French Imperial Projects in Mexico, 1820–1867

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Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

I, Edward Shawcross, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

The standard narrative of nineteenth-century imperialism in Latin America is one of US expansion and British informal influence. However, it was France, not Britain, which made the most concerted effort to counter US power through Louis-Napoléon's creation of an empire in Mexico under the Habsburg Archduke Maximilian. Despite its significance to French and Mexican history, this intervention is invariably described as an "illusion", an "adventure" or a "mirage". This thesis answers the question why some Mexicans believed that the survival of the nation itself depended upon French intervention, and why France sought to impose an informal-imperial model on Mexico. It does so by analysing the full context of Franco-Mexican relations from 1820 onwards: French and Mexican ideas about monarchy in Latin America; responses to US expansion and the development of anti-Americanism and pan-Latinism; the consolidation of Mexican conservatism and the French Second Empire's influence as a political paradigm; and, finally, the collaboration of some Mexican elites with French imperialism.

This thesis draws upon French, Mexican, British and US sources, especially diplomatic dispatches, periodicals and published works. The approach challenges the separation between intellectual history and international history. By going beyond the conventional history of ideas focus on 'canonical' texts, it seeks to identify the extent to which currents of thought normally considered to be the preserve of well-known intellectuals and politicians were part of a wider political culture that influenced French policy in Mexico, and shaped the contours of Mexican political discourse. An important dimension of the relationship between Mexico and France was the transatlantic and transnational context in which it developed, where competing conceptions of Mexico and France as nations, the role of Europe and the United States in the Americas and the idea of Latin America itself were challenged and debated.

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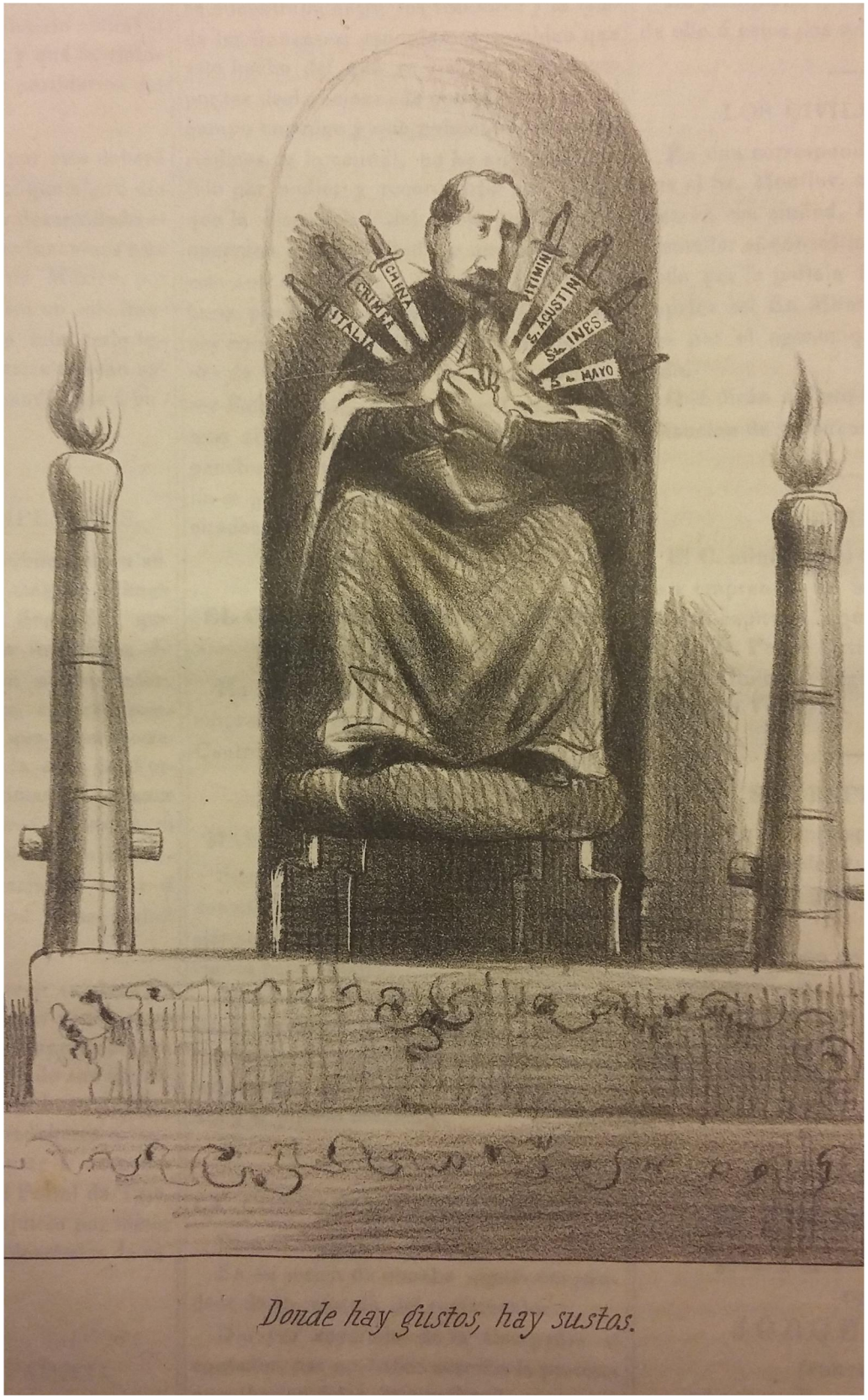
Figure 1: A cartoon from a satirical Mexican periodical depicting Louis-Napoléon, Emperor of the French. The caption translates idiomatically as “There is no pain without gain”, a more literal translation would read: “Where there are pleasures, there are risks”. *La Orquesta* (Mexico City), 7 May 1863, no page no. given.



Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisors: Professor Axel Körner for his invaluable comments and feedback, and especially Professor Nicola Miller for her inexhaustible patience, encouragement and forensic analysis.

Introduction

In the south of Mexico City a former Franciscan monastery built in the sixteenth century today houses the Museo Nacional de las Intervenciones. The museum's collection documents armed interventions in Mexico from independence to the Mexican Revolution, beginning with a Spanish attempt at reconquest in 1829 and ending with punitive US expeditions in 1916. According to a review in the *LA Times*, the museum was proof of Mexico's "obsession" with intervention and a "repository" of "unhealed wounds to Mexico's self-esteem".[1] A more sympathetic interpretation is that the museum, opened in 1981, demonstrates that the history of post-independent Mexico is one throughout which foreign powers repeatedly violated its national sovereignty. Rather than dwell upon perceived slights to Mexican *amour propre*, it might be more pertinent to ask why foreign nations were 'obsessed' with intervening in an independent country.

Amongst the Spanish uniforms, French flags and US weapons on display in the National Museum of Interventions, one imperial power is conspicuous by its absence: Britain. This is surprising because the standard narrative of imperialism in post-independence Latin America is one of British influence followed by the rise of the United States. Yet, in Mexico, it was France, not Britain that intervened militarily, first from 1838 to 1839 and then, on a much larger scale, from 1862 to 1867. These expeditions did not aim at territorial conquest. The objective of the 1838 intervention was to coerce the Mexican government into complying with French demands: payment of compensation to French nationals in Mexico and the negotiation of a Franco-Mexican treaty to regulate future relations. In order to achieve these goals, France sent its navy to blockade the Atlantic coast of Mexico. When the Mexican government refused France's ultimatum, French forces bombarded and then occupied the fortress of San Juan de Ulúa which guarded the entrance to the port city of Veracruz. To end the intervention, the Mexican

[1] Dan Williams, 'Mexico's Obsession With "Foreign Intervention" Enshrined in Museum', *LA Times* (Los Angeles), 5 June 1986, p. 21.

government was forced to pay France an indemnity of 600,000 piastres and sign a provisional treaty of commerce, navigation and friendship.[2]

The ostensible reasons the French government gave for the second intervention, which began in 1861 as a tripartite expedition with France, Britain and Spain, shared the same basic purpose as the 1838 expedition: to ensure the compliance of the Mexican government with French demands. The specific aims were outlined in the Convention of London signed on 31 October 1861: coerce the Mexican government, led by Benito Juárez (1806-72), to honour payments on Mexico's international debt, which Juárez had suspended in July, and secure better protection for European nationals in Mexico.[3] However, the ambitions of the French emperor, Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte (1808-73), extended far beyond mere debt collection. He planned regime change (to use an anachronism) in order to establish a state closely tied to French interests, but not ruled from Paris. Once this became clear, Spain and Britain withdrew from the expedition.[4]

Unhindered by its erstwhile allies, France, from April 1862, began an imperial project on a grand scale. The initial expeditionary force was defeated by Juárez's forces at Puebla on 5 May 1862, but the city was taken the following year and in the face of the advancing French army, the constitutional government of Mexico was forced to flee its capital in May. In June 1863 Mexico's republican institutions were replaced by a regency which governed Mexico until the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian (1832-67) and his Belgian wife Marie Charlotte (1840-1927) were crowned as Emperor and Empress of Mexico in June 1864.[5] Faced

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[2] The piastre was the Mexican currency, fixed and equivalent in value to the US dollar. One franc was worth roughly a fifth of one piastre or dollar and therefore the indemnity was equal to circa 3 million francs. $600,000 was 3.42 percent of the total tax revenue collected by the Mexican government in 1839. Tax figures taken from Barbara Tenenbaum, *The Politics of Penury: Debts and Taxes in Mexico, 1821-1856* (New Mexico: University of New Mexico, 1986), 'Appendix: Mexican Finances, 1821-56, Table C, Income vs Expenses, 1821-61', 182.

[3] The convention is printed in 'The Mexican Convention between England, France, And Spain', *The Times* (London), 18 November 1861, p. 7.

[4] For the diplomacy behind this see Carl Bock, *Prelude to Tragedy: The Negotiation and Breakdown of the Tripartite Convention of London, October 31, 1861* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966).

[5] The choice of Maximilian was made for a variety of reasons, not least of which was his desire to take the throne. Other candidates had been suggested, but a Spanish Bourbon was considered impractical from a Mexican perspective because of antipathy towards Spain and from a French point of view because Spain as a maritime power would have significant influence over the new monarch. Louis-Napoléon considered a French candidate impolitic. Finally, he harboured vague hopes that

with continuing Mexican opposition from forces led by Juárez, and US diplomatic pressure, Louis-Napoléon announced in January 1866 that French troops would withdraw. Charlotte returned to Europe to plead in person to Louis-Napoléon for continued military support, but, unmoved by her appeals, the French emperor ensured that the last French troops evacuated Veracruz by March 1867. Three months later, on 19 June 1867, Maximilian was executed and republican government in Mexico was restored. The life of the second emperor of Mexico ended as had that of the first, Agustín de Iturbide (1783-1824), by execution.[6] Three years later, 4 September 1870, the French Second Empire collapsed, its emperor in captivity after defeat at the battle of Sedan during the Franco-Prussian War.[7]

The Historiography of the 1862-67 French Intervention

The Mexican and French Second Empires have been judged by their dramatic conclusions, obscuring the ideas that underwrote French intervention in Mexico and the regime which it created. In Mexico, the empire of Maximilian (1864-67) was condemned by those who defeated it. Interpreted through the prism of national history, it was represented as an arcane aberration, like the French Second Empire in France, before the triumph of liberal republicanism. This explanation was embedded into Mexican national discourse by writers of officialist history under the *Porfiriato* (the period from 1876 to 1911 marked by the authoritarian rule of Porfirio Díaz, 1830-1915) who had supported Juárez.[8] The struggle was portrayed as a Manichean one of good versus evil, liberal republicans against foreign invaders supported only by a small number of reactionary and

supporting a Habsburg would facilitate a rapprochement with Austria after the 1859 Italian War. The most detailed analysis the diplomacy behind Maximilian's acceptance of the crown remains Egon Caesar Corti, *Maximilian and Charlotte of Mexico*, 2 vols., trans. Catherine Alison (New York; London: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928). See also Mary Margaret McAllen, *Maximilian and Carlota: Europe's Last Empire in Mexico* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2014).

[6] Iturbide was elected emperor of the First Mexican Empire on 19 May 1822. He abdicated on 19 March 1823 and went into exile. He was executed a year later when he returned to Mexico without the authorisation of the republican government. See Timothy Anna, *The Mexican Empire of Iturbide*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990).

[7] Three chronologies are given at the end of the thesis which detail events in Mexico and France for the years 1820 to 1867, pp. 253-64.

[8] Most notably by José María Vigil, *La Reforma*, vol. 5 of Vicente Riva Palacio (ed.), *México a través de los siglos: Historia general y completa del desenvolvimiento social, político, religioso, militar, artístico, científico y literario de México desde la antigüedad más remota hasta la época actual*, 5 vols. (Barcelona: Espasa y Compañía**,** 1884-89).

treasonous Mexican Conservatives and monarchists. Juárez's victory in 1867 became one of the foundational moments of Mexican history.[9] The Mexican Revolution (1910-20) appropriated the legend of Juárez into its own rhetoric of triumphant progress,[10] and historians repeated the by-now standard narrative of the French intervention and its place in Mexico's past.[11] With few exceptions,[12] there was no counter to this interpretation because of the near-complete abandonment of the Mexican Second Empire by its adherents: even those who had been *plus royaliste que le roi*, such as General Leonardo Marqúez (1820-1913), who held Mexico City for the empire even after its emperor had been executed, or one of the earliest proponents of a monarchy in Mexico under Maximilian, Francisco de Paula Arrangoiz y Berzábal (1812-1899), distanced themselves from the regime.[13]

Early analysis of the intervention in France was similarly negative for two reasons. First, the intervention never had widespread public or political support.[14] The expedition to Mexico united conservative legitimists, liberal Orléanists and

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[9] See Charles Weeks, *The Juárez Myth in Mexico* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1987) and his earlier article Charles Weeks, 'Uses of a Juárez Myth in Mexican Politics', *Il Politico*, 29 (1974), 210-33.

[10] Alan Knight, 'The Peculiarities of Mexican History: Mexico Compared to Latin America, (1821-1992)', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 24 (1992), 139-40.

[11] See, for example, Jesús Reyes Heroles, *El Liberalismo mexicano*, 3 vols. (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), 1957-61).

[12] Although he was not an apologist for the French intervention or the Mexican Second Empire, the *Porfiriato*-era Mexican writer and politician Francisco Bulnes attempted to debunk the hero worship of Juárez in *El verdadero Juárez y la verdad sobre la intervención y el imperio* (Mexico City: Vda. de C. Bouret, 1904), and *Juárez y la revoluciones de Ayutla y de Reforma* (Mexico City: Tip. de la Compañia Editorial Católica, 1906). This resulted in numerous articles, pamphlets and books attacking Bulnes as well as public demonstrations denouncing him as a "traitor to the fatherland". Weeks, 'Uses of a Juarez Myth', 220. On Bulnes see David Brading and Lucrecia Orensanz, 'Francisco Bulnes y la verdad acerca de México en el siglo XIX', *Historia Mexicana*, 45 (1996), 621-651.

[13] Leonardo Marqúez, *Manifiestos: El imperio y los imperiales* (Mexico: F. Vazquez, 1904), 23-29; Francisco de Paula Arrangoiz y Berzábal, *Méjico desde 1808 hasta 1867. Relacion de los principales acontecimientos ... desde la prison del Virey Iturrigaray hasta la caida del segundo imperio. Con una noticia preliminar del sistema general de gobierno que regia en 1808, etc.,* 4 vols. (Madrid: A. Pérez Dubrull) III, 219. For an overview of the historiography see Erika Pani, *El Segundo Imperio: pasados de usos multiples* (Mexico: Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004) and 'Republicans and Monarchists, 1848–1867' in William Beezley (ed.), *A Companion to Mexican History and Culture* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 273-87.

[14] French public opinion is explored in Lynn M. Case, *French Opinion on the United States and Mexico, 1860-1867. Extracts from the reports of the procureurs généraux* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1936). See also Frank Lally, *French Opposition to the Mexican Policy of the Second Empire* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, 1931). The French historiography on the Mexican expedition is discussed in Guy Martinière, 'L'expédition mexicaine de Napoléon III dans l'historiographie française', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 21 (1974), 142-173.

moderate republicans in opposition to the government. The criticisms of celebrated orators such as Pierre Antoine Berryer (1790-1868), Adolphe Thiers (1797-1877) and Jules Favre (1809-1880) in the *Corps législatif* were widely publicised.[15] Furthermore, returning French officers wrote unfavourable accounts of the Mexican Second Empire which augmented the negative portrayal of French policy.[16] Second, events in France meant that the Mexican intervention was subsumed into a wider vilification of the Second Empire itself. After 1870, French republican historiography, building on earlier attacks,[17] created a black legend around the second Bonapartist regime.[18] Moreover, the abdication of Louis-Napoléon during the Franco-Prussian War encouraged his opponents to portray his Mexican policy as a microcosm for the Emperor's own failings; a stepping stone on the road to Sedan. For French republicans, it was no coincidence that the commander-in-chief of the army in Mexico from 1863 to 1867, Achille Bazaine (1811-88), was the man who surrendered the fortress of Metz to the Prussians on 27 October 1870.[19]

Contemporary French critics of Louis-Napoléon's policy, such as Thiers, described it as a "chimera", an "illusion", or an "adventure".[20] These epithets have

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[15] Their speeches were reproduced the next day in the official government paper, *Le Moniteur universel* (Paris). The published speeches of Berryer, Favre and Thiers all contain their attacks on the government's Mexican policy. Pierre Antoine Berryer, *Oeuvres de Berryer: discours parlementaires*, 8 vols. (Paris: Didier, 1872-78); Jules Favre, *Discours parlementaires, publiés par Mme. Vve. J. Favre*, 4 vols. (Paris: E. Plon, 1881); Adolphe Thiers, *Discours parlementaires de M. Thiers*, 16 vols. (Paris: M. Calmon, 1879-89).

[16] One of the earliest and most influential in this genre, with a preface by Lucien-Anatole Prévost-Paradol, was Émile de Kératry's, *L'élévation et la chute de l'empire Maximilien: intervention française au Mexique, 1861-1867* (Paris: A. Lacroix, Verboeckhoven et Cie, 1867). Followed by Kératry, *La contre-guérilla française au Mexique: souvenirs des Terres chaudes* (Paris: Librairie internationale; Bruxelles; Leipzig; Livourne: A. Lacroix, Verboeckhoven & Cie, 1868).

[17] Most famously Victor Hugo, *Napoléon le Petit* (London: Jeffs; Bruxelles: A. Mertens, 1852).

[18] On the black legend see Maurice Agulhon (ed.), *Pourquoi réhabiliter le Second Empire?: actes du colloque organisé par le Souvenir napoléonien* (Paris: Souvenir Napoléonien, 1997); Pierre Guiral and Émile Témime, 'L'Historiographie du Second Empire', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 21 (1974), 1-17. In English see Roger Price, *The Second French Empire: An Anatomy of Political Power,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Stuart Campbell, *The Second Empire Revisited: A Study in French Historiography* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1978).

[19] In its obituary for Bazaine, *La Presse* cheerfully announced "[t]he traitor is dead!" 'Bazaine – La mort d'un soldat traître à son pays', *La Presse* (Paris)*,* 26 September 1888, p. 2. As late as 1927 an article in *La Revue de Paris* argued that attempts to rehabilitate "the man of Metz" and his role in Mexico were undeserved: "[Bazaine] was the principle architect of the catastrophe and history should consider him primarily responsible for the death of the unfortunate Maximilian". Louis Sonolet, 'Agonie de l'Empire du Mexique – I', *Revue de Paris*, 34 (1927), 590. All translations are the author's except where otherwise noted.

[20] In a speech made in 1864 criticising the Mexican intervention Thiers managed to fit the word "illusion" three times into one sentence which concluded with the adjective "chimerical" before

become the conclusions of historians who have studied the intervention, which, in these works, remains condemned by the disjuncture between the Mexican 'reality' and Louis-Napoléon's false understanding of it. In this view, Louis-Napoléon was misled into an ill-advised intervention at the behest of a small clique of émigré Mexican Conservatives and by *affairiste* French diplomats.[21] A recent French historian concludes: "the intervention, from the beginning, was only a monumental and regrettable misunderstanding."[22] Moreover, those anglophone historians who have addressed the French foundation of Maximilian's empire have done so from an almost exclusively French, or at best European and/or US, perspective, studying it in isolation with little reference either to wider French imperial policy or Mexican sources. Many have similarly concluded that the intervention was embarked upon because Louis-Napoléon was deluded, either by his own dreams, those of others, or a combination of the two.[23]

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pronouncing that he would henceforth refer to the intervention as an "adventure". Thiers, *Discours*, XIX, 468-70. The criticisms of Thiers and Favre were followed by early historians of the French Second Empire. See, for example, Émile Ollivier *L'Empire liberal*, 18 vols. (Paris: Garnier frères, 1895-1915), V and VI, and Taxile Delord, *Histoire du Second Empire*, 6 vols. (Paris: G. Baillière, 1869-75), III, 287-88; 289-90; 366.

[21] A view recently restated by Romain Delmon, 'Les acteurs de la politique impériale lors de l'expédition au Mexique: L'ecart entre la vision de Napoléon III et la réalité Mexicaine' in Gabriel Leanca (ed.), *La politique extérieure de Napoléon III* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011), 75-99. See also (and note the titles), Guy-Alain Dugast, *La tentation mexicaine en France au XIXe siècle: L'image du Mexique et l'Intervention française*, 2 vols. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008); Alain Gouttman, *La guerre du Mexique (1862-1867): Le mirage américain de Napoléon III* (Paris: Perrin, 2008); Jean-François Lecaillon, *Napoléon III et le Mexique: les illusions d'un grand dessein* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994); Jean-François Lecaillon, 'Mythes et phantasmes au cœur de l'intervention française au Mexique, 1862-1867', *Cahiers des Amériques latines*, 9 (1990), 69-79; Nancy Nichols Barker, *The French Experience in Mexico 1821-1861: A History of Constant Misunderstanding*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1979); Christian Schefer, *La Grande Pensée de Napoléon III, Les origines de l'Expédition du Mexique* (Paris: M. Riviére, 1939).

[22] Lecaillon, *Napoléon III*, 222.

[23] Michelle Cunningham explores the intervention through the prism of Louis-Napoléon's approach to nationalities and his European system of diplomacy, *Mexico and the Foreign Policy of Napoleon III* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001). Nancy Nichols Barker addresses interventionist diplomats and the Jecker bonds in 'The Duke of Morny and the Affair of the Jecker Bonds', *French Historical Studies*, 6 (1970), 556-61; 'The French Legation in Mexico: Nexus of Interventionists', *French Historical Studies*, 8 (1974), 409-26. Shirley Black offers an alternative interpretation: the intervention was undertaken to guarantee France's supply of precious metals in order to maintain its monetary system of bimetallism, Shirley Black, *Napoleon III and Mexican Silver* (Colorado: Ferrell, 2000). A conclusion that Marc Flandreau considers unlikely, *The Glitter of Gold: France, Bimetallism, and the Emergence of the International Gold Standard*, trans. Owen Leeming (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 179, fn 9. See also Jack Autrey Dabbs, *The French Army in Mexico 1861-1867: A Study in Military Government* (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1963), for a good narrative account of the intervention following French sources, especially the archive of Marshall Bazaine. Alfred Jackson Hanna and Kathryn Abbey Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico. American Triumph over Monarchy* (Chapel Hill:

In studies of the French Second Empire, moreover, the Mexican intervention is generally seen as tangential to the central story of the regime, and relatively unimportant in terms of foreign policy compared to the Crimean War (1854-56), the Italian War of 1859 or the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71). Furthermore, unlike French imperialism in Algeria or Indochina, it did not form part of a longer narrative which continued to affect France and its colonies. As a consequence, academics have focussed their attention elsewhere,[24] and Louis-Napoléon's Mexican policy is still frequently described as an "adventure" or an illusion.[25]

Mexican historians have recently challenged this dominant interpretation of Maximilian's empire as a *folie de grandeur*. Rather than viewing the empire as a European imposition alien to Mexican politics and history, recent scholarship has analysed the Mexican origins of the empire's political, economic, cultural and intellectual foundations,[26] a process Erika Pani describes as recovering "the empire

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University of North Carolina Press, 1971), is, as the title suggests, a partisan narrative, but remains a frequently cited work as does Thomas David Schoonover, *Dollars over Dominion: The Triumph of Liberalism in Mexican-United States Relations* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).

[24] Modern analyses of the French Second Empire or Louis-Napoléon give the expedition little space. For example, Éric Anceau, *Napoléon III: Un Saint-Simon à cheval* (Paris: Tallandier, 2008), 391-93 and 429-31; Jean-Claude Yon, *Le Second Empire: politique, société, culture* (Paris: A. Colin, 2004), 97-100; Price, *Anatomy of Power*, 57, 71, 305 and 401; Sylvie Aprile, *La IIe République et le Second Empire, 1848-1870: du prince président à Napoléon III* (Paris: Pygmalion, 2000), 321-25; James McMillan, *Napoleon III* (London: Longman, 1991), 149-52; Alain Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire*, 1852-1871, trans. Jonathan Mandelbaum (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 149-50; Louis Girard, *Napoléon III* (Paris: Fayard, 1986), 315-20.

[25] The word "adventure" is used seven times in the three-page preface to Lecaillon, *Napoléon III,* a work which contains "illusions" in the title, v-vii. The intervention is described as an "adventure" in the introduction of José Moya (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 5.

[26] Patricia Galeana (ed.), *El Imperio napoleónico y la monarquía en México*, (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 2012); Patricia Galeana (ed.), *Impacto de la intervención francesa en México* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 2011); Kristine Ibsen, *Maximilian, Mexico and the Invention of Empire* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2010); Claudia Ceja Andrade, *Al amparo del imperio: ideas y creencias sobre la justicia y el buen gobierno durante el Segundo Imperio mexicano* (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez, 2007); Erika Pani, 'Dreaming of a Mexican Empire: The Political Projects of the "Imperialistas"', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 82 (2002), 1-31; Brian Hamnett, 'Mexican Conservatives, Clericals, and Soldiers: The 'Traitor' Tomás Mejía through Reform and Empire, 1855-1867', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 20 (2001), 187-201; Erika Pani, *Para mexicanizar el Segundo Imperio: el imaginario político de los imperialistas* (Mexico City: Colegio de México, Centro de Estudios Históricos, 2001); Berta Flores Salinas, *Segundo Imperio mexicano* (Mexico City: Editorial Praxis, 1998); Robert Duncan, 'Political Legitimation and Maximilian's Second Empire in Mexico, 1864-1867', *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 12 (1996), 27-66. Recent work has focussed on the Second Empire's impact on a regional level. See Douglas Richmond, *Conflict and Carnage in Yucatán: Liberals, the Second Empire, and Maya Revolutionaries, 1855–1876* (Alabama, University of Alabama Press, 2015); Angela Moyano Pahissa, *Veinte años de la historia de Querétaro (1853-1873): Reforma, Intervención francesa, Segundo Imperio y Restauración de la República* (Mexico:

as a Mexican experience."[27] Although such an approach is greatly to be welcomed, these investigations, relying on the problematic historiography of French intervention discussed above, frequently take as their starting point the arrival of European forces on the shores of Mexico and treat the intervention as an accomplished fact without interrogating the policy goals of France or exploring what Louis-Napoléon hoped to construct in Mexico. Not only is it necessary to "Mexicanise" (Pani's term) the experience of politicians who worked with the French in order to create a Mexican empire, but also to imperialise the French decision to intervene in Mexico.

This thesis explores what can be learned by Mexicanising and imperialising the intervention and the regime which it created. In order to do this, the Mexican Second Empire will be placed within the wider context of Mexican history and French imperialism from 1820 to 1867. In Mexico, the ideas that underwrote calls for French intervention were partially formed in response to the problems the nation faced from its inception. From a French perspective, Latin America was part of a broader imperial context. This call to Mexicanise and imperialise the French intervention raises some general questions that this thesis will address: What might be learned from thinking about this intervention within the wider context of French imperialism? Why was it a failure when other French imperial projects, most notably Algeria or Indochina, proved to be much more enduring? How might historians think about it differently if Mexico is fully taken into account as a historical agent in its own right rather than a passive recipient of European policy? In order to answer these questions, French intervention might better be understood as an imperial policy, rather than an exceptional event shrouded in romantic language, while the decision of Mexicans to support French imperialism, and the foundation of a monarchy in a post-independence republic, can be analysed as a rational choice, instead of as a betrayal of the Mexican nation.

Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro, Editorial Universitaria, 2013); Roberto Lara, *La intervención francesa en Nuevo León (1864-1866): estudio de la resistencia a las autoridades y fuerzas armadas del Segundo Imperio Mexicano* (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, 2011); Carlos Armando Preciado de Alba, *Guanajuato en tiempos de la intervención francesa y el Segundo Imperio* (Mexico: Universidad de Guanajuato, Centro de Investigaciones Humanísticas, 2007).

[27] Pani, *Para Mexicanizar*, 20.

Mexican Political Thought and the Intervention:

Monarchism, Conservatism and Liberalism

Any attempt to Mexicanise the French intervention must begin with the Mexican historical context in which it took place. The collapse of Spain's rule triggered a prolonged conflict over what should fill the void of empire throughout its former colonies in America. From 1808 until 1867 a struggle for sovereignty and legitimacy, frequently violent, ensued in Mexico between competing political, economic and social visions of the nation. These distinct visions inspired different conceptions of the Mexican state and had multiple origins and multiple outcomes.[28] The Second Mexican Empire was one such conception and outcome, which its supporters hoped would provide a solution to the political instability of post-independence Mexico.

Stability was a key question for all Mexico's politicians in the period 1820-67. The crowning of Mexico's first emperor, Iturbide, to the execution of its second, Maximilian, has been described as a period of chaos "unparalleled in Mexican history".[29] Mexico was an empire under Iturbide (1822-23); a federal republic (1824-35); a central republic (1836-46); a restored federal republic (1846-53); and a dictatorship (1853-55).[30] This last government was overthrown and two years later the 1857 Constitution was proclaimed. However, this liberal, federal and republican document resulted in a civil war, with a de facto government in Mexico City opposing the new constitution and a de jure one at Veracruz, led by Juárez, supporting it. These two sides fought for power during the War of Reform (1858-1861). Juárez was victorious, but the French intervention (1862-67), supported by

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[28] An argument made for South America by Jeremy Adelman, 'Iberian Passages: Continuity and Change in the South Atlantic' in David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (eds.), *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context c.1760-1840* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 82.

[29] Timothy Anna, 'Demystifying Early Nineteenth-Century Mexico', *Mexican Studies*, 9 (1993), 120.

[30] William Fowler gives a brief survey of the period in *Mexico in the Age of Proposals*, *1821-1853* (London: Greenwood Press, 1998), 13-32. An overview of the Federal Republic can be found in Timothy Anna, *Forging Mexico: 1821-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998). The Central Republic is covered in depth from 1835 to 1846 by Michael Costeloe, *The Central Republic, 1835-1846: Hombres de Bien in the Age of Santa Anna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). On Santa Anna's last dictatorship see Carmen Vázquez Mantecón, *Santa Anna y la encrucijada del estado: La Dictadura, 1853-55* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1986). Works on Juárez and the *Reforma* era are numerous, Brian Hamnett provides an introduction in *Juárez* (London: Longman, 1993).

many of those who lost the civil war, replaced his government with a regency (1863) in preparation for the empire of Maximilian (1864-67).[31] Regimes were frequently overthrown by successful *pronunciamientos* (plans issued against the serving government) backed by military support.[32] Mexican politics was, therefore, characterised by instability.[33]

That a monarchy under an Austrian Archduke was seen by some as a solution to this problem is a testament to the endurance of the ideas that lay behind it. A centralist regime with a strong government and powerful executive, as opposed to a federal republic with a weak executive and powerful legislature, was one system that had its adherents in Mexico throughout the period 1820-67. For some in Mexico, monarchy remained a viable means of implementing this political vision. Indeed, Mexico initially achieved independence under these principles with Iturbide as emperor. However, he reigned for only eight months (from coronation to abdication) and his rule was pronounced as anathema after his fall by nearly all sections of Mexico's political elite. Within the traditional Mexican liberal historiography this disavowal of monarchy as a form of government suited to Mexico became subsumed in a wider critique of Mexican conservatism.

Although Mexican politics belies neat schematic categorisations, in general those who supported centralism, and certainly those who supported monarchy, became associated with the Mexican Conservative Party, founded in 1849 by Lucas Alamán (1792-1853), the leading proponent of conservative thought in Mexico as politician and historian.[34] The Conservative Party was defeated twice: first in the War of Reform by Juárez's liberals and then in 1867 with the fall of Maximilian. The triumph of liberals in 1867 followed by the *Porfiriato* ensured that supporters of the Conservative Party were vilified in subsequent Mexican historiography alongside

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[31] Chronologies 1 and 3 detail events in Mexico for the period 1820-67, pp. 253-57 and 261-64.
[32] On the role of the pronunciamiento in Mexican politics see William Fowler (ed.), *Celebrating Insurrection: The Commemoration and Representation of the Nineteenth-Century Mexican Pronunciamiento* (London: University of Nebraska Press, 2012), and William Fowler (ed.), *Forceful Negotiations: The Origins of the Pronunciamiento in Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (London: University of Nebraska Press, 2012).
[33] On the causes of Mexico's instability see Donald Stevens, *The Origins of Instability in Early Republican Mexico* (London: Duke University Press, 1991).
[34] His ideas were most famously articulated through his history of Mexico, Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Méjico*, 5 vols. (Mexico: Impr. de J. M. Lara, 1849-53). The edition consulted throughout the thesis is *Historia de México*, 5 vols. (Mexico: Impr. de V.Agüeros y Cía, 1883-85).

the Second Mexican Empire. After 1867, Mexican liberalism became a victorious force with its own "unifying political myth".[35] Enrique Krauze writes that in these Mexican officialist historical accounts (*historia de bronce*) there is a simple deification of liberals as the saviours of the *patria* in contrast to a vilification of conservatives as "traitors", "turncoats" and "reactionaries".[36] Moreover, the triumph of liberalism not only condemned conservatives as the enemies of Mexico, but also consigned them to historical oblivion because of a sympathy amongst many anglophone historians for federalist, liberal-republicans, who encouraged closer links between Mexico and the United States, rather than authoritarian or monarchical clerical Catholics, who understood the United States to be the national enemy and its values entirely contrary to Mexican political culture and society.[37]

The liberal historiographical interpretation understood federal republicanism as the endgame of Mexican history and thus obscured alternative political visions for the Mexican nation, such as monarchism. This is a particularly striking example of the tendency towards what Eric van Young has referred to as "outcomism" in Mexican history: simplifications are reinforced by *historia de bronce* literature where "political roads not taken are erased from the maps".[38] The view that monarchism was something exotic to Mexican history has been challenged. Edmundo O'Gorman argued that the "monarchical idea" was a powerful rival to republicanism and federalism during the period 1820-67,[39] and a number of subsequent works have explored various points in Mexican history when monarchical ideas became particularly prominent.[40] An analysis of why monarchism

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[35] Charles Hale, *The Transformation of Liberalism in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 3.
[36] Enrique Krauze, *Siglo de caudillos: Biografía de política de México, 1810-1910* (Barcelona: Tusquets, 1994), 20-21.
[37] Brian Hamnett 'El Partido Conservador en México, 1858-1867: La lucha por el poder' in William Fowler and Humberto Morales, *El conservadurismo mexicano en el siglo XIX, 1810-1910* (Puebla: Benemerita Universidad Autónoma, 1999), 213-14.
[38] Eric Van Young, *Writing Mexican History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 160-61.
[39] Edmundo O'Gorman, *La supervivencia política novo-hispana: Reflexiones sobre el monarquismo mexicano* (Mexico City: Fundación cultural de Condumex, S.A., Centro de estudios de historia de México, 1969), 5.
[40] Marco Antonio Landavazo, 'Orígenes políticos y culturales del monarquismo mexicano', *Araucaria: Revista Iberoamericana de filosofía, política y humanidades*, 25 (2011), 62-85; Erika Pani, 'La innombrable: monarquismo y cultura política en el México decimonónico' in Brian Connaughton (ed.), *Prácticas populares, cultura política y poder en México*, (Mexico: Casa Juan Pablos, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Unidad Iztapalapa, 2008), 369–94; Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'Centralistas,

in Mexico persisted, why some actively sought European support in order to implement it and why many in Europe understood it as the best solution for Mexico's problems may elucidate further not only why France tried to found an empire in Mexican, but also why some Mexicans rallied to it.

Monarchism was a subset of Mexican conservatism and it was those associated with the Conservative Party who called for French intervention in Mexican politics. Thus analysis of Mexican conservatism is central to explaining the French intervention. However, work on Mexican conservatism remains limited when compared to the historiography on Mexican liberalism for the period.[41] Recent studies, however, have shone light onto Mexican conservatism, its beliefs and importance to Mexican history.[42] Conservatives never formed a unified political

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conservadores y monarquistas, 1830–1853' in Fowler and Humberto Morales, *El conservadurismo mexicano*; Luis Medina Peña, *Invención del sistema político mexicano: Forma de gobierno y gobernabilidad en México en el siglo XIX* (Mexico City: Fondo Cultura Económica, 2005); Elias José Palti (ed.), *La política del disenso: la "polémica en torno al monarquismo" (México, 1848-1850) ... y las aporías del liberalismo* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1998); Jaime Delgado, *La monarquía en México: 1845-1847* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1990); Miguel Soto, *La conspiración monárquica en México*, 1845-1846 (Tepepan: EOSA, 1988). See also Pani, 'Republicans and Monarchists'; Frank Joseph Sanders, 'Proposals for monarchy in Mexico: 1823-1860' (University of Arizona, D.Phil thesis, 1967), and Carlos Villanueva, *La Monarquía en América*, 4 vols. (Paris: P. Ollendorff, 1911-1913).

[41] For example, Karen Caplan, *Indigenous Citizens Local Liberalism in Early National Oaxaca and Yucatán* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Patrick McNamara, *Sons of the Sierra: Juárez, Díaz, and the People of Ixtlán, Oaxaca, 1855*-1920 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Peter Guardino, *Peasants, Politics and the Formation of the Mexico's Nation State* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002); Florencia Mallon, *Peasant and Nation: The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru* (California: University of California Press, 1995); Alan Knight, 'Peasants into Patriots: Thoughts on the Making of the Mexican Nation', *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 10 (1994), 135-161.

[42] Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'Liberales y conservadores en México: diferencias y similitudes.' *Estudios interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe*, 8 (2014); Benjamin Smith, *The Roots of Conservatism in Mexico: Catholicism, Society, and Politics in the Mixteca Baja, 1750-1962* (New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2012); Erika Pani (ed.), *Conservadurismo y derechas en la historia de México*, 2 vols. (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 2009); Renée de la Torre, Marta Eugenia García Ugarte and Juan Manuel Ramírez Sáiz (eds.), *Los Rostros del conservadurismo Mexicano* (Mexico City: CIESAS, 2005); Hamnett, 'Mexican Conservatives'; Javier Rodriguez Piña, 'Conservatives Debate the Meaning of Independence' in William Beezley and David Lorey (eds*.), Viva Mexico! Viva Independencia! Celebrations of September 16* (Delaware: SR Books, 2001); Fowler and Morales (eds.), *El conservadurismo mexicano*; Alfonso Noriega, *El pensamiento conservador y el conservadurismo mexicano*, 2 vols. (Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, 1972); François Chevalier, 'Conservateurs et libéraux au Mexique: Essai de sociologie et géographie politiques de l'indépendance à l'intervention française', *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale*, 8 (1964), 457-474.

movement, even after the foundation of the Conservative Party in 1849;[43] nonetheless, certain general principles of Mexican conservatism can be identified in the period 1820-67. These were i) a preference for a strong, centralist state administered by a large bureaucracy and maintained by a professional standing army; ii) the Catholic Church as a base of Mexican identity and morality; iii) a preference for institutions over individuals; iv) a rejection of laissez-faire liberal economics in favour of moderate protectionism and state intervention; v) the preservation of colonial *fueros* (legal privileges accorded to the army and the Church) and indigenous communal landholdings and vi) a restricted franchise.[44] In addition to these national goals, Benjamin Smith identifies four elements that ensured this platform had popular appeal at a local level: i) political pragmatism, ii) openness to socioeconomic change, iii) support for clerical Catholicism and iv) concern for order and stability.[45]

These general trends notwithstanding, Mexican political affiliations were complex, fluid and changed over time.[46] The term "Conservative", with an upper-case "C", is used in this thesis to describe individuals who self-identified with the Conservative Party, after its foundation in 1849.[47] However, there were currents of thought in Mexico in the decades before the Party's foundation that can best be described as "conservative", though their proponents would not often have used this word. The term "conservative", with a lower-case "c", will therefore be used in

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[43] Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 42. The Conservative Party was a loose affiliation of like-minded politicians rather than a clearly defined organisation. Vicente Fuentes Díaz, *Los partidos políticos en México* (Mexico City: Editorial Altiplano 2nd ed., 1969), 57.

[44] Fowler, *Mexico in the Age of Proposals,* 46; Stevens, *Origins of Instability*, 28-36.

[45] Smith, *Roots of Conservatism*, 80.

[46] Fowler breaks Mexican politics in the period 1821-53 down into five "broad and heterogeneous" categories: i) traditionalist-conservative-liberals; ii) traditionalist-liberals; iii) moderates; iv) radicals; and, v), *santanistas*. Fowler, *Mexican in the Age of Proposals*, 12.

[47] Fowler argues that "there was no conservative political project until the 1840s. To claim that there was one before then is not only an anachronism; it simply cannot be sustained with the available historical data". Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 44. Fowler prefers the term "traditionalist". However, the currents of thought influencing the politicians who expressed what Fowler terms "traditionalist" ideas from the 1820s to 1840s were eclectic, ranging, to name but a few, from Burke to Constant and Guizot to Chateaubriand. Given this intellectual genealogy, and the fact that they wished to reform Mexican political institutions along French or British parliamentary lines (see chapter two), the term "traditionalist" can obscure because it is not clear in what sense these factors were "traditional" to Mexican or even Spanish political culture. Catherine Andrews engages in this debate in 'Sobre conservadurismo e ideas conservadores en la primera república federal (1824-1835)' in Pani (ed.), *Conservadurismo y derechas*, 88-92.

this thesis to describe politicians, intellectuals and their ideas prior to the foundation of the Conservative Party.

