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MAPPING THE LOUISIANA FRENCH

Lawrence E. Estaville, Jr.

French settlement of Louisiana during the three centuries since La Salle's expedition down the Mississippi River has been the focus of more than a few researchers. As the Louisiana French region changed over the years, so too have the interpretations of its areal extent. The purpose of this cartographic review is to take stock of the collage of geographical delimitations that have been mapped for the Louisiana French. (1) But beyond revealing interpretive contradictions and work that remains to be undertaken, this study proposes, contrary to the conventional view, that the Louisiana French have not been geographically isolated since the early nineteenth century. (2) To substantiate this proposition, four specific questions are addressed: 1) What ethnic groups came into contact with the Louisiana French; 2) which ethnic group became culturally predominant in South Louisiana; 3) what spatial movements took place because of these contacts; and 4) what are the consequent geographical patterns?

Maps of the Louisiana French can be temporally grouped into three classes: 1) those depicting eighteenth-century French distributions; 2) a larger category encompassing pre-twentieth century French boundaries; and 3) an array of twentieth-century Gallic delineations. Most of these delimitations, in diverse ways, separate French South Louisiana from the Anglo-Saxon North, but a few flow outside the state to enclose parts of Texas and Mississippi.

MAPS OF THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DISTRIBUTION. Of the four maps of eighteenth-century Louisiana French areas, two are rough generalizations (Fig. 1). Without indicating his sources, Newton outlined the initial French occupancy from 1699, the year Iberville founded Fort Maurepas at Biloxi, to 1763, the date Spain assumed control of Louisiana under the provisions of the Treaty of Fontainebleau. (3) Detro, drawing from a variety of descriptive historical accounts, estimated Louisiana settlement by French, Germans, Spanish, and Anglo-

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Fig. 1. Early Gallic settlement reflected its linear orientation along the Mississippi, Red, and Ouachita rivers and Bayou Teche.

Americans in 1800, although by the turn of the nineteenth century the French had assimilated the small groups of Germans and Spanish. (4)

The remaining two delimitations etched more precisely a French cultural surrogate, the arpent survey system (Fig. 2). An arpent is about 192 feet. Eighteenth-century grants were elongated parcels of land with narrow levee frontages, commonly eight arpents, that were surveyed on the backslopes of rivers and bayous to a standardized depth of forty arpents. Because of the French law of coparceny which required equal inheritance rights, these holdings tended through time to become fragmented into mere slivers of land. Taylor mapped as part of his research concerning agricultural settlement on the prairies of southwest Louisiana what he thought was the extent of the French forty-arpent survey system during the eighteenth century. (5) Hall, rationalizing the cultural importance and persistence of distinctive cadastral patterns, cartographically redefined the areas of the French arpent and American long lot survey systems in Louisiana. (6) The American long lot system, ac-

Fig. 2. The eighteenth-century French arpent survey system stamped a lasting cultural imprint upon the Louisiana landscape.

According to Hall, was simply a modification in English measurement of the earlier French arpent surveying method.

Each of these attempts to demarcate eighteenth-century Louisiana French settlement underscores an inherent riparian linearity, though not always continuous, primarily along the lower Mississippi and Red River transportation arteries; on the banks of Bayou Lafourche, a Mississippi distributary, and Bayou Teche, a sluggish stream west of the Atchafalaya Swamp and the heart of the present Cajun subculture; and to a lesser degree along the upper Ouachita River in the environs around Fort Miro, today Monroe.

