138}\) Moreover, these lifeways connected the indigenous and Tigua peoples of Ysleta, Senecu, and Socorro to the Guadalupe Salt Flats in a way that was inconceivable to the United States army officials who documented the Executive Report entitled *El Paso Troubles in Texas*. Understanding this indigenous connection to the landscape, as well as the inability of newly arrived Euro-Americans to perceive it, is crucial for understanding indigenous participation in the Salt War of 1877.
The general origins of indigenous resistance in the North American Southwest stem from the expanding nation-state, civilization and modernization, and the conflicts that these determinants created over land and culture. In El Paso, these conflicts linked with the political dealings of contesting elites in local government. In 1872, when ex-Confederate soldier, lawyer, and Texas Democrat Charles Henry Howard arrived in San Elizario, he immediately developed ties with Luis Cardis and Father Antonio Borajo. With the help of the Borajo-Cardis political machine, Howard defeated J.P. Hague in a race for District Attorney, and, in 1874, was appointed District Judge. Subsequently, Cardis and Borajo approached Howard with a scheme to privatize the Salt Flats. Howard refused and split from the Borajo-Cardis machine. In 1876, Cardis was reelected to the State Legislature, but Howard lost the election for his judgeship, largely due to Borajo and Cardis. Howard retaliated by physically attacking Cardis in Austin. Subsequently, Howard began to take interest in the Salt Flats upon behest of his father-in-law, George B. Zimpelman. Howard was financially indebted to Zimpelman, and, as payment, perfected title for him to the Salt Flats. Thus, Zimpelman became the legitimate owner of the Guadalupe Salt Flats. As part of the agreement, Howard was responsible for collecting extraction fees for the salt from the region’s inhabitants.139

Howard’s privatization of the Salt Flats created a backlash in which the local residents of San Elizario and Ysleta took action. The foremost community members in opposition to the “Howard-Zimpelman title” were “Sisto Salcido, Leon Granillo, José Maria Juárez…of San Elizario …and Francisco Barela of Ysleta.”140 The summer of 1877 was dry, and many Paseños sought to increase their income by selling salt from the Flats. Consequently, José Maria Juárez and Macedonio Gándara threatened to haul salt from the Flats without paying, and Howard had them arrested. This put San Elizario and its proximate communities in an uproar.141 In October,
1877, as Howard was going to their trial in Fort Davis, Leon Granillo and Francisco “Chico” Barela took matters into their own hands. They took Howard into custody in Ysleta, at the house of Sheriff Charles Kerber, and brought him to San Elizario, where a large “mob” had gathered. Father Borajo had been transferred to Juárez and the new priest, Pierre Bourgade, negotiated Howard’s release on the conditions that he not prosecute the accused, as well as the “mob” (which was outside ready to kill him), and that he relinquish his rights to the Salt Flats and leave El Paso County. Howard, after being safely escorted out of town by Bourgade, fled to Mesilla, New Mexico, and stayed with Albert Jennings Fountain. From Mesilla, he sent telegrams to the Governor of Texas for help.\textsuperscript{142}

Subsequently, Howard returned to El Paso, found Luis Cardis, and killed him. He then returned to A.J. Fountain’s place in Mesilla and rallied with a group of newly arrived Texas Rangers. Against Fountain’s advice, Howard went to San Elizario with the ragtag outfit of Rangers under the assumption that he was going to regulate access to the salt. Howard’s return to San Elizario, on Wednesday, December 12, 1877, caused the region’s inhabitants to react. Within a week of his arrival, Howard was dead.\textsuperscript{143} One author writes that during this time, about six hundred people journeyed to San Elizario from both Mexico and the United States at the high point of the resistance against Howard and the Rangers.\textsuperscript{144} In the aftermath of the uprising, the U.S. Army, Sheriff Charles Kerber, and the Texas Rangers entered San Elizario, Socorro, and Ysleta to restore order. Consequently, the Texas Rangers committed numerous murders, and isolated incidents of violence occurred well into 1878. This tension caused the U.S Government to re-establish Fort Bliss in El Paso as a permanent military base. When the violence subsided, Howard’s father in law, George B. Zimpelman, retained control of the Salt Flats, and much of its surrounding land.\textsuperscript{145}
Francisco “Chico” Barela, the leader of the revolt, or “insurgency,” is mentioned within practically all of the written works about the Salt War. Paul Cool describes Barela as a “Paseño, born in 1827” who was a “farmer, Texas Ranger, and insurgent leader.” C.L. Sonnichsen writes that he was “fair for a Mexican” and a “native of Ysleta.” Various scholars present him as a Mexican leader and confine him within the structure of the nationalist narrative. Cool’s description of Barela as a Paseño reveals one reality of regional self-perception, but it eludes the question of indigeneity as part of Barela’s story. However, Chico Barela himself is elusive. He was a mestizo and it is highly likely that he was of mixed blood Piro or Tigua ancestry with strong kinship ties and insider status within both of those indigenous communities. During the land petitioning process in Ysleta that subdivided the communal land, Barela received “[t]wo deeds, for parcels of sixteen and seventeen acres,” in August of 1873. At the time of the Salt War, Barela served as a cacique for a pueblo across the river while he lived in Ysleta. In El Paso Troubles, Major JNO. B. Jones reported that

In October last Antonio Barela resigned the position of president of one of the towns on the other side of the river, took charge of a party of armed men, and carried several wagon-loads of salt across the river.

Jones also stated that “20 armed citizens of Sarogossa [sic] crossed the river to assist in the attack.” At this time, various Tigua resided in Zaragoza, which is part of present day Juarez, and it is highly likely that they comprised most or all of the “20 armed citizens” reported by Jones. Thus, Barela lived in Ysleta, led the revolt, and served as a cacique across the river. He obviously had connections with the Tigua and ties with Ysleta, Socorro, San Elizario, and the communities of Senecu and Zaragoza across the river. This network establishes him within the local indigenous community. Yet the question of his "Indianness" still remains and it may be one that we will never fully be able to answer beyond our own perceptions of what Indians are to
begin with. Thus, Barela may not have been full blooded Indian in the sense that he had dark brown skin and all of the phonotypical features that are often associated with Indianness, but he may have nevertheless perceived himself as an insider in association with his kinship connections and social position within the indigenous communities of El Paso’s lower valley. We know that Barela navigated these communities and negotiated his social positionality as a leader in both the revolt and the pueblo across the river. Even if Barela was a mestizo, his leadership stemmed from his association with indigenous peoples, who surely influenced his identity in association with place.

Chico Barela had the power and motive to enforce the kind of justice needed to facilitate reciprocity and restore balance between the region’s people and Charles Howard, who had violated indigenous codes of honor and territoriality. The indigenous community, and in particular Chico Barela, viewed Charles Howard as the problem. In their eyes, the conflict was between them and Howard, who was at the forefront, threatening their access to the geo-cultural, economic, and cosmological lifeways which they had known for years. This view, combined with the fact that most of the region’s Tigua and ethnic Mexican peoples were already leery about Euro-Americans like Howard to begin with, did not bode well for the outcome of the situation. Many of the Tigua and Piro surely viewed killing Howard as an act of territoriality, similar to killing an Apache that overstepped his territorial boundaries. Previously, in October of 1877, Cisto Salcido, Leon Granillo, and a group of armed men had captured Howard and given him an ultimatum: leave town, leave the Salt Flats alone, or face an execution. Thus, like Fountain, Howard was implicated for his role in the dispossession of the region’s indigenous territory and consequently exiled.
At that point Howard’s life was in danger, and he could have chosen various alternatives as he was being safely escorted out of town by Father Bourgade. However, he went to A.J. Fountain’s place in Mesilla, New Mexico, and associated himself with one of the area’s main protagonists of the Tigua land dispossession—Fountain was a villain in the eyes of the Tigua. Pressing the matter further, Howard returned to El Paso and murdered Luis Cardis. Cardis, who was engaged to Pancha Barela, Chico Barela’s daughter, was a friend and social advocate to the indigenous of the region. Because Barela was a local cacique, Cardis’s engagement with his daughter placed him on the verge of becoming an insider through intermarriage and kinship. Cardis’s murder surely offended Tigua and Piro codes of honor and thus required reciprocity. To add insult to injury, Howard turned himself in to Sheriff Kerber, who released him to the care of A.J. Fountain in Mesilla. In a subsequent interview, tribal members stated that “Don Luis of Ysleta did all he could for his people…even traveling to…[Austin] with four Ysleta Indians and bringing back a paper justifying the Mexican claims.”

Hence, the Tigua perceived Cardis as an advocate for social justice, as well as a potential insider through direct kinship, and his murder surely required retribution.

Although Cardis attempted to lay claim to the Salt Flats with Padre Borajo, his intentions may have been to help preserve the land and resources for the indigenous and ethnic-Mexican peoples of the lower valley. Sonnichsen points out that “Cardis told Fountain that Howard promised to make the locations in his own name and divide [the land] with Cardis and Borajo, but he broke his word.” Thus, Howard had made enemies with practically all of the lower valley’s inhabitants, which included the Cardis-Borajo machine, Barela, and the various indigenous, mestizo, and ethnic-Mexican peoples of the region.
As indigenous people and ethnic-Mexicans rallied in anger against Howard’s actions, Barela was at the forefront of the resistance. The Federal report, *El Paso Troubles*, establishes him as a cacique who resisted the privatization of the community’s natural resources. After Cardis’s murder, Barela acted as the highest ranking warrior in the field. What some scholars viewed as a collapse of law and order or interpreted as a “hybrid legal system” was actually an interfused transnational indigenous kinship network that sought to bring reciprocity to Howard for his actions. In the *El Paso Troubles* report, Sheriff Kerber stated that “Barela told me that 25 men were waylaying Howard for the purpose of killing him.” He also stated that Barela had “[n]early one hundred…members of this organized mob [who were] citizens of Mexico and …backed by hundreds of their relatives and friends…who are ready to come when called upon.” Thus, when Howard returned to San Elizario in December, his fate was sealed by a system of kinship and indigenous reciprocity that was inconceivable to outsiders such as Howard, and the Commission that put together the *El Paso Troubles* report.