Prior to the appearance of the Conservative Party, what is meant by conservative politicians and intellectuals is best defined through their relationship to liberalism.[48] Far from being binary opposites, conservatism and liberalism in Mexico grew out of shared intellectual traditions. The 1789 French Revolution had a profound impact upon Mexican political ideas.[49] Currents of eighteenth-century French thought, as well as Spanish, British and US ideas, shaped Mexican liberalism,[50] but individuals of varying political persuasions, including conservatives, appropriated different elements from these to support their views. Furthermore, there was broad agreement across the political spectrum in post-independent Mexico on key principles of the 1789 French Revolution, such as constitutional representative government, right to property and security. There was disagreement on the best way to implement and safeguard these, but, in the immediate aftermath of independence, the similarities between the majority of Mexican politicians were more apparent than the differences.[51]

Leaders of liberal thought and politics in Mexico, such as José María Luis Mora (1794-1850), Valentín Gómez Farías (1781-1858) and Lorenzo de Zavala (1788-1836), were politically and socially conservative.[52] They advocated restricting the franchise and limiting mass participation in electoral politics and they understood property to be the bulwark upon which liberty (and electoral law) was founded.[53] More radical liberals, like Zavala, who argued for the introduction of

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[48] On Mexican liberalism see Charles Hale, *Liberalism in the Age of Mora, 1821-53* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968). See also Hale, *The Transformation of Liberalism* and Heroles, *El Liberalismo mexicano*. The ideas of liberals are outlined in Stevens, *Origins of Instability*, 29-31**,** and Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, chs. 4 and 5.

[49] María del Carmen Borrego Plá, 'La influencia de la francia revolucionaria en México: el texto constitucional de Apatzingán' in Borrego Plá and Leopoldo Zea (eds.), *América Latina ante la Revolución Francesa* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1993), 9-30. See also Solange Alberro, Alicia Hernández Chávez, and Elías Trabulse (eds.), *La Revolución francesa en México* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1992) and Oscar Marti, 'Le Mexique et la Révolution française: Antécédents et conséquences (1746-1838)' in Christian Hermann (ed.), *Les Révolutions dans le monde Ibérique*, 2 vols. (Bordeaux: Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 1991).

[50] Hale*, Liberalism*, 61.

[51] See Vázquez, 'Liberales y conservadores'.

[52] Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 43; Hale, *Liberalism*, 124.

[53] Hale, *Liberalism*, 95-98.

freedom of worship in the years following independence, were in a minority.[54] The 1824 Constitution, which was the rallying cry for many liberals in the decades after independence, stated in article three: "[t]he religion of the Mexican nation is and will permanently be the Roman, Catholic, Apostolic" to the exclusion of all others.[55]

The main political disputes in the 1820s and 1830s revolved around issues that do not break down along ideological lines such as federalism and centralism, the relationship between the executive and the legislative, or the expulsion of the Spaniards from Mexico in the 1820s. Nonetheless, politicians, many of whom later became leaders of the Conservative Party, coalesced around these disputes in support of greater centralism, a more powerful executive and the defence of Church and army privileges. Furthermore, conservative politicians disapproved of the anti-corporatist tendencies of liberals, who at times attacked legal privileges left over from Spanish colonialism, or their support for classical liberal economic doctrine, which clashed with conservatives who argued for protectionism and state intervention to develop industry.[56] Therefore when referring to these individuals and their ideas the term "conservative" is used relatively to indicate a group of politicians who were more inclined to preserve colonial institutions in post-independent Mexico, were suspicious of some of the causes championed by those who identified themselves as liberals and rallied around the national and local conservative principles outlined above.

Within liberalism itself two distinct factions emerged: the *moderados* and the more radical *puro* wing. However, it was not until a new generation of *puro* liberals rose to prominence in the 1850s that an unbridgeable divide arose between those who supported their anti-clerical reforms and the Conservative Party which opposed them.[57] Another faction in Mexican politics, *santanistas*, the supporters of the caudillo and many-times president Santa Anna (1794-1876), a military and political leader with his powerbase in the state of Veracruz, is emblematic of the

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[54] *Ibid.,* 164-65; Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 43-44.
[55] 'Acta Constitutiva de la Féderación Mexicana', 31 January 1824 printed in Miguel Ángel Porrúa (ed.), *Documentos para la historia del México independiente, 1808-1938* (Mexico City: Miguel Ángel Porrúa**;** H. Cámara de Diputados, LXI Legislatura, 2010), 246-55.
[56] Hale, *Liberalism,* 248-89.
[57] Hale, *Liberalism*, 296-97.

fluid nature of Mexican politics. Santa Anna was initially a supporter of federalism and associated with more radical liberals (especially during his first presidency, 1833-34), but later backed centralism and increasingly tended towards dictatorial rule and allied with the Conservative Party in 1853. His chief ideologue was José María de Tornel, who articulated *santanista* thought as it evolved throughout the period under study.[58]

The focus of this thesis will be on conservative ideas particularly as they were shaped by currents of French thought and by international events. Furthermore, the ideas of Mexican politicians will be analysed in this thesis from the premise that "political differences" need to be taken seriously, rather than accepting the historiographical tradition that emphasises personal ambition as the reason for shifts in political affiliations as opposed to an evolving ideological worldview that responded to events both within Mexico and internationally.[59] This is particularly pertinent as regards those who called for French intervention or later rallied to the Mexican Second Empire because the charge of contemporary opponents and some historians was that these individuals were motivated by an unprincipled desire for power.

An area of divergence in Mexican politics that had geopolitical implications was that conservative politicians were sympathetic to Europe, and feared the United States not only because of its expansion at Mexico's expense, but also because they believed the political institutions of the neighbouring republic to be inapplicable in Mexico. On the other hand, liberals tended to admire the United States, attribute its prosperity to federal republicanism, which strengthened their commitment to a similar political organisation in Mexico and, in spite of the Texan revolt (1835-36) and the US-Mexican War (1846-48), which saw Mexico lose nearly half of its national territory, much liberal opinion on the United States remained uncritical.[60] The majority of liberals "were mesmerized by the ideal society to the

[58] The evolution of *santanista* ideas is charted in William Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna: The Writer and the Caudillo, 1795-1853* (London: Greenwood Press, 2000). See also Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, ch. 6.
[59] Stevens, *Origins of Instability*, 27; Fowler, *Age of Proposals,* 3. For the historiography that perpetuates the role of personalist politics and ambition in Mexican history see page 3, fn. 19 in *ibid*.
[60] Hale, *Liberalism*, 202-9.

north and the spectacular material progress of the United States under republican federal institutions."[61] For conservatives, however, the United States was identified as the root cause of Mexico's endemic instability which it had deliberately fomented in order to weaken Mexico and thus make its conquest and eventual absorption easier. Analysis of this anti-Americanism forms a central part of this thesis because it helps to explain why conservatives increasingly looked to Europe, and France especially: in their eyes the United States was not a suitable model for Mexico.

Europe, to the contrary, provided solutions, not because it was free from the problems that afflicted Mexico and the United States, but because, Mexican conservatives argued, regimes and thinkers had developed ways to deal with these challenges. For conservative politicians events in Mexico mirrored the revolutions of 1789 and 1848.[62] Not only were the ideas developed by the *philosophes* in the eighteenth century, or later radical thinkers and politicians such as Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-65) or Alexandre Auguste Ledru-Rollin (1807-74), seen as responsible for upheaval throughout the Atlantic world, but post-revolutionary French regimes, such as the July Monarchy and the Second Empire, were seen as exemplars to adapt to Mexican circumstances. For conservative politicians, European (by which was usually meant Spanish, French or British) models and ideas were the bases from which to construct the Mexican state and national identity, while the apposite revolutions were not in the Protestant United States, but Catholic France.

France as an Imperial Power

French history and culture featured prominently as a reference point in Latin America political thought, and France also played an active role in the continent throughout the nineteenth century. France sent its navy to impose an indemnity on Haiti in return for recognition of Haitian independence (1825); threatened to bombard Cartagena (1834); blockaded Mexico in 1838-1839, and Argentina twice (1838-40 and 1845-48); garrisoned Montevideo with French troops

[61] *Ibid.,* 214.
[62] On the impact of 1848 in Latin America see Guy Thomson (ed.), *The European Revolutions of 1848 and the Americas* (London: University of London, Institute of Latin American Studies, 2002).

(1850-52); and made the first concerted attempt to construct the Panama Canal (1881-94). All this, of course, was in addition to the second French intervention in Mexico which saw the largest deployment of men and resources in Latin America by any power in the nineteenth century. France, then, did not lack ambition when it came to Latin America, yet there is no general survey of French policy in the region for the nineteenth century.

This lack of scholarly attention to French imperial projects in Latin America is part of a more general tendency in the study of French colonialism, which has suffered from what Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard, and Françoise Vergès refer to as a "black hole of memory".[63] Colette Zytnicki and Sophie Dulucq argue that, in France, colonial history emerged on the periphery of the historical field and, despite gaining some prominence between 1900 and 1920, was not institutionalised as an academic discipline. In the 1930s, it remained open to non-historians and anchored "in the political and business worlds which gave a dual image of amateurism and political activism."[64] France's acutely painful experience of decolonisation in the 1950s and 1960s ensured that colonial history, lacking firm institutional foundations, was marginalised: as Cécile Vidal writes, "France tried to erase the memory of its colonial empire and start from scratch."[65]

The last twenty five years, however, have seen a renewed interest in French imperial history from both French and anglophone historians.[66] Nonetheless, the

[63] 'L'héritage colonial, un trou de mémoire', *Hommes et Migrations*, 1228, (2000).
[64] Sophie Dulucq and Colette Zytnicki, 'Penser le passé colonial français, entre perspectives historiographiques et résurgence des mémoires', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, 86 (2005), 60.
[65] Cécile Vidal, 'The Reluctance of French Historians to Address Atlantic History', *Southern Quarterly*, 43 (2006), 59.
[66] See Robert Tombs and Maurice Vaïsse (eds.), *L'histoire coloniale en débat en France et en Grande-Bretagne* (Brussels: A. Versaille, 2010); Catherine Coquio (ed.), *Retours du colonial?: disculpation et réhabilitation de l'histoire coloniale française* (Nantes: Atlante, 2008); Pascal Blanchard, Sandrine Lemaire and Nicolas Bancel (eds.), *Culture coloniale en France: de la Révolution française à nos jours* (Paris: CNRS éditions, Autrement, 2008); Hubert Bonin, Catherine Hodeir and Jean-François Klein (eds.), *L'esprit économique impérial (1830-1970): groupes de pression et réseaux du patronat colonial en France et dans l'empire* (Paris: SFHOM, 2008). In English see Alice Conklin, 'Histories of Colonialism: Recent Studies of the Modern French Empire', *French Historical* Studies 30 (2007) 305-332; Martin Evans (ed.), *Empire and Culture: The French Experience, 1830-1940* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Robert Aldrich, 'Imperial mise en valeur and mise en scène: Recent Works on French Colonialism', *Historical Journal*, 45 (2002), 917-936; Robert Aldrich, *Greater France: A History of French Overseas Expansion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996).

period 1815 to 1870 remains relatively underexplored.[67] In part this can be explained by the fact that '*l'empire*" in French historiography usually refers to the First and Second Bonapartist empires. The term "imperialism" is conventionally associated with the Napoleonic model of continental expansion and French overseas territories are generally referred to as "*l'empire colonial*".[68] This concentration on French colonialism has largely ignored non-colonial attempts to further French influence.[69] This preference for research into areas of formal French rule may perhaps explain why there is no general analysis of French imperialism in Latin America,[70] which, aside from the colonies of Guadalupe, Martinique and French Guiana, remained outside France's formal empire. [71]

In 1815 this empire was at its smallest territorial extent since the early seventeenth century. However, despite defeat in the Napoleonic wars, David Todd argues that France remained a "military, economic, scientific, and cultural super-power", which deployed its influence on a global scale throughout the nineteenth century.[72] The most prominent example of this assertion of French power in the extra-European world was the conquest of Algeria, begun in 1830.[73] However, this was an exception because the means (eventually) adopted for the conquest and then administration of Algeria was to bring the region under formal French control.

Elsewhere, French politicians extended the influence of France through indirect means, underpinned by a particular conception of European Christian civilisation, commerce and, particularly from the 1850s, capital. This was backed by

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[67] The special issue, 'The Politics of Empire in Post-Revolutionary France', *French Politics, Culture & Society,* 33 (2015) addresses French colonialism in the period 1815-70 and its impact on the metropole. Timothy Baycroft explores the representation of the French colonial empire in French republican discourse post-1870, 'The Empire and the Nation: The Place of Colonial Images in the Republican Visions of the French Nation', in Evans, *Empire and Culture*, 148-60.

[68] David Todd, 'A French Imperial Meridian', *Past and Present*, 210 (2011), 158-59.

[69] A point made by James Daughton, who does explore French informal French influence in 'When Argentina Was "French": Rethinking Cultural Politics and European Imperialism in Belle-Epoque Buenos Aires', *The Journal of Modern History*, 80 (2008), 831-864.

[70] Michael Powelson gives a brief account of British, French, Spanish and US imperialism in '19th Century Latin America Imperialism from a Global Perspective', *History Compass* 9 (2011) 827–843.

[71] Cayenne was first settled by the French in 1604; Guadalupe and Martinique were first settled in 1635. Philippe Haudrère, *L'Empire des rois, 1500-1789* (Paris: Denoël, 1997), 'Tableau synoptique', 387-396.

[72] Todd, 'A French Imperial Meridian', 155; 173.

[73] On the conquest of Algeria see *La conquête et les débuts de la colonisation (1827-1871)*, vol. 1 of Charles-Robert Ageron and Charles-André Julien, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, 2 vols. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 3rd ed., 1979–86).

hard power, but when force was deployed it was generally through naval expeditions combined with small-scale military interventions. Policymakers wished to avoid what they considered to be costly colonial entanglements; in short, they feared another Algeria. This approach, which privileged economic and cultural factors over conquest, was facilitated by the rise of the French economy: between 1840 and 1880 French commodity exports increased fivefold, while capital exports grew twelvefold.[74] France was able to protect these interests through a powerful navy, second only to Britain's throughout the period under study.[75]

The most pertinent contemporary French imperial project comparable to Mexico is French policy in Indochina. France, ostensibly to protect Christian missionaries in China, fought with Britain in the Second Opium War (1856-60). This was part of the development of French influence in mainland Asia, where the protection of Catholic rights played a prominent role as the pretext for military action. It was within this context that troops were diverted from China to Tourane in Annam and then Saigon in Cochinchina, which were occupied in 1858 by French and Spanish troops. As with Mexico, the initial aim of the expedition was not territorial conquest. The 1862 Treaty of Saigon did acknowledge French possession of Saigon and granted France protectorates over three provinces of Cochinchina, but Louis-Napoléon was opposed to further annexations. Under pressure from admirals in the French navy, and politicians, such as Thiers, who argued for a more active policy in the region, as well as French officials who took territory without instructions from Paris, French possessions in the region slowly increased in the 1860s. In addition to Cochinchina, a protectorate was also established over Cambodia in 1863.[76]

French intervention in Mexico thus took place within a general context of the expansion of French influence globally from 1815 onwards, and specifically in

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[74] David Todd, 'Transnational Projects of Empire in France, c. 1815-70', *Modern Intellectual History*, 12 (2015), 293.

[75] See Charles Iain Hamilton, *Anglo-French Naval Rivalry, 1840-1870* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), and Ernest Harold Jenkins, *A History of the French Navy, from its Beginnings to the Present Day* (London: Macdonald and Jane's, (1979), chs. 13 and 14.

[76] Pierre Brocheux and Daniel Hémery, *Indochina: An Ambiguous Colonization, 1858-1954*, trans. Ly Lan Dill-Klein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), ch. 1; John Frank Cady, *The Roots of French Imperialism in Eastern Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1954), chs. 12 and 16.

the later 1850s and early 1860s at a time when France launched a succession of broadly successful overseas military expeditions. Aside from the Second Opium War and Indochina, France intervened successfully in Syria (1860-61).[77] Within the setting of these interventions, there was nothing exceptional about the 6,000 troops in Mexico under General Charles Ferdinand de Latrille, Count of Lorencez (1814-92), marching on Puebla in 1862 that distinguished it from the 4,000 or so troops that Admiral Léonard Charner (1797-1869) had at his disposal in the same year to relieve a besieged French garrison at Saigon.[78] Indeed, Cochinchina and Mexico were always mentioned together in Louis-Napoléon's speeches from the throne. "How," asked the Emperor of the French rhetorically in one of these addresses, "[are we] to develop our foreign trade if, on the one hand, we renounce all influence in America and, on the other, in the presence of the vast territories occupied by the English, the Spanish and the Dutch, France remains the sole [power] without possessions in the seas of Asia?"[79] It was not merely the French government that linked the two expeditions. Contemporary criticisms of French intervention in Cochinchina mirrored those levelled at the Louis-Napoléon's Mexican policy: no discernible national interest furthered; poor preparation, no long-term plan and, as a result, merely responding to events with ever-greater expense of men and resources; lack of knowledge of local politics.[80] Indochina, however, became one of the most important parts of the French empire, an outcome dramatically different to that of the Mexican intervention.[81]

Informal Empire

Placing the Second Mexican Empire within the context of French imperial policy raises questions about the nature of the imperialism France practised in Latin

[77] The Crimean War, and to a lesser extent the Italian War of 1859, were also foreign policy successes for France that saw a considerable deployment of the army and navy.
[78] French troop numbers in Cochinchina taken from Cady, *Roots of French Imperialism*, 269.
[79] 'Ouverture de la session législative. Discours de l'Empereur', *Journal des débats* (Paris), 6 November 1863, front page.
[80] Henri Galos provides an example of these criticisms as regards Cochinchina and places French policy in the context of the Second Opium War and Mexico. Henri Galos, 'L'Expédition de Cochinchine et la politique française dans l'extrême Orient', *Revue des deux mondes*, 1 May 1864, 173-207.
[81] Schefer argues that the 1862 Treaty of Saigon which "gave Cochinchina to France" was the last "incontestable positive" of the French Second Empire in *La Grande pensée de Napoléon III*, 238-39.

America. The distinguishing feature of imperialism, following Cain and Hopkins, "is that it involves an incursion, or attempted incursion, into the sovereignty of another state".[82] Clearly French policy in Mexico meets this criterion, but it does not fit very easily with other features usually associated with formal imperialism. France did not seek to acquire territory in Mexico as it had done in Algeria. Nor did it look to establish a colony, or even a formal protectorate as with Cochinchina and Cambodia – Veracruz did not become a Mexican Saigon. Maximilian was, in theory at least, an independent sovereign, the equal of Louis-Napoléon, and Mexicans held the highest offices of state and administered the empire.

The French army, of course, played a significant role in what contemporaries called "pacification". This military involvement in order to found and then consolidate the Second Mexican Empire has led to some historians to categorise French intervention as simple colonialism. Alan Knight describes it as "a foreign invasion of crude, colonial style, which brought with it all the practices of primitive counter-insurgency". He calls the French intervention an attempt "at 'formal' empire-building, geared to territorial conquest" and contrasts it with "the more subtle and insidious modes of 'informal' empire, or 'neo-imperialism'".[83] Yet to conclude that French intervention in Mexico was a colonial project which aimed at formal empire is to conflate means with ends. Many of the strategies the French army employed in Mexico had been developed in Algeria, where many of the French soldiers who carried them out had served,[84] but Louis-Napoléon at no point entertained the annexation of all, or even part, of Mexico, nor was Mexico to be governed by French administrators appointed from Paris.

A potentially illuminating framework, therefore, for Mexicanising and imperialising the French intervention is the concept of informal empire as developed by Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher in their article 'The Imperialism

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[82] Peter Cain and Anthony Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion, 1688-1914* (London: Longman, 2002), 54.

[83] Knight, 'The Peculiarities of Mexican History', 125. Knight also refers to it as colonialism in Alan Knight, 'Rethinking British Informal Empire in Latin America (Especially Argentina)' in Matthew Brown, *Informal Empire in Latin America: Culture, Commerce and Capital* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 38. Pascal Blanchard, Sandrine Lemaire, Nicolas Bancel and Dominic Thomas (eds.), *Colonial Culture in France since the Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), cite Mexico as an example of colonialism, which marks "the end of setback-free colonial expansion for France", 76-78.

[84] Lecaillon, *Napoléon III,* 69.

of Free Trade' (1953).[85] Whereas formal empire relies on direct rule from the metropolis, the theory of informal imperialism posits that a state can employ a variety of means in order to influence another sovereign government. In the classic model of informal empire these means are primarily political and economic, however, cultural factors have been added to the repertoire of imperial strategies by later historians who have embraced the concept.[86] Historians have also focused on the role of non-state actors, such as foreign nationals, business interests and missionaries, which work alongside, or in some cases independently of, metropolitan governments in order to further limit local sovereignty and advance imperial aspirations.[87]

Axiomatic to the theory of informal empire as originally elaborated is the idea that it was the preferred imperial relationship of British Victorian policymakers.[88] Informal empire provided the benefits of colonial rule without the costs and therefore it was only when informal rule broke down as a consequence of local crises which threatened imperial interests that a move was made to direct rule. Informal empire was cheaper than direct rule because local actors incurred the burden of administration, what Robinson termed "collaborating elites", while subordinating local economic interests to the metropole.[89] The relationship was attractive for local elites because it was mutually beneficial for primary product-exporting economies reliant upon lucrative metropolitan markets. Nonetheless, informal imperialism is predicated upon an asymmetrical exercise of power of one group over another whereby agents of an "expanding society gain inordinate

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[85] Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, 'The Imperialism of Free Trade', *Economic History Review*, 6 (1953), 1-15.

[86] For example, Gregory Barton, *Informal Empire and the Rise of One World Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Robert Aguirre, *Informal Empire: Mexico and Central America in Victorian Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Ricardo Salvatore, 'The Enterprise of Knowledge: Representational Machines of Informal Empire' in Gilbert Joseph, Catherine LeGrand and Ricardo Salvatore (eds.), *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Durham, N.C.; London: Duke University Press, 1998).

[87] John Darwin, 'Imperialism and the Victorians: The Dynamics of Territorial Expansion', *English Historical Review*, 112 (1997) 614-642.

[88] A thesis outlined in Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher (with Alice Denny), *Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1961).

[89] Ronald Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations of Imperialism: A Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration' in Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe (eds.), *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism* (London: Longman**,** 1972), 117-142.

influence or control over the vitals of weaker societies by 'dollar' and 'gun-boat diplomacy' [and] ideological suasion".[90]

As has been noted, the period 1815-70 is something of a terra incognita in the study of French imperialism, but by focussing on informal imperialism Todd argues the period can be cast as a French imperial meridian.[91] Latin America, and Mexico in particular, therefore offers a case study through which to test this hypothesis. Latin America had long been a battleground for advocates and detractors of the theory of informal empire,[92] but interest in informal imperialism as an analytical tool to view British relations with Latin America was revived by Matthew Brown's edited volume *Informal Empire in Latin America: Culture, Capital and Commerce* (2008). Broadly, the conclusion of the volume is that for the British informal "imperialism in Latin America was less a fact […] than an aspiration."[93] This conclusion raises the question as to whether other powers harboured similar ambitions in the region. As has been outlined above, the French government launched the most determined attempt to create an informal-imperial relationship with a Latin American state; nonetheless, the theory has never been applied to French policy in the region.

This thesis will draw on many of the themes developed in the theory of informal empire and use them as a prism to analyse French relations with Mexico.

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[90] Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations', 119.

[91] Todd, 'Imperial Meridian', 155-56.

[92] Robinson and Gallagher discuss Latin America in 'Imperialism of Free Trade', 6, 8-10, 13 and 15. Robinson cites the River Plate as an area where British influence initially failed, 'Non-European Foundations', 125-26. See also Peter Winn, 'British Informal Empire in Uruguay in the Nineteenth Century', *Past and Present*, 73 (1976), 100-126, and David McLean, *War, Diplomacy and Informal Empire: Britain and the Republics of La Plata, 1836-1853* (London: British Academic Press, 1995). DCM Platt argued against the concept of informal empire in 'The Imperialism of Free Trade: Some Reservations', *Economic History Review*, 21 (1968), 296-306 and 'Further Objections to an "Imperialism of Free Trade"', *Economic History Review*, 26 (1973), 77-91. See also DCM Platt, *Latin America and British Trade 1806-1914* (London: Black, 1972). The debate was revived by Andrew Thompson in 'Informal Empire? An Exploration in the History of Anglo-Argentine Relations, 1895-1914', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 24 (1992), 147-177, and the response from Anthony Hopkins, 'Informal Empire in Argentina: An Alternative View', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 26 (1994), 469-484. See also Rory Miller, 'Informal Empire in Latin America' in Robin Winks and Roger Louis (eds.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume V: Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) and Rory Miller, *Britain and Latin American in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London: Longman, 1993). Barton gives a review of debates over informal empire and Latin America, Barton, *Informal Empire*, 95-104.

[93] Andrew Thompson, 'Afterward: Informal Empire: Past, Present and Future' in Brown, *Informal Empire*, 233.

The following definitions of "empire" and "imperialism" will apply throughout the work: "[e]mpire […] is a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society [….] Imperialism is simply the process or policy of establishing or maintaining an empire."[94] Following Andrew Thompson, it is important to see informal empire as a "continuum" which includes formal empire rather than as a rigidly defined and separate "category".[95] There were different means by which states could attempt to impose informal rule, and Alan Knight postulates a fluid fourfold typology of formal and informal empire that combines direct and indirect rule with de jure and de facto authority.[96] And, focussing on these differences within informal imperial rule, John Darwin suggests a division between "western" (the Americas) and "eastern" (Turkey to Japan) versions of (what he terms) "semi-colonial" relationships, the former relying on private enterprise occasionally backed by diplomats and naval force while the latter was much more formal and underwritten by legal and territorial concessions. Darwin concludes, as regards the former, that it was ineffectual and that no British government could have contemplated diverting the military force necessary to occupy or annex a Latin American state.[97] This conclusion begs the question why did a French government not merely contemplate but enact such a policy in Mexico?

This thesis will address three additional questions related to these categorisations of informal empire: i) why did some Mexican elites support this project? And ii) where, if at all, can French imperialism be placed within the models outlined above, which were developed to describe British informal imperialism? Or does a different paradigm need to be proposed if French imperialism in Latin America is to be incorporated into the continuum of informal empire?

A third and final question arises from this discussion of informal empire. Robinson argued that the "efficiency [of informal empire] was clearly proportionate to the amount of wealth and power committed to it".[98] In order to consolidate the

[94] Michael Doyle, *Empires* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press**,** 1986), 45.
[95] Thompson, 'Afterward', 231-32.
[96] Alan Knight, 'Rethinking British Informal Empire' in Brown, *Informal Empire*, 28-31.
[97] Darwin, 'Imperialism and the Victorians', 617-18.
[98] Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations', 122.

Mexican empire of Maximilian, Louis-Napoléon mobilised immense resources. He sent to Mexico some 30,000 French troops, who fought alongside thousands of Belgian and Austrian volunteers as well as Egyptian soldiers recruited from France's Cairo ally and local Mexican troops loyal to Maximilian. The cost of the intervention up to April 1864 was estimated by the French government at 270 million francs. In addition to this, two loans totalling 534 million francs were raised on the financial markets of London and Paris to support the Mexican empire. The result: one of the least successful examples of imperialism in the entire nineteenth century.[99] Why France failed to construct a stable polity in Mexico tied to French interests despite the immense "wealth and power" it deployed remains a pertinent question that this thesis will address.

Pan-Latinism: A Transnational and Imperial Idea

Central to the theory of informal empire is the concept of collaborating elites and without Mexican politicians to call for, administer and support the empire of Maximilian France would not have intervened. British informal influence was predicated upon its economic hegemony combined with its naval power. France's economic and maritime might was, in the period under study, second only to Britain's, but because France lacked the clear lead in commerce and capital enjoyed by Britain, the rationale that underpinned French involvement in Latin America relied more heavily on discourses that defined the area as a natural French sphere of influence. Although French imperialism in Mexico and Latin America was ultimately unsuccessful, French thinkers played an active role in demarcating the region as "*Amérique latine*", a categorisation that proved more enduring than, for example, "*Afrique latine*".[100] The points where French ideas intersected with currents of thought in Mexico, which drew some elites towards France as both a political model and an auxiliary in promoting their own vision for the Mexican nation, are a focus for the thesis in addition to French policy.

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[99] Niall Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Volume 2: The World's Banker: 1849-1999* (London: Penguin, 2000), 118-19.

[100] For a discussion of pan-Latinism in relation to Algeria see Patricia Lorcin, 'Rome and France in Africa: Recovering Colonial Algeria's Latin Past', *French Historical Studies*, 25 (2002), 295-329.

Mexican conservatism and monarchism were shaped in dialogue with European, particularly French, models and ideas. Another current of thought that united some French thinkers and conservative Mexican politicians was the discourse of pan-Latinism, and French intervention in order to found the Mexican Empire was depicted in pan-Latinist terms by its proponents.[101] International historians continue to debate what causal role can be attributed to pan-Latinism in the French intervention, tending to play it down in favour of other factors.[102] In a separate historiographical field, cultural and intellectual historians have focused on the professed goals of pan-Latinists and their implications for the idea of "Latin America".

An important figure in the development of pan-Latinist thought is the economist and adviser to Louis-Napoléon, Michel Chevalier (1806-79).[103] Historians have concentrated on Chevalier's role in the generation of a pan-Latinist discourse not only because of his important position in the French Second Empire, but also due to his classification of the races of the Americas into two categories: "Anglo-Saxon" and "Latin".[104] However, Reinhart Koselleck warns against falling prey to a "new nominalism", which would have us believe that the emergence of a category of thought is dependent on the creation of the term designating it.[105] A focus on published texts that explicitly deal with "Latin civilisation" and "Latin races" in the Americas has meant that historians have ignored earlier expressions of the ideas that underpin these terms and the extent of their diffusion. By going beyond the conventional history of ideas focus on canonical texts, this thesis seeks to identify

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[101] 'Lettre de l'Empereur à General Forey', 8 July 1862, [A]rchives des [A]ffaires [E]trangères, [M]émoires et [D]ocuments 31/10; Michel Chevalier, *Le Mexique ancien et moderne* (Paris: L. Hachette et Cie, 1863), 478-79.

[102] The most influential work both in the English and French historiography is Schefer, *La Grande pensée de Napoléon III*, which downplays the importance of pan-Latinist ideas. They have been variously revived, for example, in Hanna and Hanna, *American Triumph*. The three most recent works mention them only in passing. Gouttman, *La Guerre du Mexique*; Cunningham, *Mexico*; Lecaillon, *Napoléon III*.

[103] For Chevalier's career and his economic theory see Michael Drolet, 'Industry, Class and Society: a Historiographic Reinterpretation of Michel Chevalier', *English Historical Review*, 123 (2008), 1229-1271, and Jean Walch, *Michel Chevalier, économiste saint-simonien* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1975). For his views on America see Jeremy Jennings, 'Democracy before Tocqueville: Michel Chevalier's America', *The Review of Politics*, 68 (2006), 398-427.

[104] Michel Chevalier, *Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord*, 2 vols. (Paris: Ch. Gosselin, 1836), I, x.

[105] Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1985), 88.

the extent to which currents of thought, such as pan-Latinism, monarchism and Mexican conservatism, normally considered to be the preserve of well-known intellectuals and politicians, were part of a wider political culture that influenced French policy in Mexico and shaped the contours of Mexican political discourse. If, for example, it can be shown that pan-Latinism was an older and far more widely shared idea in both France and Mexico then this may provide an intellectual and geostrategic rationale for the French decision to intervene, and help to account for the collaboration of some Mexican elites with French imperialism.

As will be seen, pan-Latinism was far from an exclusively French discourse: one of the earliest pan-Latinist rationalisations of French intervention in Mexico was not made by Louis-Napoléon or Chevalier, but in 1853 by José Ramón Pacheco (1805-65), the Mexican minister to France. Many of those who adopted the rhetoric of pan-Latinism in Mexico were conservatives, and this calls into question the argument that initial supporters of the idea of "Latin America" tended to be liberals "who claimed to be waging a pro-democracy crusade against the 'aristocratic' conservatives controlling many of the continent's governments."[106] This shows the importance of imperialising French intervention in Mexico, and Mexicanising the experience: pan-Latinism influenced French relations with Latin America, Mexican perceptions of Europe and the idea of Latin America itself.

Sources

The methodology is situated in transnational history and internationalised intellectual history.[107] The research seeks to discover how far the discourse of Mexican conservatism, which came to favour European intervention to support its aims, was formed in dialogue with, or in opposition to, European and US political and economic models, and how these were debated and then adapted to address

[106] Michael Gobat, 'The Invention of Latin America: A Transnational History of Anti-Imperialism, Democracy, and Race', *American Historical Review*, 118 (2013), 1361.
[107] Steven Vertovec, 'Conceiving and Researching Transnationalism', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22 (1999), 447-462; Christopher Bayly, Sven Beckert, Matthew Connelly, Isabel Hofmeyr, Wendy Kozol, and Patricia Seed , 'AHR Conversation: On Transnational History', *The American Historical Review*, 111 (2006), 1441-1464; Simon MacDonald, 'Transnational History: A Review of Past and Present Scholarship', University College London Centre for Transnational History, 2013: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/cth/objectives/simon_macdonald_tns_review; David Armitage, 'The International Turn in Intellectual History' in *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

local issues.[108] A transnational approach allows for an exploration of the movement of thinkers, and the circulation, transmission and reception of texts and ideas, both within and beyond state boundaries which shaped currents of Mexican and French thought.

In order to achieve this, a wide range of published and archival Mexican, French, British and US sources were researched. In France, the Archives du ministère des affaires étrangères in Paris contains the despatches of French diplomatic agents and the correspondence of the foreign ministry. These sources not only provide material for French diplomatic relations with Mexico, but also for how French diplomatic agents interpreted and applied the ideas articulated by influential figures such as the politician and intellectual François Guizot (1787-1874) or Chevalier. In Mexico, the Archivo Histórico Genaro Estrada de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, Mexico City, houses Mexican diplomatic sources. As many of Mexico's leading statesmen served as foreign minister, these documents provide an insight into how these individuals interpreted international events as well as their views on different nations and their political systems. British diplomatic sources were also consulted at the National Archives in London where relevant, while many US diplomatic despatches are available in published form.[109]

Alongside diplomatic sources, the private papers of prominent individuals were researched, notably the Genaro García Collection held at the Benson Latin American Collection, The University of Texas at Austin. This collection contains the papers of numerous nineteenth-century Mexican politicians. Private papers were also consulted at the Archives nationales in France as well as the National Archives and British Library in London. In addition, various Mexican, French, British and US published works, including books, pamphlets, manifestos and periodicals, were read. These are variously located at the Hemeroteca Nacional de México,

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[108] An approach Christopher Bayly takes as regards liberalism in India. See Christopher Bayly, *Recovering Liberties: Indian Thought in the Age of Liberalism and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-25. See also Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori, 'Approaches to Global Intellectual History' in Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori (eds.), *Global Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 3-32.

[109] William Manning (ed.), *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States Concerning the Independence of the Latin-American nations*, 3 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1925), and William Manning (ed.), *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States: Inter-American Affairs, 1831-1860*, 12 vols. (Washington 1932-39).

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, and the Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico City; the Benson Latin American Collection; the Bibliothèque nationale de France; the British Library; and the New York Public Library.

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis consists of five chapters in addition to the introduction and conclusion. The main chapters are organised thematically. Chapter one places Latin America within the context of French imperialism from 1820 to 1860. The focus is on the position Mexico occupied in the worldview of French policymakers: its economic and geostrategic importance is explored alongside the ideas that underpinned French imperialism more generally. As noted above, France also intervened in the River Plate.[110] French activities in this region are referred to as a comparative in order to explore more general trends in French policy towards Latin America, particularly the discourse of civilisation that promoted an active role for France in the extra-European world and the use of local elites to further French goals. Finally, the relationship of Britain to French policy in Latin America is explored in order to see what effect it had on French imperialism in the region.

Chapter two analyses monarchism in Mexico, and its place in French discourse towards Mexico. Latin American independence had an important international dimension as rival nations competed for influence over the new states.[111] Within this struggle monarchy had geopolitical significance for France because it was seen, in the 1820s, as a way of countering British power and, from the 1830s onwards, as one potential means of constraining the United States. Long before Louis-Napoléon launched his intervention in 1861, the French Bourbon Restoration had wanted to place Bourbon princes on the thrones of Spain's former colonies. Because of these European connections, there is a strong case for placing Mexican monarchism in a transnational context. Moreover, the failure of a monarchy with a Mexican as ruler (the First Mexican Empire under Iturbide) meant that for those in Mexico who favoured the creation of a new kingdom a European

[110] Chronology 2 provides key dates for French involvement in the region, pp. 258-60.
[111] Rafe Blaufarb, 'The Western Question: The Geopolitics of Latin American Independence', *American Historical Review*, 112 (2007), 742-763; Piero Gleijeses, 'The Limits of Sympathy: The United States and the Independence of Spanish America', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 24 (1992), 481-505.

monarch was a necessity, and without European support this project could not have been realised. The endurance of the idea that monarchy was the form of government best-suited to Mexico amongst French and Mexican observers thus forms the focus of the chapter. This addresses the question why French policymakers and some Mexican politicians saw an empire under a foreign prince as a legitimate means to save the Mexican nation.

Chapter three explores the shared discourse of pan-Latinism in Mexico and France. By analysing French and Mexican reactions to the Texan revolt (1835-36) and the subsequent US annexation of this former Mexican territory (in 1845) through diplomatic correspondence, newspapers and the writings of publicists and journalists as well as the speeches of politicians, this chapter shows that the ideas behind pan-Latinism can be identified earlier than the 1860s: they date back at least to the 1830s. This has important implications for the French intervention because it places Latinity at the centre of France's transnational informal imperialism, and identifies the ideas behind it as an important factor in the decision of some Mexican elites to look towards France to further their own vision for the Mexican nation.

The 1850s saw the consolidation of Mexican conservatism. Chapter four explores the worldview of the Mexican Conservative Party, particularly as it was shaped by international events and transnational currents of thought. The period 1848 to 1861, bookended by the US-Mexican War and the French intervention, has seen historians focus on domestic Mexican politics, particularly the struggle between 'reactionary' Conservatives and 'progressive' liberals culminating in the War of Reform.[112] However, the chapter argues that those associated with the Mexican Conservative Party understood themselves to be part of an international reaction against the doctrines that, they believed, caused the 1848 revolutions in Europe and contributed to instability in Mexico. In searching for a model to inspire their dream of turning a tumultuous democratic republic into an orderly authoritarian state, the newly formed Mexican Conservative Party looked to the

[112] The diplomatic relationship between Washington and reformist liberals is explored in Donathon Olliff, *Reforma Mexico and the United States: A Search for Alternatives to Annexation, 1854-61* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1981).

French Second Empire. The chapter will analyse the response of Mexican Conservatives to the 1848 revolutions in the aftermath of the US-Mexican War (1846-48). It argues that Mexican Conservatives placed themselves within a geopolitical struggle of global importance – a Western version of the Crimean War.

Chapter five will address the French intervention in Mexico and the foundation of Maximilian's empire. It will answer some of the questions posed above on informal empire. The chapter also explores the economic and administrative rationale behind the empire. In addition, the chapter will analyse the architecture of informal rule, the means by which France hoped to construct an edifice that would remain within its sphere of influence and promote French economic and political power as well as advance French civilisation. Finally, the chapter looks at the reasons for the collapse of the Second Mexican Empire.

First, however, it is necessary to explore what place Latin America, and Mexico specifically, occupied in the worldview of French policymakers. David Todd argues that French intervention in Mexico was "the hubristic apex of French aspirations to transnational empire."[113] For many contemporary French commentators, the special place Latin America, and Mexico in particular, occupied in French imperial discourse meant the Second Mexican Empire should have been the apotheosis of French informal imperial power. Rather than being the nadir of French informal empire, Mexico should have, to paraphrase Louis-Napoléon, crowned the French imperial edifice. The next chapter discusses the nature of French imperialism from the 1820s to the 1860s, French policy towards Latin America and why Mexico was identified as an area of especial interest for many French policymakers, commentators and diplomats.

[113] Todd, 'Transnational Projects', 284.

Chapter One

French Policy towards Latin America, 1820-60

"Why", Thiers demanded of the French National Assembly in 1850, "do we spend 120 million francs a year on a navy?" Thiers answered his own question: "[i]t is so that we can take action far away, so that the influence of France is not confined by the Rhine and the Pyrenees, but extends 2,000 to 3,000 leagues overseas, to do what the English do, to make ourselves respected". For Thiers, French commerce needed to be backed by hard power and "there is no commerce in the world that has more need of protection than that of South America".[1] In this debate, Thiers, one of the great critics of Louis-Napoléon's Mexican intervention, argued for a large-scale military expedition to be sent to the River Plate in order to protect French nationals and develop French influence. This apparent contradiction highlights one of the main continuities in French policy towards Latin America: all France's leading politicians agreed that French power and trade should be developed and extended, and by force if necessary; the differences between them were over how and where this should be done.

This consensus helps explain the readiness of French regimes in the period 1815-70 to intervene militarily in Latin America.[2] This attitude shaped US policy towards Latin America: James Monroe's 1823 message to Congress was partly prompted by fears that France's 1823 invasion of Spain was a prelude to the forcible restoration of Bourbon rule in the New World.[3] In December 1845 President James Polk's first annual message to Congress attacked the "[p]owers of Europe", who wished to see a "balance of power" in North America. This was a direct response to a speech of 10 June 1845 in the French Chamber of Deputies by the then foreign minister, Guizot, who had advocated that there should be a check on US expansion.[4] In response to Polk's address, Guizot maintained that France had

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[1] Thiers, *Discours*, VIII, 381-82.
[2] A list of French interventions in Latin America is given in the introduction, 24-25.
[3] 'The Monroe Doctrine' in Robert Holden and Eric Zolov (eds.), *Latin America and the United States: A Documentary History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 11-14.
[4] James Polk, 'Texas, Mexico and Manifest Destiny' in *ibid*., 21-23. Guizot's speech: 'Chambres des Députés. Présidence de M. Sauzet. Séance du mardi 10 June', *Le Moniteur universel*, 11 June 1845, p.

the right to intervene in the affairs of the Americas.[5] Guizot thus publically disavowed the Monroe Doctrine, but it was some 30,000 French troops supporting a monarchy under an Austrian Archduke that posed the greatest challenge to the doctrine in the nineteenth century.