NINETEENTH-CENTURY CARTOGRAPHIC LINKS. Only two investigators have provided cartographic links between the initial French implantations and contemporary patterns. Detro examined the toponymic evolution of a variety of physical features in Louisiana throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. (7) Focusing on

such generic terms as *anse*, *chute*, *écore*, *marais*, *portage*, *brûlé*, *chên-ière*, *coteau*, and *coulee*, (8) Detro's first boundary for the Louisiana French toponymic area considered place naming during the entire eighteenth century and reiterated the riparian nature of Gallic settlement along the lower Mississippi and Red rivers (Fig. 3). During the first half of the nineteenth century French toponyms were reinforced in the Red River Valley, and they had migrated northward along its Ouachita River tributary. Moreover, two large French toponymic belts in South Louisiana, one traversing the central coast and its many islands and the other back toward the interior through the lower Atchafalaya Swamp and onto the southwest prairies, outlined substantial French westward movement. Detro's final Gallic place-name demarcation encompassed the latter half of the nineteenth century and reemphasized French settlement in southern Louisiana and continued Gallic drift westward.

Fig. 3. Through two centuries French place-naming marked stream banks and pushed onto Louisiana's southwest prairies.

Conversely, Detrou concentrated on the key physical terms creek, branch, landing, cutoff, and glade to delimit the Anglo toponymic areas for the same periods, thus contouring Anglo intrusion deep into the traditionally French domain (Fig. 4). (9) Before the Louisiana Purchase, Anglo toponymic incursion into Louisiana was little more than a small enclave west of the Mississippi River in present-day Concordia and Tensas parishes. Yet this cultural seed grew exponentially during the early nineteenth century to engulf most of northern Louisiana, spread throughout the Atchafalaya Basin, and swept over much of the "Florida Parishes" north of Lake Pontchartrain. By the turn of the twentieth century Anglo place names abounded in all but the extreme southeastern and southwestern corners of the state. Indeed English speakers named some of the most remote and inhospitable places in Louisiana by forging a toponymic wedge right through the Atchafalaya Swamp.

My own statistical analysis of Louisiana French surnames, in con-

Fig. 4. From an eighteenth-century seed Anglo toponymic territory grew exponentially and thrust deep into traditionally Gallic homelands.

junction with given names, nativity, parentage, and English language usage from the manuscript census schedules, delimited the Gallic region for 1820, 1860, and 1900 (Fig. 5). (10) The riverine eighteenth-century Louisiana French region (>25% French) expanded in broad bands out from its streams during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Major movements occurred westward through the lower Atchafalaya Swamp's intricate web of waterways and westward from the banks of Bayou Teche deeper into Attakapas country. In the years following the Louisiana Purchase, however, Americans by the thousands poured into the Gallic homeland pervasively reducing French population proportions, but most precipitously along the eastern and northern frontiers.

By the Civil War the Gallic region no longer possessed its riparian linearity but instead began raggedly to contour a huge isosceles triangle of present-day French Louisiana, though in 1860 the triangle was

Fig. 5. Pushed by Anglo intrusion and pulled by a nascent rice industry, during the nineteenth century the Louisiana French drifted westward.

broken by the still sparsely settled southwestern prairies. The largest antebellum territorial gains were westward onto the prairies and a movement from along the lower Mississippi River onto small clearings called *brûlés* in the Atchafalaya Swamp. Contributing to the continued westward displacement of the French, the "second expulsion," was intense pressure from Anglo planters who made their most pronounced incursions near Baton Rouge and downstream from New Orleans.

In 1900 the Louisiana French region stretched its triangular shape over one-third of Louisiana. Almost all the postbellum French territorial gains followed the railroads and rice agriculture onto the western prairies. Meanwhile Midwesterners and Texans streaming into southwest Louisiana clashed with the Cajuns for control of western rice land and marsh cattle ranges and strengthened a rather formidable agricultural settlement barrier against future Gallic territorial expansion into Texas. The Midwestern farmers also wrought revolutionary changes on Louisiana's traditional rice agricultural methods and pulled their French neighbors directly onto the frontier of agricultural mechanization. Although the venerable Natchitoches outlier faded from the region, the greatest postbellum ethnic erosion continued along the lower Mississippi between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, where the French not only had to contend with Anglo incursions but also with a wave of Italian farm workers that inundated the South Louisiana sugar country.