Howard rationalized his situation in terms of the nationalistic Mexican/American binary. His inability to see the dynamics of the situation in which he was absorbed is evident in his November 1877 testimony: “I tell you that every man in El Paso, who favors law and order, or who sympathizes with Americans and the American Government, as distinguished from Mexico and Mexicans, is in hourly danger.” Consequently, when he returned to San Elizario with a makeshift band of Texas Rangers in December, he had no idea of the retribution that awaited him for his infraction of indigenous codes of honor and territory. Yet A.J. Fountain surely knew of the potential consequences, as he urged Howard to reconsider going to San Elizario. The appointed Lieutenant of the ragtag band of Rangers that accompanied Howard was John B. Tays. Tays stated that soon after their arrival in San Elizario, Charles Ellis (an Anglo in San Elizario
who was complicit with Howard) was scalped and that they were “surrounded by three lines of pickets” and “squads of calvery [sic].” Tays also stated that Cisto Salcido threatened to burn out everyone in Howard’s band if they did not surrender Howard in three hours. Much of Tays’s testimony describes the opposition as “the Mexicans,” but it may have been his intent to make it seem as if the so called rebels were Mexican in order to instigate the intervention of the United States Army, which could only act in response to an armed “international” invasion, or if “Mexican nationals” interfered with the “internal affairs of Texas.”

Although the U.S. Army could fight Indians, the indigenous peoples of the lower valley eluded them because mission Indians did not present themselves as did the semi-sedentary and nomadic tribes of the Southwest Plains. This is one of the primary reasons why the testimonies in the *El Paso Troubles* document exemplify ethnically nationalistic and racialized Mexicans as the main participants in the revolt. This makes the validity of some of the testimonies in the *El Paso Troubles* document problematic in that they are skewed by both clueless and diabolically cunning ulterior motives which minimized and obscured indigenous agency in the revolt.

Chico Barela commanded the capture of Howard. He “promised that if Howard would go down to them of his own will and relinquish all claim to the salt lakes, they would not hurt him.” Yet Howard’s fate was sealed. From across the river in Juarez, Borajo sent Barela a message saying “shoot all the gringos and I will absolve you.” After Howard’s execution, the crowd killed two more Anglos and then turned on Tays and the Rangers. Tays testified that the crowd wanted to kill them all, and that it was Barela who stopped them from doing so. Although not stated in the *El Paso Troubles* report, Barela’s group may have consisted of Piro, Tigua, and indigenized ethnic-Mexicans from both sides of the river. Barela had served with the Tigua as a Texas Ranger during campaigns against the Apache and Comanche, and it is likely that his martial
skills stemmed from his experience in both groups. Because the Salt Flats made up a significant part of the regional political economy, and Catholicism was an integral part of the religiously syncretic indigenous and ethnic-Mexican communities, Borajo did have a significant word on the outcome. An *Editors Independent* press release after the incident stated:

Influenced by Cura Borajo, and the mass of people in the Guadalupe, Saragossa, San Ygnacio, and other towns on the Mexican side, the unfortunate and deluded citizens of San Elizario and Socorro determined to take the steps they did; they were assisted by some from Ysleta [like Barela and the Tigua], by the mass of people of the Mexican towns opposite us, and not only these, but by a great number of men from Carmen, Carrizal, the mines of Chihuahua, and other places in Mexico.

What it did not state was that various descendants of Suma, Manso, Apache, Concho, and TOMPIRO indigenous peoples had participated in the resistance. These groups had evolved into the Piro and Tigua through a fusion of intermarriage and the inheritance of cultural lifeways that eventually included indigenized ethnic-Mexicans. Within both indigenous and colonial Spanish systems of land utilization, tribal lifeways were incorporated into the regional economy as a means of subsistence. However, many newly arrived Euro-Americans could not conceive of the connections that the indigenous had made amongst themselves and the land.

Accordingly, the terminology used in the primary document, *El Paso Troubles*, to describe the ethnic-Mexican and indigenous peoples of the revolt, reveals ethnic constructions which simplify the question of mesticized indigenous peoples, placing them into binary constructs as either “Mexican citizens proper,” or into obscure classifications, such as the “Guadalupe people,” or the “mob.” It describes the conflict in terms of national, ethnic and economic determinants which sidestep indigeneity, kinship, and the communal lifeways which had existed in the region for centuries.

The fact that Barela stopped the continuation of executions from perpetuating into the deaths of Tays and the other Rangers exemplifies that reciprocity had been attained with
Howard’s death, as well as his own agency as a leader in the indigenous community. While it is likely that Cardis, Borajo, Fountain, and Howard all competed with each other for the land, their motives diverged and what might have been never became, as George B. Zimpelman retained title to the Salt Flats. The aftermath of the Salt War did not fare well for indigenous and ethnic-Mexicans of El Paso’s lower valley, as “[o]ne effect of the late trouble has been the depopulation of Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario. The people of these towns have fled into Mexico, and are now encamped on the Mexican bank of the river.”

Interestingly, C.L. Sonnichsen notes that “the Governor of Texas later offered rewards for Chico Barela, Sisto Salcido, and four others. [Yet] Nobody turned a finger to collect the money and the indicted men lived out their lives in peace on the Mexican side of the river.”

Traces of indigenous resistance are also evident in the El Paso Troubles in Texas document. However, they are not found in what is stated more than they are apparent in what is kept silent. Taking this approach to reading between the lines leaves myriad venues for further investigation, yet within the context of Tigua history some examples become possible when synthesizing sources. It seems evident is that either everyone in El Paso deliberately covered up Tigua participation in the revolt due to fear of reprisals from the federal government or they were in complete denial of the reality on the ground around them. I conclude that it may have been a little bit of both. Considering Ben Dowell’s testimony in El Paso Troubles, it seems plausible that the U.S. government was not getting the whole story. Dowell, the first mayor of El Paso and owner of Dowell’s saloon (a political hotspot in downtown El Paso), surely would have known about Tigua participation in the revolt in that he “was married to Juana Marquez, a full blooded Tigua” and daughter of tribal cacique Domingo Marquez. In his testimony, as if not wanting to bring the wrath of the Federal Government upon the Tigua, Dowell states that “I...know nearly...
all the Mexicans on the other side of the river as far down as Guadalupe. They have always been trouble.” Yet in his testimony, he reveals the depth of his own kin ties as he states that “I had received information from my wife’s relatives who live in Saragosa [sic] the day that Howard went down, and that Ellis was killed”169 Juana’s father, Domingo, was responsible for settling a Tigua community in Zaragoza during the 1860s to avoid Euro-American settlers who encroached on Indian land in Ysleta. Nicholas Houser points out that during the Civil War, Domingo settled a group of Tigua in Zaragoza, Mexico, in order to “escape the harassments” of Confederate soldiers. The Tigua continued to reside in Zaragoza well into the twentieth-century.170 Surely it was in the best interests of the Tigua to remain obscure as participants in the revolt because if it was found out that they spearheaded the insurrection, it would have most certainly been harder on them. As it was, significant disruptions dramatically changed indigenous communities in the region during the 1870s. In the aftermath of the revolt, the Texas Rangers murdered and raped numerous residents of the lower valley. In this sense, the region’s inhabitants viewed silence as a means to deter the violence that plagued the region.171 Aside from the ulterior motive of involving Federal troops in a campaign against Mexico, this was another reason for locals to cover up indigenous involvement in the Salt War.

Considering the above, my investigation of the Tigua has exposed significant factors, which have led me to believe that indigenous resistance was an implicit and intrinsic element in the Salt War of 1877, and that mesticized and ethnic Mexican peoples adapted indigenous lifeways through kinship and intermarriage, which created hybrid identities and cultures within and around the borderlands pueblos of El Paso Del Norte, Socorro, Senecu, Ysleta, and San Elizario. Furthermore, as a consequence of colonization, and the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, indigenous identities changed as many people in the El Paso region chose to politically
identify as Mexican in order to obtain voting and property rights, which were denied to Native Americans. However, many retained their indigenous cultural qualities, which connected the landscape to its inhabitants. Another significant conclusion I have reached is that Charles Howard’s privatization of the communal Guadalupe Salt Flats landscape disrupted a kinship based indigenous and ethnic Mexican socio-economic system that had persisted and perpetuated among the region’s indigenous Suma, Manso, Piro, Tigua, and ethnic Mexican peoples. Yet Howard’s socio-economic disruption was only one element of a larger dynamic of dispossession that was already in progress upon his arrival to the region. In this sense, the 1871 incorporations of Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario, and the 1877 Salt War dispossessed and dislocated numerous indigenous peoples of El Paso’s lower valley.
Migration to Las Cruces

Between the 1850s and the 1880s, the indigenous peoples of Socorro, San Elizario, and Ysleta became increasingly dispossessed of their land upon the arrival of Euro-American settlers and the railroad. As settlers and speculators encroached upon the land, many of the lower valley’s indigenous moved west and north into the area of New Mexico’s Mesilla Valley. This diasporic migration led to the creation of the Tortugas community, just south of Las Cruces, around 1854. In the Las Cruces area, dislocated Tigua, Piro, and Manso peoples from El Paso’s lower valley pueblos intermarried and merged into a collective community in which they continued their indigenous identity. In the aftermath of the 1870s, some Tigua continued to migrate from Ysleta to New Mexico. Many of them followed the northwestern expansion of the railroad after it had passed through Socorro and Ysleta in 1881. At the turn of the century, anthropologist J. Walter Fewkes visited the region and wrote that

In late years several Tiwa [meaning Tigua] families have moved away from Ysleta to Las Cruces, New Mexico, and other localities along the railroad where they find profitable employment. The governor, Mariano, claims that the town of Tularosa, near the Mescalero Apache reservation, was settled by Tigua families of Ysleta, but others deny this.