France, then, played an active role which not only impacted upon the new states of Latin America in which it intervened, but also affected the policy of the United States towards the region. Furthermore, French trade with the region vied with that of the United States during the period 1820-67 to occupy second place behind Britain;[6] French nationals settled in relatively large numbers, particularly in Mexico and the River Plate; and local elites looked to French political culture for inspiration. In short, France wielded considerable political, economic, cultural and military power in the region. In the absence of any general survey of French imperialism in Latin America, it is hoped that this chapter can begin to address this gap by focussing on particular aspects of French policy towards Latin America. The key question for this chapter is: why did France commit more resources to Latin America, and Mexico specifically, than any other extra-European region, Algeria excepted, in the period under study?

In order to answer this question, the transnational nature of French imperial thought will analysed: French intellectuals and politicians developed an idea of European civilisation which encouraged informal expansion in the extra-European world. The chapter will then explore Latin America's place within this worldview. Four factors are identified which saw French policymakers mark it out as an area of significant focus for French imperialism: i) economic wealth, ii) the perceived state of civilisation, iii) local elites and iv) the British attitude towards French policy in Latin America.

1655. On the Monroe Doctrine and its evolution see Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011).

[5] First in a speech to the Chamber of Peers and then to the Chamber of Deputies, 'Chambre des Pairs', *Le Moniteur universel*, 13 January 1846, pp. 73-74, and 'Chambre des Députés', *ibid.,* 22 January 1846, pp. 158-63.

[6] For an analysis of Mexico's overseas trade for the period see Inés Herrera Canales, *El comercio exterior de México, 1821-1875* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1977).

I

Enlightenment for Informal Empire

Studies of French imperialism, colonialism or empire – the categorisation is rarely clear – if they cover 1815-70 at all, normally view this period as one of incoherent foreign policy subordinated to domestic concerns. Imperial policy during these years is variously seen as reactive to events, commercially of dubious value, elitist and lacking popular support, yet somehow connected to an ill-defined desire to restore French prestige in the world after the defeat in the Napoleonic Wars. In this view, there was little continuity and no long-term strategic vision, although the period culminates in a "burst of imperialism at the century's end" under the Third Republic.[7] Thus the years from the Bourbon Restoration to the fall of Second French Empire have been defined as "an intermediate period",[8] within which it would be vain to look for "an overall doctrine" or "a coherent idea".[9]

As has been noted in the introduction, this is partially a result of the focus on formal imperialism which, with the exception of Algeria, was generally absent from French policy from 1815 to 1870. Furthermore, intellectual historians have provided a rationale for the dominant historiographical interpretation that French imperialism was incoherent and limited, especially when compared to the Third Republic, by arguing that French political thought was itself anti-imperial. Jennifer Pitts identifies a shift in French (and British) liberal thought from anti-imperialism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to pro-empire liberalism by the mid-nineteenth century, what Pitts calls "a turn to empire".[10] In this interpretation, limited overseas expansion in the first half of the nineteenth century can in part be

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[7] The quote is from Alice Conklin and Sarah Fishman, *France and its Empire since 1870* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 16. For the various interpretations see Raoul Giradet, *L'idée coloniale en France* (Paris: La Table ronde 1972), 5-6; Blanchard, *Culture coloniale*, 13-14 and 92; Denise Bouche and Pierre Pluchon, *Histoire de la colonisation française*, 2 vols. (Paris: Fayard, 1991), I, 52; Henri Brunschwig, *Mythes et réalités de l'impérialisme colonial français* (Paris: A. Colin, 1960); Agnes Murphy, *The Ideology of French Imperialism* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1948).

[8] Jacques Binoche-Guedra, *La France d'outre-mer, 1815-1962* (Paris: Masson, 1992), 30.

[9] Bernard Lauzanne (ed.), *L'Aventure coloniale de la France*, 5 vols. (Paris: Denoël, 1987–97), II, Jean Martin*, L'Empire renaissant, 1789–1870*, 257.

[10] Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 1. See also Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003) and Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1999).

explained by a hostility towards empire, or at least a lack of interest in it, until the development of pro-colonial arguments which gained prominence under the Third Republic.

However, just as a focus on formal empire has ignored informal attempts to extend French influence, a focus on imperial thought only insofar as it relates to territorial expansion has meant that ideas which supported informal or transnational models of domination have been overlooked. Liberal intellectuals under the Bourbon Restoration or the July Monarchy believed that the expansion of French influence was inherently valuable, but the means to achieve this should not be annexation or conquest. It is therefore possible to recast the so-called "liberal turn to empire" in the mid-nineteenth century, "as a more modest tactical shift from informal to formal dominance."[11]

A particular vision of European civilisation tied to Christianity and progress underpinned the ideas which supported informal imperial expansion. As will be seen, this was most coherently articulated by Guizot. However, the continuities in French liberal thought on empire are perhaps more striking than the changes, and the relationship of intellectuals to imperialism more ambivalent or, at least more ambiguous, than generally supposed. For example, Nicolas de Condorcet (1743-94) and Benjamin Constant (1767-1830) are considered to be the exemplars of French thinkers opposed to empire,[12] but it is often overlooked that they were reacting to specific forms of imperial relationship. It does not follow that Condorcet's criticisms of mercantilist colonies predicated on slave labour or, in Constant's case, Napoleonic European empire based on the subjugation of other Europeans, were outright rejections of all forms of imperialism.

Pitt's argument relies on the assumption that imperialism entails colonialism, rather than seeing the latter merely as subset of the former. The word "colony" had a specific meaning for eighteenth-century writers: "the movement of people, or a portion of people, from one country to another", and a positive view of

[11] Todd, 'Transnational Projects', 266.
[12] Pitts, *Turn to Empire*, 168-85.

colonisation had been inherited from ancient history, particularly Greece.[13] No eighteenth-century thinker, no matter how critical of empire, was in principle opposed to the peaceable settlement of foreign land and the creation of colonies. As one of the most vociferous opponents of mercantile colonialism, Denis Diderot (1713-84), wrote, "both reason and equity permit the founding of colonies".[14] However, Diderot and Condorcet were highly critical of the results of the recent European colonisation of the Americas: slavery and mercantilism.

For Condorcet the two were linked and had deleterious effects on the economy and morality of both metropole and colony.[15] He especially attacked the restricted commercial relationships that underpinned imperial trade. Condorcet, like Diderot,[16] was an advocate of free(r) trade.[17] The tightly controlled commercial organisation of the French Empire developed under Louis XIV's minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-1683), and confirmed by the *Exclusif* legislation of 1717 and 1727, forced colonies to trade solely with the metropole. This model was antithetical to Condorcet's understanding of political economy. However, Condorcet argued that European civilisation, minus the evils of slavery and mercantilism, should be exported to non-European lands, an assumption based on a theory of progress which came to influence the civilizing mission of the Third Republic.[18] That Europeans should colonise other territories is laid out in the *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain* (1794): "colonies of citizens […] will radiate, throughout Africa and Asia, the principles and the example

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[13] See François Véron de Forbonnais, "Colony," 'The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert Collaborative Translation Project', trans. Alyssa Goldstein Sepinwal and Ann Arbor: MPublishing, University of Michigan Library, 2004. http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.did2222.0000.246 accessed 16 January 2013. Originally published as "Colonie," *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, III, 648–51 (Paris, 1753).

[14] Guillaume-Thomas Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissemens et du commerce des européens dans les deux Indes*, 10 vols. (Geneva: n.p., 1781), IV, 201. Diderot contributed to this work and is identified as the author of the quoted section in John Hope Mason and Robert Wokler (eds.), *Political Writings: Denis Diderot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 167.

[15] See Condorcet, *Réflexions sur l'esclavage des nègres* (Neufchatel: Société typographique, 1781).

[16] Denis Diderot, *Observations sur le Nakaz*, 417-18, printed in Paul Vernière (ed.), *Diderot. Œuvres politiques* (Paris: Garnier frères, 1963), 417-18.

[17] See Condorcet, *Réflexions sur le commerce des blés* (London: n.p., 1776).

[18] On the civilizing mission under the Third Republic see Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

of liberty, the light and the reason of Europe." The European population would "civilise or make disappear, without conquest, the savages who still occupy these vast countries."[19]

The advance of French civilisation became a cornerstone of nineteenth-century French imperialism, but Condorcet's vision lacked a military dimension. Another thinker identified as opposed to empire, Constant, provided a rationale for a more muscular liberalism. His anti-imperial reputation largely derives from his essay *De l'esprit de conquête et de l'usurpation: dans leurs rapports avec la civilisation européenne* (1814), but, as is made explicit in the title, it is concerned with European civilisation and, exclusively, "the present condition of European peoples".[20] The work is a direct attack on the Napoleonic Empire and its methods, which, for the author, created despotism in France and undermined political liberty and personal freedom.[21] Furthermore, and in spite of this condemnation of Napoleonic expansion, Constant was no pacifist. In *Principes de politique applicables à tout les gouvernements* (1815) he outlined an argument which stated that so long as war was legally sanctioned by parliamentary process and in keeping with public opinion, which is "almost never wrong about the legitimacy of war undertaken by any government", then military action was justifiable. Indeed, Constant went further, arguing "[t]o say that one must keep on the defensive is to say nothing at all" and that "to forbid governments to continue the war beyond their borders is again a useless precaution."[22]

Constant, therefore, did not reject outright military action, nor is it clear that his denunciation of expansion is "a much broader brief against imperial expansion in the modern age",[23] which extended to the extra-European world. It certainly did not include the Dey of Algiers, as Constant's comments in *Le Temps* on

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[19] Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain* (Paris: Agasse, 1794), 332-35.
[20] Benjamin Constant, *De l'esprit de conquête et de l'usurpation: dans leurs rapports avec la civilisation européenne* (Paris: Le Normant; H. Nicole, 3rd ed., 1814).
[21] *Ibid.,* vii-viii.
[22] Benjamin Constant, *Principes de politiques applicables à tous les gouvernements représentatifs et particulièrement à la constitution actuelle de la France* (Paris: A. Eymery, impr. de Hocquet, 1815), 205-6.
[23] Jennifer Pitts, 'Constant's Thoughts on Slavery and Empire' in Helena Rosenblatt (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Constant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 188.

the French expedition of 1830 to Algiers make clear: "we applaud the destruction of a den of pirates […] rather than respecting the sovereignty of a barbarian. May the city of Algiers be thrown into its harbour!"[24] For Constant, then, as for other French liberal parliamentarians, at least in practice, the "liberal project of representative government" was not, as some have argued, "inextricable from an international politics of peaceful commerce and mutual respect of sovereign states."[25] Rather, as regards the extra-European world, the "liberal project of representative government" was used by all French regimes in the period 1815-70 to secure national resources for overseas intervention with the express purpose of abrogating the sovereignty of states which were not considered to be legitimately or enduringly constituted.

Algeria, however, was a colonial exception in French imperial policy which affected subsequent overseas expeditions. Guizot argued that it was not in France's interests to found "new and great colonial establishments far from its territory", which would involve France in long struggles to subjugate the local population and provoke conflict with European rivals; France had "enough in Algeria to conquer and colonise". Rather, France's imperial strategy was twofold: "wherever European and Christian civilisation establishes itself, there also France is bound to assume her place and exercise her peculiar genius",[26] and France would also possess points on the "globe which are destined to become great centres of commerce" maritime posts to further and protect French trade.[27]

In part, the conclusion that informal imperial relationships with overseas states could be preferable to colonial conquest and commercially more lucrative had been arrived at as a consequence of the independence of the former Spanish, British and Portuguese colonies in the Americas.[28] The thinker that did most to

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[24] The article was first published in *Le Temps* (Paris), 20 June 1830, and is printed in Ephraïm Harpaz (ed.), *Recueil d'articles: [1825-1830] / Benjamin Constant; texte établi, introduit, annoté et commenté par Ephraïm Harpaz* (Paris: Champion, 1992), 481-83.

[25] Jennifer Pitts, 'Republicanism, Liberalism, and Empire' in Sankar Muthu (ed.), *Empire and Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 268.

[26] François Guizot, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de mon temps*, 8 vols. (Paris: Michel-Lévy frères: 1858-67), VI, 272-75.

[27] 'Chambre des Députés', *Journal des débats*, 1 April 1843, third page.

[28] In 1795 Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand wrote that despite the loss of its colonies in North America, Britain retained the economic advantages this market provided. Talleyrand to Lord Landsdowne, 1 February 1795, printed in Michel Poniatowski (ed.), *Talleyrand aux États-Unis, 1794–1796* (Paris:

draw French attention towards Latin American independence and its potential benefit for Europe was the Abbé Dominique de Pradt (1759-1837). De Pradt enjoyed a peripatetic political career as a representative of the clergy to the Estates General, a diplomatic agent of Napoléon Bonaparte and a supporter of the restored Bourbons in 1814 before rallying again to the empire during the Hundred Days. This act disgraced him in the eyes of the Louis XVIII and he became a liberal opponent of the Bourbon Restoration. His exile from politics gave new impetus to his life as a publicist. He published an array of works on various topics as well as contributing articles to newspapers and journals.[29] The numerous editions of his works as well as foreign translations attests to his popularity both in France and abroad, but he was to gain contemporary fame in Latin America,[30] where he was made an honorary citizen of Mexico and Colombia, while Bolívar paid him a pension out of his own funds,[31] in recognition of his defence of Latin American independence.

In *Des colonies, et de la révolution actuelle de l'Amérique* (1817), de Pradt reiterated what he had predicted at the beginning of the nineteenth century:[32] colonies inevitably tended towards independence. Moreover, freedom of commerce led to prosperity which made this outcome more, not less, advantageous for both colony and metropole.[33] Latin American wars of independence had shown the futility of trying to subjugate colonies once they had reached "maturity" and it was, therefore, a waste of Spain's resources to oppose militarily independence as well as the cause of severe economic dislocation.[34] US

Presses de la Cité, 1967), 345–59. For Talleyrand's views on colonies see Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, *Essai sur les avantages à retirer des colonies nouvelles dans les circonstances présentes* (Paris: impr. de Baudouin, 1797).

[29] Laura Bornholdt, 'The Abbé de Pradt and the Monroe Doctrine', *Hispanic American Historical Revi*ew, 24 (1944), 201-2. A more detailed biography is given in Colonel Daupeyroux, 'La curieuse vie de l'Abbé du Pradt', *Revue des études historiques*, 95 (1929), 279-312.

[30] De Pradt was influential in Mexico. Lorenzo de Zavala translated part of his work in 'Traducción. América Española. Mexico', *El Sol* (Mexico City), 18 July 1824, pp. 135-136 and 'Concluye de traducción del articulo de Mr. Prat [sic]', *ibid.*, 19 July 1824, pp. 139-40. Estela Guadalupe Jiménez Codinach argues that de Pradt's ideas affected Mexican independence in *México en 1821: Dominique de Pradt y el Plan de Iguala* (Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1982).

[31] Bornholdt, 'Abbé de Pradt', 203-8.

[32] In Dominique de Pradt, *Les Trois âges des colonies, ou de leur état passé, présent et à venir*, 2 vols. (Paris: Giguet, 1801-1802).

[33] Dominique de Pradt, *Des Colonies et de la révolution actuelle de l'Amérique*, 2 vols. (Paris: F. Béchet, 1817), i-xxvii; 196-208

[34] *Ibid.,* I, xx-xxiv.

and Latin American independence was also understood in geostrategic terms. De Pradt had argued that global power was not a consequence of continental domination, but rather of industrial, financial, commercial and naval pre-eminence. This meant that Britain was unrivalled and benefitted the most from the breakup of colonies.[35] François-René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848), who served as French foreign minister from December 1822 to August 1824, shared this analysis as regards Latin America. He argued that the former Spanish colonies had at the moment of independence become "a type of English colony" because of Britain's commercial and financial hegemony.[36] Moreover, influential French economists, such as Jean-Baptiste Say (1767-1832), agreed with the basic economic conclusions of Talleyrand and de Pradt and built on the late eighteenth-century critiques of mercantilist colonialism to argue for freer trade.[37]

Events in Latin America not only informed ideas about imperialism, but also French political thought. Constant and de Pradt became engaged in a debate over whether Bolívar should have assumed dictatorial powers in Colombia. This discussion drew in French royalist *ultras* who looked to legitimise their own views through an analysis of Latin American events.[38] Discussions in the press such as these drew French attention towards Latin America, and for French policymakers Latin American was a testing ground for informal imperial strategies because, as will be discussed below, it was a region of great economic potential, which consisted of what were understood in France as weakly or illegitimately constituted states. Indeed, de Pradt argued that "France, deprived of its colonies, has of all the states of Europe, the most need of the emancipation of [Latin] America."[39]

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[35] *Ibid.*, I, xviii; 193-4; II, 200; 248-70.
[36] François-René de Chateaubriand, *Oeuvres complètes de Chateaubriand.* Vol. VI*, Voyage en Amérique* (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1861), 217.
[37] Todd, 'Transnational Projects', 278-84.
[38] The debates initially appeared in *La Gazette de la France*. The articles have been translated into Spanish and published in Alberto Filippi (ed.), *Bolívar y Europa: en las crónicas, el pensamiento político y la historiografía* (Caracas: Ediciones de la Presidencia de la República, 1986), 288-360.
[39] De Pradt, I, xvi. It is perhaps interesting to note that Robinson and Gallagher's articulation of the idea of informal empire came during the decolonisation of the British Empire, and nineteenth-century French thinkers who discussed similar imperial relationships did so in the aftermath of the loss of France's first colonial empire. The idea that imperial power was not solely related to possessing a large colonial empire may have been an attractive proposition to French thinkers precisely because France did not have such an empire.

II

Early Franco-Mexican Relations: Diplomatic Distance, Commercial Closeness

Latin American independence thus presented France with particular opportunities, but the Americas had long occupied an important place in the French worldview.[40] At its apogee France's first colonial empire stretched from Quebec to New Orleans;[41] Saint-Domingue was "the Pearl of the Antilles" in the latter half of the eighteenth century providing two-fifths of the sugar and over half of the coffee produced in the New World;[42] French involvement in the American War of Independence renewed French interest and engendered enduring political sympathies amongst influential French politicians such as the Marquis de La Fayette (1757-1834).[43] Furthermore, in the immediate aftermath of the defeat to Britain in the Seven Years War (1756-63), it had been to Guiana that France looked to compensate its colonial losses with a disastrous colonisation scheme involving some 15,000 settlers.[44] Napoléon Bonaparte's dreams of recreating France's American empire were only extinguished with the failed attempt to re-occupy Haiti (1801-3) and then defeat at Trafalgar.[45] The Bourbon Restoration harboured ambitions of restoring Haiti to the French empire up to 1818.[46] More prosaically, France retained Guadalupe and Martinique in the Antilles and these colonies regained their prosperity in the 1820s in a decade which saw colonial imports average 15 percent of French total imports – a figure reached again only in the 1930s.[47]

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[40] For an overview of French interests in Latin America from the sixteenth to early twentieth century see Christian Buchet (ed.), *La Mer, la France et l'Amérique Latine* (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2006).
[41] See Gilles Harvard and Cécile Vidal, *L'Histoire de l'Amérique française* (Paris: Flammarion, 2006).
[42] Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap, 2004), 21.
[43] See Sylvia Neely, 'The Politics of Liberty in the Old World and the New: Lafayette's Return to America in 1824', *Journal of the Early Republic*, 6 (1986), 151-171.
[44] Emma Rothschild, 'A Horrible Tragedy in the French Atlantic', *Past and Present*, 192 (2006), 67-108.
[45] Christophe Belaubre, Jordana Dym and John Savage (eds.), *Napoléon et les Amériques: histoire atlantique et empire napoléonien* (Toulouse: CNRS Université de Toulouse-le Mirail UMR 5136, 2009), especially chs. 7 and 13.
[46] Jean-François Brière, 'Le baron Portal et l'indépendance d'Haïti, 1818-1821', *French Colonial History*, 10 (2009), 97-108.
[47] Todd, 'Imperial Meridian', 167.

Aside from these long-term historical connections, the importance of France's remaining colonies and the issue of Haitian independence, the relationship of Spain to its former colonies and the question of whether Bourbon France should recognise them dominated initial French relations with Latin American post-1815. At a surface level, Talleyrand's quip that the Bourbon Restoration had learned nothing and forgotten nothing is applicable to colonial policy. Although it is possible to discern a more liberal approach from 1815-21 and a vigorous protectionism from 1821-28,[48] in general, France reasserted mercantilist principles. Moreover, it became the second largest slave trading nation after Portugal while its plantation colonies regained some of their pre-1789 prosperity.[49] However, as regards Latin America Bourbon policy demonstrated the necessity of considering alternative imperial relationships in the aftermath of the wars of independence in the Atlantic world.

First, faced with the impracticality, and dubious economic benefit, of restoring Haiti to French rule, France sent a naval squadron in 1825 to impose a treaty that granted favourable tariffs on French goods and an indemnity of 150 million francs to French colonists in return for French recognition of Haitian independence.[50] The terms of the treaty included a secret clause which stipulated that Haiti would contract a loan of 30 million francs with French banks to help pay for the indemnity, which was the first significant overseas loan raised on the French market.[51] This use of military force to procure French interests became the blueprint and reference point for future French interventions in Latin America, particularly those of 1838 (discussed below).

Policymakers under the Bourbon Restoration were, therefore, willing to make compromises over sovereignty in Haiti. The same was true as regards Latin American independence, although here French freedom of action was restricted by

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[48] Jean Meyer (ed.), *L'Histoire de la France coloniale*, 2 vols. (Paris: Armand Colin, 1991), I, 309.
[49] Frédéric Régent, *La France et ses esclaves: de la colonisation aux abolitions, 1620-1848* (Paris: Grasset, 2007), ch. 9.
[50] 'Rapport a S. E. le Ministre de la Marine et des colonies de la mission a St. Domingue de M. le Bon. De Mackau', AAE, [**C**]orrespondance [**P**]olitique, Haiti, 2.
[51] David Todd, 'Republican Capitalism: The Political Economy of French Capital Exports in the Nineteenth Century', 33. Paper shared at 'France and its Empire in the Global Economy, 1815-1939' workshop, 10 June 2015, Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge.

its ties to Spain. France joined the Holy Alliance in 1818 and upheld the principle of legitimacy in Europe and the Americas. Indeed, Mexican independence was proclaimed in the same year, 1821, that the Jean-Baptiste de Villèle (1773-1854), head of the legitimist *ultra* party in France, formed his ministry. Furthermore, France invaded Spain in 1823 to restore the Spanish king Ferdinand VII (1784-1833) to absolutist rule and French troops remained there until 1828. This was seen by many in Mexico as the prelude to a French-backed Spanish expedition to reconquer its former colonies and, despite French protestations to the contrary, continued to be a concern in Mexico until 1830.[52] Intervention in the Americas to support royalism was seriously entertained in Europe by the Holy Alliance, particularly in France. Although the Polignac Memorandum, signed in 1823 between France and Britain, bound France not to intervene militarily in the Latin American wars of independence, both Louis XVIII (1815-24) and Charles X (1824-30) refused to recognise the new American republics.[53]

However, this diplomatic distance did not preclude sending diplomatic agents to Latin America in order to develop political and economic ties. France required information about the Latin American states and therefore the foreign ministry sent representatives to Argentina, Colombia and Mexico in 1822. The aim was not merely to report, but also to develop relations with the most important politicians in these countries in order that France could influence local politics.[54] Moreover, the foreign ministry realised the commercial potential of the new

[52] Tomás Murphy Sr. to unnamed, 'mui reservado', 2 January 1826, José María Bocanegra to Tomás Murphy Jr., 30 January and 'Reservada' 16 July 1829, [**A**]rchivo [**H**]istórico [**G**]enaro [**E**]strada, [**L**]egajo 4; [**e**]xpediente 25. Mexican fears were reported back to France, Schmaltz to Fleury, 18 February 1824, AAE, CP Mexique, 2.

[53] See William Spence Robertson, *France and Latin-American Independence* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1939). France's diplomatic relations with Mexico are discussed in Jacques Penot, *Les relations entre la France et le Mexique de 1808 à 1840: un Chapitre d'histoire écrit par les marins et diplomates français, thèse* (Lille: Atelier Reproduction des Thèses, Université Lille III, 1976) and Barker, *The French Experience in Mexico***.** Latin American independence is placed in its international context by Gabriel Paquette, 'The Dissolution of the Spanish Atlantic Monarchy', *The Historical Journal,* 52 (2009), 175-212, and Rafe Blaufarb, 'The Western question', 742-763.

[54] 'Rapport sur les missions projettés dans les amériques Espagnoles', dated March 1822 (with a margin note stating that instructions were extracted from the report and sent to agents on 10 March 1822). AAE, [**A**]ffaires [**D**]iverse [**P**]olitiques 46/1.

republics and feared that delay in establishing ties with the new states of Latin America would hand the economic advantage to Britain.[55]

The instructions to one of these agents stated: Mexico is "the most important of the new American republics".[56] The position conferred on Mexico by the foreign ministry is borne out by the value of its trade. According to the official French government statistics, between 1827 and 1836 Mexico was the twelfth largest export market for French goods in the world, totalling 145.4 million francs, and made up 2.18 percent of the value of France's total exports. This was second only to Brazil in Latin America,[57] which was marginally larger at 152.5 million (2.28 percent of total exports). By way of comparison, the largest export market, the United States, at 1,205 million francs, was about 18 percent of the total.[58] Mexico was more important as a destination for French goods than European powers such as Portugal, Russia and Austria, and, although France could not match Britain's export trade to Mexico, it vied with the United States as the second largest exporter throughout the period. In terms of imports, during the same period, Mexico furnished France with 65.4 million francs worth of goods and, again, was second only to Brazil in Latin America.[59]

Given this volume of trade, it was hardly surprising that calls to normalise relations with Mexico came from chambers of commerce in France's main ports.[60] These bodies had in turn been lobbied by agents of the Mexican government. The commercial agent for Mexico at Bordeaux, Jacques Galos (1774-1830), in an address to the members of the Bordeaux Chamber, echoed de Pradt and argued that France, "poor in colonies" but "rich in industry", should fix its attention on these "vast regions" in order to compensate for "the painful loss of [France's] most

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[55] 'Question dans l'intérêt de la France et des Amériques', 25 May 1825, AAE, MD Amérique, 36.
[56] 'Instructions pour Monsieur Charles Bresson, chargé par le Roi d'une mission en Amérique', AAE, MD Amérique, 36.
[57] Not including the French Caribbean colonies.
[58] *Tableau décennal du commerce de la France avec ses colonies et les puissances étrangères, publiée par l'Administration des Douanes, 1827 à 1836* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1838), XLII-XLIII. Jacques Penot charts the expansion of French trade with Mexico in the immediate years after independence, 'L'expansion commerciale française au Mexique et les causes du conflit franco-mexicain de 1838-1839', *Bulletin Hispanique*, 75 (1973), 169-201.
[59] *Tableau décennal…1827 à 1836*, XLVI-XLVIII.
[60] Chambers of commerce from the Atlantic ports and Marseilles also lobbied the government to recognise Haitian independence. Brière, 'Le baron Portal et l'indépendance d'Haïti', 99-101.

precious overseas possessions". According to the agent, more had been exported from the port of Bordeaux to Latin America than to Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guiana, Pondicherry and Senegal and other French colonies combined. He informed Tomás Murphy Senior (unknown-1830),[61] an early Mexican diplomatic agent to France, that his work had been successful and the Bordeaux and Marseilles Chambers of Commerce had pressured the French government. Murphy in turn reported that this pressure was positively influencing the French cabinet towards recognition of Mexico's independence.[62] Indeed, the French foreign ministry instructed a commercial agent, Adrien Cochelet (1788-1858), to tell the Mexican government of "our desire to extend and complete our relations with her", but that recognition would not be immediate: "[i]t is doubtless to be desired that this acknowledgement take place, but it is necessary that such an important action be examined with care".[63] Diplomatic recognition was a long-term intention of the Bourbon Restoration.

Mexico's economic importance was linked to its production of precious metals, especially silver, which was of particular concern to France given its bimetallic monetary system.[64] The reality behind the legend of New Spain's mineral wealth was confirmed in Europe by Alexander von Humboldt's travels through the kingdom between 1799 and 1804.[65] Indeed, Chevalier, an economist who studied at the École des Mines de Paris, published a work on the gold and silver mines of the Americas. Mexico formed a significant portion of the work and Chevalier wrote that the mining of precious metals was "a subject of particular interest for France" because "amongst all the nations […] it must retain the most silver" to maintain its fixed gold and silver exchange rate.[66] Silver production declined in Mexico after

[61] Date of birth not given in Miguel León-Portilla (ed.), *Diccionario Porrúa de historia, biografía y geografía de México*, 3 vols. (5th ed., Mexico City: Porrúa, 1986), II, 2008.
[62] Jacques Galos to 'Messieurs les Membres Composant la Chambre de Commerce de Bordeaux', 19 February 1825; Tomás Murphy Sr to Vicente Rocafuerte, 20 June 1826, AHGE, Francia, L. 1; e. 1.
[63] 'Instructions pour Monsieur Adrien Cochelet', 15 January 1829, AAE, CP Mexique, 4.
[64] On bimetallism see Flandreau, *The Glitter of Gold*.
[65] Alexander von Humboldt and Aimé Bonpland, *Essai politique sur le royaume de la Nouvelle-Espagne*, 2 vols. (Paris: F. Schoell, 1811).
[66] Michel Chevalier, *Des mines d'argent et d'or du Nouveau-monde* (Paris: Au bureau de la Revue des deux mondes, 1846), 75.

independence,[67] but diplomatic reports and published works recognised Mexico's immense mineral wealth and, if some noted the decline in output, all agreed that properly exploited Mexican mines would overtake pre-independence levels.[68]

The most common description of Mexico in French discourse was of a country blessed by nature through its fertile soil and favourable climates, by its abundance of natural resources and its strategic location between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, which made it ideally placed to develop commerce.[69] It was also a destination for French settlers and by the 1850s there were some 5,000 French residents there.[70] These French nationals comprised the largest group of foreigners in Mexico after the Spanish and provided an alternative means for the exchange of French and Mexican culture.[71]

Mexico, then, occupied an important place in the French worldview, but relations were impeded by the refusal to recognise independence. French investors were interested in the loans raised for the newly independent Latin American republics and some subscribed on the London markets, but non-recognition meant that these loans could not be raised in Paris. Furthermore, Alamán had originally attempted to secure capital to exploit Mexico's mines in Paris, where he spent some time after serving in the Spanish *Cortes*. In 1822 he formed the Franco-Mexican Mining Company in Paris, but the venture failed and Alamán reconstituted the company in London as the United Mexican Mining Association.[72] These

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[67] Jaime Rodríguez, 'La crisis de México en el siglo XIX', *Estudios de Historia Moderna y Contemporánea de México*, 10 (1986), 85-107.

[68] Beltrami, *Le Mexique*, 2 vols. (Paris: Crevot, 1830), I, 332; Mathieu de Fossey, *Le Mexique* (Paris: H. Plon, 1857), 429; Hippolyte Du Pasquier de Dommartin, *Les États-Unis et le Mexique. L'intérêt européen dans l'Amérique du Nord* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1852), 51-54; Martin to La Ferronnays, 24 July 1828, AAE, CP Mexique, 4; 'Note de Monsieur Gabriac sur les mines du Mexique'; 'Note sur la Sonora par Eugène du Moflas', AAE, MD Mexique, 10.

[69] See Dugast, *La tentation mexicaine*, I, chs. 5 and 6.

[70] Jean Meyer, 'Les Français au Mexique au XIXe siècle', *Cahiers des Amériques latines*, 9–10 (1974), 51; Barker, *French Experience in Mexico*, 123-30.

[71] Several of them published works on Mexico, such as Ancharsis Brissot, *Voyage au Guazacoalcos, aux Antilles et aux États-Unis* (Paris: A. Bertrand, 1837) and Fossey, *Le Mexique*. These French communities as well the influence and impact of French culture and science in Mexico are explored in Javier Perez Siller, David Skerrit and Chantai Cramaussel (eds.), *México Francia: Memoria de una sensibilidad común; siglos XIX-XX*, 4 vols. (Mexico: Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla; San Luis Potosí: Colegio de San Luis; México, D.F., CEMCA, 1998-2008).

[72] Benjamin Disraeli, *The present state of Mexico, as detailed in a report ... to the ... Congress by the secretary of State for the home department and foreign affairs, with notes, and a memoir of don Lucas Alaman* (London: John Murray, 1825), 44; Charlotte Kellner, *Alexander von Humboldt* (London:

disappointments did not diminish interest, rather, rivalry with Britain and the United States focussed attention on ways in which France could profit from Latin American independence.

Julien Schmaltz (1771-1827), who had been sent by the foreign ministry to Mexico in order to report on its political, social and economic state, wrote to Paris "the English in Mexico are in a much better position than us". His analysis echoed Chateaubriand's conclusion that Latin America had become a "type of British colony" and the reasons Schmaltz gave for this for this read like a manual for informal empire. He argued the following: the British navy maintained a constant presence on the coasts and in the ports of Mexico while naval officers frequently visited the capital, which gave Mexicans a strong impression of British "power". The pro-independence editorials in British papers, the declarations and attitude of George Canning (1770-1827) in favour of Latin American independence, the response to the Monroe Doctrine by British journalists and, above all, the sending of accredited agents, "seemed to confirm all these good dispositions [of Britain]". Moreover, loans contracted with London financial houses marked the beginning of a "political dependence" which was becoming all the more of a "dangerous influence" because London's capital markets were currently the "only resource and the unique hope of the Mexican government" to relieve its current financial distress. In addition to this political and financial dominance, it was necessary to add British commercial hegemony. And, if this was not enough, British companies and capital were poised to exploit Mexico's mines. There was even talk that a bank would be set up to disburse British funds towards agricultural improvement with the eventual result, Schmaltz concluded, that Mexico would be almost entirely subordinated to British economic and political interests.[73]

Despite Schmaltz's concerns, the activities he identified above were not part of a systematic and coherent British attempt to establish what would amount to informal empire directed from London, nor did they confer as much long-lasting

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Oxford University Press, 1963), 107-8; Michael Costeloe, *Bubbles and Bonanzas: British Investors and Investments in Mexico*, 1821-1860 (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2011), 58.

[73] Schmaltz to Fleury, 16 June 1824, AAE, AD Mexique, 1.

influence as feared.[74] Even so Schmaltz, and many subsequent French diplomats in Mexico as well as ministers in Paris, wanted to procure Britain's supposed hegemony for France, or at least, in the 1820s, to limit Britain's power. The problem was how to achieve it. Schmaltz, in a somewhat fatalistic early acceptance of the dominance of Anglo-Saxon capitalism, argued that the British could not be challenged financially or commercially. He claimed that "[French] capitalists and businessmen did not have either the same mass of funds disposable, nor the genius of enterprise, nor the boldness in speculation which gives so many advantages to our rivals", but he nonetheless urged that France should employ the means it did have to advance its interests because it "did not lack partisans in Mexico". Schmaltz was an early proponent of a proto-pan-Latinist interpretation: just as had happened in Spain, similarity of "religion, customs, mores and spirit" in Mexico meant there was a preference for France as a protector rather than Britain.[75] Monarchy, like religion or pan-Latinism (and frequently all three were inseparable), was another means of increasing French influence via non-economic means, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

The economic wealth, both recorded and potential, combined with geostrategic and commercial rivalry meant that France saw Latin America, and especially Mexico, as an area of great importance. The identification of Latin America as a key market for French trade was borne out by the fact that the volume of French trade increased throughout the period. Further attention was drawn to the region because it was feared, in the 1820s, that British policy was securing an advantageous position for itself at the expense of other powers.[76] However, the Bourbon family compact meant that Louis XVIII and Charles X, already ideologically opposed to the independence of Spanish America because of its republican direction, had yet more reason to delay the recognition of these emerging states. This in turn meant that France, unlike Britain, could not negotiate commercial treaties with the news states of Latin America. After the collapse of the Bourbon

[74] The limited influence the British loans had on the Mexican government is explored in Michael Costeloe, *Bonds and Bondholders: British Investors and Mexico's Foreign Debt, 1824-1888* (Westport: Praeger, 2003).
[75] Schmaltz to Fleury, 16 June 1824, AAE, AD Mexique, 1.
[76] 'Question dans l'intérêt de la France et des Amériques', 25 May 1825, AAE, MD Amérique, 36.

Restoration in 1830, the July Monarchy deployed its powerful navy in order to secure by force what Britain had attained by negotiation.

III

Wars of Civilisation in Mexico and the River Plate

With the fall of Charles X French policy towards Latin America was no longer shackled to Ferdinand VII's intransigence. France unilaterally recognised the independence of all the existing republics in 1830. While sympathy for monarchy in the region would remain a leitmotif of many diplomats, politicians and publicists under the July Monarchy and Second Empire, French policy was no longer tied to the restoration of Spanish sovereignty,[77] thereby removing Britain's principal objection to French intervention in the Americas. Indeed, as will be discussed later, after 1830 France frequently acted in concert with Britain when pursuing its goals. However, France's recognition of independence did not secure stable relations with the new states; rather, its newfound freedom of action led to military intervention in both Mexico and the River Plate.

Because France had not recognised independence, it had not negotiated treaties of amity, navigation and friendship to regulate its commerce and the status of its foreign nationals. The protection of nationals from damage to property and forced loans was seen as essential to promote French emigration and trade. The refusal of both Mexico and Argentina to ratify treaties and indemnify French losses during civil conflict were the pretext for French intervention. Senior French officials took the view that unstable republics such as Mexico and Argentina left France with no option other than intervention to forcibly secure French goals once both governments had rejected ultimatums. This was deemed to be justified because these Latin American governments had failed to uphold a French conception of international law and civilisation.[78] The two naval expeditions of 1838 to blockade Mexico and Argentina were predicated on the assumption that these nations were semi-civilised and based on the conviction that demonstrations of naval power

[77] Ferdinand VII refused any solution to the wars of independence in Latin America that fell short of this.

[78] Molé to Deffaudis, 10 November 1837 and Deffaudis to Molé, 6 May 1838, AAE, CP Mexique, 12; Molé to Roger, 7 July, 12 August, 22 November 1837, CP Argentine, 8.

would coerce these governments in accepting French demands, as had been the case with Haiti in 1825 and Colombia in 1834.[79] A display of French power was intended to provide a salutary lesson to the continent as a whole. The then French foreign minister, Count Louis-Mathieu Molé (1781-1855), stated: "the future of France's relations with the many states of Spanish American depend on the results of the course France has taken towards Mexico and the Republic of Argentina."[80]

This course began in 1838 with the blockade of Veracruz and Buenos Aires. Discussing French policy towards Mexico in 1838, an editorial in the semi-official Orléanist newspaper the *Journal des débats* informed its readers that France no longer took up arms for conquest or ambition. Instead, its wars were in order to "uphold a great principle of the laws of nations, and to safeguard the interests of civilisation."[81] More cynical readers may have wondered exactly how blockading the Mexican coast and seizing the fortress of San Juan de Ulúa at Veracruz in order to extract an indemnity of 600,000 piastres and force Mexico to sign a treaty would advance the cause on civilisation, but French policymakers deployed a discourse of civilisation, a continuum with which to measure other states, which drove and legitimated intervention in the extra-European world. This conception was most fully articulated by Guizot in lectures delivered at the Sorbonne between 1828 and 1830.[82]

For Guizot, civilisation was a "fact" and could be quantified by "its institutions, its commerce, its industry, its wars, all the details of its government". Having considered these factors, the task was to "estimate them, judge them […] ask in what manner they have contributed to the civilisation of that nation [….] It is in this way that we not only form a complete idea of them, but measure and

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[79] On the naval demonstration before Cartagena see William Spence Robertson, 'An Early Threat of Intervention in South America', *Hispanic American Historical Review,* 23 (1943), 611-631. Baron Deffaudis hoped that this event would have a "salutary" effect on Mexico. Deffaudis to Broglie, 20 April 1834, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.

[80] Molé to Baudin, 23 August 1838, AAE, CP Mexique, 14.

[81] 'France, Paris, 30 juillet', *Journal des débats*, 31 July 1838, front page.

[82] On Guizot's liberalism and its political context see Michael Drolet, 'Carrying the Banner of the Bourgeoisie: Democracy, Self and the Philosophical Foundations to François Guizot's Historical and Political Thought', *History of Political Thought*, 32 (2011), 645-90; Aurelian Craiutu, *Liberalism under Siege: The Political Thought of the French Doctrinaires* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2003); Marina Valensise, (ed.), *François Guizot et la culture politique de son temps* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991); Pierre Rosanvallon, *Le Moment Guizot* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985).

appreciate their true value; they are, as it were, rivers, of which we ask what quantity of water it is they contribute to the ocean?"[83] For French observers in the 1830s, the "rivers" that made up civilisation in Latin America were running dry.[84]

While there was a French discourse that depicted Mexico as part of a Latin civilisation that would naturally gravitate towards France, discussed in chapter three, this interpretation existed concurrently with negative views of Mexico as a backwards, unstable and semi-civilised state that required firm action on the part of France to protect its interests. This was a point made by the *Journal des débats*, which argued that independence from Spain had resulted in regression. What the paper described as the perpetual state of anarchy in Latin America was not "favourable to the progress of civilisation". Mexicans were "still childlike and barbarous". This was a state of society was mirrored throughout Latin America and it was, therefore, necessary to treat these states as France treated the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, by upholding the principles of international law, French intervention would inculcate "civilisation" in Mexico.[85]

The newspaper's view was one shared by France's minister to Mexico during the 1830s, Baron Antoine-Louis Deffaudis (1786-1869). He believed Mexico to be so politically fractious that it was impossible for them to "constitute themselves into an orderly and stable government."[86] The internal and external wars, parliamentary debates, administration, even the press, "everything […] in these new states is a bad parody of what occurs in Europe."[87] Deffaudis summarised what he understood as the main failing of French policy in a summary of relations with Mexico since 1825: "[i]nstead of treating these ignorant, presumptuous, cowardly and arrogant people, without morals or probity, as one would handle […] badly raised children […] we have treated the Mexicans like […] the civilised nations of Europe."[88]

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[83] François Guizot, *Cours d'histoire moderne: histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe depuis la chute de l'empire romain jusqu'à la Révolution française* (Paris: Pichon et Didier, 1828), 6-9.
[84] On the relationship between the discourse of civilisation and imperialism see Brett Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization: The Evolution of an Imperial Idea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), and Duncan Bell (ed.), *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
[85] 'France, Paris, 30 juillet', *Journal des débats*, 31 July 1838, front page.
[86] Deffaudis to de Broglie, 15 July 1833, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.
[87] Deffaudis to de Broglie, 3 February 1836, AAE, CP Mexique, 10.
[88] Deffaudis to Broglie, 2 June 1836, AAE, CP Mexique, 10.