The major difference between my nineteenth-century French boundaries and those for Detro's Gallic toponyms centers on the degree of time specificity inherent in the selected cultural surrogates of interest. Place names may remain in an area for a long while after the people who named the features have moved on or have faded as the predominant cultural force. Such is the case in the lower Red River Valley where Detro found considerable Gallic toponymic strength between 1851 and 1900, though during the same period the French in Natchitoches were overrun by significant Anglo intrusion.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY MAPS. There is a cornucopia of twentieth-century Louisiana French maps which can be divided into three groups: folk landscape, nonmaterial attributes, and generalized boundaries.

Folk Landscape. The French folk landscape was an early interest of several Louisiana geographers, particularly Fred Kniffen and his students. Gathering Spanish moss, a grayish, stringy epiphyte that had

assorted uses, was a notable folk occupation of the Louisiana French, especially the Cajuns (Fig. 6). (11) In his study of the Atchafalaya Basin, Comeaux mapped 18 operational Spanish-moss gins mainly located along the edge of the swamp in 1930. (12) The 1930s, according to Aldrich, Deblieux, and Kniffen, were the greatest years for moss production in Louisiana, and these investigators counted 26 active gins in 1941. (13).

Crawfishing also has been closely associated with the French in Louisiana (Fig. 7), and Comeaux likewise plotted the 1961 distribution of commercial crawfish farms and found that they were situated chiefly in the rice-growing southwest prairies noted for their impermeable clay hardpan. (14) A dozen years later Gary's dissertation about an increasingly lucrative commercial crawfish industry in South Louisiana revealed that the greatest intensification of crawfish operations had occurred not on the prairies but eastward back into the Cajun cores along bayous Teche and Lafourche, with a few stray ponds even as far east as

Fig. 6. Most Spanish-moss gins and French outdoor ovens were located within the pirogue boundary.

Fig. 7. Crawfishing has been strongly associated with the Louisiana French.

the southern “Florida Parishes” (Fig. 7). (15) Without question, however, licensed crawfish processing plants were clustered on the upper Teche, particularly near Breaux Bridge, Louisiana’s “Crawfish Capital.”

Comeaux reasoned that the twentieth-century expansion of commercial crawfishing, which had begun as early as the 1880s, led to the evolution of a new larger type of pirogue, the Louisiana French folk boat. (16) In 1956 Knipmeyer defined the areal extent of the pirogue (Fig. 6). (17) Its archaic sub-type, the narrow, blunt-ended dugout pirogue, was localized in the extreme southeastern sector of the state, while the more contemporary plank pirogue enjoyed a nearly ubiquitous geographical acceptance in South Louisiana.

Kniffen mapped the distribution of relic French ovens which he professed to be prime Gallic cultural markers (Fig. 6). (18) But because the Cajuns who moved onto the southwest prairies borrowed Anglo corn bread preparation during the nineteenth century, the French ovens were restricted roughly to the area east from Bayou Teche to the Mississippi River and along the northern shores of Lake Pontchartrain

where wheat breadstuffs had long been predominant. Also, Kniffen's 1936 ground-breaking work regarding Louisiana house types was generalized by Newton. (19) Newton's French folk housing area comprised most of South Louisiana, with the exception of the far southwestern grasslands of Jefferson Davis and Calcasieu parishes where Midwestern architecture was influential, and prominently protruded up the Red River Valley remembering an earlier Gallic presence (Fig. 7).

Several significant threads of commonality run through this twentieth-century Louisiana French folk landscape. Other than the Red River protrusion of relic French housing, all these cultural markers are within Knipmeyer's pirogue border, and more than a scattering of boundary segments for pirogues, outdoor ovens, and housing are congruent or nearly so. Furthermore, the Midwestern house types brought onto the southwestern prairies during the last quarter of the nineteenth century formed a bulging non-French housing enclave that was later included within the pirogue territory and densely populated by crawfish farms, thereby inferring continued French westward migration during the first half of the twentieth century. All of these geographical patterns of the French folk landscape markers, most importantly, plainly show that the massive nineteenth-century Anglo-Saxon intrusion had limited French settlement to South Louisiana and had wrenched the Gallic region into a triangular shape.