The sporadic nature of these migrations is evident in the closing of his statement, and it is possible that some Tiguas settled in Tularosa for a brief period and then moved someplace else. Nicholas Houser presents the way in which oral history and economic motivations intertwined during the migration to New Mexico. He writes that the Manso originally resided in Tortugas, and that the

Piros from Senecu and Tiguas from Ysleta del Sur...left their home to follow a fabulous beauty of their tribe. The girl, whose long flowing copper red hair was famous even among white settlers, had married Don Eugenio Van Patton, Indian fighter, soldier of fortune, and clever politico of early Dona Ana County history.
This story reveals the convergence between modernity and oral tradition during the migrations to New Mexico. The woman that the story refers to was Benita Madrid, the daughter of a Piro cacique. Houser sheds light on this connection by writing that “Van Patton was said to have been instrumental in securing the A.T. & S. F. Railroad Line from Albuquerque to El Paso.”

Patricia Farr also brings out the collusion between tradition and modernity, she writes that “[t]he village of Tortugas, directly in the rail line and three miles south of Las Cruces, New Mexico, has a strong contingent of Indian families who celebrate Tigua ceremonies such as rabbit hunts and jar dances.” These connections indicate the transitions that indigenous communities experienced in the El Paso borderlands region upon the disruption of their cultural landscape. Although these indigenous groups had always interacted and evolved within their changing environments, European contact changed the paradigm for the El Paso region’s indigenous by introducing new technology, which they eventually adapted into their lifestyles. Yet this technology also involved the mechanics of land dispossession, which facilitated itself at the state and local levels.
Conclusion

Faced with increasing Euro-American immigration, the dilemma of cleaning up the bureaucratic mess that was leftover from the 1871-1874 land grab fell upon the Texas Legislature. The Texas Legislature’s 1889 “Act to quiet land titles in the towns of Socorro, Ysleta, and San Elizario” cleaned up this bureaucratic mess. The “Act to quite land titles” closed the era of fraudulence in that it legitimately solidified the previously granted land deeds of the 1870’s. After the 1874 “Act to Repeal” the 1871 “Act to Incorporate,” local and State bureaucracies faced a land title dilemma. Although Edmund J. Davis issued a patent “grant to the inhabitants of Ysleta” in 1873, under the unfinished auspices of Section 3 in the 1854 “Act to relinquish,” the issues of incorporation, new titles, and the legitimacy of titles issued during the 1870’s were still pending. Section 3 of the 1854 Act had been overlooked by the Tigua and could have given them legal title much earlier if they had been legally knowledgeable on the subject and had access to legal power that could have pushed the General Land Office to issue a patent much sooner, assuming that their rights would have been honored. Nevertheless, the post 1874 local bureaucracy was still jammed up with the land issue. The municipal level 1880 “Corporation of the Town of Ysleta” established local legitimacy to facilitate land titles, under the 1873 grant, but the state did not recognize those titles. Nevertheless, the 1880 incorporation at the local level enabled more petitions and sales that “reduced the Tigua to barrio status.” This also significantly contributed to the dispossession and dislocation in that it forced more Tigua to migrate to Tortugas and New Mexico. In this context, that the 1889 “Act to quiet land titles in the towns of Socorro, Ysleta, and San Elizario” sealed the crime of bureaucratic land dispossession:
Section. 1  Be it enacted by this Legislature of the State of Texas: That all genuine deeds made by the town of Socorro, Ysleta, and San Elizario to lands lying within their respective corporate limits, whether the same be in form or attended with the formalities prescribed by the charters are hereby declared valid and operative as fully as if all the forms and formalities required had been complied with, saving the rights of third parties.”

With not one negative vote, and the swipe of a pen, the State of Texas facilitated the final touches of the Tigua land dispossession. Overall, the bureaucratic mechanism that dispossessed the Tigua of their land involved an administrative hodgepodge of overlapping policy that occurred between 1848 and 1889. This process was part of a larger process which had begun upon colonial Spain’s arrival to the region.

In reflection, Eurocentric hegemony overlapped the colonial institutions and administrative state forces that dispossessed El Paso’s indigenous peoples. This power-complex operated in subdivided spheres of autonomous cultural policy. The accepted political and cultural norms between the Spanish colonizer and the American imperialist paralleled one another, yet held distinctly dichromatic perspectives on Tigua land policy and religion. This is exemplified through Chihuahuan Governor Diego de Vargas’s reluctance to grant the lands surrounding the church to Franciscan Fray Hinojosa in 1692, instead granting them to the Tigua and the other indigenous occupants. This was a distinct act in that, elsewhere, Spanish mission’s exploited Indians through the labor systems of encomienda and repartimiento. De Vargas may have been influenced by the fact that El Paso’s lower valley was not economically robust with mineral wealth, so there was no need for a forced labor system. In 1751, colonial Spain considered the Tigua exemplary and granted them the lands around the Ysleta mission. The Ysleta Grant of 1751 placed the Tigua into both a collective and autonomous space in which church and state intertwined as instruments of hegemony. Thus, as the Tigua syncretically blended into the Spanish colonial paradigm, the Spanish Crown rewarded them for their seeming conformity.
Texas, on the other hand, had a distinctly different Indian policy, but because the Tigua had been partially assimilated into Western culture through Catholicism and the Spanish language, they were excluded from the militaristic degradations that the “other” so called “savage” tribes in Texas experienced. In fact, the Tigua even helped the American army fight other Indians, such as the Apache. Yet this exemption from open hostilities due to religious and other cultural affiliations with the West was temporary and began to disintegrate when Euro-Americans expanded westward under a distinctly different paradigm of colonialism: the ideology of American imperialism.

Euro-Americans possessed various forms of stereotype, paranoia, and antipathy regarding Catholicism, the Spanish language, and Native Americans. These biases marginalized the Tigua as well as the other mission Indians of El Paso’s lower valley and put them into a subaltern status of non-conformity. By “non-conformity,” I am implying that it was practically impossible for the Tigua to conform to Anglo-American perceptions of Indianness as they existed in El Paso during the last half of the nineteenth century. Whereas the Tigua, Piro, Manso, and other indigenous of the region cohesively interacted within the land systems of Spain and Mexico, their relationship within the U.S. system proved more problematic. As evidenced in the U.S. Report, *El Paso Troubles*, Euro-Americans viewed many of the region’s indigenous people as Mexican. This view also marginalized El Paso’s indigenous peoples. Further, the Tigua, Piro, Manso and mestizo peoples of Socorro, San Elizario, and Ysleta could not fully conform with the ideologies of race and capitalism that led to their communal land being expropriated, divided up, and then sold out from underneath them by speculators and local elites.

Economics also served as an underlying cause for the Tigua land dispossession because the railroad needed the lands described within the Hinojosa Grant in order to bring progress and
civilization westward. Yet the Tigua resided within the European hegemonic cultural paradigm as mission Indians who participated in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands political economy. As such, the state assimilated them through bureaucratic channels in which legal discourses justified their dispossession and overlooked their existence because they did not legitimately exist on paper as legal land holders within the parameters of the expanding U.S. political economy.

However, total assimilation into American capitalism was not an option for the Tigua because U.S. society would not accept them as equals. Open and militant resistance was not really an option either. The Salt War of 1877 also dispossessed and dislocated numerous indigenous inhabitants of El Paso’s lower valley and established their social position within the emergent U.S. political economy. It could be considered a partial ground-level geographical-ethnic cleansing that finalized the dispossession of the commons and subdued indigenous resistance in El Paso’s lower valley communities of San Elizario, Socorro, and Ysleta. In the aftermath of the revolt, immigration from El Paso increased in Dona Ana County, New Mexico, and “various families fled across the river into Mexico.” Surely these people had nothing to go back to in El Paso’s lower valley. Because racism was omnipresent in this emerging social system, it only contributed to the violence that plagued the region.