Deffaudis concluded that it was therefore necessary henceforth to treat Mexico as France treated the "Barbary states" or the "Turks" – with "force".[89] A similar narrative of superficially civilised or European society that masked barbarism was deployed by French diplomats in the River Plate.[90] And the portrayal of Mexicans as infants was shared by Admiral Charles Baudin (1784-1854), sent in 1838 to blockade Veracruz, and Baron Alleye de Cyprey (1784-1858), Deffaudis' successor in Mexico from 1840-46.[91]

However, Deffaudis' equation of Mexico with the Ottoman Empire or the Dey of Algiers was at the nadir of his (and France's) relations with the Mexican government in the 1830s. His representation of Mexico was not monolithic, nor was it entirely dismissive. He shared with many of his contemporaries the belief that it was drawn towards France by a shared culture. He also did not place Mexico entirely outside of civilisation: it was a "semi-civilised" state.[92] Similarly, for Guizot all the republics of "South America" were "semi-barbarous".[93] In this view, these nations were at risk of becoming more barbaric because of corrupt administration, ill-suited constitutions, the influence of the clergy (especially in Mexico), prejudice against European immigrants and restrictive tariffs on commerce, and the lack of the rule of law. However, with the right guidance these countries could be restored to civilisation. Moreover, it was not necessary for France to take on this burden itself because there were those who would do it for them: there were, in these republics, "many enlightened men".[94]

The second reason why Latin America was an area where it was supposed that French informal imperialism could be effective was the role of local elites, the "enlightened men". The 1838 interventions hoped to combine naval power with parties sympathetic to France in order to procure French goals overseas. As Count Narcisse-Achille de Salvandy (1795-1856) made clear while defending government

[89] Deffaudis to Thiers, 23 July 1836, AAE, CP Mexique, 6; Deffaudis to Molé, 25 November 1837, AAE, CP Mexique, 12.
[90] De Bécourt to Guizot, 17 November 1841, AAE, CP Argentine, 14.
[91] Baudin to Molé, 19 March 1839, AAE, CP Mexique, 16; De Cyprey to Thiers, 13 July 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19.
[92] Deffaudis to Thiers, 24 September 1836, CP Mexique, 12.
[93] Guizot to Saint Aulaire, 26 October 1844, AAE, CP Mexique, 24.
[94] 'France, Paris, 30 juillet', *Journal des débats*, 31 July 1838, front page.

policy in the Chamber of Deputies in 1839 there were in Latin America "parties which attach themselves to the politics and protection of France […] we want to be sure that these parties can be for us serious sources of support."[95] The most concerted enactment of this policy under the July Monarchy, which was continued by the Second Republic, was in the River Plate. Here, France backed one faction over another in a regional power struggle that lasted from 1838 to 1852. Space precludes detailed discussion of French imperialism in the River Plate,[96] but policy will be briefly outlined and analysed below to demonstrate how the French discourse of European civilisation played out in practice.

In the decade that followed independence in the former Spanish viceroyalty of Río de la Plata factions that coalesced around centralism and federalism competed for power. The former, known as the Unitarian Party, were defeated by supporters of federalism at Buenos Aires in 1829 and nationwide in 1831. Federalists were led by Juan Manuel de Rosas (1793-1877), who, after defeating the Unitarians, became the authoritarian leader of the Argentine Confederation from 1829 to 1852. His regime was considered by French policymakers to be hostile to foreigners, illiberal and contrary to French commercial interests because Rosas prohibited direct trade with the internal provinces of Argentina. As with various Mexican governments, Rosas had refused to negotiate a commercial treaty with France and French nationals suffered acts of violence and damage to property. France, therefore, presented Rosas with an ultimatum in 1837 demanding that French subjects be treated on the same terms as British subjects resident in Argentina. Rosas' refusal of this ultimatum led to a naval blockade which lasted from 1838 to 1840. However, French intervention in the River Plate became part of a regional power struggle and internal civil war because French diplomatic agents, and policymakers in Paris, saw the divisions in Platine politics as a means to secure French policy aims.

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[95] 'Chambre des Députés. Présidence de M. Sauzet. Séance du mardi 25 juin', *Le Moniteur universel,* 26 June 1839, p. 1093.

[96] French involvement in the region is detailed in Jean-David Avenel, *L'affaire du Rio de la Plata: 1838-1852* (Paris: Économica, 1998). McLean discusses French policy insofar as it relates to British involvement in in *War, Diplomacy and Informal Empire*. See also John Frank Cady, *Foreign Intervention in the Rio de la Plata* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1929).

Many of Rosas' opponents not only supported French intervention, but had actively called for it. A large number of the leaders of the Unitarian Party had emigrated to Montevideo. Here they allied with a new generation of Argentines, ideologically opposed to Rosas and strongly influenced by French *doctrinaire* liberalism, who looked to the July Monarchy as a political model and French political culture for their own intellectual inspiration.[97] For Guizot, it was clear where civilisation lay in this struggle: "there are two parties in South America, the European party and the American party […the European party] is made up of the most enlightened men, the most accustomed to European civilisation […] they want to assimilate America to Europe." However, the American party was "tyrannical, violent and bloody" and "outside of civilisation".[98] In the hope of advancing French interests and protecting French nationals, France sided with the local elites of the "European party".

The plan was that aid to Rosas' enemies would topple his regime and replace it with one sympathetic to France, or, at the very least, the pressure on Rosas would force him to concede to French demands. To achieve this, France gave leaders of the opposition to Rosas based at Montevideo diplomatic support and material aid. These individuals were "auxiliaries" (Guizot's term) for France's anti-Rosas policy.[99] Guizot refused to go beyond this strategy and send a large French expeditionary force because he feared it would be drawn into the interior where they might encounter another Abd al-Qādir (1808-83), [100] who was tying down 100,000 French troops in Algeria at the time.

France also supported the government at Montevideo, which was itself besieged from 1843 to 1851 as part of a civil war which saw Rosas send Argentine troops to Uruguay in an attempt to dislodge the government there that supported his enemies and welcomed French intervention. However a reliance upon local elites combined with limited French support proved largely ineffectual. Despite a

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[97] William Katra, *The Argentine Generation of 1837: Echeverría, Alberdi, Sarmiento, Mitre* (London: Associated University Presses, 1996); Daniel Schwartz, 'Juan Bautista Alberdi and the Mutation of French Doctrinaire Liberalism in Argentina', *History of Political Thought*, 30 (2009), 140-165.
[98] 'Chambre des Pairs', *Le Moniteur universel*, 9 February 1841, pp. 515-16.
[99] Chambre des Pairs', *Le Moniteur universel*, 9 February, 1841, p. 515.
[100] Guizot to Saint Aulaire, 21 January 1845, AAE, CP Argentine, 19.

second blockade of Buenos Aires in conjunction with Britain (1845-47),[101] a naval expedition down the Paraná River into the interior of Argentina (1846), a direct French subsidy to the government at Montevideo (1848-52) and, finally, the garrison of the Uruguayan capital with French troops (1850-52), French policy barely succeeded in maintaining the independence of Montevideo, let alone overthrowing Rosas or even coercing his government to accept French demands.

French aims in the 1838 Mexican intervention were similar to those in the River Plate. However, in contrast to the 1862-67 intervention France did not find obvious collaborators analogous to the Unitarian Party in the River Plate. Nonetheless, French observers viewed Mexican society through the prism of civilisation and attempted to forge links with factions within Mexico in order to further their aims. However, while in the River Plate intellectuals and politicians openly sided with French intervention, in Mexico all parties more or less rallied around the national government against France and, for French observers, it was less clear which faction in Mexico embodied civilisation.

The difficulties France encountered in securing a treaty combined with the treatment of its nationals meant that French hostility developed towards those who held power in Mexico in the 1830s. During this decade, Mexican governments were generally composed of the conservative members of Mexico's elite. They had become disillusioned with the federal 1824 Constitution and wished to create a more powerful executive, restrict the franchise and establish a centralised state. They achieved these reforms with the "Seven Laws" (discussed in more detail in chapter two) published in 1836 which replaced the existing constitution. The only government made up of Mexican liberals during the 1830s was a reformist administration with Santa Anna as nominal president, but run by his vice-president Gómez Farías from 1833 to 1834. Liberals who supported federalism were thus out of power at the time French grievances increased against Mexico.

It was not merely federalist opposition to the national government that led some French observers to favour their cause in Mexican politics. Liberal federalists were considered to be more sympathetic towards France, and closer to French

[101] Britain unilaterally raised its blockade in 1847. France continued until 1848.

liberal values, than their conservative opponents. The Mexican liberal Mora, who after 1834 spent most of his life in Paris, argued that the French divided Mexican politics into two camps: "federalist" and "clerical". They wished for the "reformist ideas" of the former to triumph not because they supported federal republicanism, "[in France] they love nothing but constitutional monarchy", but because they sympathised with the federalist party which they saw as more tolerant of foreigners, and because of its "well known tendencies towards free trade" as well as freedom of worship.[102]

Mora's analysis was correct: many French observers tended to categorise conservative politicians as retrograde. The first administration of Anastasio Bustamante (1780-1853), in which Alamán had significant influence, and which was in power 1830-32, was described as "faithful in some ways to the old Spanish traditions" and looked to found its power "on the same bases of fanaticism [the Church and the military]". One of the first French diplomatic agents wrote that the July Revolution "frightened" the men of this government because they feared that the "revolutionary torrent" would cross the ocean and be unleashed in Mexico.[103] According to another French diplomat, Bustamante's ministers had heard of the overthrow of the Bourbons in France "with pain" because they wanted to destroy federalism and replace it with a kingdom ruled by a Spanish prince.[104] The French foreign minister therefore looked forward to the overthrow of Bustamante's regime because it would bring to power a government "less hostile to the principles of [the July Revolution].[105]

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[102] José Luis Mora to Gomez Farías, 20 May 1845, [**B**]enson [**L**]atin [**A**]merican [**C**]ollection, The University of Texas at Austin, Valentín Gómez Farías collection.
[103] Cochelet to foreign minister, 1 January 1832, AAE, CP Mexique, 7.
[104] Baron Jean-Baptiste Louis Gros to Count Horace François Bastien Sébastiani de La Porta, 30 August 1832. For similar views see Gros to Sébastiani, 13 February, 5 April, 5 June 1832, AAE, CP Mexique, 7.
[105] Sébastiani to Baron Gros, 4 March 1832. Tornel was pleased by the July Revolution. Tornel to Alamán, 19 and 28 September 1830, AHGE, Estados Unidos, L. 17; e.1. Alamán welcomed it insofar as it led to French recognition of Mexico and gave no indication of hostility towards it in his diplomatic correspondence. Alamán to Murphy, 29 September and 27 October 1830, Francia, L. 8; e. 57, and L. 9; e. 73.

Federalists were understood to be more favourably inclined towards France.[106] Deffaudis reported back to Paris that "France is more in favour when [the federalists] are in power." As with the River Plate, therefore, the conclusion was that the solution to French problems "would seem to depend on a change of government."[107] In contrast to the River Plate, however, French sympathy for a political faction did not develop into a long-term relationship. Divisions within Mexican politics were exploited to further immediate French goals, but French attempts to co-opt federalists were opportune and short-lived. The leader of the French naval intervention, Baudin, was in communication with the leaders of federalism in Mexico. He maintained that he would not help the federalist cause because if it were associated with a foreign flag national opinion would rise against it. He did, however, argue that the fall of the present government and the proclamation of federalism would be a mutually beneficial outcome. In order to help bring about this state of affairs, Baudin lifted the blockade on ports controlled by federal forces in revolt against the government in Mexico City, such as Tampico. Baudin considered the federalist cause to be that of "liberty, unity, civilisation and progress" against the retrograde ideas of "priests and Spaniards". Despite this admiration, his conclusion was that Mexico was not "advanced enough in political ideas to understand and appreciate the views of the federalists".[108]

In an account of the campaign published by one of his subordinates, the binary French image of Mexican politics was reinforced. There was the "party of the Church, strengthened by former Spaniards" and this "clerical-Spanish party" wanted to see the establishment of a "monarchy more or less constitutional, less rather than more." Those who fought for the reinstitution of the 1824 constitution and federalism proclaimed "strongly liberal ideas", including freedom of worship. The head of this faction was Gomez Farías, "a man of talent and a constant

[106] Deffaudis to foreign minister, 6 July, 1 and 19 October, 1836, AAE, CP Mexique, 10; Deffaudis to Molé, 12 January and 24 February 1837, CP Mexique, 11.
[107] Deffaudis to Molé, 24 February 1837, AAE, CP Mexique, 11.
[108] Baudin to José Urrea, 22 December, Urrea to Baudin, 27 December 1838, José Antonio Mejía to Baudin, 6 January, Baudin to Urrea and Mejía, 15 January, Baudin to Mejíá, 20 January, Baudin to Molé 15 February, Baudin to Urrea, 16 February 1839, AAE, CP Mexique, 15; Baudin to Molé, 19 March, 'Note, article pour le Moniteur sur l'affaire du Mexique', Baudin to Soult, 27 November 1839, AAE CP Mexique, 16.

defender of the most advanced liberal ideas". However, the author reiterated Baudin's analysis that Mexico was not ready for such ideas. Furthermore, he summarised what was to become the dominant interpretation of the prospects for liberalism in Mexico. The members of the federal party may have been "the most enlightened" section of the population, but they were neither the most numerous, the richest nor the most influential, and against them were the Church and the great landowners. The conclusion was not promising: "[i]f there is a future [for the federalists], it does not seem likely it will arrive soon."[109]

The local situation in Mexico differed significantly from that of the River Plate, which meant that the strategy of supporting local elites in revolt against the national government did not develop into the kind of relationship France established with the Argentine Unitarian Party or Uruguayan liberals at Montevideo. First, there were fewer French nationals in Mexico than the River Plate (roughly 5,000 in Mexico compared with some 15,000 in Montevideo). Furthermore, in Mexico, these immigrants were not concentrated in one place, but spread throughout the country. Although French nationals in Mexico were threatened with expulsion, at Montevideo they were faced with an army of Argentine troops that from 1843 onwards besieged the city. Second, although the blockade of the Mexican coast caused significant economic problems for the Mexican government because of its dependence on customs revenue, pressure could not be put on Mexico City without an inland military expedition. It was argued that naval power was more effective in the River Plate because the two major cities, Montevideo and Buenos Aires, were ports.

Third, Rosas' regime was represented as barbarism incarnate, while the Unitarian liberals were seen as a viable alternative. In Mexico, by contrast, federalists were seen as enlightened, but impractical, while the Mexican government was not, unlike Rosas, irredeemable. Fourth, when Mexico declared war on France because of its naval action many federalists rallied to the national

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[109] Eugène Massin in Henri Blanchard and Adrien Dauzats, *San-Juan de Ulùa, ou Relation de l'expédition française au Mexique, sous les ordres de M. le contre-amiral Baudin, par MM. P. Blanchard et A. Dauzats. Suivi de notes et documents et d'un aperçu général sur l'état actuel du Texas, par M. E. Maissin... Publié par ordre du roi, sous les auspices de M. le baron Tupinier, alors ministre de la Marine* (Paris: Gide, 1839), 457-62.

cause, whereas in the River Plate opposition to Rosas openly welcomed French imperialism. Fifth and finally, the Mexican government, was willing to negotiate with France and eventually agreed to sign a convention regulating Franco-Mexican relations until a permanent treaty was concluded as well as paying an indemnity of 600,000 piastres. Although Rosas did sign a treaty with France, he later attempted to overthrow the French-backed government at Montevideo, which led to the second French intervention in 1845.

The success of the interventions discussed above was limited and they were widely criticised, not least by Thiers.[110] But not because the policy was in itself considered flawed; rather, the support given to local elites and the military force sent to procure French goals was deemed to be insufficient. Deffaudis, who after serving in Mexico was appointed as minister to Buenos Aires and coordinated efforts against Rosas from 1845 to 1848, wrote "we conducted [the intervention] with such insufficient means that, far from remedying the evil, we only increased it".[111] The novelist Alexandre Dumas asked rhetorically whether French intervention in the River Plate was "anything other than the ineffective aid one brings to the mortally wounded?"[112]

There was, however, no disagreement between those like Salvandy or Guizot who argued for a more limited deployment of resources, or those like Thiers, who wanted to see a greater commitment of men and money in the River Plate, over where civilisation lay. Thiers similarly understood the opponents of Rosas to be the "enlightened" party, while one of the earliest proponents of active French intervention in the region on a larger scale argued for it in the following terms: "when a revolution carries to power a party of […] more enlightened, more moral and more capable of […] re-establishing the nation to prosperity would France be committing a great crime if it lent, in whatever it form it might take, serious and

[110] See especially his speeches on 29 and 31 May 1844, and 5 January 1850. Thiers, *Discours*, VI, 349-98 and 399-444; VIII, 327-84.
[111] Antoine-Louis Deffaudis, *Questions diplomatiques et particulièrement des travaux et de l'organisation du Ministère des affaires étrangères* (Paris: Goujon et Milon, 1849), 78.
[112] Alexandre Dumas, Montevideo, ou Une nouvelle Troie (Paris: N. Chaix, 1850), 159.

disinterested support? Would it not be, on the contrary, the fulfilment of the duty imposed on [it] by superiority of power, of wisdom and of civilisation?"[113]

One notable critic of Orléanist policy towards Mexico and Argentina was Louis-Napoléon. In articles published in the *Progrès du Pas-de-Calais* the future emperor attacked the July Monarchy's imperial projects. Were France in a "normal state" it could embrace the words of God: "increase and multiply". It could say "traverse the seas, and everywhere you find a shore, continent, island or rock, plant, as a germ of a new civilisation, your intelligent and laborious race." Unfortunately, France was not in a "normal state" and needed to concentrate, rather than disperse, its forces, otherwise the overseas possessions it did have would be a "cause of weakness", not "prosperity."

There were only two motives to found colonies, Louis-Napoléon argued: military and commercial. Vast swathes of Africa, Asia and America had been seized in order to found "satellite kingdoms" which were "producers and consumers for the metropole". Colonies had also been established in order to "occupy strategic points, which, by their position, dominate the great commercial routes" and, in time of war, assured influence to the countries that possessed them. French expansion in the Pacific (the Marquesa Islands, Tahiti and the Society Islands were his examples) met none of these criteria and thus the government was spending "millions in order to establish onerous colonies". Instead, France should concentrate its resources and look to develop Algeria and Guiana, which were "the sole and unique possessions which can truly be of great benefit to France". However, rather than developing what it had, the French government preferred to "seize all the barren rocks that the other powers scorn."[114]

In this article Louis-Napoléon largely echoed the ideas of Orléanist imperialism even if he criticised the practice. If France could afford it then the extension of French civilisation overseas was desirable, with a preference for strategic points on the globe that dominated commercial routes. These elements

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[113] Charles Lefèbvre de Bécourt, 'Des Rapports de la France et de L'Europe avec L'Amérique du Sud' *Revue des deux mondes',* 15 (1838), 54-69.

[114] Louis-Napoléon, 'Nos Colonies dans l'océan pacifique' first published in *Progrès du Pas-du-Calais*, 14 June 1841. Republished in *Oeuvres de Napoléon III*, 5 vols. (Paris: Amyot, 1854-69), II, 3-8.

would underpin his own imperial policies, while the designation of Guiana as an existing French colony of value showed his interest in the circum-Caribbean.[115] Indeed, the importance he attached to Latin America is demonstrated by the fact that while he attacked Orléanist policy in the Pacific for diminishing the power of France, he condemned the government for not deploying sufficient resources in Mexico and the River Plate. France's overseas military interventions had been counterproductive. They had done nothing but "give foreigners more and more striking proofs of the submission of the French government to their demands". In this category he included expeditions to Lisbon in 1832 and Ancona in 1837, but it was Buenos Aires and Montevideo that best illustrated the impotence of the French government: Baudin's forces, he argued, captured the fortress of San Juan de Ulúa, but they could not "profit from their victory because they did not have enough marines" to continue French operations inland. The result was a "weakening of our influence in [Mexico]." In the River Plate, Baron Ange René Armand de Mackau (1788-1855), who had led the naval squadron that imposed the treaty recognising independence on Haiti, "trampled underfoot all French interests, and abandoned to the fury of a tyrant [Rosas] 15,000 of his compatriots" by negotiating with Rosas.[116]

The debates over late 1830s and 1840s French intervention in Mexico and the River Plate informed later policy towards Mexico, not least because France did not withdraw militarily from Montevideo until 1852. Furthermore, the Second Republic seriously entertained a much greater military deployment, discussed in heated debates in the National Assembly where one of the great critics of Louis-Napoléon's Mexican policy, Thiers, argued for a large expeditionary force to be sent. Opposing this idea was Louis-Napoléon's future minister of state, and the defender of French intervention in Mexico, Eugène Rouher (1814-84).

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[115] Louis-Napoléon was supposedly offered the presidency of Ecuador in 1844. In 1859, and again in 1862, the idea of a French protectorate over Ecuador was discussed. Mark van Aken, *King of the Night: Juan José Flores and Ecuador, 1824-1864* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 180; George Lauderbaugh, *The History of Ecuador* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2012), 57-58. On French involvement in Central America and Louis-Napoléon's interest in the region see Thomas Schoonover, *The French in Central America: Culture and Commerce, 1820-1930* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2000); Edward Richards, 'Louis Napoleon and Central America', *Journal of Modern History*, 34 (1962), 178-184.

[116] Louis-Napoléon, 'Vielle histoire toujours nouvelle' first published in *Progrès du Pas-du-Calais*, 3 August 1844. Republished in *Oeuvres de Napoléon III*, II, 35-41.

Thiers had also been a consistent critic of what he understood to be Guizot's pusillanimous policy towards Rosas at Buenos Aires. The irony was not lost on Rouher who, in a reply to an 1864 speech of Thiers that criticised the 1862-67 French intervention, quipped that he preferred Thiers' language in 1844. Indeed, it is striking that Rouher used the exact same geostrategic rationale in his justification for intervention in Mexico as Thiers had used in 1850 to argue for intervention in the River Plate. Like Thiers, Rouher emphasised a global role for France: "[Louis-Napoléon] was the apostle of a daring, but far-sighted and wise policy, [which] recognised that the balance of power in Europe is no longer […] on the Alps, the Pyrenees, or the Black Sea, but embraces the whole world, and that such great interests must be the object of France's concern, however far it is necessary to go to protect them with the French flag."[117] Thiers' opposition was based on the perceived impracticality of the policy, not the informal-imperial ideas that lay behind it. In conversation with Nassau William Senior (1790-1864) he remarked, "I believe that nothing but European intervention can save civilisation in Mexico. I should be glad to see Europe interfere […] for a joint purpose and at a joint expense. But that [only] France […] should send an army and a fleet for the purpose of raising an Austrian Archduke to a Mexican throne, is a madness which has no parallel since Don Quixote undertook the cause of the Princess Autonomasia [sic]."[118]

French intervention in Mexico and the River Plate demonstrates that a shared discourse of European civilisation tied to the belief that limited military intervention combined with the support of local elites would secure French goals and develop French influence. The importance of this observation lies not only in the fact that this model underpinned French intervention in Mexico from 1862 to 1867, but also that the limited results achieved by France from 1838 to 1852 in Latin America did not discredit the strategy: the conclusion of Louis-Napoléon, and one shared by Thiers, was the policy had been badly executed.

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[117] 'Corps législatif', *Le Moniteur universel,* 28 January 1864, p. 147.
[118] Nassau William Senior, *Conversations with Distinguished Persons, During the Second Empire, from 1860 to 1863*, 2 vols. (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1880), II, 113.

For Thiers in the River Plate, and Louis-Napoléon in Mexico, one of the key reasons for intervention was economic. It has already be seen that Latin America in general and Mexico specifically were important markets for France in the first decades after independence. Trade with Latin America increased in the following years and the expansion of the French economy between 1815 and 1870 focussed politicians' attention on commerce and overseas markets. French economic growth was fairly consistent between 1815 and 1860: industrial output increased on average between 2.5 to 3 percent annually and total national income increased at roughly 2 percent.[119] Furthermore, although France could not compete with Britain as an industrial nation, it was more industrialised than the majority of its European neighbours in the first half of the nineteenth century: 70 percent of its exports were manufactured goods and a similar proportion of its imports were primary commodities.[120] French exports rose steadily throughout the period, but especially under the French Second Empire where they tripled in value between 1850 and 1870 and the French share of global exports rose to fifteen percent.[121]

Thiers linked commerce with military intervention and compared trade outside the French empire to colonial commerce in his arguments for further intervention in the River Plate. "Why", he asked the National Assembly, "do you support the inconveniences of the colonial system and all the difficulties it entails and the […] enormous expenses [it involves]?" There was only one reason: "restricted shipping (*navigation réservé*)". Yet, he continued, commerce with Latin America, which did not have this privilege, was more important to France than trade with its colonies.[122] Thiers' analysis was correct: taken individually countries like Mexico only made up a small percentage of French exports. However, as Table 1 (on page 73) shows, taken collectively Latin American trade was as important a destination for French goods as the United States and second only to Britain. For the years 1849 to 1860,[123] French exports to the United States accounted for 13.14

[119] Robert Tombs, *France 1814-1914* (London: Addison Wesley Longman, 1996), 151.
[120] Jean-Marcel Jeanneney and Élizabeth Barbier-Jeanneney, *Les économies occidentales du XIXe siècle à nos jour* (Paris: Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1985), 222.
[121] Todd, 'Imperial Meridian', 178-79.
[122] Thiers, *Discours*, VIII, 341-42.
[123] These years were selected because the revolution of 1848 makes this an anomalous year for French commerce and after 1860 the US Civil War resulted in a reduction of its international trade.

percent of the total and those to Latin American countries were slightly higher at 13.99 percent (Britain was the highest at 21.16 percent). Latin America therefore had increased its share in the total volume of French export trade, while the United States' had decreased, compared with the figures from 1827 to 1836. For those who argued, like Thiers, that this trade needed to be developed and protected by force, interventions were a logical, although not inevitable, outcome where threats were perceived.

Table 1: Latin American, British and US share of French export trade by value (expressed in millions of francs).

Year	Total Exports (worldwide)	United States	Britain	Latin America
1849	1032.2	147.4	200.1	149.6
1850	1123.6	177.9	225.6	140.2
1851	946.6	134.3	277.9	193.8
1852	1233.3	162.9	250.4	188.6
1853	1363.2	216.5	317	180.7
1854	1261.1	182.1	279.5	179.1
1855	1441.7	203.8	250.9	202.6
1856	1626.9	244.1	278.9	226.3
1857	1640.3	198.8	291.5	255
1858	1777.5	180	371.4	227.7
1859	1998	245.5	474	240.5
1860	2090.5	210.6	493.8	269.1
Total	**17534.9**	**2303.9**	**3711**	**2453.2**
Percentage of total		**13.14**	**21.16**	**13.99**

Source: Compiled from 'Tableau des exportations par pays de destination. Commerce special. (Valeurs exprimées en millions [francs,"valeurs officielles"]' in *Annuaire de l'économie politique et de la statistique* (Paris: H. Guillemin & Cie, 1847-99) from the issues 1851 to 1862.

As will be discussed in chapter three, some French policymakers, such as Guizot, Chevalier and Louis-Napoléon, identified US expansion as the greatest threat to Latin American markets. All three saw Mexico as a geostrategic barrier to prevent US expansion, but it was also a fulcrum to protect and develop markets for French commerce and industry in the region: a gateway to Central and South

Between 1861 and 1867 Latin America's share of the total volume of French imports and exports increased. The statistics are taken annually from *Annuaire de l'économie politique et de la statistique* (Paris: H. Guillemin & Cie, 1847-99) from the issues 1848 to 1869. By Latin America it is meant all countries listed in the journal's tables that are part of this area today, which are the following (these names are those used by the *Annuaire* translated into English – not the present day equivalents): Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Chile, the River Plate, Uruguay, New Granada, Venezuela, Cayenne / French Guiana, Haiti, Guatemala, Ecuador, Bolivia, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Dutch, Spanish and Danish Possessions in the Americas (three separate categories).

America. Moreover, it occupied an important place within Chevalier's Saint-Simonian worldview which saw communications as central to the development of global commerce. Chevalier initially argued for an interoceanic canal through Panama, while Louis-Napoléon identified Nicaragua as the most promising site. The arguments for both locations outlined the civilisational advances such a project would bring.[124] The identification of Mexico or Central America as a key point of commerce fits into the general pattern of French imperialism during the period under study, which was concerned with developing and protecting French trade across the globe. The semi-official *Le Mémorial diplomatique* noted the continuities between the policies of Louis-Napoléon and Guizot. An editorial argued, quoting Guizot directly, that Rouher's defence of Louis-Napoléon's Mexican intervention reminded the author of Guizot: both understood that in order to develop and protect commerce it was necessary for a French navy to have posts in the "great commercial regions" of the world in order to advance French interests.[125] In this context, where the French Second Empire favoured free trade and concentrated its imperial activities in Egypt, Indochina and Mexico, imperial policy does not seem quite so incoherent or bereft of ideas as some historians have alleged.

France's ability to act on a global scale was predicated on its powerful navy. After 1815 naval revival began in France under the Bourbon Restoration, but it was during the July Monarchy that it was greatly expanded. In 1846 the Chamber of Deputies voted to provide an additional thirteen million francs above the normal budget for naval construction for a period of seven years, but even before this extraordinary increase in funding France had a navy that could be deployed across the globe and came second only to Britain in its overseas reach.[126] Latin America was a region within which France could deploy its forces in pursuit of its interests

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[124] Michel Chevalier, *L'Isthme de Panama, examen historique et géographique des différentes directions suivant lesquelles on pourrait le percer et des moyens à y employer, suivi d'un aperçu sur l'isthme de Suez* (Paris: C. Gosselin, 1844); Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, *Canal of Nicaragua, or a Project to Connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans by Means of a Canal* (London**:** Mills and Son, 1846). Mexico's position between two oceans formed part of Chevalier's argument for its economic potential and he hoped that a canal, certainly a railroad, could be built across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. Chevalier, *Le Mexique*, 445-47.

[125] 'Politique – Bulletin de la semaine', *Le Mémorial diplomatique*, pp. 65-66.

[126] Hamilton, *Anglo-French Naval Rivalry*, 36-37.

because, far from seeing these interests as a threat, British policymakers believed they converged with Britain's own commercial and strategic goals.

IV

The Anglo-French Partnership

Thus the fourth and final factor that made Latin America a focus for French imperialism was that from 1830 to 1867 France could prosecute its interests through military intervention in the region without British opposition, and, at times, with active British support. This had not been the case In the 1820s when Britain opposed French plans to support Ferdinand VII's attempted re-conquest of his former colonies. Chateaubriand made this clear: "[The Holy Alliance], which makes so much noise about its theories [legitimacy], would not support [France] if we wished to sustain those theories by armed force against England. The Spanish colonies will therefore leave the motherland".[127] As the Polignac Memorandum (1823) demonstrates further, France remained in a subordinate position to Britain globally: it could only act unilaterally as long as Britain acquiesced.

With the fall Charles X, and thus the end of the Bourbon Family Compact, French governments lost any interest in intervening in Latin America to support Spanish reconquest. Therefore Britain's principal objection to French policy in Latin America was removed. Moreover, despite the narrative of Anglo-French rivalry, and the habitual upsurge in anti-British public opinion,[128] French foreign policy after the fall of the Bourbon Restoration, and especially from 1840 to 1870, was generally directed by Anglophile statesmen. Guizot and Louis-Napoléon wished for a cordial relationship with Britain which would avoid hostilities.[129] Britain never went to war against France after 1815; only with it, notably in the Crimea and the Second Opium War for the period under study.

In Latin America the relationship varied between formal arrangements and informal cooperation. For example, in the River Plate, a joint expedition blockaded

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[127] François-René de Chateaubriand, *Congrès de Vérone. Guerre d'Espagne. Négociations: Colonies espagnoles*, 2 vols. (Paris: Delloye, 1838), II, 351.
[128] Robert Tombs, *That Sweet Enemy: The French and the British from the Sun King to the Present* (London: Pimlico, 2007), ch. 7 and 8.
[129] See Roger Bullen, *Guizot, Palmerston and the Breakdown of the Entente Cordiale* (London: Athlone Press, 1974) and Price, *The French Second* Empire, ch. 13.

Buenos Aires from 1845 until 1847. Britain was also a participant in the Tripartite Convention of 1861 that was a prelude to the French intervention.[130] Britain and France cooperated in their attempts to prevent the annexation of Texas (1844-5). The French and British legations frequently worked together in Mexico to place more pressure on the Mexican government to support their nationals' claims, lower tariffs or protest against the imprisonment or murder of their subjects, and they frequently shared information sent from London or Paris. Beyond this open collaboration, Britain allowed France a free hand in Mexico and the River Plate: it did not oppose France's interventions in 1838 and it did nothing to prevent the establishment of the Second Mexican Empire.

This partnership was based on a commonality of interests. Britain wanted broadly liberal (on economic and religious matters) and stable governments in Latin America that encouraged trade and protected foreign nationals and their business interests. French policy was seen as a means to achieve these goals. Thus the British chargé d'affaires to Mexico wrote to Viscount Palmerston (1784-1865) as regards the impending 1838 French blockade that "British interests will rather reap advantage than suffer injury" because it would "undeceive the Mexicans as to the power […] of other countries to enforce the observances of international law and conventions as regards to foreigners."[131] Britain had numerous grievances against the Mexican government, from the default on its loans raised in the 1820s to the destruction of property of various British mining companies and forced loans on British nationals.[132] In short, it was hoped that a display of French naval power would compel the Mexican government to treat British interests with more respect in the future, and the British diplomat understood Mexico's refusal to accept France's ultimatum as "a temerity amounting almost to insanity, and ascribable to recklessness inspired by long impunity."[133] Lord Palmerston agreed with his chargé d'affaires and instructed him to "use your best endeavours to induce the Mexican

[130] See Bock, *Prelude to Tragedy*.
[131] Ashburnham to Palmerston, 30 November 1837, disp., 63 marked 'confidential', FO 50/107.
[132] Examples are numerous, see Wellington to Pakenham, 17 March 1835, FO 50/90; Pakenham to Wellington, 8 March 1835, disp. 10; FO 50/91 and Palmerston to Pakenham, 15 November 1836, disp., 26, FO 50/97.
[133] Ashburnham to Palmerston, 7 November 1837, disp., 57, FO 50/107.

government to come to an amicable agreement with that of France."[134] It was the British minister plenipotentiary, Sir Richard Pakenham (1797-1868), who negotiated the peace treaty between Mexico and France in 1839.[135]

Palmerston followed the same course in the River Plate, although the length of the French blockade and its consequently greater deleterious effect on British trade meant that he put pressure on the French government to come to terms with Rosas short of their original demands. However, this was not because he disagreed with French naval intervention, but because this policy had failed. In 1839, Palmerston had urged the British minister at Buenos Aires to "persuade [the Argentine government] to accede without further delay to the demands made upon them by the government of France." For Palmerston, French complaints were "not wholly destitute of foundation" and it was necessary to point out to Rosas "how vain it [was] to resist successfully so great a power as France."[136]

In 1843, the then British foreign secretary, Lord Aberdeen (1784-1860), was similarly favourably disposed towards French interests and expressed his surprise to Robert Peel (1788-1850) that the French had not been more aggressive. He could not "understand why the French have not been more desirous of interference [….] Their interest in the war, from the many thousands of French settled at Montevideo, must be very great".[137] Both Britain and France wished for peace in the region and the independence of Uruguay. Furthermore, French success could lead to the liberalisation of Argentine markets: British policymakers saw France not as a rival, but as a power pursuing a course congruous to Britain's own interests.

These shared foreign policy goals explain the Anglo-French intervention (1845-47) in the River Plate. As has been described above, the River Plate was in a state of near-constant civil war and one of the aims of joint expedition was to end these conflicts, partially for humanitarian reasons and the protection of nationals, but also because war impeded commerce. The blueprint for British policy was outlined in James Murray's 1841 'Memorandum on Trade'. For Murray, the export

[134] Palmerston to Ashburnham, 15 September 1838, disp., 35, FO 50/112.
[135] Pakenham to Palmerston, 24 March 1839, disp., 22, FO 50/124.
[136] Palmerston to Mandeville, 6 February 1839, FO 6/68.
[137] Aberdeen to Peel, 27 November 1843, British Library, Peel Papers, Add MS 40454.

of industrial machinery to Europe was detrimental to Britain as the industrialisation of Europe would undermine Britain's leading position as an exporter of manufactured goods. It was therefore reasonable to look "to the means of extending British trade with other parts of the globe." Murray believed that Latin America would compensate for the loss of European trade, but the constant state of warfare prevented it from realising its potential. The solution was British interference in the affairs of Latin American states "on account of self-interest, and as a means of self-preservation". Murray identified Uruguay as a paradigmatic case where British intervention could reap significant benefits. If Britain "would protect Montevideo against the animosity and rancorous spirit of [Rosas]" then it could secure, on the best of terms, its "subjects and commerce in the region".[138] The position of the British government over French intervention was that if France could secure these terms for Britain then so much the better.

As has been noted, the 1861 Tripartite Convention launched a joint British, French and Spanish expedition to Mexico to demand that Juárez revoke the suspension of foreign payments. Britain refused to militarily support Louis-Napoléon's intervention inland and withdrew its forces as soon as it became clear that French troops would march into the interior.[139] Nonetheless, Palmerston did give unofficial approval. He wrote privately to Lord Russell (1792-1878), then foreign secretary, outlining his view: "we should be glad if Mexico converted into a settled and well-ordered monarchy; and that we should raise no objection to it being guaranteed by France", a position he reiterated a month later.[140] Palmerston went as far as preventing Russell from sending a dispatch to Austria that discouraged Maximilian accepting the Mexican throne: "as to the question as to whether it would be advantageous or not for us and for Europe generally that Mexico should be governed by monarch instead of being prey to republican anarchy I conceive that there cannot be any doubt Mexican monarchy would be advantageous to all nations having commercial relations with Mexico." As regards France he continued, "though systematically and on national principles jealous of

[138] James Murray, 'Memorandum on British Trade', 31 December 1841, FO 97/284.
[139] Russell to Wyke, 30 April 1862, disp., 52, FO 50/363.
[140] Palmerston to Russell, 13 August 1863; Palmerston to Russell, 11 September 1863, PRO 30/22/22.

the ambitious policy of France I feel no jealousy as to the proceedings of France in Mexico."[141] Just as in 1838 and 1845, Palmerston understood that France would not annex any territory, but it would attempt to impose settlements, or, in the case of Maximilian, create governments, that were compatible with British interests. Where these interests converged, as in Mexico and the River Plate, France and Britain's relationship was one of imperial condominium.

Conclusion

French imperialism from 1815 to 1870, far from lacking a coherent doctrine, was founded upon liberal economic principles and favoured the promotion of French civilisation and the expansion of French commerce through a preference for informal influence over annexation. In this period, French overseas trade remained on an upward trajectory while its navy expanded. Algeria was seen as an exceptional case, and formal colonialism was to be avoided elsewhere on the globe, but it was a widely held view that French political, economic and cultural influence should be extended by informal means wherever possible and its strategic interests defended. These basic doctrines were shared in parliament by influential intellectuals and politicians such as Constant, Guizot and Thiers, all of whom considered themselves part of the "liberal project of representative government" supposedly opposed to imperialism. Louis-Napoléon expressed similar views in the 1840s and acted upon them later as emperor. The disagreements between Thiers and Guizot, or Thiers and Louis-Napoléon, were not whether France should be an imperial power, merely where and how it should be an imperial power.

That Latin America, and Mexico in particular, was a significant focus of French imperialism is explained by the following four factors. First, it was region of imagined, potential and real wealth. Mexico went into prolonged recession after the wars of independence. Precious metal production declined, as did its exports to France, but its famed riches under Spanish rule were reinforced by the popularity of Humboldt's work and by writers who followed him, particularly Chevalier. It was, therefore, expected that with stability economic prosperity would return. A comparison was often made with Brazil. French exports to this monarchy had risen

[141] Palmerston to Russell, 26 September 1863, PRO 30/22/22.

from 20.7 million francs in 1849 to 53.4 million in 1860, whereas in republican Mexico, torn by civil war, French exports fell from 20.2 million to 12.3 million francs for the same years.[142] Finally, Mexico's strategic position across trade routes combined with its proximity to the United States ensured that it was seen as a vital area to prevent US expansion and to protect commerce with Latin America, which, as has been seen, was as important in terms of volume of exports as French trade with the United States.

Second, like many places in the extra-European world, Mexico was understood to be "semi-civilised"; authority was not legitimately constituted. In the civilisational worldview of French policymakers intervention was a logical choice to shape Mexico in France's image. However, what set Mexico (and the River Plate) apart, the third factor, was that imperialism could be prosecuted through local elites who sympathised with French political culture and French models of government, thus avoiding another colonial entanglement such Algeria and, it was hoped, advancing French goals relatively inexpensively. Latin America was not outside of civilisation, it was Catholic and its elites were steeped in Spanish political traditions and many were admirers of European, particularly French intellectuals, and they looked to European political and economic models which influenced their own visions for the emerging nation states. As a consequence, much greater autonomy, within the confines of imperial relationships, could be granted to those politicians who were willing to work with France than would have been afforded in Africa or Asia.

Political conflicts in Mexico saw competing factions contest power and this meant that France could support one over another in times of civil war in order to further French ambitions. This was the case in 1838-39 and 1862-67. It was also true in the River Plate from 1838 to 1852 where the same strategy of supporting one faction over another was employed to secure French goals. Far from discrediting this policy, many critics concluded that its limited success was a consequence of insufficient forces. In essence, politicians such as a Thiers or Louis-

[142] *Annuaire de l'économie politique et de la statistique* for 1849 and 1860.

Napoléon agreed with the maxim that the efficiency of informal empire is proportionate to the amount of "wealth and power" committed to it.[143]

The fourth and final factor was that the French conception of civilisation, and the interventions which were predicated upon it, was congruous with British interests. Furthermore, because French imperialism did not aim at territorial acquisition, Britain did not consider it a strategic threat. France, after 1830, could rely on British acquiesce and, more often than not, open cooperation and support. However, Britain, unlike France, was unwilling to commit forces on the scale of France. Aberdeen made it clear that "if I had twenty-thousand British troops to spare, I would not send one of them [to the River Plate]."[144] Britain disapproved of Rosas' government, but this was "not sufficient reason to attempt his overthrow."[145] Similarly, while Palmerston sympathised with the French creation of the Mexican Second Empire, he ruled out any military commitment on the part of Britain to support it.