Nonmaterial Attributes. Nonmaterial cultural attributes certainly were not neglected in mapping the twentieth-century Louisiana French, and drawing political boundaries played a focal role (Fig. 8). Prefacing these contemporary boundaries was Howard's work regarding the early Franco-American political cleavage and the "French Ascendancy" in gubernatorial elections and appointments during the 1820s which created the political structure that ensured Gallic power throughout the early antebellum period. (20) Howard, a political scientist, offered a choropleth map of this French political dominance in the 1820s, but unfortunately he distorted past reality by incorporating twentieth-century parish boundaries. Newton's map of the "French Ascendancy" corrected Howard's error, but, like Howard, Newton failed to consider that before the 1820s Europeans had not settled large parts of Louisiana. (21)

Two gubernatorial contests, Bouanchaud (1924) and Edwards (1971), and one presidential election, Kennedy (1960), serve as representative

Fig. 8. The revitalized political strength of the French during the 1970s mirrored spatially the foregoing folk landscape delineations.

Gallic surrogates for the twentieth century (Fig. 8). In his examination of Louisiana's political tendencies, Howard drew a map showing the support for French, Roman Catholic Hewitt Bouanchaud in his unsuccessful effort in the 1924 gubernatorial first primary. (22) Havard and Heberle joined Howard to study the 1960 Louisiana election results, and they demarked the northern limit of parish electorates that voted for Catholic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy. (23) And in his atlas Newton copied a map of P.A.R.'s (Public Affairs Research Council) analysis of the Democratic gubernatorial primary of 1971 that indicated voter preference for Edwin Edwards, the only Catholic to be elected governor of Louisiana in this century. (24)

The Kennedy presidential vote perhaps recaptured the latency of the old Natchitoches Gallic heritage evident within the antebellum delineation, while both gubernatorial patterns follow much more closely the foregoing French folk landscape markers. After more than one hundred years of Anglo-Saxon political dominance, then, the quies-

parently expanded eastward across the Mississippi, these four religious silhouettes are remarkably congruent, even though they span 35 years.

Meigs in 1939 constructed a seminal isopleth map of French surname proportions; in fact, it was the first map to detail Gallic westward migration into southeast Texas (Fig. 10 shows the 50% boundary only). (29) To obtain his data Meigs used the 10 most common surnames found in 115 telephone directories from Louisiana and Texas communities and recorded names from 159 mailboxes in eight parishes that had no directories. The linguist Oukada, however, has criticized Meigs' methodology: 1) Employing surnames alone, Meigs could not have distinguished such French cognate names as Bernard, Martin, and Richard from their English counterparts; 2) only surnames of household heads were checked, thereby discounting most French females who were important socializing agents in early mixed Anglo-French marriages; 3) without counting all the surnames in the 115 telephone directories,

Fig. 10. The presence of "wet" liquor laws and the absence of KKK klaverns within the French surname area underscore Gallic liberalism.

how, Oukada asked, did Meigs determine the 10 most numerous names in each? (30) Two other concerns should be added to Oukada's inventory. Because of the unusually high endogamy among Cajun families in their early homeland of Acadia and in their subsequent eighteenth-century Louisiana implantations, the number of Cajun patronyms are relatively few, therefore biasing the ten-most-common-names criterion in favor of the French. (31) And since by 1939 telephone communication had diffused unevenly, as evidenced in the eight parishes without directories, urban places more attuned to novelty enjoyed a greater input into Meigs' sample which may have overlooked many conservative *petits habitants* unwilling or unable to purchase the new gadgetry. Nevertheless, these critiques leveled decades after Meigs' investigation do not discredit the salience of his quantitative delimitation that used an innovative source for sampling spatial data, nor do they diminish his pioneering effort to demonstrate the gradational predilection of the internal morphologies of culture regions. Meigs, furthermore, explained in detail his research design. Most other researchers have neglected such a methodological discussion, leaving little to criticize and making corroboration difficult.