As stated previously, indigenous communal land extended from Ysleta into Brewster County and well past the Guadalupe Mountains. Miguel Pedraza also testified about how westward U.S. expansion disrupted the Tigua cultural landscape:

[A]ll of this land around Ysleta, the sandhills and up around the mountains used to belong to the Tiguas. I don’t exactly know what happened, but I am told the white man came in and pushed the Tiguas off the land. The Tiguas used to hunt all over this land, but after a while, the gringo ranchers put up fences and wouldn’t let us enter even thought [sic] we told them this was Indian land. The white man wouldn’t even let us collect firewood from the sandhills. We told them this was Indian land and that we had always took firewood from the sandhills, but they still ran us off. I remember one man named Jess Woldridge who found me picking some firewood and chased me off the land and almost
shot me…as more white men moved in, they would take our land and then put up fences so that we couldn’t hunt or collect wood on the land any more.¹⁸³

Yet Pedraza’s testimony also connects the Tigua land dispossession with the violence that continued in El Paso’s lower valley well after the Salt War of 1877:

[M]y father was killed by the Texas Rangers. This was in 1915 and happened in front of my father’s house…there had been some little argument with some other Indian, who had gone to the white man and complained about my father. When my father came home, he got off the street car and someone told him the Texas Rangers were looking for him. He went to his house because he didn’t want the Rangers to arrest him. I was at my grandmother’s house which was next door at the time. When my father got to his house, the Texas Rangers found him and here was a shooting. One of the Texas Rangers shot my father in the back of the head right in front of his own house. My grandmother and I ran over there, but the Texas rangers did not get close to my father, they just stood there pointing their pistols at him. My grandmother ran over to him and turned him over, but he was dying and there was nothing we could do.¹⁸⁴

Pedraza was governor of the Tigua when he gave this testimony. His words reveal how violence, dislocation, and dispossession contribute to the historical memory of the Tigua. Considering how various historians have sidestepped indigenous peoples, I have attempted to problematize the Mexican/Indian dichotomy and expose the magnitude of the Tigua land dispossession and indigenous resistance in El Paso’s borderlands.
Notes


2 “Affidavit of Jose Trinidad Granillo,” *Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives: Tom Diamond Files* (n.d.), University of Texas at El Paso, Special Collections, FM 554 roll 1 of 3, index 22.

3 “Affidavit of Jose Trinidad Granillo,” *Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives: Tom Diamond Files* (n.d.), University of Texas at El Paso, Special Collections, FM 554 roll 1 of 3, index 22.

4 George Kinsinger, “Ysleta Mission Land Grant May Be First One Recorded In N. America,” *El Paso Times*, August 1, 1971, sec. A

5 Kinsinger, “Ysleta Mission Land Grant May Be First One Recorded In N. America,” *El Paso Times*; J.J. Bowden, *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants in the Chihuahuan Acquisition* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1971), 164-167. The *Times* article further stated that “the document is significant in indicating that the Indians of El Paso area had their own lands and were not subject to the Franciscan mission congregation. Although somewhat ancient history, the question of who had control affects present Indian legal rights and Tigua claims to the 36-square mile Ysleta grant and lands in El Paso, Hudspeth, Culberson, Jeff Davis, and Presidio Counties.” This 1692 grant is referred to as the Hinojosa Grant. It was the first of a series of Spanish land grants that gave land to the region’s indigenous inhabitants.

6 “Report Confirms Indian Land Claim,” *Express-News*, January 19, 2008, http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/MYSA012008_01A_Indianland_29b80ea_html7737.html (accessed October 2, 2008), mySAbusiness. *Express-News* is from San Antonio, Texas. The article further states that “[a]ccording to the report, the Republic of Texas pledged to honor all grants made by previous sovereigns. But the expropriation of Indian land went unnoticed and unopposed by the U.S. government partly because there were no federal Indian agents in Texas after 1859.” The article also states that “The [Texas] Legislature’s taking of the tribe’s land [Tigua] came despite the Indian Nonintercourse Act passed by [the U.S.] Congress many years earlier that invalidated the sale of Indian land by individuals or states not sanctioned ‘at some public treaty, held under the authority of the United States.’” The Governor’s office feels it’s a matter for the courts to decide.


9 Sonnichsen, *Pass of the North*, 41.

10 Ibid., 197, 206.


Studies would not ignore the dominant, because the subalterns are always subject to
professor. Prakish wrote that Guha (practically the founder of Subal
Chakravorty Spivak. He is a member of the Subaltern Studies Collective and currently is a Princeton University

16 Interview with Joe Sierra in Randy Lee Eickhoff, Exiled, 111.


19 Ibid., 20-21, 34-42, 184.


21 The concept that I am applying is from Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology, Corrected Edition, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), lvii, 65, 70. For Derrida, Grammatology is ‘the science of the effacement of the trace.’ Derrida wrote that the trace of knowledge is connected with various discourses and is open to multiple interpretations. The concept of the trace that I am applying in the sense of Newcomb’s penmanship is that of it having the capability to interject and replace one truth with another constructed truth, which establishes itself through the written word and its acceptance as truth itself. Derrida warns us of this methodology in that “it should be recognized that it is in the specific zone of this imprint and this trace, in the temporalization of a lived experience [i.e. the Tigua being culturally extinct] which is neither in the world nor in “another world,” which is not more sonorous than luminous, not more in time than in space, that differences appear among the elements or rather produce them, make them emerge as such and constitute the texts, the chains, and the systems of traces [i.e. systems of bodies of knowledge and discourses]. These chains and systems cannot be outlined except in the fabric of this trace or imprint” (65). For Derrida, this “appearance” of the “trace” is an act of construction in which the writer of history is “[a]rticulating the living upon the nonliving,” as well as “establishing a natural hierarchy” (65). Gayatri Spivak describes this type of construction as problematic in that it creates or constructs a “structure” of knowledge, which “is the natural object plus the subjective intelligence of the structuralist” (lvii). Therefore, “epistemic violence” results from such a construction and is described in Simon Gunn, History and Cultural Theory (Harlow: Pearson, 2006), 169. Gunn presents that Gayatri Spivak’s theory on ‘epistemic violence’ is a ‘problematic’ element of ‘Western colonialism,’ and I will add imperialism, “[f]or it was through this act of colonial violence that certain forms of knowledge, including ‘history,’ [i.e. Tigua history in Newcomb’s writing] had been installed as the normative version of reality, relegating native understandings to the status of ‘subjugated’ or illegitimate knowledge” (169). In other words, the positionality and subjectivity of Newcomb, as a writer who perpetuates colonial discourse and, especially, a discourse that reduces the Tigua to ‘subaltern’ status, exemplifies an act of ‘epistemic violence.’ Epistemic violence perpetuates notions of colonial and imperialist hierarchies, through the writer’s subjectivity, which often reduces indigenous peoples to subaltern positions within those structured hierarchies.

22 J. Walter Fewkes, “The Pueblo Settlements Near El Paso, Texas,” American Anthropologist 4 no. 1 (1902); Derrida, Of Grammatology, 304.; Gunn, History and Cultural Theory, 85; Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, trans & ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971) 12-14. The Fewkes article offers evidence of culture and reveals the subjectivity of the writer when one reads into the text. Antonio Gramsci’s hegemony is the basic idea that as a society, people are so engrained with conceptions of power, nationalism, social class, ethnocentrism, race, religion, gender, behavioral norms, education, politics and popular culture and that these elements shape our worldview so immensely, that they are practically inescapable and invisible. Hegemony is timeless and intrinsic; it motivates us even when we are unaware of its presence.


24 Gyan Prakish, “Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism,” American Historical Review (December 1994): 1483. Gyan Prakish, Ph.D. builds his work upon the Subaltern Studies theories of Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. He is a member of the Subaltern Studies Collective and currently is a Princeton University professor. Prakish wrote that Guha (practically the founder of Subaltern Studies) “suggested that while Subaltern Studies would not ignore the dominant, because the subalterns are always subject to their activity, its aim was to
rectify elite bias characteristic of much research and academic work’…” (Prakash, 1477). Prakash concluded that “Subaltern Studies obtains its force as postcolonial criticism from a catachrestic combination of Marxism, poststructuralism, Gramsci and Foucault, the modern West and India, archival research and textual criticism. As this project is translated into other regions and disciplines, the discrepant histories of colonialism, capitalism, and subalternity in different areas would have to be recognized…Subaltern studies demands that its own translation also occur between the lines” (Prakash, 1490).

The conceptual application of “decolonization” is in Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples (London: Zed Books Ltd, 1999), 20, 21; Gunn, History and Cultural Theory, 17; the connections between land and culture are from Adolph M. Greenburg, “Ph.D Report,” in Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives, vol. 1 (El Paso: Sundance Press, 2000), 304-305; and, Jeffrey P. Shepherd, “At the Crossroads of Hualapai History: Contesting Space and Place,” American Indian Quarterly 32, no. 1 (2008): 20-22. Smith wrote: “Decolonization is a process which engages with imperialism and colonialism at multiple levels. For researchers, one of those levels is concerned with having a more critical understanding of the underlying assumptions, motivations, and values which inform research practices” (20). Also, “The concepts of colonialism and imperialism are crucial ones which are used across a range of disciplines, often with meanings which are taken for granted. The two terms are interconnected and what is generally agreed upon is that colonialism is but one expression of imperialism. Imperialism tends to be used in at least four different ways when describing the form of European imperialism which ‘started’ in the fifteenth century: (1) imperialism as economic expansion; (2) imperialism as the subjugation of ‘others’; (3) imperialism as an idea or spirit with many forms of realization; and (4) imperialism as a discursive field of knowledge. These usages do not necessarily contradict each other; rather they need to be seen as analysis which focus on different layers of imperialism” (21); for ‘epistemic violence’ see endnote no. 18.

The concept of “unveiling” of the truth is from: Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology, lxiii, 10; Smith’s indigenous projects are in Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies, 142-144, 153-156.

The term incorporate will appear various times in this essay, and it has two distinct definitions: (1) it implies “to combine or join with something already formed; make part of another thing; include; embody;” and (2) as a legal term, used in the Legislative Acts of the State of Texas, the word means “organized as a legal corporation,” as in an incorporated town. Definitions courtesy of Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language, 2nd ed., s.v. “incorporate” and “incorporated.” In the incorporation of Ysleta, the Town is given authority by the State to survey land and issue land deeds, which were backed up by State patent. The legally incorporated Town is responsible for electing a Mayor and Town Council and is held accountable to the State. The legal “incorporation” of land gave the town the power to tax, give title to, sell and/or lease land within the boundaries of that township. The incorporation of Ysleta turned communal land, which belonged to Indians, into subdivided plots of individual pieces of property.


