

(from the 1858 Texas Almanac)

TEXAS – TEXIAN – TEXAN

[Extract from an old manuscript, (not published,) “A Review of Kennedy’s History of Texas.”]

The first specific objection we shall allege to his excellent work, is founded on the mode by which he prefers to convert our country’s appellation into its personal term. He says, in a note to volume 1, page 217: — “Texas and *Texan* are the correct English appellations of the land and its inhabitants.”

It is an indubitable fact that the inhabitants of Texas, literate and illiterate, have almost universally adopted the term *Texian*, to define their political individuality, and we are not apprised of any rule of language that is violated in doing so. Words are but arbitrary signs at best; and, although lexicographers and grammarians have certain established rules for the construction of them in their several modifications, there is scarcely a single rule which does not leave room for and recognize some exceptions. We believe, however, there is no fixed rule governing the conversion and termination of names of places into their *personal* appellations. If there is, writers of the most approved character and nations, ancient and modern, have corrupted it in many instances.

Texas ends in *as* ; we cannot on the instant, recollect any country or place whose name has the same termination. Paris ends in *is*, and we say *Parisian* ; Tunis has a like terminus, and we say *Tunisian*. Examples in cases most analogous are in our favor; but nothing can be more fanciful and without rule, than the various modes of effecting such verbal conversions. For Greece, we say *Grecian*, or Greek; for Persia, *Persian*; Rome, Roman; England, English; Turkey, Turk, or Turcoman; Russia, Russ, or *Russian*; America, American; China, Chinese, &c., &c., with incessant variations. We, therefore, conclude there can be no imperative law of language adverse to the term *Texian*, which we have almost universally adopted, and which is fully incorporated into our public documents. We believe every man has originally the right to determine the orthography, and, if you please, the *rhythm* of his own proper name; and certainly communities are equally privileged. We fancy that *Texian*, the *i* pronounced *e* soft, according to the vernacular tongue of our late step-dame, has more of euphony, and is better adapted to the convenience of poets who shall hereafter celebrate our deeds in sonorous strains, than the harsh, abrupt, ungainly appellation, *Texan* — impossible in rhyme to anything but the merest doggerel; and we are sure the accomplished author of *Fitful Fancies* will not insist on a term which even his genius would find it difficult to compose to the metrical harmony of an epic.

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