Newton mapped the parishes that had completely "wet" liquor laws in 1971 (Fig. 10). (32) Other than the cotton "Delta" in northeastern Louisiana, all of Newton's "liquor region" is nested within the Catholic delineations, perhaps implying that the Roman Catholic Louisiana French not only exhibit a distinctive *joie de vivre* but also fully appreciate the adage, "Laissez les bons temps rouler." (33) This Gallic liberalism is also reflected in racial relationships. From no more than a casual glance at Brunn's 1974 dot map of Ku Klux Klan klaverns, the almost total absence of these foci of bigotry in French Louisiana is striking. (34)

The 1970 census provided what many scholars had hoped would be a conclusive cultural diagnostic for the Louisiana French—mother tongue. As it turned out, because of definitional difficulties it was not a panacea. For example, the *Acadiana Profile* published in 1970 the results of CODOFIL's (Council for the Development of French in Louisiana) 18-parish survey conducted the previous year which estimated that, of the 2,059,270 residents, 868,440 were French-speakers. (35) From this sample the council's statisticians projected that there were 1,468,440 French-speakers in all Louisiana. The 1970 census, however, counted only 572,262. (36) On balance, both of these estimates were more than likely erroneous: CODOFIL's extrapolation was inflated,

possibly for self-promotion, and the government's figure was far too conservative because of its very restrictive definition.

Geographical interpretations of French mother tongue likewise stand amidst disagreement. Using exactly the same census data, Allen, Oukada, Breton, Breton and Louder, and Waddell drafted five different maps for French mother tongue in Louisiana (Fig. 11). (37) Four reasons underlie these incongruities: 1) Waddell constructed a choropleth map, and the others created isopleth maps; 2) Oukada and Waddell mapped parish proportions, while the others obtained more precision with ward (precinct) aggregates; 3) although Oukada suggested no particular critical value within his isopleth schema (Fig. 11 shows the 50% line only), Allen constructed a 50 percent isoline, and the Breton and Breton-Louder maps followed the 40 percent break of their "ethnograms"; 4) unlike Breton's original *carte*, Breton and Louder constrained their delineation within the "Heart of Acadiana," an ambiguous

Fig. 11. Different interpretations of French mother tongue data left discordant delimitations.

territory of 22 or so parishes capriciously pronounced as such by the 1971 Louisiana Legislature.

As their patterns clearly display, this family of cartographic efforts to delimit the Louisiana French in the twentieth century by way of non-material cultural surrogates—political support, Roman Catholicism, liquor laws, KKK klaverns, and mother tongue—is spatially related. Although an antebellum Anglo conspiracy dismantled the “French Ascendancy” of the 1820s, resurgent Gallic political power was expressed in the 1970s. An alien tongue likewise began to seriously erode the French language. The French, however, held to their religion and maintained their liberal philosophy of life despite the starkly contrasting beliefs of the thousands of invading WASPs.

Generalized Boundaries. Some of the foregoing folk landscape artifacts and nonmaterial cultural attributes have become diagnostic precursors of generalized or composite French boundaries. Smith’s classic straight-line interpretation was the first attempt to define a generalized twentieth-century pattern for French Louisiana (Fig. 12). (38) With the exception that Beliveau and Rushton ran their lines sharply up the Red River to Alexandria, Kniffen, Beliveau, and Rushton (39) modified very little Smith’s 1937 geographical description of French Louisiana as resembling

... a large triangle whose base consists of the Gulf of Mexico. One side is bounded by a straight line running from the southwestern tip of the state to the junction of the Red and the Mississippi rivers, and the other side is bounded by a straight line running from the latter point through the city of New Orleans to the Gulf of Mexico. (40)