“Las Misiones Del Valle Del Paso,” *Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives: Tom Diamond Files* (El Paso: University of Texas at El Paso Library), FM 554, roll 1 of 3, index 44.


George Kinsinger, “Ysleta Mission Land Grant May Be First One Recorded In N. America,” *El Paso Times*; J.J. Bowden, *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants in the Chihuahuan Acquisition*, 164-167. The Hinojosa Grant, subsequently said to be forty leagues, is in the range of 360 square miles. However, this forty-league estimate was subsequently made in 1796, and only includes the areas that were granted to Hinojosa himself. Because de Vargas granted all of the surrounding lands to the indigenous peoples, or “natives” that supposedly lived in harmony with the Spaniards, the granted lands that were actually extended to the “natives” includes a range much larger than the forty leagues claimed by the descendants of Hinojosa.


Bowden, *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants*, 129-130, 140-141, 151-152, 156-157, 164-168. Rex Gerald wrote that Sama Indians were living in San Elizario prior to the Spanish presidio in what was called “Tiburcios,” also noting that “[i]n 1779 it is evident that there were still Sumas pursuing their traditional hunting and gathering mode of existence outside the settlement.” See Rex Gerald, “The Suma Indians of Northern Chihuahua and Western Texas” in “Indians of El Paso,” n.p. (El Paso: C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department. The University of Texas at El Paso Library, 1970), “Suma Appendix.”


Bowden, *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants*, 140-142, 148; J.J. Bowden, Misc: *Correspondence, Ysleta Grant*, Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives, *Tom Diamond Files* (El Paso: University of Texas at El Paso, Special Collections). FM 554, roll 1 of 3, index 4. Bowden wrote that “[i]n 1750 Fray Jose Jimeno, Reverend Father Provincial of the Province of El Santo Evangelio…stated that “[t]he missionary religious, since they entered these provinces, [“the four Indian missions in the El Paso Valley”] not only have labored and are laboring in teaching and instructing the Indians in our holy Catholic faith and the spiritual life, but also in things for maintaining corporal life, teaching them to cultivate the land, to plant fruits, and to harvest their crops, the religious going so far as to take the
plough in their own hands, so that the Indians may learn more easily… (141). In Correspondence to Tom Diamond, Bowden noted that “nothing is known about the whereabouts of papers evidencing the grant. The General Land Office file on the grant, Bexar-1-1499, contains only a copy of the Act of February 1, 1854.”

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44 Eickhoff, Exiled, 100; Bowden, Spanish and Mexican Land Grants. 171, 190.


46 Ibid., 217-222; Alan H. Minter, The Tigua Indians at the Pueblo de Ysleta del Sur, El Paso County, Texas (El Paso: West Texas Historical Association Yearbook, 1969), 31-32, 38-39, 42; George D. Harmon, “The United States Indian Policy in Texas,” The Mississippi Valley Historical Review 17, no. 3 (1930): 380-381. The Harmon article is a clear case of ‘epistemic violence,’ which exemplifies the contiguity nationalistic and hegemonic influences stemming from the colonial period. Notwithstanding, Harmon’s description of U.S.-Texas Indian policy is informative: Harmon wrote that “upon coming into the Union, Texas retained exclusive jurisdiction over its public domain. The Senate, moreover, struck article III of the treaty [negotiated by the U.S. with the Indians of Texas] which defined the relative jurisdiction of the United States and Texas…Thus, there existed in Texas a complex situation. The trade and intercourse laws of the United States did not extend within the limits of Texas; nor could they be extended over that commonwealth, without the consent of the state. Although Texas retained supreme jurisdiction and control over her territory, the state expected the federal government to bear the entire expense and responsibility of managing the relations with the Indians” (Harmon, 380-381).

47 Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, 52; also applied are Jerry Adelman and Stephen Aron’s interpretation of Herbert Eugene Bolton’s work in Jerry 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), 814-816. Adelman and Aron point out that “For Bolton, northern New Spain was a different kind of frontier because it highlighted the friction between two Old World powers in the New: Spain and England. Too often students of borderlands neglect territorial hegemony. They overlook the essentially competitive nature of European imperialism and the ways in which these rivalries shaped nation transitions from colonies to nation states in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries” (815). By 1850 the U.S. and Texas governments were not well organized in El Paso. There was no railroad, and Texas still acknowledged the Spanish land grants, which recognized the inhabitants of Socorro, Ysleta, San Elizario, and Senecu. Soon after 1850 Anglo migrations into the region dislocated some Tigua and members of other local tribes, and caused them to migrate to Tortugas, N.M.


http://texashistory.unt.edu/permalink/meta-ph-6730:46 (2 Oct 2008); “Rick Hendricks Report” and Adolph M. Greenberg, “Tigua Land Tenure and Land Use Practices: An Ethnographic Assessment and Interaction of Tigua Land Tenure and Land Use Practices in the Ysleta Grant and Ysleta Del Sur Claim Area,” (Ph.D. Report: Miami University at Oxford Ohio, 1998), in vol. 1 of Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives (El Paso: Sundance Press, 2000), 175-176, 303. UTEP. C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Dept; Minter, “The Tigua Indians of the Pueblo of Ysleta del Sur, El Paso County, Texas” (West Texas Historical Association, 1969), 35; “Tom Diamond Compilation,” vol. 3, Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives (El Paso: Sundance Press, 2000), 90. UTEP. C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Dept. The 1854 “Act to relinquish to the inhabitants of Ysleta, in El Paso county, a certain tract of land now held and owned by said inhabitants” stated that “Whereas, by a change of the channel of the Rio Grande, in the year eighteen hundred and thirty two, the citizens of the town of Ysleta were deprived of a large portion of the grant of land made to them by the Government of Spain, and a portion of the town tract belonging to the Cinecue [Senecu] was left on the east side of the Rio Grande…” Senecu was originally one of the Spanish missions that the Piro and Tiwa Indians from New Mexico settled around after 1680. It was placed into Mexico via the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; however, the people of Senecu were very particular about their land, and they surely must have viewed federal and state intervention as encroachment, especially since the Rio Grande River was never an international boundary prior to 1848. Tom Diamond wrote that “[a]s a result of this legislation, [see note 47] there follows a patent #393 dated May 28, 1873 from the State of Texas by Governor Edmund J. Davis to the inhabitants of the town of Ysleta” (Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives, vol. 3, p. 90).

51 Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 1, 45.


http://texashistory.unt.edu/permalink/meta-ph-6730:1031 (2 Oct 2008); Bowden, Spanish and Mexican Land Grants, 96-97, 125; “Tom Diamond Compilation.” vol. 3 of Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives (El Paso: Sundance Press, 2000), 91-92. Basically, what happened was that Texas purposely overlooked Spanish and Mexican land grants. Ysleta, until its 1859 incorporation, was certainly overlooked, and the Tigua, Piro, and other Indians were, for all purposes, non-existent for the Texas government; “This [Railroad] company was one of five southern transcontinental railroads chartered by the Texas Legislature in 1852 and 1853. The company did little beside hold railroad meetings, and on February 4, 1856, President Travis G. Wright and the board of directors of the Memphis and El Paso and Pacific received a charter for a new company, which they named the Memphis, El Paso and Pacific Railroad Company. The new company was also chartered to run from the eastern border of Texas to El Paso.” Railroad information courtesy of George C. Werner, “Memphis, El Paso, and Pacific Railroad,” The Handbook of Texas Online, TSHA, originating from Virginia H Taylor, The Franco-Texan Land Company (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969). Also, see Houser, vol. 2. “Pre Civil War Visionaries and El Paso Railroad Route,” pp. 49-52.


Ibid., in Nicholas Houser, “From the Place of Beginning: An Analysis of Land Transactions and Their Effect on Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo,” vol. 1, 42-45, 56-58; “A Bit of History,” El Paso Herald, 9 March 1894. Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives, Tom Diamond Files, UTEP Library. MF 554, roll 1 of 3, index 9; Houser presents that the first incorporation was an attempt by white settlers to establish “Perfect Title” to the land. This was due to the fact that “the land status of the three ancient Pueblos of Ysleta, Socorro and San Elizario presented a serious obstacle to Anglo-American settlers and most especially to their lawyers and legal servants…The immediate legal dilemma to the lawyers was how to perfect title to these lands and to establish a legitimate title chain to the sovereign” (Houser, 43). Thus, the first incorporation of Ysleta was an attempt by white settlers to restructure land tenure so that it would be deemed legitimate and uncontestable.

Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 1, 42-45, 63.


Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” 68-71.

“Rick Hendricks, PhD Report” in Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives , vol.1 (El Paso: Sundance Press, 2000), 176. The shift in the Rio Grande River affected both Ysleta and Senecu due to the fact that they were adjacent to one another. Hence, as the river shifted course, it meandered disparately and both entities gained, as well as lost segments of land.