France, therefore, and much more than Britain, intervened in the internal politics of Latin American states in order to further geopolitical and geostrategic goals, develop its commerce and promote French interests. In part this policy can be explained by the fact that French observers described a system of informal influence they believed Britain to have attained and urged France to secure a similar position. However, unlike Britain, they encouraged non-economic (monarchy, pan-Latinism and shared religion, open and partisan collaboration with local elites and intervention) means alongside commerce and finance in order to achieve it. This method of informal imperialism required collaborating elites and the subsequent chapters will explore the economic, political and cultural relationship between France and Mexico which not only gave Louis-Napoléon the opportunity to fashion Mexico in the image of the French Second Empire, but, more importantly, led many members of the Mexican elite to embrace French imperialism as the only means by which Mexico itself could be saved from destruction. The Second Mexican Empire was, of course, a monarchy, and an

[143] Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations', 122.
[144] Aberdeen to Ouseley, 8 April 1846, *Aberdeen Papers,* Add MS 43201.
[145] Aberdeen to Ouseley, 4 February 1848, *Aberdeen Papers*, Add MS 43201.

appreciation of the existence of a shared Franco-Mexican discourse of monarchism, discussed in the next chapter, is essential to understand why supporters of Maximilian did not believe, as Thiers did, that their cause was a quixotic madness.

Chapter Two

"Republics Descend into the Bloodiest Anarchy":[1] Monarchy and the Search for Order in Mexico

Writing six months after the execution of Maximilian, the Emperor's former minister to Paris and one of the most ardent supporters of monarchy in Mexico, José Manuel Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar (1826-96), wrote: "[a] great enterprise has failed. But the catastrophe with which it ended does nothing to undermine the greatness of the [monarchical] system." The Second Mexican Empire "had been defeated in the realm of facts, but not in the realm of justice or reason". Hidalgo's conclusion, that monarchy remained theoretically the best form of government for Mexico, despite its disastrous denouement in 1867, is illustrative of one of the central features of support for monarchy: the sheer persistence of the idea.

After the fall of Iturbide, monarchy was only ever supported by a small section of the Mexican elite. As the foundation of a kingdom in Mexico lay at the heart of the French intervention in Mexico this fact has been cited as yet more proof of Louis-Napoléon's delusions.[2] However, rather than dismissing monarchism in Mexico as inconsequential because it lacked widespread support, it may be more helpful to ask: why monarchism persisted in the minds of some influential Mexican politicians as the solution to the problems faced by Mexico after independence? After all, support for monarchy as a political system within which to achieve independence or autonomy from Spain was common to all Latin American countries; however, certainly by the 1860s, no other nation had politicians lobbying European governments for spare princes and princesses to replace republics with empires. Mexico was unique in that one of its foremost intellectuals, Alamán, tried to found a monarchy in 1846; its most powerful caudillo, Santa Anna, sounded out European courts over the same possibility in 1854 while he was president; and in 1863 a former presidential candidate and a leading Mexican diplomat, Juan Nepomuceno Almonte (1803-69), headed a regency government in preparation for the Second Mexican Empire, which he, amongst others, had called for.

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[1] Quote taken from 'Gobierno', *El Sol* (Mexico City), 27 April 1822, p. 182.
[2] Delmon, 'Les acteurs de la politique impériale', 77-78.

Monarchy, then, clearly mattered to some people. But the question remains why? The defeat of the Mexican Second Empire and the triumph of liberalism resulted in the reification of federal republicanism and obscured alternative political visions for the Mexican nation. However, as O'Gorman has argued, monarchy remained a viable option for political elites throughout the period 1820-67.[3] Nonetheless, it was not the case that there was a monarchist party which consistently advocated for a monarchy throughout the period. Rather, monarchy was embraced at different times and by different people from different political backgrounds. In order to help explain why this was the case, section I of this chapter will address the legacy of the First Mexican Empire and the anti-federal and anti-republican arguments made in the early 1820s. Section II explores the endurance of these ideas in the 1830s, the attempts of conservative politicians to adapt monarchical constitutional theory within a republican framework and finally the monarchical proposals made in 1840 by the Mexican politician Gutiérrez de Estrada (1800-67).

A key reason why monarchy remained a viable option in Mexico was support for it in Europe. As will be discussed, the end of the First Mexican Empire did not discredit the idea of monarchy in Mexico, merely that a Mexican could be a monarch. Therefore monarchism in Mexico had an inherently transnational dimension: in order to establish an independent Mexican monarchy a European prince had to be found willing to take the throne, which in turn required a minimum level of European support. At the very least, a monarchy in Mexico would need the acceptance of whatever ruling house the monarch was chosen from and the consent of the major maritime powers of Europe. Mexican monarchists procured this diplomatic and material assistance twice (once in 1845-46 and again with the second French intervention). This was possible because monarchism in Mexico had evolved as a shared and mutually constituted transnational discourse with contributions from Mexican and European, particularly French, thinkers. Indeed, the idea that the political problems of Latin American states stemmed from a renunciation of monarchical principles and the adoption of overly democratic

[3] O'Gorman, *La supervivencia*; Pani, 'La innombrable: monarquismo'.

republicanism in nations that were not ready for such systems was widely held in monarchical Britain, Spain and France. Finally, a monarchy in Mexico was understood in geopolitical and imperial terms: it would further the interests and influence of the European power that created it. Section III will, therefore, explore European, especially French, views on monarchy in Mexico and how they were shaped by events in Mexico.

I

"A Throne that was Subject to Ridicule from its Inception"[4]

The First Mexican Empire and the Legacy of Iturbide

Writing in 1857 the French minister to Mexico, Alexis de Gabriac (1811-90), wondered "[w]hat to make of a people who have as the first of their heroes a man whom they shot?"[5] In his question Gabriac had identified one of the great dilemmas in Mexican historical interpretation: in order to celebrate federal republicanism, it was necessary to denigrate the First Mexican Empire, whose emperor, Iturbide, was executed in 1824 despite the fact that Mexico gained its independence under his regime. According to Alamán, who was not himself a supporter of Iturbide, history had been reordered to the point whereby "the same generation that witnessed [Mexican independence] was able to be fooled in such a way that it came to believe the opposite of what it saw."[6]

In order to appreciate what Alamán meant, it is worth recalling that Mexico's struggle for independence was fractious, often contradictory and resistant to simple schematic interpretation.[7] The insurgent movement led by Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla (1753-1811), a parish priest who issued the *Grito de Dolores* on 16 September 1810, was seen by much of the creole elite as an insurrection dangerous to social order and thus rallied behind the Spanish government to defeat it. Hidalgo was executed in 1811, but the revolt continued under the leadership of another priest, José María Morelos (1765-1815), who was executed in 1815. Iturbide, a creole officer in the Spanish royal army, fought against Hidalgo and Morelos

[4] Alamán, *Historia de México*, V, 521.
[5] Gabriac to Walewski, 10 October 1857, AAE, CP Mexique, 47.
[6] Alamán, *Historia de México*, V, 582.
[7] Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 13-17.

because, he argued, they were "a lawless band who harassed the country", not in order to win independence but "to exterminate all the Europeans, to destroy their possessions, and to trample on the laws of war, humanity and religion",[8] a view echoed by Alamán.[9]

Those creoles that did fight for independence prior to 1821, notably Mexico's first president Guadalupe Victoria (1786-1843), were as much opposed to the French usurpation of the Spanish crown in 1808 as they were in favour of independence. Constitutional liberals such as Zavala or Gómez Farías urged cooperation with the Spanish government after the proclamation of the liberal Spanish Constitution of 1812 in the peninsula, and during its forcible reinstatement in 1820. They initially favoured self-government within the Spanish Empire, only opting for independence when it became clear that Ferdinand VII was not prepared to tolerate greater autonomy in the Americas. Finally, conservative sections of Mexican society, especially the army and the high clergy, were alarmed by the anti-corporatist direction of Spanish liberalism and began to see independence as the best means to prevent its implementation in Mexico.[10]

It is with this last group that Iturbide is traditionally, if not wholly accurately, identified. Fearful for the *fueros* of the army and the church, many Spanish and creole elites in Mexico, who had previously supported Ferdinand VII, came to embrace the separatist cause, as exemplified by Iturbide's dramatic transition from royalist soldier to liberator of the nation, announced by his Plan of Iguala on 24 February 1821. This document was able to unite Mexicans of differing views behind the three guarantees of religion, independence and unity. Aside from the declaration of independence from Spain, the key points of the plan were: Catholicism as the sole state religion to the exclusion of all others; a constitutional monarchy under Ferdinand VII, one of his relatives or a monarch from another ruling house; and citizenship for all the inhabitants of the Mexican kingdom. These promises would be upheld by the Army of the Three Guarantees, led by Iturbide,

[8] Agustín de Iturbide, *A Statement of some of the Principal Events in the Public life of Agustín de Iturbide*, trans. Michael Joseph Quin (London: J. Murray, 1824), 11.
[9] Alamán, *Historia de Mexico*, I, 334-36.
[10] Anna, *Mexican Empire*, 8-9.

which entered Mexico City on 27 September 1821.[11] The Treaty of Córdoba, signed on 24 August 1821 by the newly arrived viceroy Juan O'Donojú, reaffirmed the Plan of Iguala, although it was never ratified by Spain.[12] Mexico thus achieved independence as a monarchy, albeit without a monarch.

This has often been viewed as a conservative path to independence: "an act of counterrevolution".[13] However, Ferdinand VII refused to countenance the Plan of Iguala. The solution of Iturbide and his supporters was that he become emperor himself, but his nomination as emperor had been proposed by Gomez Farías, who went on to become the leader of the *puro* wing of liberalism in Mexico, and was initially supported by Zavala, later one of the most radical liberals of his generation. In short, the First Mexican Empire was neither liberal nor conservative, but rather represented a brief moment of consensus in Mexican politics, which was in favour of an autonomous or independent Mexico governed by a constitutional monarch. As Zavala later wrote, "Republican ideas were in their infancy: all seemed content with a constitutional monarchy". Zavala concluded that he did not know at the time "what was the [form of government] best suited to a new nation that neither had republican nor monarchical habits. All were to be trials and experiments until a form was found suitable […] to the needs of the nation."[14]

Indeed opposition to the First Mexican Empire initially came not from liberals but from conservative politicians, known at the time as Bourbonists.[15] This group included men such as Alamán and Francisco Sánchez de Tagle (1782-1847)

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[11] 'Plan de independencia de la América Septentrional Iguala, 24 de Febrero de 1821' printed in Porrúa, *Documentos*, 200-3.

[12] Anna, *The Mexican Empire*, 10-11; Jaime Rodriguez, *"We Are Now the True Spaniards" Sovereignty, Revolution, Independence, and the Emergence of the Federal Republic of Mexico, 1808–1824* (Stanford: University Press, 2012), 257-66.

[13] Richard Morse, 'The Heritage of Latin America' in Louis Hartz (ed.), *The Founding of New Societies: Studies in the History of the United States, Latin America, South Africa, Canada, and Australia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964), 160. David Brading claims "the royalist establishment…staged a *coup d'état* against a liberal metropolis', *The Origins of Mexican Nationalism* (Cambridge: Centre of Latin American Studies, 1985), 56. Florencia Mallon calls it a "conservative declaration of independence", 'Indigenous Peoples and Nation-States in Spanish America, 1780-2000' in Moya, *Oxford Handbook of Latin American*, 285.

[14] Lorenzo de Zavala, *Ensayo histórico de las revoluciones de México: Desde 1808 hasta 1830*, 2 vols. (Paris: P. Dupont and G. Laguionie, 1831), I, 172-73.

[15] Rodriguez prefers the term "autonomists" to make clear that this group did not support Spanish colonial rule, but rather autonomy within the Spanish empire and later independence under a constitutional monarchy headed by a Spanish prince, *True Spaniards*, 273.

and centred around José María Fagoaga (1764-1837), whose family was one of the wealthiest and most influential in Mexico. Bourbonists did not support Iturbide's assumption of the crown and viewed this 'usurpation' as one of the causes of his downfall. Instead of a Mexican emperor, they favoured a Spanish prince.[16] In the Spanish parliament they put forward their proposal for greater American autonomy. The plan divided Spanish America into three kingdoms (New Spain and Guatemala; New Granada; and Peru, Chile and Buenos Aires), and called for a Spanish *infante*, or someone appointed by Ferdinand VII, to rule them while retaining close ties to Spain. Essentially, it was an argument for a commonwealth and Canada's relationship with Britain was cited as an example.[17]

Bourbonists thus initially supported the Plan of Iguala, which called for exactly this, but it did not follow that they supported Iturbide once he became emperor. For conservative Mexican politicians and intellectuals, the legacy of the First Mexican Empire was threefold. First, Iturbide's entry at the head of the Army of Three Guarantees on 27 September 1821 provided a good alternative date for the national commemoration for independence in contradistinction to the *Grito de Dolores* of 16 September 1810. The former signified ordered transition while the latter represented social revolution.[18] Second, the Plan of Iguala was upheld as the foundational document upon which Mexican independence should have been constituted. This plan made no reference to a Mexican empire under a Mexican emperor. Rather, monarchy should have been established under a European prince. The plan had therefore been corrupted and worse, third, its non-fulfilment resulted in the adoption of a federal republican constitution in 1824, a system which conservatives understood as inimical to Mexico's political traditions and a root

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[16] Alamán, *Historia de México*, V, 427-28; 449-51; 458; 541; Doris Ladd, *The Mexican Nobility at Independence, 1780-1826* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, the University of Texas, 1976), 124-5; Rodriguez, *True Spaniards*, 272-73.

[17] 'Exposición presentada a las Cortes por los diputados de ultramar en la sesión de 25 de junio de 1821, sobre el estado actual de las provincias de que eran representantes, y medios convenientes para su definitiva pacificación; redactada por encargo de los mismos diputados por D. Lucas Alamán y D. José Mariano de Michelena' in Alamán, *Historia de México,* V, 781-96.

[18] The conservative view of 27 September is discussed by Rodríguez Piña, 'Conservatives Contest the Meaning of Independence', 1846– 1855'. See also Christon Archer, 'Death's Patriots – Celebration, Denunciation, and Memories of Mexico's Independence Heroes: Miguel Hidalgo, José María Morelos, and Agustín de Iturbide' in Lyman Johnson (ed.), *Death, Dismemberment and Memory* (New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2004).

cause of subsequent political instability. In short, Iturbide was a figurehead for the Plan of Iguala, who, once he became emperor, was a traitor to his own plan and responsible for the failure of the First Mexican Empire. Moreover, the ideal of constitutional monarchy under a European ruler was untarnished because it had never been implemented.

This legacy meant that the federal and republican 1824 Constitution was viewed with suspicion by former Bourbonists, suspicions which were increased because of the association of the new constitution with the model of the United States. There were good historical reasons as to why a federal republic emerged from the debris of Iturbide's empire.[19] And it has been shown that the intellectual genealogy of the Mexican 1824 Constitution was primarily the Spanish Constitution of 1812 rather than that of the United States.[20] It has been further argued that Mexicans, such as Alamán, who claimed the 1824 Constitution was in part based on the US one, were politically motivated and distorted the facts to undermine a system they criticised.[21] However, while much of the 1824 Constitution was indeed transcribed from the Spanish Constitution of 1812, article four certainly was not: "The Mexican nation adopts for its government a representative, popular, federal republic."[22] Therefore, for opponents of the 1824 Constitution, the classical Spanish liberal tradition which inspired the document was somewhat irrelevant because the principal innovations were republicanism and federalism. The newspaper *El Federalista* may have carried histories of German, Swiss and Dutch federalism,[23] but there was only one model in the Americas that had successfully enacted this form

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[19] See Rodriguez, *True Spaniards*, 325-34 and Nettie Lee Benson, *The Provincial Deputation in Mexico: Harbinger of Provincial Autonomy, Independence, and Federalism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992).

[20] Hale, *Liberalism*, 79. Timothy Anna, 'Agustín de Iturbide and the Process of Consensus' in Christon Archer (ed.), *The Birth of Modern Mexico, 1780-1824* (Delaware: SR Books, 2003), 187-204.

[21] Jaime Rodriguez, 'Intellectuals and the Mexican Constitution of 1824' in Roderic Ai Camp, Charles Hale and Josefina Zoraida Vázquez (eds.), *Los intelectuales y el poder en México: memorias de la VI Conferencia de Historiadores Mexicanos y Estadounidenses* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1991), 67.

[22] 'Acta Constitutiva de la Féderación Mexicana', 31 January 1824, printed in Porrúa, *Documentos*, 246-55.

[23] 'Ensayo histórico sobre los gobiernos federados', *El Federalista* (Mexico City), 15 August, pp. 61-4; 'Continúa el ensayo histórico comenzado en el numero 16', *ibid*., 29 August, pp. 73-6; 'Continúa el ensayo histórico, y concluye el artículo de la confederación germánica', *ibid*., 5 September, pp. 81-4; 'Continúa el ensayo histórico', *ibid*., 9, 12, 16, 19, 23, 26, 30 September, 3, 7, 10 and 14 October 1823, pp. 85-88, 89-91, 93-94, 97-100, 101-4, 105-6, 109-11, 113-15, 117-19, 121-24 and 125-28.

of government: the United States. And it was not merely conservative critics who made the link between US federal republicanism and the 1824 Constitution, it was one made by its supporters as well. It was the US model that one of Mexico's first republicans, Servando Teresa de Mier (1765-1827), pointed towards.[24] Furthermore, prior to the ratification of the constitution, the Mexican Congress cited George Washington as the example to follow.[25] And in a manifesto to the people the new president, Guadalupe Victoria, quoted part of Washington's 'Circular to the States' of 1783, concluding that it "summarised in a few words the elements of our social organisation."[26]

Mexico may have become a federal republic because of the failure of monarchy combined with long-term historical factors that favoured federalism over centralism, rather than because of deliberate imitation of the United States, but this conclusion of twentieth-century historians was not the analysis of Mexican critics in the 1820s. This is important because the conviction that federal republicanism was at best a pale imitation of the US Constitution, or, at worst, a deliberate imposition by Washington, and, either way, entirely unsuited to Mexico, lay at the heart of conservative attacks on Mexican liberalism and its constitutional ideas throughout the period under study. One of the earliest proponents of this argument was the newspaper *El Sol*, which was the principal paper of the Bourbonists from 1821 to 1822. It ceased publication during the empire of Iturbide and was refounded in 1823 as the organ of conservative elements of Mexican politics. Alongside its rival, *El Aguila Mexicana*, it was the most important and influential daily in Mexico City in the 1820s.[27] The anti-federal and anti-republican arguments made in *El Sol* are worth discussing in detail because they laid out many of the central tenets of later conservative polemics against these systems.

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[24] Servando Teresa de Mier, *Memoria político-instructiva, enviada desde Filadelfia en agosto de 1821, á los gefes independientes del Anáhuac* (Philidelphia: Juan F. Hurtel, 1821), 45-46; 66.
[25] 'Manifiesto del congreso general a los Mexicanos. El congreso general constituyente a los habitantes de la federación', *El Sol*, 11 October 1824, p. 473.
[26] 'Manifiesto del presidente del Estados-Unidos mexicanos, a sus compatriotas Mexicanos', *ibid.,* 19 October 1824, p. 507.
[27] Miguel Ángel Castro and Guadalupe Curiel (eds.), *Publicaciones periódicas mexicanas del siglo XIX, 1822-1855: fondo antiguo de la Hemeroteca Nacional y fondo reservado de la Biblioteca Nacional de México* (Mexico City: UNAM, 2000), 413-19.

Long before a federal republic was widely discussed in public discourse as a possibility, *El Sol* ran a series of articles between 1821 and 1822 analysing the best form of government for Mexico. According to the editorials of the paper, and echoing the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the three key concerns for Mexico were "liberty, property and security",[28] which were best protected under a "moderate monarchy" with a "liberal constitution".[29] The paper did not argue that federal republicanism was an objectively bad form of government, merely that it was ill-suited to Mexico's political traditions and current needs. Sovereignty lay in the nation itself, and following the seventeenth-century English thinker Algernon Sidney (1623-83), the paper argued that the nation had the right to constitute whatever government was most appropriate.[30] It was, therefore, necessary to examine different types of political organisation past and present.

The paper espoused what can be described as an Aristotelian analysis of forms of government combined with a negative view of human nature. All governments had a propensity to descend into tyranny: people had "sometimes been victims of monarchical tyranny" and other times of "democracy". However, most recent republics had collapsed into the "bloodiest anarchy" because it was necessary that people be "virtuous and obedient to the laws by conviction" otherwise "passions, pride and avarice" were unleashed and "the thirst for public positions, particularly those of high government […] created envy". The result was civil war, first motivated by "rancour", but then systematised into party political conflict. Monarchies, too, had resulted in "human misery" and "seas of blood" because invariably the monarch believed that the people existed for the dynasty and not the dynasty for the people.

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[28] Article two of the Declaration of the Rights of Man: "The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression." Printed in Gérard Conac, Marc Debene and Gérard Teboul (eds.), *La déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen de 1789: histoire, analyse et commentaires* (Paris: Économica, 1993), 361-65. *El Sol* was noticeably silent on "resistance to oppression".

[29] 'Política. Continúa el anterior', *El Sol*, 29 December 1821, pp. 31-32; ''Apuntes sobre las bases principales y demas objetos públicos, que deben tenerse presentes para establecer un gobierno franco, liberal justo y equitativo' and 'Concluye el anterior', *ibid*., 2 and 5 February 1822, p. 73 and p. 77.

[30] 'El Poder soberano', *ibid.,* 23 February 1822, p. 97.

The solution was a "mixed constitution" which equated to "moderate constitutional monarchy". Under this government the people were sovereign, the monarch depended on the people and enacted their laws, which were dictated by their representatives (ministers). The advantage of monarchy over a republic lay in the fact that it was harder for it to degenerate into despotism, and England was cited as the example to follow. Moreover, "what is constitutional government", asked the paper rhetorically, "but a republic in fact if not in name?" The only difference was that under a monarchy the executive power was called a "king" or an "emperor" and, in a republic, "president". However, while the former governed in perpetuity because of the hereditary principle, under the latter the head of state remained for no longer than the laws allowed, and in this requirement lay the seeds of a republic's destruction: the problem of succession.[31] Central to the Bourbonist argument was that republics led to civil conflict, as had happened in France from 1792, and the result would inevitably be in Mexico what it had been there under Napoléon Bonaparte – military tyranny.[32]

Constitutional monarchy, therefore, gave inherent stability to a polity, but it was not merely the perfection of the form which underpinned the argument. Unlike the United States, Mexico's historical experience made republicanism impossible. In response to a federalist republican pamphlet,[33] the paper argued that "the enlightenment and social virtues necessary for a federal republic […] do not exist in the Mexican nation." Therefore Mexico would be best governed under a "moderate monarchy".[34] The paper was willing to admit that in its perfect, theoretical or "pure" form republican government was the most desirable. But, "where has there ever existed a people in which individuals sacrifice their private interests to the common good, the laws are perfect, their execution infallible, their application impartial, and those in power as faithful and impassive as the laws?" Such a republic, "more than Platonic", was to be desired, but it had never existed, nor could it ever exist. In reality, republics were not "pure", but mixed and, citing most

[31] 'Gobierno', *El Sol*, 27 April 1822, pp. 181-83.
[32] 'Política', *ibid*., 29 December 1821, p. 31; 'Gobierno', *ibid.*, 15 May 1822, pp. 207-8.
[33] M. F. del Z. [sic], *Sueño de un republicano, ó sean reflexiones de un anciano sobre la república federada* (Puebla: Imprenta liberal de Moreno hermanos, 1822).
[34] 'Papeles Públicos', *El Sol*, 13 March 1822, pp. 123-24.

European republics from ancient Athens to modern France, the paper concluded that while many were, again, good in theory, they were all inherently impracticable, and certainly unworkable in Mexico. The only other republic to examine that held out some hope of stability was that of the United States. The editorial was not interested in whether the US Constitution was good or bad in itself, but merely whether it would be possible to establish it in Mexico.

The answer was, predictably, no. A federal republic was deemed to be impossible in Mexico: "the reasons are so obvious, clear, simple and powerful [that] they are self-evident". Just in case they were not as obvious to the reader as to the author, the editorial outlined them. First and foremost, in order to adopt the US Constitution it would be necessary to divide Mexico into small, sovereign states, each with their own constitution, and then form a union to create a national polity. For *El Sol* such an idea was absurd. In the United States, the division had arisen naturally out of historical circumstances – namely the thirteen colonies had become states. In contrast, Mexico was a homogenous political entity and "it is chimerical and impossible to realise the idea of a republic in this Empire with the [US] constitution".[35] To those who argued for a centralised republic, the editorial stated that the US Constitution was inherently federal.

The newspaper's second argument against republicanism was that Mexico was not ready to go straight from absolute monarchy to a representative republic with a wide franchise. A year and a half of imperfect representative government was not enough to erase the habits, interests and opinions formed over many centuries. Amongst other things, religious tolerance and trial by jury would have to be introduced. Supporters of republicanism were naive: the stroke of a pen could not transform the traditions of an entire nation. Third, the paper maintained that Mexico lacked anyone of the stature of Washington, Jefferson or Adams to put at the head of government.

The paper's fourth and final point was that Mexico had nothing to gain from making the change to a republic from a monarchy, but much to lose. It would make "liberal institutions unstable", the existence of government "precarious", unleash

[35] 'Proyectos republicanos', *El Sol,* 11 May and 15 May 1822, 201-2 and 205-7.

civil war and ensure the return of "despotism". The "hereditary throne" was the "cornerstone" of a "great nation". Countries that went from monarchies to republics removed this cornerstone and saw the rest of the edifice collapse. The editorial stated that for a monarchical nation to proclaim a republic was the same as proclaiming "social dissolution". The argument was that without the legitimating force of monarchy, ambitious men would contend for supreme power and there would be "no order, no government, no society". Constitutional monarchy was to the benefit of order, it gave "stability, consistency and firmness". Those who looked to the United States were mistaken, its example was not applicable. Instead, they should look to the French Revolution if they wanted to know what would happen in Mexico: the "so-called republic will be a true anarchy".[36]

It is important to note that few, if any, of these arguments had much to do with the actual details of the US Constitution. They were arguments against federalism and republicanism, and they would not be resolved by the happy fact that much of the 1824 Constitution was based on the Spanish Constitution of 1812. The *fueros* were maintained for the army and Church, Catholicism was still the sole religion and trial by jury was not introduced, but these were minor complaints in the Bourbonists' larger argument, which at heart, putting to one side objections to federalism, was an argument against representative republican government.

The direction of Mexican politics after 1824 did little to persuade those who supported the arguments of *El* Sol outlined above as to the merits of federal republicanism. In the mid-1820s two factions developed in Mexican politics, the *yorkinos* and the *escoceses*, which were formed around Masonic lodges from which the groups derived their name. Broadly, the *escoceses* attracted conservative members of the creole elite while the *yorkinos* appealed to more radical, liberal and popular thinkers, such as Zavala, who were often not from the upper echelons of Mexico's elite.[37] This group had been formed with the encouragement of the first US minister to Mexico, Joel Poinsett (1779-1851). *Yorkinos* gained the upper hand in Mexican politics, although they split between radicals and moderates in 1827. This division cost the former's candidate for the presidency, Vicente Guerrero

[36] 'Proyectos republicanos', *El Sol,* 11 May and 15 May 1822, pp. 201-2 and 205-7.
[37] Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 18-21; Brading, *Origins*, 64.

(1782-1831), the election, but these *puros* brought Guerrero to power in 1828 through a revolt against the legitimately elected president. They advocated and enacted popular policies such as the expulsion of Spaniards,[38] were more sympathetic to the United States than to Europe and were generally democrats and federalists. The *escoceses* were more pro-Spanish and European and could be categorised as conservative liberals, although not on religious matters. Members of this group included former Bourbonists such as Alamán, José María Fagoaga and Francisco Sánchez de Tagle.[39]

These lodges were loose political groupings and members changed political opinions over time; there was no straight path from the *escoceses* to the later Conservative Party. Nonetheless, the actions of the *yorkinos* – their revolt against the elected president, the expulsion of the Spaniards and, above all, their association with the United States – lived long in the memories of those who opposed them. Poinsett's role in setting up the *yorkinos* and his close ties with them fuelled the suspicion that federal republicanism was an alien imposition. Again, some of this is retrospective propaganda to undermine the system, but Julien Schmaltz, an agent of the French government sent to Mexico, who was close to the leading members of the Bourbonist party, wrote in May 1824 that Miguel Ramos Arizpe (1775-1843), who played a key role in drafting the constitution, had had federalism "inculcated in him by an American doctor [Poinsett], who […] is the true author of the constitutional plan" with the result that US institutions would be imposed on Mexico.[40]

Poinsett had little, if any, influence on the adoption of republican federalism, but he did become a target of anti-federal republican criticism. He took a partisan interest in Mexican politics, particularly the rivalry between the two Masonic lodges. Poinsett himself cast the conflict as a geopolitical one and argued that because Britain had aligned itself with the "aristocratic and monarchical party [the *escoceses*]" he was compelled to "seek friends" amongst the "democrats" in

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[38] See Harold Dana Sims, *The Expulsion of Mexico's Spaniards, 1821-1836* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990).
[39] Fowler provides a list of those associated with the *escoceses* in *Age of Proposals*, 53, fn 62.
[40] 'Note remise à M. Samouel à son passage à la Nouvelle Orléans' enclosed in Schmaltz to Fleury, 10 May 1824, AAE, ADP Mexique, 1.

order to "sustain the institutions of [Mexico]". He claimed his policy was successful in promoting the interests of the United States and "liberal principles."[41]

Poinsett, therefore interfered in Mexican politics in order to pursue what he understood to be US national interests. The significance of this lies in the fact that the association of the *yorkinos* with Poinsett fuelled conservative suspicions of US attitudes towards Mexico more generally and thus formed the basis of an anti-American discourse that was reinforced by US expansion (discussed in chapters three and four), but existed independently of it. This provided an additional and powerful rationale for conservative politicians to reject what they understood as US-style federal republicanism and look for alternative models influenced by European thought and examples.

Poinsett was eventually recalled by Washington at the insistence of the Mexican government, but he remained the bête noire of conservative politicians. Alamán blamed Poinsett for the "hatred" that existed between the United States and Mexico as early as 1830.[42] In a work published in 1834, Alamán concluded that the *yorkinos* under Poinsett's direction were the "root of the so many of the evils experienced by the nation, and will be [the root] of those yet to come."[43] Years after his recall, Poinsett's name remained shorthand for the pernicious influence of the United States in Mexican politics. One conservative newspaper attacked its enemies as "the liberal disciples of Poinsett" who worked to bring about the "hateful domination of an enemy race on our unfortunate country",[44] and highlighted "the disastrous mission of Poinsett" and claimed "the proximity of the [United States] is the true cause of all the misfortunes of our nation."[45]

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[41] Joel Poinsett to Martin van Buren, 10 March 1829, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States Concerning the Independence of the Latin-American nations*, III, 1678-80. Poinsett gives his account of Mexico in *Notes on Mexico, made in the autumn of 1822. Accompanied by an historical sketch of the revolution, and translations of official reports on the present state of that country* (London: John Miller, 1825).

[42] Alamán to Tornel, 24 May 1830, AHGE, Estados-Unidos, L. 17; e.2.

[43] Lucas Alamán, *Defensa del ex ministro de Relaciones D. Lucas Alamán: En causa formada contra él y contra los exmininistros de Guerra y Justicia de Vicepresidente D. Anastasio Bustamante* first published 1834 and reprinted in Lucas Alamán, *Documentos diversos: inéditos y muy raros ... Compilación de Rafael Aguayo Spencer*, 4 vols. (Mexico City: Editorial Jus, 1945-47), III, 41. Alamán restated these charges in *Historia de México*, V**,** 623-4. See also Alamán to Tornel, 2 August 1830, AHGE, Estados-Unidos, L. 17; e.2.

[44] 'Proyectos contra *El Tiempo*, su acusación', *El Tiempo* (Mexico City), 20 February 1846, front page.

[45] 'Proyectos de los Estados-Unidos', *ibid.,* 13 February 1846, front page.

The two arguments detailed above, the unsuitability of a federal republic for Mexico and the association of this model with liberalism and the United States, became the cornerstone of conservative discourse in the 1840s and 1850s. Nonetheless, anti-republican arguments had been laid down in *El Sol* in the immediate aftermath of independence, while Poinsett had provided proof for those who saw the malevolent hand of Washington behind federalism. What became tropes of conservative discourse were not only the consequence of "profound disillusionment", to use Fowler's phrase,[46] with the political instability of post-independent Mexico, but also the outcome of more fundamental doubts about the viability of republicanism in Mexico, doubts which the volatility of the first decades of Mexican independence reinforced, rather than created.

These fears had been expressed by Iturbide himself, who argued that Spanish colonialism meant Mexico was not ready for republican government.[47] Indeed, this was not in itself controversial: liberals like Mora and Zavala agreed that Mexican society did not conform to the liberal principles of the 1824 Constitution.[48] The difference between these men and conservative thinkers was that Mora and Zavala argued society must be transformed to fit the constitution, whereas conservative thinkers argued that it should be the other way round. However, if in 1822 the arguments of *El Sol* could be characterised as "whatever happens will be for the worse, and therefore it is in our interest that as little should happen as possible",[49] the 1824 Constitution meant that the worst had already happened. It was therefore necessary, in the view of conservative politicians, to radically transform the political institutions of Mexico.

II

The Development of Monarchist Thought in Mexico after 1824

The political instability of post-independent Mexico not only confirmed *El Sol*'s worst fears, it exceeded them. From 1828 to 1834 Mexico had five different

[46] Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 5.
[47] Iturbide, *A Statement*, v-vi; 24-25.
[48] Hale, *Liberalism*, 113-16.
[49] A quote from Lord Salisbury in Andrew Roberts, *Salisbury: Victorian Titan* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999), 435.

presidents, three of whom came to power as the result of coups. Dissatisfaction with the 1824 Constitution led to its replacement with a centralist one in 1836,[50] but not before federalist revolts against this proposed change broke out across Mexico, including Texas, which permanently separated from the nation. Moreover, French intervention from 1838 to 1839 resulted in severe economic dislocation, while Yucatán seceded from Mexico in 1840. Governments under the new centralist constitution proved no more able than their federalist predecessors to maintain themselves in power against popular revolt in Mexico City or military revolts outside the capital.[51]

The course of post-independent Mexican politics had therefore done nothing to disprove the arguments of the Bourbonists. Two events precipitated by *puro* liberals had especially shaken conservative politicians and thinkers. First, Vicente Guerrero had been brought to power by a revolt culminating in the Parián riot in 1828, which saw street violence in Mexico City unparalleled in its recent history. Second, Gómez Farías came to power in 1833 and promoted a liberal reformist agenda, which was seen to attack the Church and the army. For conservative politicians the prospect of social violence combined with liberal reform, within a system that had lost all pretence of constitutional legitimacy, gave greater urgency to their arguments against federal republicanism.

The arguments which came to be deployed against the 1824 Constitution had been outlined in *El Sol* as early as 1822. For many conservative thinkers these criticisms were still valid, but they were willing to continue the republican experiment subject to significant constitutional reform. The result was the Seven Laws of 1836, which transformed Mexico into a centralised republic. The importance of the 1836 Constitution to this research lies in the fact that many of the ideas that drove the overturn of the 1824 Constitution were monarchical in inspiration, derived from constitutional theorists such as Burke or Constant. It was hoped that what were perceived to be the problems of republicanism in Mexico

[50] For the evolution of Alamán's constitutional thought see Catherine Andrews, 'In the Pursuit of Balance. Lucas Alamán's Proposals for Constitutional Reform (1830-1835)', *Historia constitucional*, 8 (2007), 13-37.
[51] For the Federal Republic see Anna, *Forging Mexico*. For the Central Republic, Costeloe, *The Central Republic*.

could be solved by the incorporation of elements of constitutional monarchy as well as restoration of centralised power to the national government. The failure of the Seven Laws to create stable and legitimate rule led some to conclude, or perhaps merely confirmed their existing belief, that republicanism was unworkable in Mexico.

Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) had been translated into Spanish and published in Mexico City in 1826. His thought, alongside that of Chateaubriand and Joseph de Maistre (1753-1821), strongly influenced Alamán's criticisms of the 1824 Constitution.[52] Making direct reference to Burke, Alamán followed his indictment of the French National Assembly during the French Revolution and claimed Mexico had destroyed everything that had previously existed in order to found a government entirely alien to its historical experience,[53] echoing the argument *El Sol* had made for maintaining a monarchical regime in Mexico. Alamán similarly argued that US prosperity was a result of its institutions conforming to its historical inheritance from British colonialism and therefore no innate superiority should be ascribed to federalism, nor could it be readily transcribed to Mexico. Alamán's main criticisms in the early 1830s, however, were of overly democratic representative government and a weak executive. He proposed strengthening the presidency at the expense of the legislature, introducing more restricted property or income qualifications for deputies in the lower house and making the upper house more independent by ensuring it was not elected in the same way as the chamber of deputies. Alamán further argued that seats in congress should be reserved for the professional classes, those in the army or Church or men who had followed a literary career, ideas which he later put into practice via an electoral law of 1846, discussed in chapter three.[54]

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[52] Noriega, *El pensamiento conservador*, I, Ch. 3; Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 60; David Brading, *The First America: the Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots and the Liberal State, 1492-1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 646.

[53] Andrews, 'In Pursuit of Balance', 16-17; Lucas Alamán, *Examen imparcial de la administración del general vicepresidente D. Anastasio Bustamante. Con observaciones generales sobre el estado presente de la República y consecuencias que éste debe producer* printed in Alamán, *Documentos diversos*, III, 245.

[54] Andrews, 'In Pursuit of Balance', 26-33.

The majority of political theorists, like Burke or Constant, whom Alamán and his supporters were adapting for their own political vision of Mexico, were constitutional monarchists and thus many of the ideas that influenced conservative politicians were inherently monarchical. The attempt to square the circle of republican Mexico with monarchical institutions, i.e. to create a balanced or mixed constitution without a monarch, is most apparent in the Seven Laws. These acts incorporated many elements of conservative thought: deputies and senators had higher age and income or property requirements for eligibility to congress; executive power was strengthened and presidential terms were set at eight years; and a distinction was made between "Mexicans" and "Citizens of the Mexican Republic". The latter status, which conferred the right to vote, required an income of 100 pesos per annum. Apart from the abolition of states and their transformation into departments administered by a centrally appointed governor, the most radical change was the introduction of a fourth power in addition to the legislative, judicial and executive: the Supreme Conservative Power.[55]

The role envisaged for the Supreme Conservative Power was similar to that of a constitutional monarch. The body was to be composed of five members, each to be over the age of forty and with an income of at least 3,000 pesos and with previous ministerial, congressional or Supreme Court experience. It had the power to declare any law unconstitutional if petitioned to do so by one of the three branches of government. It could deem the president morally or physically incapable of retaining office if prompted by congress and it could suspend the Supreme Court or congress when it saw fit or if requested by the president. In extraordinary circumstances it could determine the will of the nation and restore any branch of government toppled by revolt.[56] The aim was to provide an institution that would give stability to Mexican politics as an arbiter between the

[55] Costeloe, *Central Republic*, 100-4. The Supreme Conservative Power is analysed in Catherine Andrews, 'El debate político de la década de 1830 y los origenes de las Siete Leyes' in Cecilia Noriega and Alicia Salmerón (eds.), *México: un siglo de historia constitucional, 1808-1917* (Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Dr José María Luis Mora, 2009), and David Pantoja Morán, 'Las Siete Leyes Constitucionales. Presupuestos históricos y teoría constitucional subyacentes al diseño de sus insituciones' in *ibid*., and David Pantoja Morán, *El supremo poder conservador: el diseño institucional en las primeras constituciones mexicanas* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México; Zamora, Michoacán: El Colegio de Michoacán, 2005).

[56] Costeloe, *Central Republic*, 106; Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 67-68.

various branches of government, similar to the neutral power of the crown envisaged by Constant.[57] It was hoped that the institution would provide continuity and stability by moderating between competing factions and thus prevent, or at least moderate, the violent conflicts which had overturned a succession of governments in Mexico.[58]

The author and defender of the Seven Laws, and the Supreme Conservative Power, was Francisco Sánchez de Tagle,[59] a scion of one of the elite families of New Spain, and a leading member of the Bourbonist faction in the early 1820s.[60] It is not, therefore, surprising that the analysis of Mexico's problems in the 1830s matched those outlined by *El Sol* in 1821-22. Sanchez de Tagle shared an elite worldview similar to that of Fagoaga or Alamán, and his Supreme Conservative Power was "a monarchist republic […] a monarchy without a prince".[61]

Alamán believed that the new constitution was "in general good" and in every way "very superior" to what had preceded it because it "put authority in respectable hands and [assured] the stability of public order on the bases of individual property".[62] Increasingly, the establishment of order was the principle to which conservative thinkers subordinated all others. The official government newspaper of the Bustamante administration claimed the government wished to free the nation from "the most ferocious anarchy" and guarantee it a "wellbeing that can only be enjoyed amidst order. This is not, nor has it ever been, a war of opinions; it is not about systems, nor even individuals; it is a war of civilisation against barbarism, of property against thieves, of order against anarchy."[63] The new constitution, however, proved no more effective than the old in creating stability.

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[57] Morán, 'Las Siete Leyes Constitucionales', 196.
[58] Francisco Manuel Sánchez de Tagle, *Discurso del señor Don Francisco Manuel Sánchez de Tagle en la sesión del 15 de diciembre, sobre creación de un Poder Conservador* (Mexico City: Imprenta de J.M.
Fernández de Lara, 1835), 9.
[59] Noriega, *Pensamiento conservador*, I, 103-115. Sánchez de Tagle defended the Supreme Conservative Power in Sánchez de Tagle, *Discurso del señor Don Francisco Manuel Sánchez de Tagle*.
[60] María Luna Argudín,'De Guadalupes a borbonistas: desarrollo y proyección política de Fagoaga, Sardaneta y Sánchez de Tagle (1808-1824)', *Secuencia*, 38 (1997), 25-50.
[61] O'Gorman, *La Supervivencia política*, 27.
[62] Lucas Alamán to Santa Anna, 23 February 1837, Alamán, *Documentos diversos*, IV, 152-56.
[63] 'Mexico 19 de Octobre', *El Registro Oficial del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos* (Mexico City), 19 October 1830, pp. 139-40.