In 1949 Heberle and Bertrand produced the first generalized, non-straight-line map of the Louisiana French (Fig. 13). (41) Yet they seemed to have simply traced Meigs’ 25 percent French surname isoline and professed that the population within the area was of French origin and predominantly Roman Catholic. Six years later in a provocative monograph, *The Many Louisianas*, sociologist Bertrand proposed a wide transition zone between French and Anglo Louisiana. (42) Apparently drawing from the Smith and Hitt investigation as a point of departure, Bertrand procured perceptual information by questioning county agents and others in each parish of the state and visiting specific “cultural islands” to gain local feeling. Knipmeyer, possessing what he called “a sound knowledge of the area” and without citing any sources,

Fig. 12. Straight-line demarcations bound Louisiana's famous "French Triangle."

intuitively demarcated French Louisiana. (43) Knipmeyer, though, prefaced his portrayal with sagacious insight: "Regions could be delimited on the basis of personal familiarity, and the results would vary according to individual interpretation"—certainly a vexing truism within regional geography. (44) In 1963 Havard, Heberle, and Howard suggested the final broad border before 1970, a watermark year since mother tongue data were previously unavailable. (45) Although for substantiation these political scientists depended upon the works of Smith and Hitt, Bertrand, and Howard, they evidently borrowed with slight modification Heberle and Bertrand's French delimitation which, as mentioned, was based upon Meigs' 25 percent isoline. (46).

Thus, these four pre-1970 generalized Louisiana French boundaries are nearly concordant. Of course two of them by Heberle and Bertrand and Havard, Heberle, and Howard followed Meigs' cartography. The two presumably independent formulations by Bertrand and Knipmeyer are often congruent or nearly so as well as in close harmony with the two Meigs emulations. All of the maps show the results of the French

Fig. 13. Before the 1970 census several generalized French boundaries were intuitively drawn.

westward movement onto the prairies of southwest Louisiana. The only major inconsistencies are: 1) a Lake Pontchartrain dichotomy with the two boundaries based upon Meigs' map skirting south of the lake, underscoring the "second expulsion" of the French from along the lower Mississippi, and the other two swinging north to encircle southern Tangipahoa and St. Tammany parishes; 2) Bertrand's exclusion of the lower Mississippi River delta, mainly Plaquemines and St. Bernard parishes; and 3) Knipmeyer's inclusion of a Natchitoches outlier that overlooked serious nineteenth-century Anglo-Saxon erosion.

Two post-1970 French composite maps intuitively combined several cultural attributes (Fig. 14). In 1975 Newton, in a synopsis titled "Blurring the North-South Contrast," averaged borders for toponymic counts, Catholic proportions, election results, economic statistics, migration data, and urbanization percents to produce a definitive north-south boundary between what he had originally held are now blurred or confused regional differences. (47) Two years later Spitzer, a folklorist,

Fig. 14. Two composite delimitations of the Gallic region were constructed after 1970.

proposed another boundary struck from a synthesis of previously mapped traits: surnames, house types, religion, and language usage. (48) Spitzer not only allowed for substantial Anglicization along the lower Mississippi River but also stretched his French line into east Texas bisecting Orange and Jefferson counties. The significance of Spitzer's Texas extension is threefold: 1) The Sabine River is not a magical barrier where cultures fear to cross or cartographic boundaries disappear; 2) the Louisiana French are a group of people who have occupied in both historical and modern times an area along the north central Gulf Coast that is larger than French Louisiana, albeit Louisiana was their cultural hearth and is their present regional core; 3) the Louisiana French during the twentieth century have sustained their westward movement all the way into Texas to take advantage of high-paying jobs in the oil industry. (49).

CONCLUSIONS. Maps of the geographical evolution of the Louisiana

French through three centuries have thus been derived from an eclectic array of cultural markers: survey systems, toponyms, outdoor ovens, pirogues, house types, Spanish-moss gins, crawfish farms, political support, Roman Catholicism, surnames, liquor laws, KKK klaverns, mother tongue, and an assortment of intuitive generalizations. Of the foregoing 45 maps, only four portray eighteenth-century French implantations, seven deal with nineteenth-century Gallic spatial evolution, and the remaining 34 depict twentieth-century geographic patterns. The rare eighteenth-century cartographic images are to a large degree balanced by voluminous written literature which has furnished much insight into the incipient Louisiana French region. Few such explanatory works supplement the paucity of nineteenth-century maps.