“Chronology,” Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives: Tom Diamond Files (El Paso: University of Texas at El Paso Special Collections), MF 554, roll 1 of 3, index 27; An Act to relinquish to the inhabitants of Ysleta, in El Paso county, a certain tract of land adjoining the town tract now held and owned by said inhabitants, approved Jan 31, 1854, Fifth Leg. Ch. 30, 1853 Tex. Special Laws 42-43, reprinted in 4 H.P.N. Gammel, The Laws of Texas at 42-43 (Austin: Gammel Book Co., 1898). http://texashistory.unt.edu/permalink/meta-pth-6730:36 (2 Oct 2008); “Tom Diamond Compilation,” vol. 3, Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives (El Paso, Sundance Press, 2000), 94; Myra Ellen Jenkins, “The Pueblo of Ysleta Del Sur,” (Santa Fe, 1989), 105, in “Jenkins: Pueblo/Ysleta,” Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives: Tom Diamond Files (El Paso: University of Texas at El Paso Library), MF 554, roll 1 of 3, index 113, p. 104. Considering the 1870 case Pueblo of Senecu v. United States, Section 2 of the Texas “Act” stated, “This act shall not be construed so as to affect any vested right now held to said tract by any person whatever.” However, the terminology of Section 2 was nothing more than lip service in regards to the Tigua, Piro, and other tribes of the El Paso area. The event of the Commission ruling against Senecu reveals the indifference in which Indian land claims were viewed by the government. Because the claim was only monetary, the Commission could have easily ruled in favor of the Pueblo of Senecu, especially since they rightfully occupied the land upon the signing of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Rex Gerald presents that the first Boundary Commission was established in 1850, and that its arrival corresponded with increased numbers of Euro-American settlers into the region who committed atrocities against Mexican and Indian people living on the border. In 1852, Ysleta Justice of the Peace, Pedro Gonzales, in a letter to State governor, P.H. Bell, complained that the local patterns of economic sustenance were being destroyed in lieu of the arriving Americans. For more information see Rex E. Gerald, “A History of the Tigua Indians of Ysleta del Sur, Texas,” Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives, vol. 1 (El Paso: Sundance Press, 2000), 28.

Indians of the Pueblo de Ysleta del Sur, El Paso County, Texas, 36-37; “Chronology,” Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives, Tom Diamond Files (El Paso: University of Texas at El Paso Library) MF 554 roll 1 of 3, index 27; Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 1, 62.

64 Houser, From the Place of Beginning, vol. 1, 62, 82, 97.


66 Ibid., 1436-1437.


68 Houser, From the Place of Beginning, vol. 1, 81.


70 Ibid., 1440-1441.

71 Houser, in “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 2, pp. 50-51, noted that prior to the “May 9th (1871) incorporation of Ysleta…The Texas Legislature approved on February 14, 1871 a Joint Resolution which requested that the United States Congress pass a bill for the construction of a railroad from the eastern boundary of the state to the Pacific Ocean on or near the 32nd parallel.” A.J. Fountain likely had a strong influence on this legislation because of his position as “Senate Chairman of the Indian Committee” one of the intents of the railroad was to allow for safe passage, from Indian attacks, through the frontier. So, just before the Ysleta incorporation (May 9), Texas passed “An Act to Incorporate the Indianola, San Antonio and El Paso Railroad Company, approved April 3, 1871, 12th Leg. Ch. 40, 1871 Special Laws 74-78, reprinted in H.P.N. Gammel, The Laws of Texas at 1212-1216 (Austin: Gammel Book Co., 1898). http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaphth6734/m1/1202/ (21 Feb 2010). An article in the San Antonio Daily Herald (March 10, 1871, p. 2) stated “The road is to reach San Antonio in three years and El Paso in five.” Houser also noted that Fountain “is listed among the incorporators who are members of the board.” This establishes Fountain as the initial lynchpin in the act of dispossessing the Tigua of their land. See the Act to Incorporate the Indianola, San Antonio, and El Paso Railroad Company, 6 H.P.N. Gammel, Laws of Texas, 302-303.


73 Houser, From the Place of Beginning, 92, 116.


75 An Act to Incorporate the town of Ysleta, in El Paso county, approved May, 9, 1871, 12th Leg. F.S., ch. 175, 1871 Tex. Special Laws 297, reprinted in H.P.N. Gammel, The Laws of Texas at 1435, (Austin: Gammel Book Co., 1898). http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaphth6734/m1/1425/ (21 Feb 2010); Ibid., 1435; An Act to relinquish to the inhabitants of Ysleta, in El Paso county, a certain tract of land adjoining the town tract now held by said inhabitants, approved Jan. 31 1854, 5th Leg., ch. 30, 1853 Special Laws 42, reprinted in H.P.N. Gammel, The Laws of Texas at 42-43 (Austin: Gammel Book Co., 1898). http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaphth6730/m1/46/ (22 Feb 2010); Bowden, Spanish and Mexican Land
Grants in the Chihuahuan Acquisition, 144; Eickhoff, xix. Subsequent to the January 31, 1854 “Act to relinquish” was a February 1, 1854 “Act for relief to the inhabitants of the town of Ysleta, which further recognized the Ysleta Grant by stating: “Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas, That the grant made to the inhabitants of the town of Ysleta, in the present county of El Paso, in the year seventeen hundred and fifty one, by the Government of Spain, to the following described tract of land, to-wit: commencing at the Rio Grande…is hereby fully recognized and confirmed.” Also, Section 2 of the “Act for the relief authorized the General Land office “to issue a patent to the inhabitants of said town of Ysleta” (4 Gammel, Laws of Texas, 53). However, the patent was not issued until March 28th, 1873 (El Paso County Deed Record 1 (1881), 184. UTEP C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Dept.). At best this document, initially written by Edmund J. Davis (Texas Governor, 1873), was a last ditch effort to maintain legitimacy to land titles, fraudulent as they were, in the midst of the awareness of the illegality of Fountain’s 1871 “Act to incorporate.”

76 “Correspondence: Misc: J.J. Bowden,” Memorandum on the Pueblo of Ysleta Claim, p. 7, Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives: Tom Diamond Files, University of Texas at El Paso. MF 554, roll 1 of 3, index 4; Eickhoff, 81.

77 “Senecu vs. Ysleta (Case #99),” Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives: Tom Diamond Files, University of Texas at El Paso. MF 554, roll 1 of 3, index 39.

78 Ibid. (Defending the Town of Ysleta was Blacker, Jones, and Pierson; the jury ruled in favor of Ysleta. The defense attorney’s argument had constructed a discourse on citizenship that neglected the rights of the plaintiff by reducing them to “alien” status. The international division created by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which isolated the Piro of Senecu, was emphasized over the responsibility to actually abide by the Treaty itself. The Piro were only seeking minimal compensation for what was rightfully theirs, yet the jury overlooked the facts in favor of an argument that was embedded with racism and imperialist overtones.

79 “Senecu vs. Ysleta (Case #99),” Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives: Tom Diamond Files (El Paso: University of Texas at El Paso Library), MF 554, roll 1 of 3, index 39.

80 Ibid; Defending attorney is referring to the patent that was issued in 1858 for the 1854 Relief Act More information on the patent is in Bowden, Spanish and Mexican Land Grants, 144-145.

81 Perfected land titles, or perfect titles are land titles that are free of liens and legal questions that may come up after a purchase is made and create a dilemma for the buyer. Title companies investigate title chains and insure land titles to protect land buyers from losing their investments. Considering the land of the Spanish Ysleta Grant, Socorro Grant, and Senecu Grant, the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo does create such a dilemma for the current inhabitants.


83 Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 1, 71.

84 Edward A. Leonard, Rails at the Pass of the North (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1981), 13, 21; Myra Ellen Jenkins, “The Pueblo of Ysleta Del Sur,” (Santa Fe, 1989), 105, in “Jenkins: Pueblo/Ysleta,” Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives: Tom Diamond Files (El Paso: University of Texas at El Paso Library), MF 554, roll 1 of 3, index 113, p, 104; The explanation of the conspiracy for land theft is in Eickhoff, Exiled, 84-86. Ben Dowell’s wife, Juana Marquez, was a Tigua Indian who was the daughter of a tribal Cacique, or chief. Yet Ben Dowell is noted in Leonard’s book as being “El Paso’s most enthusiastic railroad booster” (Leonard. 12).

85 For petition information see note 69; Jenkins, “The Pueblo of Ysleta Del Sur,” 108.


Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 2, 85. Houser wrote, “Somehow Fountain lost the Ysleta land Bonanza. He had more than his share of enemies and fellow spoilers. Because he was in Austin at the Senate, he had little communication with his fellow schemers in El Paso. At this time, because of the frenzy to acquire the salt lakes, the Mills and Fountain coalition had already collapsed into feuding factions” (Houser, vol. 2, 85).

Leonard, Rails at the Pass of the North, 12; Eickhoff, Exiled, 82.

Eickhoff, 73; Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 2, 64. Houser wrote that “Ben Dowell, the early Anglo-American resident of El Paso (Texas), in 1852 or 1853, married Juana Madrid (‘Juana Marquez’), an Indian from Ysleta whose father was a cacique…This is the earliest known marriage of a Tigua with an Anglo-American” (Houser, vol. 2, 64).

Eickhoff, Exiled, 73, 81; Gibson, The Life and Death of Colonel Albert Jennings Bryan, 47.

Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 1, 86; For more information on Jose Maria Gonzales see Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 1, pp. 80-88, 92, 116.

Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 1, 86. W.B. Blanchard petitioned first, receiving a “gift” of 152 acres; Joseph W. Tays received 600 “free” acres; James P. Hague, the defending attorney for Ysleta in the case Senecu v. Ysleta, received three allocations of land well in excess of 200 acres. Houser wrote that Gonzalez petitioned off the land with the assistance of W.B. Blanchard, James P. Hague, and Joseph W. Tays. Fountain’s plans didn’t work out the way he wanted them to. Although some of his cohorts gained access to the lands of the Tigua, he himself didn’t. Nicholas Houser wrote about the significance of the railroad in the acquisition of Tigua lands: “Fountain was an avid railroad supporter and a member on the board of directors of two railroads. Blanchard held railroad land opposite Guadalupe, just south of Ysleta. The two lawyers, Blacker and Hague, who represented Ysleta in the 1870’s, also represented railroad companies. In July 4, 1871, Hague wrote the following prophetic letter about the pending arrival of the railroad: ‘The growth of El Paso depends upon the Southern Pacific coming to this exact spot, which will make El Paso a great town in a few years’ …The Town of Ysleta subsequently passed an ordinance which granted to the Galveston Harrisburg and San Antonio Railroad Company a tract of land 150 feet wide on each side of the center line ‘through all the lands belonging to Ysleta’” (February 28, 1881; El Paso County Records, Deed Book I-1:143, in Houser, vol. 1, p.85).

El Paso Daily Herald, 9 March 1894, 4, in Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 1, 80, 92, 116.


United States v. Joseph, 94 U.S. 614, 4 Otto 614, 24 L.Ed. 295 (1876), at http://www.utulsa.edu/law/classes/rice/USSCT_Cases/US_V_JOSEPH_1876.HTM (30 Oct 2008), in “Tom Diamond Compilation,” Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives, vol. 3 (El Paso: Sundance Press, 2000), 98. Civilization was the scapegoat that the Supreme Court used to negate Lincoln’s recognition of the tribe, as well as disqualify them from protections found within the Intercourse Act of 1851. The court reasoned that “[t]he pueblo Indians, if, indeed, they can be called Indians, had nothing in common with this class. The degree of civilization which they had attained centuries before, their willing submission to all the laws of the Mexican government, the full recognition by that government of all their civil rights, including that of voting and holding office, and their absorption into the
general mass of the population (except that they held their lands in common), all forbid the idea that they should be classed with the Indian tribes for whom the intercourse acts were made."


99 Sonnichsen, *Pass of the North*, 182-183; Paul Cool, *Salt Warriors*, xi, xii, 36, 37; Quote from testimony of A.J. Fountain in U.S. War Dept, *El Paso Troubles*, 128. In *Salt Warriors*, Cool defines *la Isla* as the settlements, just south of El Paso, as we know it today, of Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario (p. 2). Cool defines the primary residents of these settlements as Paseños, Tejanos, and Salineros. Cool writes that a Paseño was “a Mexican who lives in the Valley of the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo, on either side of the river at or near the Pass of the North”; a Tejano was “a Texan of Mexican ethnicity”; and that a Salinero was “a Paseño who trekked to the Guadalupe lakes for Salt” (Cool, xi, xii). Yet ethnicity and race are social constructs; identity within those constructed paradigms blurs our historical vision, causing fluid misinterpretations of historical consciousness. Cool’s use of the term Paseño, and Sonnichsen’s description of the inhabitants of San Elizario, Socorro, and Ysleta as “Valley Mexicans” promote the solidification of nationalistic racial constructs, which erase indigenous agency and existence (Sonnichsen, *Pass of the North*, 197). Sonnichsen applied the term “valley Mexicans” (from the U.S. War Dept. *El Paso Troubles, Texas*, 68) as a descriptor in C.L. Sonnichsen, *The El Paso Salt War of 1877* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1961), 7. This application blurs indigeneity in the historical record.


102 Sonnichsen, *Pass of the North*, 190-192; Cool, *Salt Warriors*, 46, 288-289. Albert Jennings Fountain was assassinated in 1896. Antonio Borajo and Luis Cardis are suspected in the murder, yet it could have been anyone from El Paso or New Mexico, including any number of Indians who may have held a grudge against him for the incorporation of Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario.


104 The concept of hybridity I am applying is from Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 37. Nationalist political constructs imply binary oppositions. The hybridity I am applying breaks down and navigates the interstitial space between the polarized constructions of ethnic and national identity. Bhabha’s view “overcomes the given grounds of opposition and opens up a space of translation: a place of hybridity, figuratively speaking, where the construction of a political object that is new, *neither one nor the other*, properly aligns our political expectations, and changes, as it must, the very forms of our recognition of the moment of politics” (37).

Considering identity, and in particular indigenous identity, I am basing the term indigenous identity in a hybrid position similar to Bhabha’s above description in that the indigenous peoples of Socorro, San Elizario, Ysleta, Senecu, and El Paso Del Norte were primarily mission oriented and engaged in syncretic and overlapping hybrid negotiations between their traditional-cultural lifestyles, and the co-opted cultural-lifestyles and practices with which they interacted. This correlates with Susan Deeds’s concept of “mediated opportunism,” in Susan Deeds, *Defiance and Deference in Mexico’s Colonial North: Indians under Spanish Rule in Nueva Vizcaya* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 6. Deeds describes this concept as “[t]he extent to which indigenous peoples could formulate mixed strategies and exercise choices in adapting to changing cultural and ecological circumstances” (6).

In an e-mail memo to Scott Comar on April 2, 2009, Howard Campbell describes the 1870s mindset of the indigenous peoples in the El Paso borderlands as one in which “the consciousness of those you refer to as indigenous and engaging in indigenous agency may have been different from what we mean today when we say indigenous, i.e. Indian. They may have thought of themselves as the people who live in X place and who just happen
to speak x or y languages but without a strong sense of this as a racial/ethnic identity. They may have had a sense of being a people but without this being strongly differentiated from others around them who were mestizo...Blurry, overlapping borders of identity.” In this sense, Tiguas, Mansos, Sumas, and Piros, who lived in the lower valley did not walk around trying to be Indians in the anachronistic sense; they dressed, lived, and worked among various ethnic Mexicans and adopted the same contemporary modes of civilization that were available to all the residents within that time and space—within the confines of their socio-economic capacity to do so. In short, just because a Tigua puts on a sombrero and speaks Spanish, they do not become any less indigenous than if they appeared walking around in more traditional and stereotypical indigenous apparel (i.e. moccasins and feathers).


109 Ibid., 145-146.


115 Juliana Barr, Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 9. Barr also wrote that “kinship provided the infrastructure for native political and economic systems and codified both domestic and foreign relations” (9).

116 Greenberg, “Tigua Land Tenure and Land Use Practices,” in vol. 1 of Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives, 213, 229. Greenburg writes that the “Defense of homeland means territoriality, and Tigua territory extended well beyond the arbitrary boundary of their ejido land grants to include those areas ancestrally possessed and continuously used for several hundred years. Any notion that the Tigua’s settlement in the El Paso del Norte area is too recent for a certain ancestral possession is a misrepresentation born of the dominant society” (229).
Greenberg, “Tigua Land Tenure and Land Use Practices,” in vol. 1 of *Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives*, 252-253. Greenburg wrote that “Father Serampion del Prado, who did the 1805-06 census, pointed out that the very real threat of enemy (Apache) Indians prevented the Ysleta Indians from raising many livestock. Del Prado also noted that the Tigua were bilingual, speaking fluent Tiwa and Spanish” (253). Considering that church officials were largely responsible for the cultural process of ethnic definition and construction, the Hispanicization of an indigenous pueblo served the agenda of the church, and Del Prado’s inference that the Indians spoke good Spanish may have been his rationalization for classifying them as “Hispanic or mestizo,” instead of Indian.


Gerald, “A History of the Indians of Ysleta Del Sur Texas,” in *Rex Gerald, “Indians of El Paso,”* 17-18. Gerald goes on to write that this trend reversed itself after Tigua tribal recognition by the United States and Texas governments: “with the consequent economic and medical advantages that accrued to Indians on the tribal role—there are now more Ysletans who are willing to admit their Indian identity.” For “ethnogenesis” and “mediated opportunism” see Deeds, *Defiance and Deference, 6-7*, 152, 171, 191, 195, 201-202.


U.S. War Dept, *El Paso Troubles in Texas: Letter from the Secretary of War, Transmitting Report from Colonel Hatch on the subject of El Paso Troubles, 45th Cong., 2d sess., House Executive Document 84* (Washington DC, 1878), 50, 54, 58, in Oscar J. Martinez, *Troublesome Border, revised edition* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1994), 159. In his testimony, J.P. Hague stated that “The people of one [side of the Rio Grande] are bound to those of the other by more than the obligation of race and hospitality. They have married and intermarried; their interests are in many respects identical; their wants and fear spring from the same source and hold them in sympathy; for time out of mind they have reciprocally enjoyed the same feasts and festivities; they are invited by the same religion, and have an equality of feeling, sympathy; for time out of mind they have reciprocally enjoyed the same feasts and festivities; they are invited by the same religion, and have a common to an ignorant people.” This statement reveals Hague’s perception and awareness of the kinship ties which existed between ethnic Mexicans and the indigenous of the region. Although Hague, in his testimony, was unaware of it, he actually described networks of kinship which had developed over generations between ethnic Mexicans, Sumas, Mansos, Pinos, and Tiguas in the communities of San Elizario, Socorro, Ysleta, Senecu, Zaragoza, El Paso, and Juarez. Hague went on to state that “the relations both social and official between these communities have been of the most agreeable natures” (El Paso Troubles, 50).


U.S. War Dept., *El Paso Troubles in Texas*, 68; “Law Race and the Border: The El Paso Salt War of 1877,” *Harvard Law Review* 117, no. 3 (2004): 954-956. Ramon Ortiz: Ortiz also testified that in “[a]bout the year 1824, when the salt lakes of San Andres were discovered, the Mexican Government conceded to these same towns the use and produce of the same in Mexican law.” Thus, the “Guadalupe Salt Lakes” were communal in the indigenous sense, as well as the Mexican bureaucratic sense and should have been recognized as such by the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo” (*El Paso Troubles*, 68).