The Supreme Conservative Power itself was later criticised by writers sympathetic to the views of those who created it because it lacked physical force to "make itself obeyed" and, recalling Alamán's criticism of Iturbide, it thus "fell into ridicule from the day of its installation."[64]

Conservative members of the Mexican elite had supported constitutional monarchy at independence, many of the currents of thought they drew upon were monarchist, they blamed US-style federal republicanism as the root of all Mexico's evils, and they had seen their own attempts to modify the constitution by incorporating monarchist elements into Mexico's political institutions fail to prevent further instability. In this context it is perhaps surprising that it was not until 1840 that monarchy was reintroduced into public discourse as a solution to the ills of Mexican society. In this year, José María Gutiérrez de Estrada published a pro-monarchist pamphlet.[65] Gutiérrez de Estrada was a respected member of the elite from Yucatán, who had briefly served as minister for foreign affairs in 1835. He was a friend and correspondent of Mora, who described him as a "man of progress".[66]

The immediate trigger for his arguments in favour of monarchy was his first-hand experience of the chaos of which *El Sol* had warned. He had returned to Mexico after four years abroad, but had been refused entry into Campeche, the main port of his home state, because it was in revolt against the national government. He then made his way to the capital and witnessed a *puro* federalist revolt, which temporarily captured the national palace and held the president hostage.[67] Gutiérrez de Estrada witnessed directly "the effusion of blood", when his father-in-law was wounded during street fighting,[68] and the damage to the most

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[64] Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, II, 236-37; Niceto de Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico, desde sus tiempos más remotos hasta nuestros días*, 18 vols. (Barcelona-Mexico City: J.F. Párres, 1877-82), XII, 102-3.

[65] José María Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida al Excmo. Sr. ... necesidad de buscar en una convención el posible remedio de los males que aquejan a la república, y opiniones del autor acerca del mismo asunto* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1840), 24-27.

[66] Sanders, 'Proposals for Monarchy in Mexico', 124-25. Gutiérrez de Estrada's correspondence with Mora is in the BLAC, José María Luis Mora archive.

[67] See Michael Costeloe, 'A Pronunciamiento in Nineteenth Century Mexico: 15 de julio de 1840', *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 4 (1988), 245-264.

[68] Frances Erskine Inglis Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico, During a Residence of Two Years in that Country* 2 vols. (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown), I, 352-53.

"noble buildings of the capital". It was "twelve days of fire and scandal for the entire nation, as well as the world that contemplated in horror our crimes against morality, humanity and civilisation".[69] Writing in 1861, he noted that he had returned to Mexico in 1840 to find it "plagued by one of those violent crises" that it had passed through without cease since it was constituted as a republic.[70]

For Gutiérrez de Estrada, the solution to these ceaseless "crises" was constitutional monarchy. The arguments against republicanism made by the Bourbonists were largely reiterated by Gutiérrez de Estrada, but Mexico's recent past was used as evidence to demonstrate their veracity. The nation had experimented with "democratic, oligarchic, military, demagogic and anarchic [republics], so that all the parties, and always to the detriment of the nation's honour and happiness, have tried the republican system under all possible forms." It followed, then, in his view, that this type of government could not work in Mexico.[71] Because of its Spanish colonial past, Mexico's political culture was monarchical, not republican, and governments must conform to the present state of society.[72] While all forms of republican government had been tried, he noted, there had not been an attempt at a "*true* monarchy in the person of a *foreign prince*."[73] The Empire of Iturbide did not count, but the Plan of Iguala could and should be fulfilled.[74] Republicanism was clearly flourishing north of the border. However, it was not suitable for Mexico. Aside from its monarchical heritage, the nation was not ready for a form of democratic government which, since it had failed in a country as civilised and advanced as France, would certainly not succeed in Mexico. Gutiérrez de Estrada quoted a speech made by Chateaubriand in 1830: "the representative republic will be the future of the world, but its time has not yet arrived."[75]

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[69] Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida*, 26.
[70] José María Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Le Mexique et l'archiduc Ferdinand Maximilien d'Autriche* (Paris: Garnier frères, 1862), 9. A point Gutiérrez de Estrada also made to the British economist William Senior Nassau in a conversation of 1863. Senior, *Conversations with Distinguished Persons*, II, 275-76.
[71] Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida,* 31-35.
[72] *Ibid.,* 40-41; 44-45.
[73] *Ibid.,* 37. Emphasis in the original.
[74] *Ibid.,* 68-9; 80-82.
[75] *Ibid.,* 73-74.

The arguments for monarchy were general and vague: republicanism in Mexico was unstable, monarchy would provide stability. Gutiérrez de Estrada identified one of the problems that the Supreme Conservative Power was intended to solve. He claimed that Mexico was divided into two parties equal in power that would be locked in incessant struggle, but for him this was a problem insolvable within republican institutions, whereas a monarch could mediate between them and create a national party.[76] However, there was no mention of how the monarchy would be constituted or even which foreign prince would be called upon to rule. The only practical recommendation was that a national congress be called to debate the matter. But constitutional monarchy was a programme that was largely self-explanatory and broadly liberal because Gutiérrez de Estrada's model was France, namely the July Monarchy.[77]

Gutiérrez de Estrada was known as a prominent Francophile,[78] and his pamphlet was influenced by French history and politics. He directly quoted Odillon Barrot (1791-1873), head of the "dynastic opposition" in the French Chamber of Deputies under the July Monarchy, as an example of how party conflicts did not lead to revolt, but were contained within a constitutional monarchy. Leading politicians like Thiers, La Fayette, Casimir Pierre Perier (1777-1832) were cited and the July Monarchy's (apparent) consolidation as a stable political entity impressed Gutiérrez de Estrada.[79] After the July Revolution of 1830 France had not become a republic because, like Mexico, Gutiérrez de Estrada argued, its traditions were inherently monarchical.[80] Mexican politicians of all persuasions had a vast array of comparative models to examine and with which to further their arguments. Monarchists were no exception: Gutiérrez de Estrada asked pointedly, who in

[76] Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida,* 42-3.
[77] For the liberal influences on Gutiérrez de Estrada's monarchism see Gabriela Tío Vallejo, 'La monarquía en México: historia de un desencuentro. El liberalismo monárquico de Gutiérrez Estrada', *Secuencia*, 30 (1994), 33-56.
[78] Hale, *Liberalism*, 28-29. Prior to returning to Mexico, Gutiérrez de Estrada had spent some time in Paris. He had dinner with the newly appointed French minister to Mexico, de Cyprey, before the diplomat departed for his new post. Garro to foreign minister**,** 6 September 1839, AHGE, Francia, L. 23; e. 238.
[79] Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida*, 3; 16-18; 20-1; 43-44.
[80] *Ibid.,* 46-47.

"Britain, France, Holland or Tuscany would exchange the situation of their respective country for that of the Mexican Republic?"[81]

These examples were invoked in order to demonstrate that nothing could be more natural than monarchy, but the reaction to Gutiérrez de Estrada's pamphlet in Mexico was almost universally hostile. Its impact was summed up by the wife of the Spanish minister to Mexico, Fanny Calderón de la Barca: "The whole world is talking [about it], and [it] seems likely to cause a greater sensation in Mexico than the discovery of the gunpowder plot in England." Her prediction that "the consequences are likely to be disastrous for the fearless and public-spirited author" was to be borne out.[82] Public opinion railed against the pamphlet in the press, the president condemned it publically as seditious, as did prominent national politicians such as the *santanista* José María Tornel, and the publisher of the pamphlet was imprisoned.[83] Mexico's only public monarchist was thus forced into hiding before fleeing the country and spending the rest of his life trying to convince the courts of Europe rather than his fellow countrymen of the merits of a Mexican kingdom.[84]

The virulence of the anti-monarchical reaction is perhaps suggestive of the fragility of the republican ideal after years of instability in Mexico. In a letter commenting on the publication of Gutiérrez de Estrada's work, the moderate liberal José Bernardo Couto (1803-62) wrote "you cannot imagine what a hornet's nest has been kicked with this. In public everyone speaks the language of the most exalted republicanism: some out of personal agreement, many from calculation and with ulterior motives. Very few who have pronounced an anathema against the poor writer have done so out of genuine feeling."[85] Since the fall of Iturbide, there was much political capital to be gained by denouncing groups associated with monarchy and Spanish colonialism more generally, as the 1827 expulsion of the Spaniards had

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[81] *Ibid.*, 54.
[82] Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, II, 4-7.
[83] Costeloe, *Central Republic*, 171-72.
[84] He reiterated his views seven years later in Gutiérrez de Estrada, *México en 1840 y en 1847* (Mexico City: Imprenta de Vicente G. Torres; Paris: impr. de Lacrampe y hijo, 1848). In 1846 he secured an interview with Louis Phillipe. Gutiérrez de Estrada to Guizot, 11 September 1846, ADP, 46/3.
[85] José Bernardo Couto to Mora, 25 October 1840, BLAC, José Luis Mora archive.

demonstrated. And those behind the most vitriolic responses to the pamphlet of 1840 were in part motivated by a desire to present themselves as the ardent defenders of Mexican republicanism.

Despite the reaction to the pamphlet, as has been demonstrated in section I, the sentiments of some of Mexico's political elite were sympathetic to monarchy. The failure of the First Mexican Empire was a consequence of its Mexican emperor, not the ideas that lay behind monarchy. Moreover, in the conservative view, the fall of Iturbide directly led to the adoption of federal republicanism, which they understood as unsuitable for Mexico, inspired by the US example and promoted by the US minister Joel Poinsett. Furthermore, Mexico's tumultuous political experience as a federal republic from 1824 did little to convert conservatives to republicanism, while the failure to find order and stability as a centralist republic from 1836 further discredited republican ideas, but crucially not the monarchical ones that lay behind many elements of the Seven Laws. Monarchy represented a shorthand solution to all the problems of republican government: a strong executive, a centralist government and a restricted franchise and thus embodied the solutions proposed by conservative politicians without making compromises within a republican framework. Gutiérrez de Estrada even claimed that one of his most violent critics, Tornel, had adopted monarchical principles, but without a monarch,[86] certainly *santanistas* increasingly leaned towards authoritarian government.[87] Gutiérrez de Estrada's exile did not mark the end of monarchist support in Mexico; rather a group of conservative politicians put his call for a national convention to decide on the political institutions most appropriate to Mexico into action in 1845-46, which will be discussed in chapter three. First, however, it is necessary to understand why many in Europe, and especially in France, understood monarchy as the best form of government for an independent Mexico.

[86] Gutiérrez de Estrada to Mora, 3 June 1843, BLAC, José Luis Mora archive.
[87] Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna*, ch. 13 and Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 219-64.

III

The View from Europe: The Monarchist 'Party' in Mexico

As will be seen, the reappearance of monarchist ideas in 1840s Mexican public discourse influenced debates in Europe over the origins of Mexico's instability and the means to solve these problems. But, in contrast to Mexico, the idea that monarchy was the form of government best suited to Spain's former colonies, and Mexico in particular, was a constant refrain in European thought on Latin America. Moreover, many argued, monarchy was not only the solution to Mexico's political problems, but a geopolitical opportunity that would benefit Europe, and especially the power most closely associated with the Mexican monarchy. Indeed, this rationale formed the basis of the Bourbon Restoration's policy towards Latin American independence in the first half of the 1820s. Chateaubriand, who was foreign minister from December 1822 to August 1824, wrote: "the monarchical emancipation of the Spanish colonies by the generous influence of the eldest son of the Bourbons would have raised France to the highest degree of prosperity and glory. Such was the last dream of my mature years; I believed myself in America, but I awoke in Europe."[88] Chateaubriand's plan, supported by Villèle, was for Spain's former colonies to be constituted as independent kingdoms under Spanish *infantes* with French support. In short, France backed the Plan of Iguala, although not until two years after it had been proclaimed, by which time the First Mexican Empire had ceased to be.

Chateaubriand was not alone in his belief that the "Spanish colonies" would have "much to gain by forming themselves into constitutional monarchies".[89] It was the view of numerous French (and British and Spanish) politicians, journalists and travel writers**.** If monarchists remained a persecuted or silent minority in Mexico after 1824, they found a much more sympathetic audience in Europe. It was the endurance of this vision overseas that ensured that in Mexico monarchy remained a viable alternative to republicanism.

The British author Robert William Hale Hardy travelled across Mexico from three years from 1825 to 1828. In Mexico City he attended "tertulias" with,

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[88] Chateaubriand, *Voyage en Amérique*, 220-21.
[89] *Ibid*., 219.

amongst others, Mora. A favoured topic of conversation was the prosperity of the United States, which, Hardy's Mexican hosts argued, proved the wisdom of adopting federal republicanism in Mexico. Hardy's response to this claim was that "I have not yet been able to understand how [this] style of government and institutions can be made to apply to Mexico". Governments should suit "the previous habits and education of the people", British colonialism meant the United States "was nurtured in the lap of liberty" and independence served to confirm for their own benefit the "laws and customs of the mother country". Mexico, on the other hand, "acted as if she were trying to make the clothes of a grown person fit an infant". Hardy's analysis was, therefore, exactly that of conservative politicians as outlined above, but it is his authorial aside that is most illustrative of European views: "Born in England as I was, and [raised] in the belief that its form of government is, of all others, the wisest, and the best for the nation […] I could not of course give my opinion in favour of the expediency of a federal government."[90]

Many in monarchical Britain, France and Spain shared this view. Of course, opinion was not universally in favour of this form of government, particularly in France, nor did it necessarily follow that support for monarchy in Europe would translate as advocacy for the same in Mexico. Few observers, however, made the distinction drawn by the Italian, Giacomo Beltrami (1779-1855), author of one of the earliest accounts of independent Mexico published in France, who "was monarchical in Europe and republican in America".[91] And not all Bonapartes believed, as Joseph apparently did when supposedly offered the Mexican crown in 1821, that "the throne you want to raise again cannot make you happy. Each day that I pass on the hospitable territory of the United States demonstrates to me the excellence of republican institutions for America; guard them amongst yourselves as a precious gift from providence […] imitate the United States".[92] Most agreed with the conclusion of the Prince de Polignac (1780-1847) in a letter to Alamán,

[90] Robert William Hale Hardy, *Travels in the Interior of Mexico in 1825, 1826, 1827 & 1828* (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1829), 514-17.
[91] Beltrami, *Le Mexique*, I, xxxi.
[92] Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, 'Quelques mots sur Joseph-Napoléon Bonaparte' in *Oeuvres de Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte*, 3 vols. (Paris: M. Charles-Édouard Temblaire, 1848), II, 330.

who had spent time with the French legitimist politician in Paris, that "monarchical governments are generally more stable than [republican ones]".[93]

Many Europeans, therefore, shared the cultural assumptions of conservative interpretations of Mexico's past, but for French observers and governments there were also geopolitical and imperial dimensions to monarchy in Mexico. As regards Spanish American independence, de Pradt argued that it did not matter whether the new states were monarchical or republican because "it is not by their form of government that they will be useful [to Europe], but as a consequence of their independence alone."[94] Nonetheless, in the preface to the work he wrote: "Duty and personal feeling have induced [me] to point out the dangers which arise to royalty and to Catholicism, from the prolonged struggle between Spain and America". He wrote that he knew of no constitutions proposed in Latin America that mentioned monarchy; rather they were strongly republican and inclined towards the institutions of the United States, not Europe. He further warned that the impolitic policy of Spain would likely result in the end of royalism in its former provinces and that a republican Latin America would be a dangerous example to monarchical Europe.[95]

Whether guided by de Pradt or not, the Bourbon Restoration's policy of promoting monarchy in Mexico was underpinned by similar ideas. The French government hoped to develop French commerce by embracing the arguments for commonwealth that had been proposed in the Spanish parliament by Latin American deputies such as Alamán, which would, in theory, benefit France, Spain and the new states. The details were sketched out by several times prime minister and *ultra* Jean-Baptiste de Villèle: "the commercial favours reserved to Spain would

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[93] Prince de Polignac to Alamán, 6 August 1823, AAE, AD Mexique, 1. The view that monarchy was the form of government best suited to Mexico was held by numerous British commentators. For example, Ward, *Mexico in 1827*, I, 303; Mark Beaufoy, *Mexican Illustrations, founded upon facts; indicative of the present condition of Society, manners, religion, and morals, among the Spanish and native inhabitants of Mexico: with observations upon the government and resources of the Republic of Mexico, as they appeared during part of the years 1825, 1826, and 1827, etc.* (London: Carpenter and Son, 1828), 103-117; Hardy, *Travels*, 517; George Frederick Augustus Ruxton, *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains* (London: John Murray, 1847), 105-6. Even the US Minister concluded in the 1840s that Mexico was not ready for institutions as "free" as those of the United States. Waddy Thompson, *Recollections of Mexico* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1846), 246-51.
[94] De Pradt, *Des colonies*, II, 299.
[95] *Ibid.,* I, xiii.

more than compensate for what would have been lost in respect to sovereignty." Success was predicated upon co-opting the remaining royalist sympathisers in Spanish America: "[i]n all these countries armed parties exist which favour [Spain]. If the *infantes* should not find [...] submissive kingdoms, they would at least find realms that could easily be subjugated by the aid of [France's] navy and credit." Villèle wrote that the French government would permit the use of its forces for this purpose in anticipation of "commercial advantages".[96]

As noted in chapter one, France's freedom to implement its strategies was limited in the 1820s. First, by the intransigence of Ferdinand VII, who refused to countenance anything other than the complete restoration of the Spanish empire in Latin America and, second, by British opposition to armed intervention in the wars of independence. Regardless of Spanish opposition, it is likely France had arrived at a solution which would have fulfilled the Plan of Iguala too late. By the time Chateaubriand and Villèle countenanced Bourbon kingdoms for Latin America the empire of Iturbide had already fallen in Mexico. The 1823 French invasion of the Spanish peninsula created widespread hostility towards France in Latin America because it was seen as a prelude to further intervention.[97] Moreover, French forces in Spain ended constitutional government there and thus, according to the formerly Bourbonist paper *El Sol*, finished the party in Mexico: the ruin of "the constitutional system in Spain" meant that a Bourbon prince ruling in Mexico was an "impossibility" and therefore the party that had "desired it" dissolved.[98]

Nonetheless, Mexico's experience as a republic did little to dissuade many foreign observers that Mexico was inherently monarchical, and that monarchy had powerful support amongst elites (and invariably passive support amongst the majority of the population). In 1829, the Mexican diplomatic agent, Tomás Murphy (senior), reported that the sack of the Parián market during a revolt in Mexico City had been attributed in Europe to the failings of republican government.

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[96] Jean-Baptiste de Villèle, *Mémoires et correspondance du Comte de Villèle*, 5 vols. (Paris: Perrin, 1888-90), IV, 200-1 and 239-40.

[97] For example, Tomás Murphy Sr to unnamed, 2 January 1826, José María Bocanegra to Murphy Jr, 30 January and 16 July 1829, AHGE, Francia, L. 4; e. 25. Mexican fears were reported back to France, Schmaltz to Fleury, 18 February 1824, AAE, CP Mexique, 2.

[98] 'Estado actual de la nación', *El Sol*, 4 and 5 January 1824, p. 816 and pp. 818-19.

Furthermore, "the defects of the system [were] so much worse" when applied to a people "accustomed to a completely different order of things" and whose religion and lack of enlightenment made them ill-suited to republican government. He claimed this was a widely held view, even amongst those who previously had expressed hope Mexico would consolidate under "the adopted system". Thus he feared that France and Britain would work "in secret" and "indirectly" to help Spain, "not for the reconquest of America, but for the consolidation of independence under the monarchical system". Moreover, if the "wisdom of the Mexican people did not in its future conduct restore the credit" that had been lost because of the riot then this view of Mexico would gain more credence.[99]

Murphy's analysis of political opinion in France was accurate: French diplomats and commentators generally concluded that Mexico would be better governed under a monarchy. In addition, they reported the existence of a strong monarchical party, although publically there was no sign of one after 1824 until 1846. This can be explained by the fact European diplomats generally preferred the company of Mexico's conservative politicians. Schmaltz wrote that he had met in Mexico a wealth of "gentlemen" notable for their "honesty" and "enlightenment" amongst other qualities, but he had also known radical liberals whose "venality, presumption, audacity and political ignorance render them capable of the most shocking and extraordinary actions, without any regard or fear for the consequences".[100] Deffaudis wrote that of the hundred or so people who made up his social circle in Mexico "four fifths belong to the aristocratic party".[101]

In 1823 Schmaltz identified Alamán as the most important man in Mexico, and listed him alongside other monarchists, such as José María Fagoaga. Schmaltz knew these elite members of Mexican society personally and wrote letters of introduction to all of them for another French agent who was sent to Mexico.[102] Alamán and Fagoaga, moreover, were pro-French, Schmaltz argued, because of the

[99] Tomás Murphy Jr to foreign minister, 26 November 1828. AHGE, Francia, L. 4; e. 25.
[100] 'Note remise à M. Samouel à son passage à la Nouvelle Orléans' enclosed in Schmaltz to Fleury, 10 May 1824, AAE, ADP Mexique, 1.
[101] Deffaudis to foreign minister, 3 March 1835, AAE, CP Mexique, 9.
[102] 'Note remise à M. Samouel à son passage à la Nouvelle Orléans' enclosed in Schmaltz to Fleury, 10 May 1824, AAE, ADP Mexique, 1.

positive view of France they had gained during stays in Paris, and as late as 1845, Mora, then in exile in Paris, wrote that they still retained a favourable reputation in France.[103] Alamán had studied in Paris at the Collège de France and was introduced, at the salon of the Duke of Montmorency, a Bourbon prince of blood, to such luminaries of Parisian society as Madame de Stael, Benjamin Constant, Chateaubriand, La Fayette and Polignac. José María Fagoaga also mixed in this exclusive company with Alamán.[104] Partially as a consequence of Schmaltz's reports, which identified an influential monarchist party, the foreign ministry concluded "after everything that we have been able to learn about the state of Mexico, it is reasonable to assume that […] the social and religious state, the mores and the customs of the people […] call for a [monarchical government]". The minister remained under the impression that the implementation of the Plan of Iguala was still possible. He hoped that an arrangement could be reached between Mexico and Spain and perhaps even a viceroy could preside over an entirely Mexican administration, which would regulate domestic affairs.[105]

French observers generally concluded that politics in Mexico was the preserve of a small elite, Mexican society was backward and apolitical and popular support was therefore by no means a necessary requisite for governments or political institutions. Deffaudis reported to Paris that of the 150,000 to 200,000 people that made up the population of Mexico City only 6,000 to 8,000 belonged to the "bourgeois class". All the rest were "those which one calls '*los leperos*', people who do not have regular employment, nor wives, nor legitimate children". Outside of the cities, "the people of the countryside, which form the great mass of the nation, are essentially docile". They viewed with "the most profound indifference" the continual changes in government. "The imitation of the institutions of the [United States] has been fatal to Mexico" because, unlike their northern neighbours, Mexicans had not been "raised in the constitutional school of England". Similarly, federalism arose organically in the United States, but had been imposed

[103] Mora to Gomez Farías, 20 May 1845, BLAC, Valentín Gomez Farías Collection.
[104] José C. Valadés, *Alamán, estadista e historiador* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1987), 66-68; 140-41.
[105] 'Instructions données aux personnes envoyées au Mexique', 29 November 1823, AAE, CP Mexique, 2.

artificially in Mexico. As a result, Deffaudis argued, Mexico could not find stability in any government other than a monarchical one, and it should tend towards absolutism given the level of political education in the country.[106]

The then French foreign minister, the *doctrinaire* liberal Victor de Broglie (1785-1870), agreed entirely with this analysis: "that is to say, [on] the incompatibility of the form of its government with the character, the habits and the interests of its people". Mexico's "imperfect state of civilisation" meant republicanism and federalism were inappropriate. Indeed, in a crossed out section of the draft Broglie wrote that he had never considered the current system in Mexico as anything other than "one of those ephemeral and transitory situations" which, after "the convulsions of anarchy", lead to the "calm and regular customs of a despotism more or less tempered". In this respect Mexico was no different from all the other states of "Spanish America" and "monarchical power" was the "port" where "these states will repose after their long agitations".[107]

The belief that republicanism and federalism were anathema to Mexico's historical circumstances and its present did not mean automatic sympathy with all the conservative views of Mexico's elite. Nineteenth-century liberalism in France is hard to categorise. Economic liberals, like Chevalier, were willing to support the (initially) politically authoritarian Second Empire,[108] while Orléanists, such as Broglie, Thiers and Guizot, who all served as foreign minister, were constitutionally conservative and advocated a restricted franchise.[109] Indeed, Zavala was briefly Mexico's minister to France (1833-34), the representative of Gomez Farías' liberal government, and Broglie reported he was disappointed by Zavala's "exaggerated liberalism" and his unswerving belief in federalism and "pure democracy".[110] The brief French flirtation with Mexican federalists during the 1838-39 intervention, discussed in chapter one, was the high-water mark of sympathy for their cause amongst French government observers.

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[106] Deffaudis to Broglie, 11 June and 15 July 1833, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.
[107] Broglie to Deffaudis, 24 November 1833, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.
[108] Sudhir Hazareesingh, *From Subject to Citizen: The Second Empire and the Emergence of Modern French Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 184-89.
[109] See Craiutu, *Liberalism under Siege*; Rosanvallon, *Le Moment Guizot*; Marina Valensise, *François Guizot*.
[110] Broglie to Deffaudis, 2 May 1834, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.

France's minister to Mexico from 1840 to 1846, Baron Alleye de Cyprey, was as dismissive of federalists in Mexico as Broglie had been. De Cyprey spent nine days with Gomez Farías in the immediate aftermath of the failed federalist revolt which had so shaken Gutiérrez de Estrada in July 1840 and concluded that liberal federalist ideas were impractical in Mexico.[111] This is not surprising given that de Cyprey was an avowed proponent of monarchy in Mexico, who did not believe that "Spanish America had republican elements".[112] He frequently recommended European intervention in order to found a monarchy and believed that Mexicans were like children and therefore required a strong government. There was, he claimed, a monarchist party in Mexico, but it was badly directed and divided over who the candidate should be for the throne.[113]

His belief that this party existed similarly stemmed from French diplomats' contact with the narrow section of Mexico's elite who favoured monarchy. De Cyprey knew Gutiérrez de Estrada,[114] and expected his pamphlet would leave "deep roots" and produce a revolution in ideas, which would one day be realised.[115] It confirmed what de Cyprey already thought to be true: "Mexico marches towards a monarchy".[116] In two long memorandums, de Cyprey took the time to outline how monarchy could be achieved in Mexico through military intervention.[117] Although not as extreme as those of De Cyprey, views in Paris concurred that monarchy was an appropriate solution for Mexico. De Cyprey had sent a copy of Gutiérrez de Estrada's pamphlet to Paris, where it was read by Guizot. The foreign minister complained that the writing was a "little difficult", but it sketched a picture of the situation and needs of Mexico that Guizot believed "to be true". He added that Gutiérrez de Estrada had resided long enough in Paris to leave behind him "good

[111] De Cyprey to Thiers, 11 August 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19.
[112] De Cyprey to Guizot, 25 September, AAE, CP Mexique, 21.
[113] De Cyprey to Thiers, 13 July and 28 September 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19; De Cyprey to Thiers, 15 October 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19.
[114] De Cyprey to Thiers, 30 November 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19; Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Le Mexique et l'archiduc Ferdinand*, 15-17.
[115] De Cyprey to Thiers, 27 October 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19; de Cyprey to Guizot, 21 January 1841, AAE, CP Mexique, 23.
[116] De Cyprey to Thiers, 27 October 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19.
[117] De Cyprey to Guizot, 17 April 1842, AAE, CP Mexique, 22; de Cyprey to Guizot, 8 January 1844, AAE, CP Mexique, 26.

memories and the reputation of a being one of those small number of men who are both learned and free of prejudice." He was, therefore, a credit to his country.[118]

This was not, of course, how the Mexican government thought of him, which was sufficiently worried by Gutiérrez de Estrada's views that it reported them to its representative in Paris. The Mexican foreign minister noted that the author of the pro-monarchy pamphlet would receive the punishment he merited and that the state would do everything in its power to prevent the evils that could result from his ideas. The president and the press had therefore condemned the monarchist arguments in order to "cut at its root this new pretext for civil discord". It was further necessary to inculcate abroad "the unquestionable truth that [Mexico] would never permit the establishment of a throne, nor be governed by foreigners".[119]

In this latter cause Mexican governments were unsuccessful. French publicists echoed the views of Orléanist ministers and diplomats.[120] An article published in 1842 in the *Journal des débats*, outlined this monarchist discourse. Mexico, ran the editorial, proved that "forms of government which succeed in one nation [i.e. the United States]" cannot "be imposed on another nation [i.e. Mexico] completely different by its traditions, political and religious education, and by its mores." In 1824 Mexico had adopted an imitation of the US Constitution, the only difference being that Catholicism was the sole religion of state, but the impossibility of making this work was apparent from the start. Mexico had therefore gone through various systems, none of which had provided stability. The newspaper believed that there were many monarchists in Mexico, including Gutiérrez de Estrada, whose pamphlet was described, recalling Guizot, as tracing a "true picture" of Mexico. Finally, the article concluded that monarchy was the solution to Mexico's problems.[121]

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[118] Guizot to de Cyprey, 11 March 1841, AAE, CP Mexique, 20.
[119] José María Ortiz Monasterio to José Máximo Garro, AHGE, Francia, L. 20; e. 206.
[120] For example, Félix Clavé, 'La Question du Mexique – Relations du Mexique avec les États-Unis, l'Angleterre et la France', *Revue des deux mondes*, 12 (1845), 1053; Gabriel Ferry, 'Guerre entre les États-Unis et le Mexique, scènes et episodes de l'invasion', *Revue des deux mondes*, 19 (1847), 429; Fossey, *Le Mexique*, 520-25.
[121] 'France, Paris, 12 septembre', *Journal des débats*, 13 September 1842, first and second pages. The paper reiterated these views after the outbreak of the US-Mexican War. 'France. Paris, 18 septembre', *Journal des débats,* front page.

Indeed, foreign observers not only echoed the conservative interpretation of Mexican politics and history, in some cases they predated it. The Austrian writer, Isidore Löwenstern, travelled to Mexico in 1838 where he met, amongst others, Alamán.[122] In his account he described Mexican politics and identified what he called a "conservative party" composed of the clergy and men "finally enlightened as to the abyss that the establishment of a democratic government has plunged [Mexico]." This party, within which he claimed Alamán was the most influential individual, contained "educated, but timid men", who wished to see Mexico governed under a system "consistent with the needs of [Mexico]". They were "timid" due to the fact that they were afraid to express their views, which, Löwenstern claimed, were to place Mexico under "foreign domination", because they were "under the despotism of an unbridled mass". It is, of course, anecdotal evidence, but the reaction to Gutiérrez de Estrada's pamphlet suggests there may be an element of truth in Löwenstern's belief that (what he called) the "conservative party" was afraid to express its views.[123]

Löwenstern's work demonstrates that the idea of monarchy, and even the idea of European intervention in favour of a monarchy, was part of French discourse on Mexico during the 1840s. His work concluded with a chapter that began: "the current state of Mexico cannot continue". He argued the country had been destroyed by representative republicanism, Mexico had been founded as a monarchy and only a return to the Plan of Iguala could save the nation.[124] Chevalier was largely in agreement with this conclusion. In a review of Löwenstern's work he wrote that monarchy was the form of government best suited to Mexico. However, he argued that Löwenstern "seemed to be of the opinion that Europe should intervene to impose a monarch on Mexico". This, he thought, "would be very difficult" and European intervention would face many obstacles. Moreover, a

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[122] His work was not published until 1843. Isidore Löwenstern, *Le Mexique: souvenirs d'un voyageur* (Paris: A. Bertrand, 1843). See Margarita Pierini, 'Literatura Mexicana Un viajero austriaco en México. Los Recuerdos de Isidore Löwenstern (1838)', *Literature Mexicana*, 14 (2003), 7-42.
[123] It is also striking that he used the term "conservative party" and contrasted it with the "democratic party", which he qualified as the "destructive party". This is the exact same language that Alamán used in 1850: "the Conservative Party has existed amongst us from the moment that the opposite party was born, [the] destructive". *El Universal* (Mexico City), 'Los conservadores y la nación – (concluye)', 10 January 1850, front page.
[124] Löwenstern, *Le Mexique,* 455-64.

European prince that presented himself in Mexico by "right of conquest" would be opposed by the local populace. Mexico, Chevalier argued, was independent and therefore it should "freely call to its aid a European prince".[125] However, far from demonstrating that Mexico was against monarchy, the treatment of Gutiérrez de Estrada "proved nothing". To the contrary, there were strong monarchical elements in Mexico, which was like France on the eve of Napoléon Bonaparte's 1799 coup against the Directory: all that was required was a great man to assume the role of "supreme arbiter of the destiny of the nation".[126]

The republican Mexican governments were right to be concerned about European opinion as regards monarchy in Mexico. Writing in 1861, Gutiérrez de Estrada published a letter written in 1840 that he "cherished dearly" from Baron de Cyprey. The French minister stated: "the picture you paint of the state of country is only too true [….] The remedy that you propose is the only one that can save [Mexico]. You have been a prophet". He pointed to the work of the explorer, Eugène Duflot de Mofras (1810-1884), who had been sent by the July Monarchy to the North American Pacific coast on an exploratory mission and wrote in his report, referencing Gutiérrez de Estrada, that monarchy was the sole remedy for Mexico's problems.[127] Gutiérrez de Estrada quoted at length the *Journal des débats* article of 13 September 1842 discussed above.[128] He argued that the idea for monarchy was not a "French idea"; rather, it "belonged entirely to Mexico; it is *all Mexican*".[129] As this chapter has shown, this is only partially true – monarchism in Mexico was a shared transnational discourse. However, Gutiérrez de Estrada was right in a sense – it was enough of a Mexican idea for the viability of monarchy to be seriously entertained in Europe. If the Mexican monarchist was persecuted in Mexico he was

[125] Michel Chevalier, 'Variétés: Le Mexique, souvenirs d'un voyageur, par M. Isidore Lowenstern. – Paris, chez Arthus Bertrand', *Journal des débats*, 17 September 1843, third and fourth pages.
[126] Chevalier, *Des mines*, 90-91.
[127] Eugène Duflot de Mofras, *Exploration du territoire de l'Orégon, des Californies et de la mer Vermeille, exécutée pendant les années 1840, 1841 et 1842*, 2 vols. (Paris: Arthus Betrand, 1844), I, 29-32.
[128] Gutiérrez de Estrada claimed it was written by "a distinguished writer, today an eminent member of the senate". In all probability, he is referring to Chevalier. Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Le Mexique et l'archiduc*, 15-18.
[129] *Ibid.,* 23. Emphasis in the original.

at least feted by some men of influence in France, and the realisation of his dream would not have been possible without this intellectual context.

Conclusion

For monarchists in Mexico, the importance of Iturbide's reign lay in the non-fulfilment of the Plan of Iguala. For conservatives, this, rather than the *Grito de Dolores* or the 1824 Constitution, was the foundational document of Mexican independence. The failure to found Mexico as a monarchy under a European ruler was a missed opportunity to constitute the nation in its appropriate form, and an explanation for contemporary problems. However, it was not until the 1840s, first by Gutiérrez de Estrada, and then, as will be discussed in the next chapter, by conservatives led by Alamán, that this argument was made in public discourse. In the previous decade, politicians like Alamán had hoped to achieve order and stability by adapting monarchist constitutional ideas to Mexican republicanism. The result was the Seven Laws of 1836, but this centralised constitutional framework proved no more effective in creating stability in Mexico than the federalist constitution of 1824. The conclusion these politicians drew from this was not that monarchist ideas were unworkable in Mexico, but that republicanism in Mexico was inherently unstable which came back to one of the central charges made against republicanism by *El Sol* in 1821-22: the problem of succession meant that factions competed for power and resorted to extra-constitutional means to secure it.

The European monarchies provided powerful alternatives models: if republicans could point to the prosperity of the United States then monarchists could cite Britain and France. Moreover, monarchists in Mexico drew on European examples of, and were encouraged by European sympathy for, monarchy. It was a project of only a small section of Mexico's conservative elite, as the liberal *Porfiriato* writer Justo Sierra Méndez (1848-1912) noted, "[t]here were monarchists in Mexico, but there was no monarchical party". Monarchists, with the exception of the "most naive and honest of them", Gutiérrez de Estrada, "all hid themselves, including, Alamán, the most conspicuous".[130] Regardless of this limited support, the

[130] Justo Sierra, *Juárez; su obra y su tiempo* (Mexico City: J. Ballescá, 1905), 300.

idea proved remarkably durable: monarchy in Mexico was not purely a French imposition of the 1860s.

French observers, particularly those tied to the Bourbon Restoration or the July Monarchy, understood monarchy in Mexico in geostrategic terms and saw it as a way to further French influence and interests. This is apparent in the arguments made by Chateaubriand, Villèle and de Pradt. Aside from the geopolitical importance of monarchy in Mexico, it necessarily had a transnational dimension in that it required foreign support, without which it would have remained in the realms of ideas and never have had the opportunity to be defeated, as Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar put it, in the "realm of facts". As will be seen, one important factor which helped to promote monarchy in Mexico from idea to French government policy was a pan-Latinist worldview, which placed Mexico on the front line against invading Anglo-Saxon hordes unleashed by US expansion in Texas and the US-Mexican War. The formation of this pan-Latinist interpretation in Mexico and France forms the basis of the next chapter.

Chapter Three

The French and Mexican Response to the Texan Revolt (1835-36) and US Expansion: Towards Pan-Latinism

Louis-Napoléon had presciently warned General Élie Frédéric Forey (1804-72), commander of the French reinforcements sent to avenge the 1862 defeat at Puebla, that: "[t]here will be no lack of people who will ask you why we are going to deploy men and spend money in order to found a strong government in Mexico." His rationale, he explained, was that the United States would soon seize the entire Gulf of Mexico and threaten the Antilles and South America. This was contrary to the interest of France, but, continued the emperor, "if Mexico preserves its independence, and maintains the integrity of its territory, if a stable government is created with the assistance of France, we shall have restored the strength and prestige of the Latin race on the other side of the ocean."[1] The task of publicly defending the regime's Mexican policy fell, amongst others, to the emperor's economic adviser, Chevalier. He identified the same two principal motives: "to put up a barrier to the imminent invasion of the entire American continent by the United States" and to "save from irreparable ruin not only Mexico, but also the whole Spanish branch of Latin civilisation in the New World."[2]

As noted in the introduction, international historians have tended to play down pan-Latinism as a factor in explaining the French intervention.[3] In a separate historiographical field, cultural and intellectual historians have focussed on the professed goals of Louis-Napoléon and Chevalier quoted above, particularly their implications for the idea of "Latin America". In an influential argument, John Leddy

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[1] Louis-Napoléon to General Forey, 3 July 1862, published in *Affaires étrangères: Documents diplomatiques* (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1862), 190-91. A later draft of the same letter is in AAE, MD Mexique, 10: 'Lettre de l'Empereur à General Forey', 8 July 1862, and another version dated 14 July 1862 is in the [**A**]rchives [**N**]ationales, 400AP/62.

[2] Chevalier, *Le Mexique*, 478-79.

[3] Delmon, 'Les acteurs de la politique impériale'; Cunningham, *Mexico*; Black, *Napoleon III*. A notable exception is Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon the Third*, which argues the French intervention was a "sinister conspiracy against the United States" that aimed at "substituting monarchies for republics below the Rio Grande" and thereby achieving "superiority for the Latins in America over Anglo-Americans", 58 and 303-7.

Phelan associated pan-Latinism with the imperialism of the French Second Empire.[4] For Phelan, though Chevalier never used the words "*l'Amérique latine*", he provided the ideological framework and "spelled out the idea of Latin America". Phelan believed the term "Latin America" first appeared in the *Revue des race latines* in 1861, a publication which was part of a wider doctrine of "Latin regeneration [that] was a creation of the Second Empire."[5] However, Arturo Ardao and Miguel Rojas Mix have demonstrated that the term "Latin America" was used earlier than Phelan claimed. Ardao identified the term in a poem by a Colombian diplomat and intellectual resident in France, José María Torres Caicedo (1830-89), published on 15 February 1857 in a French-based Spanish language newspaper, while Rojas Mix located it in a speech delivered in France by Chilean politician Francisco Bilbao (1823-65) in June 1856.[6]

The 1850s French context is considered key to the emergence of the idea of Latin America and pan-Latinism for two reasons. First, the US-Mexican War (1846-48) revived fear of US aggression among both Latin American and French commentators. Therefore pan-Latinism and the idea of Latin America were constituted primarily in opposition to a US or an "Anglo-Saxon" threat: Torres Caicedo's poem called for Latin American unity in the face of US expansion,[7]

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[4] John Leddy Phelan, 'Pan-Latinism, French Intervention in Mexico (1861-67) and the Genesis of the Idea of Latin America' in Juan Antonio Ortega y Medina (ed.), *Conciencia y autenticidad históricas. Escritos en homenaje a Edmundo O'Gorman* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1968), 279.

[5] *Ibid*., 295-97.

[6] Arturo Ardao, *Génesis de la idea y el nombre de América Latina* (Caracas: Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos Rómulo Gallegos, 1980), ch. 2; Miguel Rojas Mix, 'Bilbao y el hallazgo de América Latina: Unión continental, socialista y libertaria...', *Cahiers du monde hispanique et luso-brésilien*, 46 (1986), 35-47. On pan-Latinism and the idea of Latin America see also Jaime Hanneken, 'Infinite Latinité: French Imperial Discourses between *l'Afrique Latine* and *América Latina*', *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies*, 17 (2013), 236-244; Walter Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005); Aims McGuiness, 'Race and Sovereignty in the Americas in the 1850s' in Nancy Appelbaum, Anne Macpherson and Karin Rosemblatt (eds.), *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Union latine (ed.), *La latinité en question: colloque international, 16-19 mars 2004* (Paris: Institut des Hautes Etudes d'Amérique Latine; Union Latine, 2004); Vicente Romero, 'Du nominal 'latin' pour l'Autre Amérique. Notes sur la naissance et le sens du nom 'Amérique latine' autour des années 1850', *Histoire et Sociétés de l'Amérique latine*, 7 (1998), 57-89; Paul Estrade, 'Del invento de 'América Latina' en París por latinoamericanos (1856-1889)' in Jacques Maurice and Marie-Claire Zimmerman (eds.), *París y el mundo ibérico e iberoamericano* (Paris: Université Paris X-Nanterre, 1998) ; Guy Martinière, 'Invention d'un concept opératoire: la latinité de l'Amérique' in Guy Martinière, *Aspects de la coopération franco-brésilienne: transplantation culturelle et stratégie de la modernité* (Grenoble: Presses universitaires de Grenoble; Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1982).