Not only is there a temporal lacuna in demarcating French geographical development, but there is also a hiatus in probing the internal nuances of the region's morphological evolution. Yet the only internal morphological inquiries, those of Meigs and myself, were fruitful in suggesting distance-decay gradations of ethnic intensity and discovering areas of ethnic interaction. Moreover, although several scholars as well as the Louisiana Legislature have offered their intuitive delimitations of the contemporary French region, only Bertrand has sampled residents throughout Louisiana to produce a perceptual map of the Gallic homeland. Indeed many other data sources, from restaurant surveys to archival accounts, still need to be mined. Of course definitional confusion, as in the case of French mother tongue, makes it difficult to choose the "best" Gallic boundary; but carefully selected attributes from the foregoing maps could lay a solid foundation for a quantifiable composite boundary that might be projected through time.

The 45 maps reviewed herein nevertheless provide a strong basis for answering the four specific questions posed at the outset of this investigation about the Louisiana French geographical experience: 1) The French came into contact with a variety of ethnic groups. During the eighteenth century the French assimilated small groups of Germans and Spanish, but in the nineteenth century thousands of Anglo-Saxons and hundreds of Italians intruded deep into the Gallic homeland and interacted directly with the French. 2) During the nineteenth century Anglos created state-wide economic and political hegemonies that ensured their cultural predominance. Although the French clung to their religion and their renowned *joie de vivre*, the widespread use of English caused the demise of the French language, the essence of their

culture. 3) The Louisiana French through three centuries have drifted westward: from the east, pushed by an Anglo appetite for rich delta soil, a billow of Italians that broke across the South Louisiana "Sugar Bowl," and an obsolete arpent survey system that left on the land splinters of uneconomical long-lots; and, from the west, pulled along railroad tracks by a commerical rice agriculture that Midwestern families nurtured on the southwest prairies and later by a burgeoning East Texas petroleum industry. 4) Over the years these movements pinned the French against the Gulf of Mexico in what has come to be known as Louisiana's "French Triangle." Contrary to conventional thinking, then, these ethnic interactions clearly show that the French have not been geographically isolated since the early years of the nineteenth century.

* * *

- (1) The Louisiana French are comprised of French Creoles, Cajuns, and "foreign French." Only maps pertaining to the Louisiana French ethnic group as a whole are reviewed here.
- (2) For examples of commentators who have held that the Louisiana French have been geographically isolated well into the twentieth century, see H. W. Gilmore, "Social Isolation of the French Speaking People of Rural Louisiana," *Social Forces*, Vol. 12 (1933), p. 82; Minnie Kelley, "Acadian South Louisiana," *Journal of Geography*, Vol. 33 (1934), p. 85; Corinne L. Saucier, *History of Avoyelles Parish, Louisiana* (New Orleans: Pelican, 1943), pp. 84, 86, 88–89; Harnett T. Kane, *The Bayous of Louisiana* (New York: William Morrow, 1944), p. 11; Richard M. Ketchum, "Cajun Country," in *The American Heritage Book of Great Historic Places* (New York: American Heritage, 1957), pp. 228–229; Elizabeth Brandon, "Acadian Folk Songs as Reflected in 'La Delaissee,'" in Glenn R. Conrad (ed.), *The Cajuns: Essays on Their History and Culture* (Lafayette, LA: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1978), pp. 187–188; Marietta M. LeBreton, "Acadians," in Stephan Thernstrom (ed.), *Harvard Encyclopedia of Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1980), pp. 2–3; Marjorie R. Esman, "The Breaux Bridge Crawfish Festival," *Natural History*, Vol. 93 (1984), pp. 47, 53.
- (3) Milton B. Newton, Jr., *Atlas of Louisiana* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1972), p. 71.
- (4) Randall A. Detro, "Generic Terms in the Place Names of Louisiana, An Index to the Cultural Landscape" (Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1970), pp. 101–113; J. Hanno Deiler, *The Settlement of the German Coast of Louisiana and the Creoles of the German Coast* (Philadelphia: 1909; reprint ed., Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1975), passim; Vaughn Baker, "The Acadians in Antebellum Louisiana: A Study of Acculturation," in Glenn R. Conrad (ed.), *The Cajuns: Essays on Their History and Culture* (Lafayette, LA: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1978), p. 117.