For the Rancho de Ysleta Grant and La Prieta Grant see Bowden, *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants*, 171, 177-178; also for a map see Bowden, 190; also see U.S. War Dept., *El Paso Troubles*, 68; Oscar Lozano, “Ahorta Es Tiempo! The Belated Consequences of Anglo-Mexican Contact in the El Paso Valley” (Seminar Paper: The University of Texas at El Paso, 1994), 7.

Bowden, *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants*, 190; For more on mission Indian land tenure systems under the Mexican system and land dispossession as a result of land grants and documentation of their standing within that system see Haas, *Conquests and Historical Identities*, 43, 45, 47.


Ibid., 276-280.


Ibid., 289-292.


138 Greenberg, “Tigua Land Tenure and Land Use Practices,” in vol. 1 of *Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives*, 303-304. Greenberg describes this kinship system that was passed onto the Tigua as one of “Ancestral Possession.” He explains that “[t]he problems of group identity and points of origin are not a problem of erosion or deterioration of singular traditional beliefs, but rather a reflection of Tigua history which is not linear as that of a single isolate but an interwoven mosaic of peopling and their histories. These diverse traditions, subsistence patterns and knowledge of ecology have been woven together as a fabric of Tigua culture. As such, the tribe is, in fact, the unofficial repository of the traditions of several no longer distinctly identifiable cultural groups. Therefore, those lands which were part of the immediate territory of the Suma (Jumano), Manso, and Piro groups including the riverine environment, neighboring sandhills, and mountain ranges are part of the Tigua claim. When the Tigua tribe argues for ancestral possession it is speaking not only for the Tigua cultural component, but also for those traditions that became a part of [the] Tigua Tribe over time” (303-304). Thus, the connection Greenburg is describing is the kinship ties that were extended to the Tigua upon their arrival and subsequent intermarriages with the aforementioned tribes that previously held the territory.


140 Cool, *Salt Warriors*, 83. Cool continues that “[s]ubsequent events indicate that the juntas decided that summer to defend the people’s salt rights. Circumstantial evidence indicates they established a system of rapidly communicating unfolding events and calls to armed action. The war that soon consumed El Paso County was not the result of mob violence but the product of a widely shared community decision to organize and act decisively, along legal lines if possible but militarily should Howard force the issue” (83).


149 U.S. War Dept., *El Paso Troubles, Texas*, 30

150 Ibid., 30.

War Dept. El Paso Troubles in Texas, 13. Salcido and Granillo are common names among Tigua tribal members. There is the possibility that some Tiguas choose to ethnically identify as Mexican to attain a social standing. Eickhoff writes that “the Tiguas could not hold any land. Ownership, the local courts interpreted was predicated upon citizenship. If one was not a citizen, then, obviously, one could not own land” (Eickhoff, 81). This certainly must have motivated Tigua Indians to identify, at least politically, as Mexican so that they could vote and enjoy land ownership as stipulated per the 1848 Treaty. This is similar to categorization as vecino for participation in the colonial economy years before. Thus, a pattern of ethno-political identity was perpetuated due to the social hierarchy, which excluded the indigenous.


Sonnichsen, Pass of the North, 199n21, 444.

U.S. War Dept., El Paso Troubles, Texas, 30, 143; The “Minority Report Of [the] Commissioners Appointed To Investigate The Troubles in El Paso County, Texas” describes Barela’s office as that of “presidente of one of the towns on the other side of the river” (30). However, “president” is actually another term for alcade, which was often used interchangeably in describing the position. However, in the indigenous context, alcade was an intermediary position in which an indigenous leader, such as a cacique, was appointed to act as a go between among European (Spanish and Criollo Mexicans, etc.) elite political leaders and indigenous communities. As time passed, indigenous communities often chose mixed bloods for this position in order to benefit from increased negotiating opportunities. Thus, Chico Barela could have easily negotiated between the worlds of indigenous and Catholic Pisos, Tiguas, mestizos, and elite Mexicans in positions of political power. Susan Deeds describes the core of this dynamic as “mediated opportunism,” noting that in colonial Nueva Vizcaya, caciques were viewed as “Captains who were responsible for protecting the mission from outsiders.” As such, Barela’s role as cacique and “mob” leader were actually one in the same, and his resignation was probably more political than cultural, considering that he resided in Ysleta. For more information on caciques see Deeds, Defiance and Deference in Mexico’s Colonial North, 18-19, 22, 87, 219n18; and Radding, Landscapes of Power and Identity, 162-177, 376.


Paul Cool wrote that “[e]ven if Paseños overwhelmingly thought of themselves as Mexicans, it appears unlikely that nationalism drove the uprising.” He goes on to write that “Mary Romero considered the question of Paseño aims and concluded that their ‘purpose and goals were aimed at eliminating H...” (Cool, Salt Warriors, 131; Mary Romero, “El Paso Salt War: Mob Action or Political Struggle?” Aztlán 16 nos. 1-2 (1987): 139, in Cool, Salt Warriors 131. Although both of these views deny nationalism, they do not consider indigenous agency, or kinship.


By subaltern status I am implying that indigenous agency was positioned beyond perception by those that testified with the hidden agenda of Mexicanizing the revolt in order to facilitate Federal intervention. For more

162 U.S. War Dept., *El Paso Troubles*, 81, 82, 98; Houser “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 1, 117, 121; La Vere, *The Texas Indians*, 221.


164 Ibid., 97.

165 For examples see U.S. War Dept. *El Paso Troubles, Texas*, 120, 122, 127.


169 U.S. War Dept., *El Paso Troubles in Texas*, 120; noted in Randy L. Eickhoff, *Exiled: The Tigua Indians of Ysleta Del Sur* (Plano, Republic of Texas Press, 1996), 73; and in Bill Wright, *The Tiguas: Pueblo Indians of Texas* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1993), 14. Surely it was in the best interests of the Tigua to blame Mexicans from across the border because if it was found out that they had instigated and participated in the insurrection, it would have most certainly made it harder on them. As it was, the Texas Rangers murdered and raped numerous people in El Paso’s lower valley (see *El Paso Troubles*, 88-95, 103).


175 *New Mexico Historical Review*, vol. 1(1926): 491, in Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 1, 113, 116.


184, University of Texas at El Paso, C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Dept; Minter, “The Tigua Indians of the Pueblo De Ysleta Del Sur, El Paso County, Texas,” 36.


180 Radding, Wandering Peoples: Colonialism, Ethnic Spaces, and Ecological Frontiers in Northwestern Mexico, 1700-1850 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 358, 360. Radding describes encomienda as “[g]rants of Indians for tribute,” or a system that granted indigenous peoples to the missions for labor and conversion (358). Radding describes repartimiento as “[f]orced labor recruited from native villages, and sent to Spanish estates and mines for stipulated periods of time” (360).

181 Houser, “From the Place of Beginning,” vol. 2, 105-106, 121.


183 “Affidavit of Miguel Pedraza,” Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives: Tom Diamond Files (n.d.), University of Texas at El Paso, Special Collections FM 554 roll 1 of 3, index 22.

184 Ibid.
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Appendix

Figure 2. Apache Migration into Texas and El Paso Borderlands. Image courtesy of David La Vere, *The Texas Indians* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2004), 30.
Figure 4. Indians of the Rio Grande and El Paso Borderlands Region, 1598-1690. Courtesy of “Las Misiones Del Valle Del Paso,” Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Archives: Tom Diamond Files (El Paso: University of Texas at El Paso Library), MF 554, roll 1 of 3, index 44.
Figure 5. The Hinojosa Grant. Courtesy of J.J. Bowden, *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants in the Chihuahuan Acquisition* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1971), 166.
Figure 6. The River Shift between 1832 and 1849. Courtesy of J.J. Bowden, Spanish and Mexican Land Grants in the Chihuahuan Acquisition (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1971), 160.
Figure 8. The La Prieta Grant and El Rancho De Ysleta Grants. Courtesy of J.J. Bowden, *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants in the Chihuahuan Acquisition* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1971), 190.
Vita

Scott Christopher Comar was born in Glens Falls, New York, on December 15, 1965. The son of Lee and Sheila Comar, he spent his youth in Ulster County, New York, and Hartford, Connecticut. At the age of nineteen, he began a career as a tractor-trailer driver. In 1991, he received the award of Van Guard Driver for North American Van Lines. As an over the road driver in the moving and storage business, he relocated to the El Paso borderlands. In May of 2006, he received an Associate of Arts, degree with honors, from El Paso Community College. In the autumn of 2006, he began attending the University of Texas at El Paso. He majored in history, minored in secondary education, and received his Bachelor of Arts, Summa Cum Laude, in 2008. Subsequently, he also received a Texas Educator Certificate, which certified him to teach social studies at the secondary level in June of 2008. In the summer and fall of 2008, he began working part-time at El Paso Community College and pursued his Master of Arts in history at the University of Texas at El Paso. As a graduate student and member of Phi Alpha Theta, he presented an essay entitled “The Texas Two Step: The Incorporation and Dispossession of the Tigua of Ysleta Del Sur, 1848-1889” at the 2009 meeting of the Southwestern Historical Association, which was held at the eighty-ninth meeting of the Southwestern Social Science Association in Denver, Colorado. In 2010, he presented an essay entitled “Beyond Mestizaje: Indigenous Agency in the San Elizario Salt War of 1877” at the 2010 Phi Alpha Theta Biennial Convention in San Diego, California.

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