[7] 'Las dos Américas', *El Correo de Ultramar* (Paris), 15 February 1857, front and second pages.

Bilbao's speech warned of "fragments of America falling into the Saxon jaws of the hypnotising boa",[8] and, as we have seen, Chevalier claimed that a US invasion of the American continent was imminent. Second, Louis-Napoléon's regime is considered to mark a new, aggressive phase in French imperialism.

Chevalier played an important role in the articulation of pan-Latinist discourse, and he was influential under the French Second Empire, particularly as an economist. He was an expert on Latin America, who had travelled in Mexico, published various works on the continent and, as noted in chapter two, believed that monarchy was the solution for Mexico's problems. A collection of his various articles was published under the title *Le Mexique ancien et modern* (Paris: L. Hachette et Cie, 1863) in which he articulated and defended the ideas behind the French intervention.[9] However, it does not follow from this, as some have argued, that pan-Latinism was: "an ideology composed to legitimate […] the expansionist policy of Napoléon III. His chief ideologue was Michel Chevalier."[10] If nothing else, Chevalier had argued for the ideas behind the French intervention at a time when the thought of a Second Bonapartist Empire in France was preposterous for the majority of the political class, but, more importantly, there were many in France and Mexico who shared Chevalier's views on Mexico in particular and the role of France in the "Latin" world in general.

Heeding Koselleck's warnings against a "new nominalism",[11] this chapter will argue that the focus on published texts that explicitly deal with "Latin civilisation" and "Latin races" in the Americas has meant that historians have ignored earlier expressions of the ideas that underpin these terms and the extent of their diffusion.

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[8] Francisco Bilbao, 'Iniciativa de la América. Idea de un Congreso Federal de las républicas' in Manuel Bilbao (ed.), *Obras Completas*, 2 vols. (Buenos Aires: Imprenta de Buenos Aires Calle de Moreno, frente a la casa del Gobierno Provincial, 1865-66), I, 289-90.

[9] The work was translated into English and Italian and ran to a second French edition published in 1864. In a review *The Economist* argued the work reveals the policy of Louis-Napoléon and must have had his approval. 'M. Chevalier upon Mexico', *The Economist*, 2 April 1864, pp. 414-15. This same interpretation is outlined in 'Chevalier's Mexico', *The Times*, 8 December 1864, p. 7.

[10] Miguel Rojas Mix, *Los cien nombres de América: eso que descubrió Colón* (Barcelona: Lumen, 1991), 357. An idea restated by Herminio Núñez Villavicencio, 'Sobre el concepto de identidad latinoamericana', *Cuadernos Americanos*, 124 (2008), 181-199, and Mignolo, Latin America, 79. This interpretation is also in the entry for "Latin America" in Barbara Tenenbaum (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Latin American History and Culture*, 5 vols. (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1996), III, 391.

[11] Koselleck, *Futures Past,* 88.

By analysing French and Mexican reactions to the Texan revolt (1835-36) and its subsequent US annexation (1845) through diplomatic correspondence, newspapers, the writings of publicists and journalists, and the speeches of politicians, this chapter will show that of these ideas can be identified earlier than the 1860s: they date back at least to the 1830s. This approach brings together intellectual history and international history. Moreover, pan-Latinism was a transnational discourse, with contributions from French and Mexican commentators (amongst others). Indeed, the readiness of conservative politicians in Mexico to adopt pan-Latinist language and ideas may call into question the argument that initial proponents of the idea of "Latin America" tended to be liberals "who claimed to be waging a pro-democracy crusade against the 'aristocratic' conservatives controlling many of the continent's governments."[12] First, however, early expressions of French pan-Latinist ideas will be analysed below.

I

Early Franco-Mexican Relations: A "Confraternity"?

An axiomatic principle of Chevalier's pan-Latinism was that there was a natural affinity between "Latin" races which extended to the former Spanish colonies in America. However, Chevalier did not invent this idea: it was present during France's earliest dealings with the new states of Latin America. It was hoped that this shared culture would ameliorate France's diplomatic relations with Mexico, which, as discussed in chapter one, were rarely cordial. As has been seen, many French observers held negative views of the Mexico's population and politicians and therefore doubted the nation's ability to constitute a stable republican government.[13] What is interesting about these negative stereotypes of Mexicans, which were typical of the European prejudices of the era, is that they coexisted alongside a concurrent discourse that projected a different view of the Mexican race.[14] This alternative representation placed it within a southern and

[12] Gobat, 'The Invention of Latin America', 1361.
[13] See Henri Favre, 'Race et nation au Mexique. De l'indépendance à la révolution', *Annales*, 49 (1994), 951-976, and Nancy Nichols Barker, 'The Factor of "Race" in the French Experience in Mexico, 1821-1861', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 59 (1979), 64-80.
[14] That these two views could co-exist may in part be explained by the fact that within the continuum of civilisation discussed in chapter one it was possible to regress as well as progress. For

Catholic tradition, which France belonged to, and thus a natural affinity would compel Mexico towards French civilisation. Chevalier's use of the term "Latin" to express this idea is unusual, although not exceptional, in the 1830s and 1840s. Chevalier explained what he meant by the word: it was the "community of ideas, of sentiments and of mores, of origin and of belief that today binds us to these countries".[15]

This affinity based on a shared culture was an assumption common to many French diplomats, journalists and politicians in the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1825 the minister for the colonies and the navy informed one diplomatic agent that there were in Mexico "a great number of men who have conserved a sentiment of preference for the French". This was a consequence of a "very great similarity of character, of tastes, of practices, of mores, of habits; and even more powerfully still by the conformity of religion."[16] The French agent, Schmaltz, reiterated this view in a despatch to Paris. Just as in Spain where France had been preferred to the "English", in Mexico where Spanish "mores, customs and prejudices" and "the same conformity of spirit, character and religion" existed, France would similarly be privileged.[17]

The economic rationale that underwrote arguments for recognition of independence and improved commercial relations were often tied to cultural assumptions. The French newspaper *Le Constitutionnel* noted French commerce had increased after the wars of independence as a result of a partiality for French goods because the "Spanish colonies were attracted towards [France] by a conformity of tastes, of religion and of sympathy."[18] The commercial agent of the Mexican government at Bordeaux, Gallo, argued that the development of economic ties between France and Latin America would be "easy" because "the French, of all

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example, in 1846 Chevalier wrote "after twenty five years [of independence…] Mexico, instead of advancing in civilisation, has gone backwards, it has returned to barbarism". Chevalier, *Des mines*, 89.

[15] Michel Chevalier, 'Variétés. De l'expatriation considérée dans ses rapports économiques, politiques et moraux; par M. S. Dutot. Le Texas et sa Révolution; par M. T. Leclerc, médecin en chef de l'hôpital-général de Tours', *Journal des débats*, 23 September 1840, third and fourth pages.

[16] 'Instructions pour Monsieur Martin. Agent Français à Mexico', 22 December 1825, AAE, CP Mexique, 2.

[17] Schmaltz to Fleury, 16 June 1824, AAE, ADP Mexique, 1.

[18] 'Intérieur. Paris, 29 janvier. Dixième letter. D'une vallée des Vosges, le 25 janvier.' *Le Constitutionnel* (Paris), 30 January 1825, 1-2.

the Europeans, are those whose character and interests coincide the best with the character and interests of [Latin Americans]." Their predilection for the French was so marked that French language and French literature were almost "the only [which] can be cultivated there". French education would make "[Latin] Americans" the "zealous partisans [of France]".[19] For this reason it was argued that French commerce could rival Britain's.

The premise of a preference for political and commercial relations with France based on a shared culture was a leitmotif for French diplomats serving in Latin America. The French consul and then interim chargé d'affaires in Mexico from 1829 to 1832, Adrien Cochelet, believed that French relations with Mexico would improve after recognition because of "our language, our character and our mores."[20] Similar claims were made about other Spanish Americans: Charles Lefebvre de Bécourt (1811-96), French minister to Buenos Aires, wrote "by our character, by our language, by our religion we have better relations with South Americans than the citizens of the [United States]".[21] The July Monarchy's recognition of Latin American states in 1830 was justified by Molé in a report to the King in similar terms: "[t]he identity of our religion, the affinity of our language, the ease of our mores, have for a long time earned us a very marked preference of affection over all other peoples. This preference is primarily an undeniable gage of the political influence that we are destined to exert in America."[22] This theme was further emphasised by Deffaudis in a letter of introduction to the then Mexican president Anastasio Bustamante: "the lines of friendship that have formed between France and Mexico [are because of] the likeness of our languages and customs as well as the similarity of our religion."[23] While Molé and Deffaudis never used the

[19] Galos to 'Messieurs les membres composant la chambre de commerce de Bordeaux', 19 February 1825; Galos to Tomás Murphy Sr., 6 and 17 May 1826; Murphy Sr. to Rocafuerte, 22 May and 20 June 1826, AHGE, Francia, L. 1; e. 1.
[20] Cochelet to foreign minister, 5 November and 22 November 1830, AAE, CP Mexique, 5; Cochelet to Sébastiani, 13 February 1832. See also same to same, 1 January 1832, AAE CP Mexique, 7.
[21] De Bécourt, 'Des Rapports de la France', 60.
[22] Molé, 'Rapport au Roi', August 1830, AAE, MD Amérique, 36.
[23] Deffaudis to Broglie, 12 February 1833, and Broglie's response, Broglie to Deffaudis, 9 May 1833, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.

word “Latin”, the implication was clear: France held a privileged position as regards the former Spanish American colonies by virtue of a shared culture.[24]

Chevalier’s identification of Anglo-Saxons with Protestantism and Latins with Catholicism was also a political division, which informed the French debates on monarchy in Mexico. He claimed that the United States’ historical circumstances made it well suited to democracy. Catholicism, on the other hand, tended towards monarchy and the anarchy of the former Spanish American colonies proved the impracticality of republicanism in states with a Catholic tradition.[25] As has been seen in chapter two, this was an assumption shared by some Mexican politicians, who argued Mexico was not ready for US-style federal republicanism, and this view informed Gutiérrez de Estrada’s monarchical arguments. For de Cyprey, the Mexican monarch would have to be from France because the “French and Catholic element” was “the one that could best be assimilated to the Mexican element.”[26] He believed that Mexicans preferred “the allure of the French, the irrepressible and careless vivacity of our nation, our love of light and lively pleasures. In a word, they truly sympathise with the French.”[27] There was a “confraternity” between the French and the Mexicans because Mexico was drawn towards France by religion and a “similarity of language.”[28]

II

Texas: A Conflict of Races

On its own, this assumption of “confraternity” may not have amounted to much, but US expansionism was increasingly seen in racial terms by French observers, and by the mid-1840s a sympathy with the southern, Catholic race provided the rationale for an anti-US and pro-Mexican foreign policy that shared the same goals as Chevalier’s and Louis-Napoléon’s pan-Latinism. This policy was outlined in three speeches of 1845 and 1846 delivered by Guizot.[29]

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[24] See also Deffaudis to Molé, 24 February 1837; same to same, 29 March 1837; same to same, 18 April 1837; same to same, 17 August 1837, AAE, CP Mexique, 11.
[25] Chevalier, *Lettres,* II, 291.
[26] De Cyprey to Guizot, 12 August 1844, AAE, CP Mexique, 28.
[27] De Cyprey to Guizot, 17 April 1842, AAE, CP Mexique, 22.
[28] De Cyprey to Guizot, 5 November 1841, AAE, CP Mexique, 21.
[29] To the Chamber of Deputies on 10 June 1845 in François Guizot, *Histoire parlementaire de France: recueil complet des discours prononcés dans les Chambres de 1819 à 1848, par M. Guizot*, 5 vols.

Guizot identified "two distinct races [in the Americas], the English race and the Spanish race". He argued it was in the interests of France "that neither of these two races be destroyed or absorbed by the other […] that the Spanish race, the southern Catholic race, maintains in the New World its importance […and] that it does not fall under the yoke of, and that it is not devoured by, the Anglo-American race."[30] Guizot's image of the southern Catholic race enslaved by the north would become a trope of the most virulent pan-Latinism of the 1850s and 1860s. How, then, had France's Protestant foreign minister come to the conclusion that the concerted policy of France should be to prevent the expansion of the United States to save the Catholic south?

Guizot, like many European observers, worried that the enormous US acquisition of territory in the first half of the nineteenth century upset the regional and global balance of power. In 1821 Mexico occupied an area approximately equal to that of the United States, and its population was roughly two-thirds of its northern neighbour. However, with the end of the US-Mexican War the United States acquired over 1 million square miles of additional land and its population increased to three times that of Mexico.[31] The US was now a transcontinental power with access to the Pacific. In contrast, Mexico lost nearly half its national territory. Through waging war, the United States fashioned a momentous transformation of international power.[32]

French observers had watched these events unfold with unease and concluded that the "American enemy" was real. The "republican" and "Protestant" US may have been at odds "with the French [Second Empire] in its very essence",[33]

(Paris: Michel-Lévy frères, 1863-64), IV, 559-73; to the Chamber of Peers on 12 January and to the Chamber of Deputies on 21 January 1846 in *ibid*., V, 1-32 and 43-59.

[30] *Ibid.*, V, 21.

[31] Map 1 shows the loss of Mexican territory to the United States between 1836 and 1853, p. 265.

[32] Daniel Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: the Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 20 and 746; Donald Meinig, *The Shaping of America: a Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History*, 4 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), Volume II, *Continental America, 1800-1867*, 128.

[33] Maike Thier, 'The View from Paris: "Latinity", "Anglo-Saxonism", and the Americas, as discussed in the *Revue des Races Latines*, 1857–64', *International History Review*, 33 (2011), 630. On French views of the United States see also Maike Thier, 'A World Apart, A Race Apart?' in Axel Körner, Nicola Miller and Adam Smith (eds.), *America Imagined: Explaining the United States in Nineteenth-Century Europe and Latin America* (New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

but the legitimist *ultras* of the Bourbon Restoration and the politically conservative *doctrinaires* of the July Monarchy were able to find fault with US democracy before the 1850s.[34] France's 1833 refusal to indemnify the US for shipping losses during the Napoleonic War, despite agreeing by treaty to pay 25 million francs in 1831, saw the nations threaten each other with war.[35] Incidents such as this did much to create an undercurrent of hostility in France towards the United States.[36] However, it was the geostrategic implications of US aggression that most worried diplomats and policymakers in Paris.[37]

Through their dispatches to the foreign ministry, French diplomats in the Americas consistently warned Paris that Mexico would not be able withstand US expansionism. As early as 1830, Cochelet reported the opinion of Alamán that Texas would "pass to the North Americans" because (Cochelet quotes Alamán directly): "[w]e [Mexico] are too weak to successfully oppose their invasion."[38] Cochelet explained four days later that there were 9,000 to 10,000 "North Americans" in Texas "almost always in conflict with the Mexican authorities" and that it was an incidental question whether Texas would be taken by payment of an indemnity or by force of arms because it had already been invaded by American colonists.[39]

Alamán, along with other Mexican leaders, was worried about Texas. Cochelet, or Alamán, may have exaggerated the number, but the US population there heavily outnumbered Spanish speakers: in 1830 there were 7,000 Americans to 3,000 *Tejanos* and by 1836 there were 35,000 to 3,500.[40] A colonisation law of 1830, discussed in more detail in section III, drafted by Alamán, had been designed to slow the tide of immigration from the United States, but proved unenforceable

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[34] Philippe Roger*, The American Enemy: The History of French Anti-Americanism*, trans. Sharon Bowman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), ch. 1.
[35] Henry Blumenthal, *A Reappraisal of Franco-American Relations*, *1830-1871* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), 74-77.
[36] See René Rémond, *Les États-Unis devant l'opinion française, 1815-1852*, 2 Vols. (Paris: A Colin, 1962).
[37] The French minister to Washington warned that unless checked it would lead to global catastrophe, Pageot to Guizot, 15 July 1845 and 29 September 1845, AAE, CP États-Unis, 101.
[38] Cochelet to foreign minister, 16 January 1830, AAE, CP Mexique, 5.
[39] Cochelet to foreign minister, 20 January 1830, AAE, CP Mexique, 5.
[40] David Weber, *The Mexican Frontier, 1821-1846: The American Southwest Under Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), 166.

because of the weakness of the Mexican government.[41] The 1835 victory of centralism in Mexico was the occasion for a revolt in Texas, which began as a federalist one, but the colonists soon called for complete independence.

This revolt confirmed French views on the weakness of Mexico. Santa Anna, who in 1835 was serving as president, led Mexico's army against the insurgents. However, he was defeated and captured at the battle of San Jacinto in April 1836 by Texan forces. Having learned of these events, Deffaudis commented, "everyone is persuaded that Texas is definitively lost to Mexico". He then went on to report a speech of Branch Tanner Archer (1790-1856), Commissioner of Texas to the United States, who claimed that in "fifty years' time the English language would be dominant everywhere on the American continent to the Isthmus of Panama", a prediction that Deffaudis considered to be extremely likely, if perhaps in "a slightly more distant future".[42]

Deffaudis was not alone among French diplomats in documenting the pivotal role of Texas in what was increasingly seen as the inexorable rise of the United States. An unsigned 1838 memorandum on Texas for the then foreign minister, Molé, discussed the merits of recognising the nascent republic and reported: "they [the United States] fear nothing and already dream of the conquest of Mexico. It went on to summarise the process of US expansion: "[the United States] coveted [Texas] just as they had formerly coveted Louisiana before they bought it, and as they had wanted the Floridas before they invaded it, and just as they now covet the rest of the continent". The report concluded that further expansion was inevitable: "The encroachment of, and colonisation by, the Anglo-American race are events that have long been foreseen and in truth would be difficult to prevent."[43]

Two decades before the 1850s, US expansion at the expense of former territories of the Spanish empire was understood as a conflict between two races. Eugène Maissin (1811-51), a French naval officer who accompanied Baudin on a

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[41] Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'The Colonization and Loss of Texas: A Mexican Perspective' in Jaime Rodriguez and Kathryn Vincent (eds.), *Myths, Misdeeds, and Misunderstandings: The Roots of Conflict in U.S.-Mexican relations* (Delaware: SR Books, 1997), 47.
[42] Deffaudis to Broglie, 1 July 1836, AAE, CP Mexique, 10.
[43] 'Memorandum sur Texas', 8 May 1838, AAE, CP Texas, 1.

short visit to Texas after the conclusion of the naval blockade of Veracruz in 1839, put the battle of San Jacinto in the following context: "it has been the first decisive encounter of the two predominant races in America and it has given the advantage to the Anglo-Saxons."[44] Frédéric Gaillardet (1808-82), a writer who would become the editor of the most widely distributed French language newspaper in the Americas, the *Courrier des États-Unis*, published a series of letters on Texas, after travelling through the new state in early 1839, which shared this conclusion. In the first letter, Gaillardet informed his readers that the US colonists "constitute[d] the first act of collision […] between the two English and Spanish races who share the Americas."[45]

For Dubois de Saligny (1809-1888), who travelled with Gaillardet, and was France's first diplomatic representative to Texas as well as later head of the French legation in Mexico during Louis-Napoléon's intervention,[46] this racialised conflict was a foregone conclusion: "the Mexican republic is doomed [….] the day is less distant than generally supposed in Europe when the Spanish race as a nation will be dispossessed by the Anglo-American race."[47] This was also the view the interim French chargé d'affaires in Mexico, who argued that the struggle between Mexico and the United States was "not one of principles" that could be settled by a compromise between the protagonists; rather, it was a conflict of "race against race and no one can doubt that the final victory must rest with the Anglo-American[s]."[48]

Informed French opinion that had viewed the conflict over Texas at first hand saw it as a racial one, the outcome of which was clear, but there were different interpretations of this conclusion. Some observers saw the United States as the vanguard of a civilizing mission in North America. Its acquisition of new territories would lead to the development of previously worthless land and

[44] Massin in Blanchard and Dauzats, *San Juan de Ulùa*, 540.
[45] Frédéric Gaillardet, 'Variétés. Lettres sur la Texas. (Première lettre.) Envahissmens de la race Anglo-Américaine sur le Texas', *Journal des débats*, 1 October 1839, third and fourth page.
[46] For Saligny's career see Nancy Nichols Barker, 'In Quest of the Golden Fleece: Dubois de Saligny and French Intervention in the New World', *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 3 (1972), 253-268.
[47] Dubois de Saligny to Soult, 4 May 1840, AAE, CP Texas, 2.
[48] Édouard de Lisle to Soult, 1 January 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 18.

therefore provide new markets for France.[49] However, an alternative interpretation was to see US expansion as a geopolitical threat. This was the interpretation of pan-Latinists in the 1850s and 1860s, but it was also the editorial line of the *Journal des débats* and was developed in response to the Texan revolt, which began in 1835.

Broadly, the paper saw Mexico as weak, the loss of further Mexican territory to the United States as a constant danger and the United States itself as an inherently invasive power. The incorporation of Texas into the Union would "singularly flatter the vanity of American democracy" and the United States would expand its southern borders "without difficulty and piece by piece."[50] Another editorial warned: "[the Texan revolt] compromises the equilibrium of the world because it assures the Anglo-American domination of the entire new hemisphere. It threatens the industrial interests of Europe because as a consequence it must throw Mexico into anarchy".[51] And, in 1839, the paper published the clearest expression of what became pan-Latinist policy: "[w]e belong to the same branch of civilisation. France is the leader and guide of the southern peoples of Europe and America, all of those Latin races which have been least effaced by the Germanic invasion."[52]

The *Journal des débats* occupied a privileged position under the July Monarchy. It was the ministerial paper *par excellence* and was partially funded from the *fonds secrets*, governmental money bestowed by the July Monarchy upon sympathetic publications. While it cannot be said to represent exactly the policy of any given ministry, it was particularly partisan to the *doctrinaires* (especially Guizot and de Broglie), was rarely critical and would not consistently publish a non-governmental line.[53] Chevalier was the economics editor and a frequent contributor.[54] The 1839 editorial quoted above is unsigned, but may well have been

[49] Deffaudis to Broglie, 29 July 1835, CP Mexique, 9; Deffaudis to Thiers, 1 September 1836, CP Mexique, 10; Massin in Blanchard and Dauzats, *San Juan de Ulùa*, 543; 'Memorandum on Texas', 8 May 1838, AAE, CP Texas, 1. Frédéric Leclerc, 'Le Texas et sa révolution', *Revue des deux mondes*, 21-22 (1840), 220-253; 605-639.
[50] 'Paris, 22 juin', *Journal des débats*, 23 June 1836, front and second page.
[51] 'Paris, 2 septembre', *ibid*., 3 September 1836, front and second page.
[52] 'Paris, 16 mars', *ibid.*, 17 March 1839, front and second page.
[53] Hugh Collingham and Robert Alexander, *The July Monarchy: a Political History of France, 1830-1848* (London: Longman, 1988), 178-9.
[54] In 1837 the newspaper published four of his letters on Mexico, Michel Chevalier, 'Lettres sur le Mexique. Aspect du pays. – Ancien mexicains', *Journal des débats*, 20 July 1837, third and fouth

written by Chevalier given the closeness in language and ideas, but the authorship is less important than the views it expresses. Such an articulation of pan-Latinist ideas in 1839 demonstrates not only that it was possible to construct a role for France as defender of Latin civilisation in the Americas more than a decade before the imperialism of Louis-Napoléon, but also that it could be done in a mainstream periodical close to the views of the French government.

In an 1837 letter to a Mexican politician, Chevalier outlined what was to become French policy over Mexico. "The situation of Mexico distresses me", he wrote. Mexico possessed everything necessary to be a powerful state, but it was falling into dissolution. Furthermore, the conquest by the United States had already begun; the taking of Texas was the first step. "I strongly believe", he continued, "that the integrity, the strength and the independence of Mexico is important to the equilibrium of the world". France had an interest there, not the selfish interests of other cabinets, but that "great and civilizing interest which habitually regulates the foreign policy of France."[55]

In this letter, Chevalier lamented the fact that European governments, and especially France, did not understand the importance of Latin America and above all Mexico. In fact, however, as has been outlined above, many French observers did share his concerns. Indeed, part of Louis-Napoléon's argument for a canal through Nicaragua rested on the idea that it would lead to "Central America [becoming] a flourishing and powerful state, which will establish a balance of power […] and […] prevent, by backing Mexico, any further encroachment from the north."[56] Rather than a canal to its south, Guizot looked to Mexico's north: he hoped to achieve the same goal of strengthening Mexico by developing Texas as a bulwark against further US expansion, which would in turn protect Mexico from further loss of territory. Britain shared France's desire to prevent annexation and the two governments acted in concert to achieve their goal by privately

page; 'Politiques des espagnols dans le nouveau-monde. Mexico', 1 August 1837, third page; 'Lettres sur le Mexique. De l'état actuel du Mexique. Mines de Real de Monte, avril 1833', 7 August 1837, third and fourth page; 'Lettres sur le Mexique. Système de colonisation des espagnols', 15 August 1837, third page.

[55] Chevalier to Rafael Mangino y Mendívil, 30 September 1837. AHGE, Francia, L. 14; e. 109.

[56] Louis-Napoléon, *Canal of Nicaragua*, 7.

encouraging Texas to oppose annexation to the United States, while at the same time urging Mexico to recognise the independence of its former territory.[57] Guizot partially justified this course of action because of France's commercial interests in the Texan republic. However, the main rationale was what he termed France's "political interest". In a speech of 12 January 1846, Guizot mirrored the racialised language of French diplomats: an independent Texas would be "a means to prevent in North America […] a conflict of two races, Spanish and Anglo-American, and the absorption of one by the other." This would also preserve a "number of independent states in the New World, and, by consequence, maintain a certain equilibrium between these states."[58]

French responses to US expansion were varied and Guizot's opposition to the annexation of Texas attracted significant criticism, particularly from opposition politicians such as Thiers, who saw the geostrategic implications of US expansion in a different light: the aggrandisement of the United States could benefit France by challenging British power. Thiers, therefore, attacked Guizot's policy in the Chamber of Deputies. Thiers noted that the United States had grown in population and power since independence, but this was not something to be feared. It had, in fact, been the secret plan of France inaugurated by Louis XVI when "he founded the United States" and continued by Napoléon Bonaparte when he "knowingly and voluntarily gave Louisiana [to the United States]". Thiers denied that America could become "a rival or an enemy of France".

He ridiculed Guizot's belief that the "Spanish race" was threatened by the "Anglo-American" one because the United States had neither Britain's naval strength nor its pretensions to global dominance. Thiers could understand Guizot's worries over America if France had retained Canada or Louisiana, but the only French colonies were Martinique, Guadeloupe and a "few other insignificant possessions." Fears of the United States were misplaced: "who threatens theses

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[57] Guizot to Sainte-Aulaire, 29 January 1844, Sainte Aulaire to Guizot, 8 Februrary 1844 and same to same, 19 June 1844. AAE, CP Texas, 7; Guizot to Saint-Aulaire, 13 January 1845, same to same, 11 February 1845 and Guizot to Dubois de Saligny, 27 April 1845. AAE, CP Texas, 8. See also Guizot to Alleye de Cyprey, 27 April 1844, AAE, CP Mexique, 26.

[58] Guizot's policy as regards Anglo-French cooperation as regards Texas is outlined in *Histoire parlementaire*, V, 1-32 and 43-59.

colonies? Where are they placed? [...] in the middle of an English archipelago." Britain was France's rival, not the United States, and a challenge to British hegemony was therefore beneficial to France.[59]

From the perspective of the immediate material interests of France, Thiers' criticisms were pertinent. France, as Guizot himself admitted, had only a small volume of trade with Texas in the 1840s and only a few colonies in the Caribbean. This demonstrates the importance of representing the conflict in North America in terms of race. By casting France as the defender of the "Spanish race, the southern Catholic race" Guizot placed his policy in a wider geostrategic context, where the aggrandisement of the United States did threaten French interests. This was what Guizot termed France's "political interest", but for Thiers the aggrandisement of the United States was not a threat, thus for him there was no reason to support Mexico by preventing the annexation of Texas.[60]

However, in a pan-Latinist worldview US expansion was inherently detrimental to France. This was made clear in Chevalier's early conceptualisation of the discourse: "the superiority which formerly belonged to the Latin family, has passed into the hands of the Teutonic race [….] The people of the Latin stock must not, however, stand idle in the coming struggle, or the case will go against them by default".[61] Chevalier outlined the centrality of Mexico in this global conflict in an 1840 article that argued against the claim that US expansion could benefit France.[62] Chevalier, like Guizot, argued that the balance between the two forces in America had been disturbed by the Texan revolt: "South America, with Mexico, is like southern Europe, Catholic and Latin; North America belongs to a Protestant and Anglo-Saxon population. But today the equilibrium is broken." He warned that the "Catholic and Latin flag […] will be replaced or conquered by the Anglo-Saxon standard" and that "one of the most beautiful jewels [Mexico] in the Catholic and

[59] Guizot, *ibid*, V, 21.
[60] Just as Thiers ridiculed Guizot over the threat to the "Spanish race" in 1846 so too he ridiculed Louis-Napoléon over the "Latin race" in 1864. "You will pardon the word I am about to use, but I do not take seriously this idea of Latin races opposed to Saxon races. No, it is not a consideration that deserves attention." Thiers, *Discours*, IX, 492.
[61] Chevalier, *Lettres*, I, x-xi.
[62] The article was a review of Leclerc, 'Le Texas et sa révolution'.

Latin crown [will] fall into the hands of the invading Anglo-Saxons."[63] While Guizot's language was less alarmist than Chevalier's, his goal was the same and his policy was predicated upon a conception of an unequal struggle on the North American continent between two races where the sympathies of France lay with the southern, Catholic peoples. In short, it was pan-Latinist in all but name.

France and Britain's attempts to prevent the annexation of Texas were unsuccessful. In 1845 the former Mexican territory was incorporated into the Union and the next year Mexico's politicians were forced reluctantly into a war with the United States by the bellicosity of public opinion and the determination of Polk to provoke a conflict.[64] The US-Mexican War confirmed the assumptions of French diplomats. Because France had broken diplomatic relations with Mexico in 1846,[65] the Spanish minister Salvador Bermúdez de Castro (1817-83) acted as French chargé d'affaires and it was left to the secretary of the French legation to report on the war from Havana. He believed that the Americans were "a rising people" who had invented a new way to make war: "annexation". What the United States had done in Texas they would repeat in Alta and Baja California to achieve their long-held ambition of reaching the Pacific Ocean.[66] Once war had broken out he informed Guizot that it meant "nothing less than the complete annihilation of the

[63] Michel Chevalier, 'Variétés. De l'expatriation considérée dans ses rapports économiques, politiques et moraux; par M. S. Dutot. Le Texas et sa Révolution; par M. T. Leclerc, médecin en chef de l'hôpital-général de Tours', *Journal des débats*, 23 September 1840, third and fourth pages.
[64] Jesús Velasco Márquez, *La guerra del 47 y la opinión pública, 1845-1848* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1975); Gene Brack, *Mexico Views Manifest Destiny, 1821-1846* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1975).
[65] Over a somewhat bizarre incident, de Cyprey became involved in a fight in an attempt to rescue one of his horses which had been taken hostage. This turned into a street brawl, shots were exchanged and, while fleeing a crowd of angry Mexicans, members the French legation, minister included, were arrested. It is likely that de Cyprey hoped this would precipitate French intervention on his behalf, he therefore broke relations with Mexico and demanded his passport. Before leaving, he further demonstrated his inability to grasp the finer points of diplomacy one evening in the lobby of the Mexico City opera house where he spat in the face of a Mexican journalist, who had ridiculed him in a national newspaper, and then beat him with his cane. Barker, *French Experience in Mexico*, 110-13. This was not the only animal-related obstacle to diplomatic relations in North America. In 1841, Texas, Saligny had one of his servants shoot a pig, which had been accused of attacking the fine linen in the French legation. The pig's owner threatened Saligny with physical violence and the French chargé d'affaires unilaterally broke relations with Texas, although Paris did not recognise this breach. Nancy Nichols Barker, 'Devious Diplomat: Dubois de Saligny and the Republic of Texas', *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 72, (1969), 324-334.
[66] Goury de Roslan to Guizot, 4 April 1846, AAE, CP Mexique, 33.

Mexican nationality".[67] The French consul in Havana was even more pessimistic: "the Anglo-Saxon race is going to reign in Mexico as it does in Delhi" and "I am convinced that Mexico has ceased to be". For the consul, the incorporation of Texas into the Union was part of "a conquest that in a half century will finally be complete."[68]

The worst fears of the *Journal des débats* were confirmed by the US-Mexican War. An editorial rhetorically asked: "[w]ould the possession of Texas, Florida and Louisiana satiate the ambition of the "Anglo-Saxon race?" Unsurprisingly for a paper that had railed against US expansionism for the past decade the answer was no, and the article expressed the concerns Louis-Napoléon used to explain French intervention in Mexico fifteen years later: the United States would go as far as Panama and even threaten the Antilles.[69] This view was shared by many French commentators, such as Gabriel Ferry (1809-52), a French writer who had spent some time in Mexico. He wrote in the *Revue des deux mondes* that the US-Mexican War had shown "how little the Spanish race, if left to itself, is in a position to offer serious resistance to the Anglo-Saxon race." It was left to Europe to correct this "default of equilibrium".[70]

It is within this context of widespread views of Mexico as a southern Catholic nation with a natural affinity for France and threatened by "Anglo-Saxon" invasion, that pan-Latinist ideas were able to flourish in the 1850s and 1860s. It also explains why the first published arguments for pan-Latinist policies after the US-Mexican War were not written by Chevalier. In an 1849 work, Benjamin Poucel (1807-69) argued that it was necessary for France to "balance the material power of the Anglo-Saxon race in America by a serious alliance with the Latin race."[71] Poucel was responding to the situation in the River Plate, but Hippolyte Du Pasquier de Dommartin (1819-unknown), claimed, as regards Mexico, and following Chevalier's

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[67] Goury de Roslan to Guizot, 2 September 1846, AAE, CP Mexique, 34.
[68] Gaspard Théodore Mollien to Guizot, 8 September and 25 October 1847, AAE, CP Mexique, 35.
[69] 'France. Paris, 8 juillet', *Journal des débats*, 9 July 1845, front and second page; 'France. Paris 23 septembre', *ibid.,* 24 September 1845, front page; 'France. Paris, 5 juillet', *ibid.,* 6 July 1847, front page.
[70] Ferry, 'Guerre entre les États-Unis et le Mexique', 431. Clavé also argued for French intervention in Mexico in 'La question du Mexique', 1029-59.
[71] Benjamin Poucel, *Études. Des intérêts réciproques de l'Europe et de l'Amérique. La France et l'Amérique du Sud* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1849), 20-21.

pan-Latinist analysis closely, "the observer, who follows the movement of people on a map of the world, is struck by three great facts: the state of stagnation of the Latin race […] the maritime progress of the Anglo-Saxon race […] and finally the military advance of the Slavs". This situation had "worried [Dommartin] for a long time"; he felt France's traditions and interests were threatened, even its language. In North America, the only barrier to the ambitions of the United States was a weak Mexico, which "represents the Latin and Catholic race". He called on "our men of the same blood, of the same mores, the same religion" to rescue Mexico.[72] Phelan and Rojas Mix argue that pan-Latinism was an ideology composed to legitimate the "expansionism" of Louis-Napoléon, but, unless they were particularly prescient, Poucel and Du Pasquier de Dommartin cannot have been writing tracts to justify the imperialism of the French Second Empire before it was founded. Certainly they were not expressing ideas new to the 1850s, nor, as will be seen below, were they exclusively French ideas.

III

The View from Mexico

In a published letter to the US Whig politician Henry Clay (1777-1852), the liberal theologian William Ellery Channing (1780-1842) wrote, "Some crimes, by their magnitude, have a touch of the sublime; and to this dignity the seizure of Texas by [US] citizens is entitled. Modern times furnish no example of individual rapine on so grand a scale. It is nothing less than the robbery of a realm."[73] Channing's analysis echoed that of most Mexican observers, and his letter was quoted by the Mexican monarchist Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar, who then summarised the anti-Americanism that had developed in conservative thought from 1820 to 1867. "Since 1824", he wrote, "when the United States planted the republican seed in Mexico", Washington had always sympathised with, and given help to, "the party that was able to do the greatest evil [*puro* liberals]". Moreover, the "Monroe Doctrine, so unnatural, has served as the pretext to completely isolate Europe from

[72] Dommartin, *Les États-Unis et le Mexique*, 5-7.
[73] William Ellery Channing, *A letter to the Hon. Henry Clay, on the annexation of Texas to the United States* (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1837), 20-21.

America" and was declared on the principle that "Manifest Destiny" was to "dominate the entire continent of America". Those in Europe who had opposed French intervention in Mexico would soon realise that one day everyone would "bow their heads before the United States", but by the time they did it would be too late to do anything about it.[74]

In fact, as has been seen, many in France shared these fears, and the same concerns lay at the heart of conservative discourse in Mexico throughout the period under study. It has already been shown in chapter two that conservative politicians in Mexico believed that from the 1820s onwards the United States played a partisan and destabilising role which favoured federalism and liberalism in Mexican politics. This was one strand of the conservative anti-American discourse in Mexico, which was reinforced by another: US expansion. In this view, far from a model republic of liberty which the former Spanish colonies should imitate, the United States was an aggressive power, hostile to Latin America and Mexico especially. The Texan revolt convinced many in Mexico of the veracity of this interpretation over a decade before the US-Mexican War.

From its inception Mexico had been wary of US ambitions. As early as 1821 a government commission on foreign relations warned that the United States might strip Mexico of its northern territories.[75] In a speech to Congress, Iturbide claimed "our country is in danger […] it is threatened on all sides […] it has both external and internal enemies". One of these threats was "on the side of Texas" where "our neighbours feel an interest".[76] However, Mexican attempts to secure and govern its far northern territories, which would help neutralise the US threat, were hindered by the weakness of the Mexican state, which was marked by political instability, fiscal insolvency and military weakness.[77]

Early Mexican views of the United States were ambivalent. Although the United States was the first nation to recognise Mexican independence, it took

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[74] José Manuel Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar, *Apuntes para escribir la historia de los proyectos de monarquía en México desde el reinado de Carlos III hasta la instalación del emperador Maximiliano* (Paris: Garnier hermanos, 1868), 16; 18.
[75] Daniel Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 20.
[76] 'Iturbide's Message to Congress' in Poinsett, *Notes on Mexico*, Appendix, 65-68.
[77] Tenenbaum, *The Politics of Penury,* xi.

another three years before it sent an accredited minister, Poinsett, who had instructions to purchase Texas. Therefore relations were rarely cordial and Mexican politicians were acutely aware of US territorial ambitions.[78] In 1826, the British chargé d'affaires published a work by the former Spanish minister to Washington, Luis de Onís (1762-1827). This was one of the earliest and most influential accounts in Spanish of Mexico's northern neighbour. Onís warned that Anglo-Americans "looked with disdain or contempt on all the other nations" and that their rapid success in the New World had engendered "vanity and arrogance" and a belief that they were "superior to all other men".[79] The conduct of Anglo-American colonists in Texas, the US volunteers who joined the revolt and the material aid they received from within the United States convinced many Mexicans that Onís had been right.

Texas was an immediate cause of concern for Mexican politicians even before the events of 1835-36, but in the 1820s many had hoped that Mexican-US relations would be mutually beneficial. In 1824, Tornel warned that if Mexican "recklessness" excited "rivalry with [the United States]" then "our western borders will be overrun with the same violence as the waters of the Missouri", but the United States were Mexico's "natural allies" because Washington's policy towards Latin American independence had been more favourable than that of major continental European powers. However, Tornel came to share Alamán's negative view of Poinsett's involvement in Mexican politics, and Texas played a major part in forming this opinion. In the immediate aftermath of the revolt, he argued, far from being the "natural allies" of Mexico: "[f]or more than fifty years […] the prevailing thought in the [United States] has been the acquisition of the greater part of the territory that formerly belonged to Spain, particularly that part which today belongs to the Mexican nation."[80] Tracing the roots of US expansionism and depicting it as an inherently invasive power, the arguments in Tornel's interpretation of US-

[78] Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'War and Peace with the United States' in William Beezley and Michael Meyer (eds.), *The Oxford History of Mexico* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 326.
[79] Luis de Onís, *Memoria sobre las negociaciones entre España y los Estados-Unidos de América, que dieron motivo al tratado de 1819, con una noticia sobre la estadistica de aquel pais* (Madrid: Imprenta de D. M. de Burgos, 1820), 73. Republished under the same title in Mexico: Reimpresa en la oficina a cargo del C. Martin Rivera, 1826.
[80] José María Tornel, *Tejas y los Estados-Unidos de América, en sus relaciones con la República Mexicana* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1837), 3.

Mexican relations in 1837 would have been familiar to a reader of the *Journal des débats*.