- (5) James W. Taylor, "Louisiana Land Survey Systems," *Southwestern Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 31 (1950), pp. 275–282.
- (6) John W. Hall, "Louisiana Survey Systems: Their Antecedents, Distribution, and Characteristics" (Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1970), pp. 11–13, 23–25.
- (7) Detro, footnote 4, pp. 334–338.
- (8) *Anse* is synonymous with prairie that extends into woodlands; *écure* denotes an inland river bluff; *marais* designates a small irregular-shaped pond; *brûlé* is a burned-over swamp clearing; *chênière* refers to an oak-covered isolated beach ridge or natural levee; and *coteau* signifies a low, rounded hill or ridge line. See Detro, footnote 4, pp. 199, 170–171, 215–217, 266–267; 161–164; 168–169; and John F. Rooney, Jr., Wilbur Zelinsky, and Dean R. Louder (eds.), *This Remarkable Continent: An Atlas of the United States and Canadian Society and Cultures* (College Station, TX: Society for the North American Cultural Survey and Texas A & M, 1982), pp. 136–139.
- (9) Detro, footnote 4, pp. 334–338.
- (10) Lawrence E. Estaville, Jr., "The Louisiana French Culture Region: Geographic Morphologies in the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1984), pp. 225, 236, 239, 292, 305, 364, 377.
- (11) Spanish moss has been used in brick making; house construction; filling mattresses, furniture cushions and automobile upholstery; weaving harnesses, bridles, and saddle blankets; and even making Mardi Gras costumes. See Allen E. Begnaud and Jon L. Gibson, "Cajun Folk Occupations: A Summary" in Steven L. Del Sesto and Jon L. Gibson (eds.), *The Culture of Acadiana: Tradition and Change in South Louisiana* (Lafayette, LA: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1975), pp. 50–51.
- (12) Malcolm L. Comeaux, "Atchafalaya Swamp Life: Settlement and Folk Occupations," in Bob F. Perkins (ed.), *Geoscience and Man*, Vol. 2 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1972), pp. 78–87.
- (13) C. C. Aldrich, M. W. DeBlieux, and F. B. Kniffen, "The Spanish Moss Industry of Louisiana," *Economic Geography*, Vol. 19 (1934), pp. 347–348.
- (14) Comeaux, footnote 12, pp. 63–70.
- (15) Don L. Gary, "A Geographic Systems Analysis of the Commerical Crawfish Industry in South Louisiana" (Ph.D. dissertation, Oregon State University, 1973), pp. 46, 57–83.
- (16) Comeaux, footnote 12, p. 68.
- (17) William B. Knipmeyer, "Settlement Succession in Eastern French Louisiana" (Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1956), pp. 144–162, plate 116.
- (18) Fred Kniffen, "The Outdoor Oven in Louisiana," *Louisiana History*, Vol. 1 (1960), pp. 25–35.
- (19) Fred B. Kniffen, "Louisiana House Types," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 26 (1936), pp. 179–193; Milton B. Newton, Jr., "Louisiana House Types, A Field Guide," *Mélanges*, Vol. 2 (1971), p. 5; Newton, footnote 3, p. 86.
- (20) Perry H. Howard, *Political Tendencies in Louisiana* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1971), pp. 26–31.
- (21) Newton, footnote 3, p. 71.

- (22) Howard, footnote 20, pp. 228–231.
- (23) William C. Havard, Rudolf Heberle, and Perry H. Howard, *The Louisiana Elections of 1960* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1963), pp. 55–78.
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