In order to stem the tide of US migration to Texas, Alamán drafted a law in 1830 which aimed at limiting Anglo-American colonisation. In the proposal for this law, he outlined his distrust of the United States. From its inception it had expanded at the expense of European powers and indigenous tribes. In place of armies, battalions and invasions, the United States sent colonists, which gradually outnumbered those already in the territory and undermined the authority of the state. Once this stage had been reached, and this was the stage Texas was at in 1830, the diplomatic assault began. In the name of protecting settlers and their interests Washington pushed the other power towards a "transaction as onerous for one side as it is advantageous for the other." The loss of Texas would then endanger states "from New Mexico and Chihuahua to San Luis [sic] and Guanajuato". Central to Alamán's proposals was the idea of increasing the number of Mexican settlers in Texas and encouraging European immigrants "whose religion, language, customs and habits are in opposition to those of the United States." The aim was to form a barrier against further US encroachments. Without immediate and energetic action, Alamán concluded, "Texas is going to be lost to [Mexico]". Moreover, once this happened it would prove impossible to reconquer. Everything that Alamán predicted came to pass: events in Texas demonstrated to him the "insatiable" nature of the "invasive genius" of the "Anglo-Saxon" race, which wished to extend itself across the whole continent of "North America."[81]

This conflict with the United States was frequently represented as one which threatened Mexico's existence: "[i]n a word, [US aggression] will leave [Mexico] without a country".[82] It was thus a "war of race, of religion, of language and of customs".[83] For conservative politicians, Poinsett and US-style federal republicanism were linked to Mexican liberals as part of a plan to destabilise Mexico in order to "tear [it] apart with continuous convulsions so that we never

[81] Alamán, 'Dictamen sobre la independencia de Tejas' in *Obras*, II, 545-54.
[82] 'Mexico, noviembre 10 de 1835', *El Mosquito Mexicano,* 10 November 1835, fourth page.
[83] Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza, *Dictamen leido el 3 de Junio 1840 en el Consejo de Gobierno, sobre la cuestion de Tejas* (Mexico City: Imprenta de la Casa de Corrección, 1844), 19-20.

consolidate ourselves under any system [of government] and remain in perpetual weakness", while [the US government] advanced their plans to seize Texas.[84] These charges against Mexican liberals were given credence by the open admiration of some of them for the United States.[85] Indeed, Zavala supported the federalist revolt in Texas and became the vice-president of the Texan republic.[86]

The US threat led some Mexican politicians to look to Europe for support in preventing further US expansion. Tornel's work concludes with a discussion of Britain and France, to whom he appeals to stop the march of the "Colossus of the North." As regards France, Tornel wrote, "the character of the French people has so many points in common with that of our own, the advantages of a reciprocal trade are so marked, and her interests in maintaining the balance of power both in the old and the new worlds so great, that she cannot very well make an exception in her magnanimous and humane policy, by abandoning Mexico to a doubtful state."[87] In 1824 Tornel called the United States a "natural ally"; in 1837 it threatened the "political existence" of Mexico, the fate of which would be as sad as Poland's.[88] This journey was representative of the disillusionment of many Mexican politicians,[89] but it was particularly acute amongst more conservative sections of the elite because US expansion was linked to Mexican liberalism by a pernicious plan to export the "exotic flowers" of federalism and pure democracy that would weaken Mexico in order to facilitate the eventual absorption of the entire nation.[90]

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[84] 'Mexico: 14 abril de 1835', *El Mosquito Mexicano*, 14 April 1835, second and third pages. The link between US expansion and Mexican liberals was a favoured theme of the paper. See, for example, 'Mexico: 24 abril de 1835', 24 April, second and third pages; 'Mexico: 19 mayo de 1835', 19 May, third and fourth pages; 'Mexico, junio 30 de 1835', 30 June 1835, third page.

[85] Zavala, *Ensayo histórico*, II, 146; 310; See also, Lorenzo de Zavala, *Viaje a los Estados-Unidos del Norte de América* (Merida de Yucatán: Castillo y compañía, 1846).

[86] Margaret Swett Henson, *Lorenzo de Zavala: The Pragmatic Idealist* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1996), 103.

[87] Tornel, *Tejas y los Estados-Unidos de América*, 97.

[88] *Ibid*., 89-90.

[89] Gómez Farías, who had admired US institutions, was transformed into "a stout Yankee hater" by events in Texas. Pedro Santoni, *Mexicans at Arms: Puro Federalists and the Politics of War, 1845-1848* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1996), 27.

[90] "Exotic plants" was a phrase used by Tornel, *Discurso que pronunció el Exmo. Senor General D. José María Tornel y Mendivil, individuo del Supremo Poder Conservador, en la alameda de la ciudad de México, en el día del solemne aniversario de la independencia* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1840), 7. The argument was developed to further incorporate the US dimension in a series of editorials entitled 'La Cuestion del día', *El Tiempo*, 12, 13, 17 March and 5 April 1846, all first page.

IV

Monarchism, Anti-Americanism and Pan-Latinism

Anti-Americanism was, then, a well-trodden path for many Mexican politicians. It is within this context that the resurgence of monarchical ideas, which looked to Europe for protection and inspiration, needs to be placed. Chapter two outlined how Gutiérrez de Estrada saw the July Monarchy as a model to end the anarchy of Mexican politics. He also argued for monarchy in geopolitical terms: a means to stop the progress made by the "Anglo-Saxon" race in Texas. He warned that if Mexico did not act soon then "the flag of the [United States]" would be unfurled above the national palace while Protestant services would be celebrated in the "splendid Cathedral of Mexico".[91]

The reaction to his pamphlet meant that Gutiérrez de Estrada spent the rest of his life in exile. However, his ideas resonated with some in Mexico and the most open identification in the 1840s with Europe as a means to safeguard the independence of Mexico in the face of US aggression came from monarchists, who restated and developed the ideas of Gutiérrez de Estrada and combined them with a strong current of anti-Americanism. Fanny Calderón de la Barca had written in 1840 "[it is claimed that] many distinguished men here hold the same opinions [as Gutiérrez de Estrada], but their voices, even were they to venture to raise them, could not stem the tide of public indignation."[92] By 1846, however, monarchists were prepared to incur the wrath of public opinion in order to promote their cause.

One man who came to identify with Gutiérrez de Estrada's views and, according to one source, had held them since 1832, was Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga (1797-1849).[93] Paredes was strongly pro-clerical, anti-democratic and nostalgic for the order and stability of the colonial past.[94] The liberal Guillermo Prieto (1818-97) wrote: "his admiration for the Spanish system was profound and

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[91] Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida*, 58.
[92] Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, II, 7.
[93] Arrangóiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 159; The French minister, de Cyprey, claimed that Paredes was seeking to set up a constituent congress that would decide in favour of a monarchy as early as 1841, De Cyprey to Guizot, 27 August 1841, AAE, CP Mexique, 20.
[94] Costeloe, *Central Republic*, 284.

his hatred of the mob was insuperable."[95] He shared conservative contempt for federal republicanism and advocated a regime dominated by the army, clergy and propertied classes.[96] On 14 December 1845 he issued a *pronunciamiento* against the moderate liberal government, but what separated this revolt from the many others that had gone before was that the plan called for an "extraordinary congress with full powers to constitute the nation without any restrictions".[97]

Although monarchy was not explicitly mentioned, Gutiérrez de Estrada's plan was in effect being put into action. Paredes was in secret communication with Alamán and, backed by Madrid, the Spanish minister to Mexico, Bermúdez de Castro, who wished to see Mexico become a monarchy and helped to compose the Plan of San Luis Potosi (the manifesto for Paredes' revolt against the government). Nonetheless, Paredes' supporters included staunch republican *santanistas* such as Tornel. He was, therefore, cautious about openly proclaiming monarchical intentions, although he was equally reluctant to rule out publicly a change in governmental system.[98] In order to prepare public opinion for the possibility of monarchy a newspaper, *El Tiempo*, was set up. Partially funded by money provided by the Spanish government, the paper was associated with various individuals, particularly Alamán, who would become influential figures in the Conservative Party, and, later, many were supporters of the French intervention and the Mexican Second Empire.[99]

Initially, the paper espoused familiar arguments: recent Mexican history demonstrated the inadequacy of the various forms of government, and the inherent instability in Mexican politics, since independence. The solution was that

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[95] Guillermo Prieto, *Memorias de mis tiempos, 1828-1840*, 2 vols. (Paris; Mexico City: Vda. de C. Bouret, 1906), II, 178.
[96] Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna*, 241. On Paredes see Frank Samponaro, 'Mariano Paredes y el movimiento monarquista mexicano en 1846', *Historia Mexicana*, 32 (1982), 39-54; Michael Costeloe, 'Los generales Santa Anna y Paredes y Arrillaga en México, 1841-1843: rivales por el poder o una copa más', *Historia Mexicana*, 39 (1989), 417-440; José Antonio Aguilar Rivera, 'La convocatoria, las elecciones y el congreso extraordinario de 1846', *Historia Mexicana* (2011), 531-588; Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'In Search of Power: The Pronunciamientos of General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga' in Fowler, *Malcontents*.
[97] 'Manifiesto y plan de San Luis, 14 de diciembre de 1845', Saint Andrews University 'Pronunciamiento in Independent Mexico 1821-1876' database: http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/getpdf.php?id=518.
[98] Santoni, *Mexicans at Arms*, 102-09; Costeloe, *Central Republic*, 284-92.
[99] Soto, *Conspiración*, 60**;** Prieto, *Memorias de mis tiempos*, II, 179.

"political institutions" should conform to the current state of society and politicians should stop pretending that society could be compelled to conform to institutions. These were, admitted the editorial, "essentially conservative principles".[100] *El Tiempo* ridiculed the belief that reforms would accustom Mexican society to republican institutions: If Mexico had lost Texas and was about to lose California, if Yucatán had separated from Mexico, if there was no economy, credit, resources, if morality and disorder had entered the administration, if there were revolts every year and scandals every day, "this is nothing, this only happens while the institutions acclimatise. Under the current system only the first five hundred years are bad. After that it is another thing". The paper argued further that "liberty can exist under a constitutional monarchy the same as in a republic" and "we are capable of preferring the monarchical institutions of Britain and France to the republican institutions of Venice."[101]

It was not, however, until 12 February 1846 that the paper declared itself openly in favour of monarchy. An editorial entitled 'Our Profession of Faith' outlined the newspaper's "political principles". Independence was a glorious and necessary fact, and the Plan of Iguala promised a prosperous future uniting all sections of Mexican society. However, as discussed in chapter two, the plan had not been enacted and the First Mexican Empire had fallen. In its place, "the [United States] began to build another kind of empire" through its books, its ideas, its representatives and its deceptive prosperity (deceptive because Mexican liberals had attributed US prosperity to federal republicanism) directed and encouraged republican ideas. Failing to take into account the differences of "origin, religion and history", Mexican politicians had made the mistake of thinking that the best route to prosperity was to "throw ourselves into the arms of the [United States], slavishly imitate its institutions and follow its perfidious advice." The "absurd" 1824 Constitution had therefore been adopted, and with disastrous consequences. By 1846 the results were clear: a disorganised administration, a ruined economy, enormous debts, "barbarians pushing back the borders of civilisation", Yucatán separated, the United States occupying Mexican territory and the state unable to

[100] 'Editorial', *El Tiempo*, 24 January 1846, first page.
[101] 'Post-scriptum: cuatro palabras a La Reforma', *El Tiempo,* 26 January 1846, front page.

protect itself militarily. If Mexico continued down this path it would lead to "not only ruin, demoralisation, anarchy, but also the entire dissolution of the nation, the loss of our territory, our name, our independence."

The solution was "representative monarchy", the "promises and Guarantees of the Plan of Iguala." This in turn would develop commerce, protect industry and give impetus to the intellectual activity. There would be "no other aristocracy than that of merit". In this ideal state there would be a strong army, distant provinces would be protected, Church property would not be threatened and Catholicism would be the only religion tolerated. The paper did not want a "reaction": "[c]onservative by character and conviction, we ask protection for all legitimate interests whatever may be their origin."[102] As will be seen in chapters four and five, monarchist, and conservative arguments more generally, developed significantly in the next decade to incorporate economic development as well as administrative reform, but the concerns of the 1840s were not dramatically different to those of the early 1820s. Fear of US aggression, however, as well as its perceived political and cultural influence on Mexico, gave the polemics an urgency lacking in earlier manifestations of monarchical arguments – in the 1840s monarchy was a solution to an immediate and external existential threat.

There were numerous articles expressing belligerent anti-Americanism, which normally incorporated one or more of the following familiar arguments: i) the United States had deliberately exported federal republicanism in order to weaken Mexico; ii) some liberals in Mexico had worked, and were working, with the United States to destroy Mexico; iii) the United States was an inherently aggressive power that used immigration to weaken the national government's hold on distant territory and this was a prelude to annexation; iv) the "Anglo-Saxon" race was the implacable "enemy" of Mexico and its "race"; v) the Protestant US aimed at destroying Catholic Mexico.[103] Taken collectively, this meant that war against the

[102] 'Nuestra profesión de fe', *ibid.,* 12 February 1846, front page.
[103] See in *El Tiempo*: 'Proyectos de los Estados-Unidos', 13 February; 'Los padres de la patria', 18 February; 'Importante. Proyectos contra *El Tiempo.* Su acusación', 20 February; La cuestión del día', 12, 13, 17 March and 5 April; 'Parte política', 18 March; 'Parte política', 23 March; 'Los Estados-Unidos y el clero', 27 March; 'Emigración de los Estados-Unidos a Californias', 16 May 1846, all front page.

United States was a "national war" and at stake was the existence of the Mexican nation. If the United States triumphed then "we will be its slaves, and our religion, customs and language will end with the current generation".[104]

For *El Tiempo*, Mexico was faced with the question "to be, or not to be" as a consequence of its political instability and the US threat.[105] The paper thus argued that Mexico needed to restore its reputation in Europe in order to secure alliances against the United States.[106] It was in Europe's interest, ran another editorial, for Mexico to "increase [its] forces in order to resist the [United States]" because it could not view with indifference the "immense" increase in power that the "turbulent American democracy" would acquire by absorbing Mexico. Europe's political influence, its commercial concerns and the equilibrium of the world necessitated a "counterweight" to the United States.[107]

The *Journal des débats* played a role in this discussion. An article published on 12 January 1846 in this newspaper argued, as conservative Mexicans had done, that Poinsett introduced federalism into Mexico in order to make its later conquest by the United States easier, and also claimed that "private correspondence and reliable travellers tell us that all the honest men in [Mexico] regret [the absence] of royal power and wish to see it reconstituted in the hands of a foreign prince."[108] *El Tiempo* translated this article and commented that "thus was opinion in Europe before either the plan or the result of [Paredes' revolt] were known'.[109] The paper delighted in an interpretation of Mexican events that mirrored its own.

As with Gutiérrez de Estrada, the editorials of *El Tiempo* saw the western European constitutional monarchies, especially France, as paradigms. Just as in Europe, constitutional monarchy in Mexico would result in a meritocracy where "the democratic element is everything, the aristocratic nothing." The evidence for this argument was that the leading statesmen of France, such as Guizot, Thiers, Perier and Villèle, had, an editorial argued, all come from humble backgrounds.

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[104] 'La Independencia de México amenazada por los Estados Unidos', *ibid.,* 15 May 1846, front page.
[105] Parte política', *ibid.*, 29 January 1846, front page.
[106] 'Nuestra profesión de fe', *ibid.,* 12 February 1846, front page.
[107] 'Proyectos de los Estados-Unidos', *ibid.,* 13 February 1846, front page.
[108] 'Paris, 11 janvier', *Journal des débats*, 12 January 1846, second page.
[109] 'Parte política', *El Tiempo*, 6 April 1846, front page.

Moreover, it was pointed out that change to representative institutions would not be radical: in Britain and France the parliamentary system corresponded to the upper and lower houses of Mexico.[110] Finally, critics of *El Tiempo* had deliberately confused their ideas with the monarchies of Austria, Prussia and Russia, not France, Britain and Belgium which were the true models. The paper quoted a speech by Guizot at length.[111]

Anti-US invective was part of Mexican public discourse after the Texan revolt and in the run up to the US-Mexican War, but what separated *El Tiempo* from its peers was that they synthesised anti-Americanism into an argument against all forms of republicanism in favour of monarchy and orientation towards Europe.[112] As Justo Sierra noted later, "the [conservative] politics at the time of Gutiérrez de Estrada […] had no other desire than to implant [in Mexico] what [had been done] in France, our intellectual mother." This was the apogee, he continued, of the constitutional system under the house of Orléans, which seemed as though it would endure and "[Mexican] thinkers" were "fascinated by its prestige". They admired its leading statesmen: Guizot, Thiers, Victor de Broglie and Molé were named amongst others. Those who wanted a monarchy in Mexico were, then, "liberals in what pertained to civil liberty, and to a certain extent to political freedom" as well. Sierra concluded that what they were searching for in constitutional monarchy was the guarantee of "certain rights to life, property and liberty", which they did not think could be safeguarded in Mexico while the president was not outside or above party disputes.[113] Sierra's analysis was correct: conservative thinkers argued that these rights were respected when society was ordered, but when they were not the result was social dissolution. Good and bad elements existed in all societies and the art of government was to suppress the latter in order to protect the former, but in Mexico all respect for authority had broken down and thus so too "the conservative power of order".[114] It was this collapse of order that monarchy would address.

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[110] 'La Republica y la Monarquía – a *la Reforma* – Articulo cuatro', *ibid.,* 21 February 1846, front and second pages.
[111] 'Prensa extrangera: La Monarquía constitucional', *ibid.,* 14 March 1846, second page.
[112] 'Otras cuatro palabras a *la Reforma*', *ibid.*, 14 February 1846, front page.
[113] Sierra, *Juárez*, 298-99.
[114] 'Parte Política', *El Tiempo*, 30 May 1846, front page.

The details of how the monarchy would be constituted were vague because monarchy was a programme in itself. Although, as has been seen, criticisms of the 1824 Constitution were legion, at heart they rested on two elements: a weak executive within a federal republic. This is what Alamán meant when he described it as "a monstrous graft of the US Constitution on to that of [the Spanish Constitution of 1812]".[115] The same point was made by *El Tiempo*: the Spanish Constitution of 1812, following French revolutionary influence, gave too much power to the legislature, making it the "origin of all power", whereas US-style republicanism required a strong executive.[116] As discussed in chapter two, the constitutional reforms of the 1830s had been attempts to solve such concerns, but they had proved unsuccessful. A monarchical regime was attractive because, in theory at least, it unravelled, at a stroke, all of these perceived problems. Congress would be elected on a restricted franchise: party divisions would be moderated by an impartial ruler, who would be a powerful head of state at the helm of a centralist administration. Finally, it was argued that only under a monarchy could corporate bodies, key elements of society, such as the church and the army, be protected, while order would be restored.[117]

El Tiempo stressed the disorder, anarchy and chaos in post-independence Mexico. In the newspapers view, there was no respect for authority, the rule of law had broken down and factions contended for power, but the power they fought for had lost all legitimacy and social order had collapsed. Some insight into the vision of those who supported Paredes is given by the electoral law which was drawn up in order to choose the deputies who would make up the constituent congress. Reported to be the work of Alamán, it was distinctive, although it had antecedents in the previous electoral system used in Mexico in 1821 and the 1843*,* and was influenced by the ideas of Burke. The main innovation was that the makeup of the congress would be organised by class as defined by occupation. In total there would be 160 deputies, which would be consist of 38 landowners, 20 merchants, 14 miners, 14 industrialists, 14 literary professors, 10 magistrates, 10 public

[115] Alamán, *Historía de México*, V, 589-90.
[116] 'Parte Política', *El Tiempo*, 3 March 1846, front page.
[117] 'Parte Política', *ibid.,* 26 February 1846, front page.

administrators, 20 clergy and 20 military.[118] It was an attempt to impose order, to accord each valuable section of society its proper place.

The majority of voters were excluded from the electoral process. The franchise was based on income, although it varied for different classes, and some representatives were elected directly, others indirectly. In this sense it was trying to correct one of the major defects identified by Iturbide in the system used for the 1821 congress: it did not take into account that "[the number of] representatives ought to be in proportion to the civilisation of the represented". He explained that three or four individuals could be selected from among one hundred "well-educated citizens", whereas among a thousand without education "scarcely one man can be met with of sufficient ability to know what is conducive to public welfare".[119] The system drawn up in 1846 is, then, at least illustrative of what was meant in practice by not being educated enough to enact democratic republican government.[120] Nonetheless, it would be dangerous to extrapolate too much from this electoral experiment because the law was designed to elect a congress that would in turn vote for a monarchical government, therefore it necessarily required that a narrow section of Mexico's elite be returned who might plausibly support this. And in bringing about this composition one of its architects judged it successful in that the deputies were, according to Bermúdez de Castro, predominantly made up of "sensible people" who belonged to (what he called) the "conservative party".[121]

Many of those elected played a prominent role in Mexican conservatism and later supported Maximilian,[122] and "a great part of the affluent classes subscribed to [*El Tiempo*]", but its open support for monarchism "caused a profound sensation" and the "entire press, without exception […] rose against [its] ideas".[123]

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[118] Rivera, 'La convocatoria', 535-44.
[119] Iturbide, *A Statement*, 28-29.
[120] On representative politics in nineteenth-century Mexico see Erika Pani, 'Misión imposible: la construcción de la representación política en México, siglo XIX', *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research*, 20 (2014), 36-49.
[121] Despatch number 253 dated 29 May 1846 of Bermúdez de Castro, document number XIII in Delgado, *Monarquía*, 241-44.
[122] A list of those elected can be found in Antonio Aguilar Rivera, 'La convocatoria', anexo 1, 582-88.
[123] Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XII, 428-9. See also de Cyprey to Guizot, 27 February 1846, AAE, CP Mexique, 30.

Paredes was forced to drop monarchy partly because of its controversy and unpopularity amongst his own supporters, such as Tornel. Naturally, republican papers, such as *El Siglo XIX, El Monitor Republicano* and the newly formed ministerial, but republican, *La Reforma*, railed against any attempt to change the political institutions of the country,[124] but even later monarchists, such as Juan Nepomuceno Almonte and Antonio Haro y Tamariz (1811-69) were at this time openly against the ideas expressed in *El Tiempo*.[125] Paredes, in an ultimately unsuccessful bid to retain power, pronounced himself in favour of republican government in a speech of 6 June 1846 to the new congress. The next day *El Tiempo* announced it would cease publication because it could not continue to support the present government, but did not wish to oppose it during a time of war.[126]

In 1846, anti-Americanism alongside monarchist ideas combined to create the most concerted attempt to found a monarchy in Mexico since the Plan of Iguala.[127] The failure of this plan, Duflot de Mofras argued, was greatly to the detriment of French interests because it would result in the US conquest of Mexico. He argued in 1847 that for "monarchical and Catholic France" the "annihilation of people of Latin origin […] to which [France] is tied by the double line of language and religion" would be disaster. The solution was to support those Mexicans, like Gutiérrez de Estrada and Paredes, who wanted to found a monarchy.[128]

Many Mexican conservative politicians accepted the geostrategic and geopolitical rationale that underpinned pan-Latinism. Increasingly, they turned towards France for inspiration for their political projects. Alamán had looked to Spain for help to found a monarchy in 1846, but in the 1850s attention turned to

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[124] The response of the republican press to *El Tiempo* is discussed in Santoni, *Mexicans at Arms*, 109-14, and Soto, *La conspiración*, 147-69.

[125] Antonio Haro y Tamariz, *Esposición que Antonio Haro y Tamariz dirige a sus conciudadanos, y opiniones del autor sobre la monarquía constitucional* (Mexico: Imprenta en el Arquillo de la Alcaiceria, 1846). Haro y Tamariz was in Paris when he wrote this work and it was also published in France (Paris: impr. de H. Fournier, 1846). On Haro y Tamariz see Jan Bazant, *Antonio Haro y Tamariz y sus aventuras políticas*, *1811-1869* (Mexico City: Colegio de México, 1985).

[126] 'Despedida del Tiempo', *El Tiempo*, 7 June 1846, front page.

[127] Alamán and his co-conspirators even had a candidate for the throne, the *infante* Enrique, Duke of Seville. Delgado, *Monarquía*, 52-53.

[128] 'Note sur le Mexique. D'après les renseignements fournis par M. le général Paredes. Traduits et rédigé par M. de Mofras', 4 January 1847, AAE, MD Mexique, 9.

the French Second Empire. Mexican conservatives realised that Spanish power was limited and identified France as the strongest "Latin" and Catholic nation. Buenaventura Vivó, Santa Anna's minister to Spain during his 1853-55 dictatorship, pointed out that France was the "first" power of the "Latin race" in Europe and it had "greater sympathies for Mexico and the Spanish-American people than any other nation, and was better able to make these sympathies effective."[129]

This was part of a shift in Mexico in the 1850s from a pan-Hispanic conception to a pan-Latinist one. Poucel's pamphlet, discussed above, introduced the category of "Latin" more widely into the Mexican conservative press. The pamphlet was a précis of Chevalier's ideas and cited the more celebrated author numerous times. It was translated in *El Correo de Ultramar* and reprinted from this Parisian paper in *El Orden* in Mexico City.[130] The newspaper of the Conservative Party, *El Universal*,[131] had picked up on it earlier and analysed it in a series of six editorials. Although the paper argued that reducing the races of the Americas into two categories was overly simplistic, the geopolitical and geostrategic argument of Poucel largely fitted the paper's own understanding of the international context.[132] Identification with the Latin race became increasingly common in 1850s Mexican conservative discourse. For example, an 1854 editorial predicted a great future for the "Latin race […] to which we belong by our origins and to which we are bound by indestructible sympathies."[133]

Conservatives also agreed with the argument that more authoritarian government was better suited to Latin races. An 1855 pamphlet argued that liberalism was successful amongst "Teutonic" races, but amongst the Latin race, "to which we belong", the Conservative Party represented the ideas that would be most successful.[134] By the late 1850s, "Latin" was used interchangeably with

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[129] Buenaventura Vivó, *Memorias de B. V., Ministro de Mejico en España durante los años 1853, 1854 y 1855* (Madrid: M. Rivadeneyra, 1856), 86.
[130] 'De la necesidad de una alianza sólida y sincera de todos los estados de la América del sud con Francia', *El Correo de Ultramar*, 15 December 1852, third page; 'América', *El Orden* (Mexico City), 17 February 1853, p. 2.
[131] On *El Universal* see Miguel Ángel Castro and Guadalupe Curiel, *Publicaciones periódicas mexicanas del siglo XIX, 1822- 1855*, 441-46.
[132] 'Emigración europea a los americas', *El Universal*, 2, 8, 9, 19, 22 and 30 June 1852, all front page.
[133] 'Moviemiento general', *ibid.*, 24 May 1854, front page.
[134] Anonymous, *El Partido*, 5.

"Hispano-American" or "Spanish American" in the semi-official newspaper of the Conservative Party, *La Sociedad*.[135] The newspaper was contacted in an open letter from the editor of the French journal the *Revue des races latines*. In an editorial following on from the publication of this letter, *La Sociedad* described the "*Revista de las razas latinas*" as dedicated to the interests of "the Spanish American people".[136]

Perhaps the most striking example of anti-Americanism combined with pan-Latinism in conservative Mexican discourse is provided by José Ramón Pacheco, Santa Anna's minister to France from 1853 to 1855. Pacheco argued that the United States was an expansionist power which threatened Mexico and Central America as far as Panama as well as Cuba. The Monroe Doctrine was not a fraternal policy in the interests of the other American republics; rather, it was a project which aimed at exclusive domination and allowed the United States to act with impunity. New Orleans was the "Algiers" of modern times, filibusters were its pirates. Furthermore, in the struggle between the forces of order and "socialists" or "communists" the radical democracy of the United States supported the latter. This was not, then, merely a question of the independence of some "half-forgotten republic", but rather a crisis for the civilised world as a whole which was threatened by these "new Goths and Vandals". Mexico was on the frontline of this struggle and France must take an interest in its survival.[137] In private conversations with the French foreign minister, Pacheco argued that France had a duty to protect Mexico because it was "the most powerful [nation] of the Latin peoples". Moreover, Pacheco associated liberalism with the violence of the French revolution and warned that this would be unleashed across the American continent by the "Anglo-Saxons."[138] This is one of the first examples of an argument for French intervention

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[135] For example see in *La Sociedad*: 'La política norte-americano', 1 May, p. 1; 'El partido liberal y los Estados-Unidos', 15 May, p. 1; 'Proyecto de un periódico frances destilando a defender y propagar en Europa los intereses politicos y materiales de la América Latina', 10 September 1858, pp. 1-2.
[136] 'Conveniencia de dar a conocer el estranjero la historia y la situación actual de nuestra país', *La Sociedad*, 2 December, pp. 1-2; 'Conveniencia de hacer que se conozca en Europa la verdadera situación de México – Peligros que corre nuestra nacionalidad – Un articulo de la "Aurora" de Tehuacan', *ibid.,* 13 December 1859, p. 1.
[137] José Ramón Pacheco to Édouard Drouyn de Lhuys, 24 October 1853, AAE, CP Mexique, 41.
[138] Pacheco to el Sr. Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, 10 October 1853, 'copia' contained in Pacheco to Almonte, 10 October 1853, AHGE, Estados-Unidos, L. 43; e. 2.

in Mexico made at a government level in pan-Latinist terms, and it was made by a Mexican in 1853.[139]

It was not only Santa Anna's diplomats who interpreted the 1850s international context through the prism of pan-Latinism and looked to France to support "Latin" races in the Americas: this was a view shared by many in the Spanish speaking world. *El Correo de Ultramar*, which was later edited by Torres Caicedo,[140] believed that there was a struggle between the "Latin" and "Anglo-Saxon" races in the Americas. The former needed to unite and work with Europe in order to safeguard its borders from the US threat, an argument the paper claimed it had made consistently for the last six years. Louis-Napoléon's mission in America was the same in the West as it was in the East: "to sustain the weak against the strong".[141] The paper had earlier argued that, although "Latin America" should be free from interference, Europe was necessary to maintain the balance of power and the Monroe Doctrine was an absurd fiction which aimed at US dominance.[142]

Periodicals published in Madrid such as the *Revista española de ambos mundos* and *La América* made similar arguments warning that the Latin or Hispanic race faced extinction in the Americas.[143] In the former, the Spaniard Francisco Muñoz del Monte (1800-65) lamented Europe's inability to prevent US expansion: "in vain Guizot […] proclaimed the solemn commitment to prevent the annihilation of the Latin race".[144] The Cuban-Spanish creole Francisco de Frías y Jacob (1809-77) warned Louis-Napoléon that the "triumph of the United States" would signal the end of the Latin race and, as its guardian, France's duty was to support the forces of

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[139] In a pamphlet published in 1833 Pacheco wrote that Mexican "mores" were a mixture of Spanish and French traits. José Ramon Pacheco, *Lettres sur le Mexique* (Bordeaux: impr. de C. Lawalle neveu, 1833), 41. From 1831 to 1833 Pacheco served as Mexican consul at Bordeaux.
[140] 'La Nueva redacción', *El Correo de Ultramar*, 15 March 1860, front page.
[141] 'Variedades: Caracteres de los razas preponderantes', *ibid.,* 30 June, third page and 'La Raza latina', *ibid.,* 15 July 1859, third page.
[142] 'Revista Américana. Nicaragua y los filibusteros oficiales y estra-oficiale. Tratados y reclamaciones', *ibid.,* 30 November 1858, second and third pages.
[143] Mark Van Aken, *Pan-Hispanism: Its Origin and Development to 1866* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), 69-74.
[144] Francisco Muñoz del Monte, 'España y las Repúblicas Hispano-Americanos', *Revista española de ambos mundos*, I (1853), 264.

order in Mexico against the United States.[145] The Chilean Ambrosio Montt (1830-99) identified Louis-Napoléon as the most powerful sovereign in Europe and asked rhetorically: "does he […] try to ensure the independence and integrity of the Latin republics of America so threatened by Anglo-Saxon democracy?" The answer, sadly, was no, he did not "harbour any such ambitions".[146]

In France authors such as Chevalier, Poucel, de Fossey and Ferry had warned, in similarly pan-Latinist language, that the absorption of Mexico by the United States was imminent.[147] An 1856 article by the journalist Félix Belly (1816-88) in the *Revue contemporaine*, one of the first anywhere to use the term "Latin America", wrote that "the suzerainty of the entire New World is claimed by an invading republic" which "threatens the independence of its neighbours, the autonomy of the Spanish race and the commercial freedom of the globe."[148] Writing in 1855, Jean-Jacques Ampère (1800-64) believed the United States to be an expansionist power, and Mexico to be more under threat than Cuba.[149] Such anti-Americanism was not, then, merely the minority view of publications such as the *Revue des races latines*,[150] but was shared by Mexican conservatives, French diplomats, the foreign ministry in Paris and many French, Spanish and Latin American publicists.

As has been shown, fear of the United States had been a preoccupation in French thought and was frequently expressed in pan-Latinist terms. In a virulently anti-American article, Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-69) wrote that the idea behind French intervention in Mexico was "great": far from being motivated by petty monetary concerns, or even the protection of French nationals, the policy "was for

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[145] Francisco Frias y Jacott, *Lettre à Sa Majesté l'Empereur Napoléon III sur l'influence française en Amérique à propos du message de M. Buchanan. Par un homme de la race latine* (Paris: Ledoyen, 1858), 22.
[146] Ambrosio Montt, *Ensayo sobre el gobierno en europa* (Paris: Imp. d'Aubusson y Kugelmann, 1859), 359.
[147] Chevalier, *Des mines*; Ferry, 'Guerre entre les États-Unis et le Mexique'; Fossey, *Le Mexique*; Poucel, *Études*.
[148] Félix Belly, 'Du conflit anglo-américain et de l'équilibre du nouveau-monde', *Revue contemporaine*,
26 (1856), 122; 153.
[149] Jean-Jacques Ampère, *Promenade en Amérique; États-Unis, Cuba, Mexique*, 2 vols. (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1856), II, 71-78; 225.
[150] On this journal see Thier, 'The View from Paris'.

the salvation of America and the world." Lamartine argued that the United States threatened "all the capitals of civilised South America." Therefore France must "anticipate events [and] protect the Latin race" by defending Mexico, not merely for its own interest, but for that of Europe as well.[151] This argument was the first of Chevalier's two "motives of general policy" for the French intervention: a "European, universal interest" to place a "barrier to the imminent invasion of the entire American continent by the [United States]."[152]

Sara Yorke Stevenson (1847-1921), who grew up in Paris and moved to Mexico during the French intervention and Second Mexican Empire, describes in her memoirs how these pan-Latinist views were commonplace amongst the political class in Paris. Lamartine and Chevalier were frequent visitors to her guardian's house and their assumptions, she wrote, were largely those of the elite at the time. Moreover, "[n]one seriously doubted the possibility of occupying [Mexico] [….] The only point discussed was, [would it be] worth it?"[153] Contemporaneously with these expressions of pan-Latinism in France, monarchical or authoritarian ideas gained currency in Mexico, and for those who supported them it was argued that Mexico's salvation lay in an intimate connection with Europe, especially France.

Conclusion

As has been demonstrated, the geostrategic goals of Louis-Napoléon's and Chevalier's pan-Latinism not only predated the 1860s by at least three decades, as did the assumptions that underpinned them, but also these were widely shared in France and in the Spanish-speaking world. Moreover, the only difference between the policy of Guizot and Louis-Napoléon was the means by which it was to be achieved. For Guizot this was "by the sheer weight of [France's] influence alone",[154]

[151] Alphone de Lamartine, 'Littérature américaine. Une page d'histoire naturelle, par M. Audubon – première partie', *Cours familier de literature: un entretien par mois*, 118 (1865), 100-1.
[152] Chevalier, *Le Mexique*, 478-9. Jacques Louis Randon, Louis-Napoléon minister of war at the time of the intervention, explained the rational for the intervention in similarly pan-Latinist terms, *Mémoires du maréchal Randon*, 2 vols. (Paris: Impr. de Lahure, 1875-77) II, 59-60.
[153] Sara Yorke Stevenson, *Maximilian in Mexico: A Woman's Reminiscences of the French Intervention* (New York: Century Co., 1899), 1-6.
[154] Guizot, *Histoire parlementaires*, IV, 568.

whereas for Louis-Napoléon it was by the force "of French arms."[155] And here the context is crucial: had Guizot, even with British support, strongly opposed Texan annexation it would have meant war with the United States. Louis-Napoléon's intervention, coming as it did during the US Civil War, faced no such constraints.

North Africa was also cast as a Latin empire and "*l'Afrique Latine*" came to describe the area of former Roman provinces under French rule or influence. Patricia Lorcin argues that pan-Latinism in Algeria was "a multidirectional process whose disparate components came together gradually" and that "it was not a predetermined justification for colonization; rather it was engendered by circumstances of conquest and colonization."[156] As with North Africa, it can be argued that pan-Latinism in America was also a discourse whose varied components came together gradually. The idea of an affinity between France and the former Spanish American colonies dates back at least to the 1820s and once US expansion began to be seen as a conflict of two races after the Texan revolt the two principal constituents of the pan-Latinist discourse were already in place. It was therefore not an "ideology" composed to legitimate the French "expansion" of the Second Empire, as Phelan and Rojas Mix claim, but a discourse that emerged in the 1830s and only became mobilised behind a specific foreign policy in the 1860s. The consequence was that it became more coherently articulated through the propaganda of the regime's apologists. Rather than indulging in short-term desire for a Latin empire, Louis-Napoléon was instead implementing a long-held French geostrategic vision.

From the Mexican perspective, anti-Americanism developed immediately after independence, particularly over Texas. A particular interpretation of the United States' relationship with Mexico became embedded within conservative discourse, which maintained that Washington had a pernicious and partisan interest in Mexican politics. This formed the basis of arguments for orientating Mexico towards Europe and, in no small part, underpinned the rationale for

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[155] Louis-Napoléon to Forey, 14 July 1862, AN, 400AP/62.

[156] Patricia Lorcin, 'Rome and France in Africa: Recovering Colonial Algeria's Latin Past', *French Historical Studies*, 25 (2002), 327. See also Michael Greenhalgh, 'French Reliance on the Roman Past during the Conquest of Algeria', *War and Society*, 16 (1998), 1-28.

monarchy. However, unlike the French proto-pan Latinist discourse, the majority of Mexicans did not openly associate with French interests or pan-Latinist ideas, nor did they call for French intervention, until the 1850s – it was Spain that furnished the funds to support *El Tiempo*.

It would take the catastrophic defeat of the US-Mexican War, combined with the increased polarisation of Mexican politics, for Mexican conservatives to openly identify the future of the Mexican nation with that of the French Second Empire. In the 1850s Mexican conservatism consolidated into a more coherent body of thought articulated by those who now identified openly as "Conservatives" and associated themselves with what they called the Mexican Conservative Party. In part, this development of Mexican conservatism was influenced by international events, particularly the 1848 revolutions and the creation of the French Second Empire. As will be discussed in the next chapter, Mexican conservatives sympathised not only with the geostrategic implications of pan-Latinism, but also with what they believed to be the "conservative principles" at the heart of the French Second Empire. Moreover, in order to protect these in Mexico, and to safeguard Mexico from further US expansion, Mexican conservatives began to call for European intervention, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

"The Western Question"

Introduction

A distant war fought on the northern shores of the Black Sea would seem to have little importance for the future of Mexico. However, for the newspaper of the Conservative Party, *El Universal*, the Crimean War (1854-56) had implications for the very existence of the Mexican nation: if Russia defeated Britain and France then "Europe would lose its independence under the iron sceptre of the Tsar, and [Latin] America would lose its own under the despotic heel of the sons of Washington."[1] In the Crimean War, Mexican conservatives had found the perfect analogy to articulate the necessity of an alliance with western European nations in order to prevent US expansion and preserve their own political power prior to the French-backed Mexican Second Empire. This they termed "the western question" because "with the exaggeration of the democratic principle, the United States arrives at demagogic absolutism; Russia, with the exaggeration of the opposed principle, arrives at tyrannical absolutism; and both nations seek to impose on the world […] a tyranny that equally rejects civilisation."[2] For this reason, after defeating Russia, the "allied powers" which "march at the front of world civilisation" must "transport their forces to the New World" in order to prevent the "unlimited expansion" of the United States.[3]

This continued fear of US expansion was the backdrop to which the consolidation of Mexican conservativism in the 1850s took place. As chapter three has shown, this was not new to Mexican politics, but the disastrous defeat in the US-Mexican War and the consequent loss of nearly half of Mexico's national territory confirmed the worst fears of conservatives. The Conservative Party, founded in 1849 by Alamán, represented itself as the true national party in contradistinction to liberal *moderados* and *puros* because, its members claimed, liberals sympathised with the United States and its political institutions – federalism

[1] 'La Guerra de oriente', *El Universal*, 3 December 1854, front page.
[2] 'La Guerra de oriente', *ibid.*, 3 December 1854, front page.
[3] 'La alianza anglo-francesa. – Sus principios y su influyo', *ibid.,* 12 January 1855, front page.

and republicanism – institutions which liberals wished to see triumph in Mexico. The question then, for the Conservative Party, was not merely how to establish a state based on conservative principles,[4] but also how to construct a nation that could prevent further territorial losses.

In their search to found a strong, stable and centralised government that would achieve both these aims, Conservatives in the 1850s drew upon international events and transnational ideas. The Mexican Conservative Party was formed in part to contest local elections in 1849 followed by presidential elections in 1850. Previously disdainful of democratic politics, this engagement with the ballot box was partially inspired by events in Europe after the 1848 revolutions, particularly the example provided by Louis-Napoléon, who was elected president of the Second Republic in November 1848. Conservatives in Mexico, however, failed to replicate the electoral success of Louis-Napoléon, but his transition from prince president to French emperor provided another model that could be adapted to Mexican politics: the Conservative Party supported Santa Anna's dictatorship (1853-55) and the caudillo's return to power was compared to Louis-Napoléon's 2 December 1851 coup d'état and the foundation of the French Second Empire a year later.

Santa Anna's rule, however, was short lived: he was overthrown by the revolt of Ayutla (1854-55), which brought to power a new generation of *puro* liberals with anti-clerical aims. The result was the liberal 1857 Constitution, which in turn led to the War of Reform between a de facto Conservative government at Mexico City, headed by Félix María Zuloaga (1813-98) and then Miguel Miramón (1832-67), and a de jure Liberal government led by Juárez at Veracruz.[5] This polarisation of Mexican politics was also a geopolitical struggle. In 1859 the United States recognised Juárez's Liberals, while France, Britain and Spain maintained that the Conservatives at Mexico City were the legitimate government. Moreover, Conservatives believed that US support for Juárez contributed to their eventual defeat in 1861, and the inability of Conservatives to defeat their opponents saw the

[4] The principles that underpinned Mexican conservatism are outlined in the introduction, 20.
[5] The term "Liberal", with a capital "L", is used here to denote the Mexican Liberal Party which contested power with Conservative Party during the War of Reform and fought against the French intervention and the Second Mexican Empire.

identification with European ideas turn into a call for European arms to support them in their struggle against what they saw as the twin threat of Mexican liberalism allied to US expansionism – what many Conservatives termed the "western question".

This chapter will analyse the impact of the threat of further US expansionism on Mexican conservative thought. It will then place Mexican conservatism within the international realignment of political ideologies prompted by events in 1848,[6] whereby so-called parties of order sought to appropriate elements of political and economic modernisation to establish secure regimes in the face of revolutionary challenges.[7] US involvement in the War of Reform will then be explored to see to what extent it led to Mexican Conservatives to call for European intervention. Finally, the French interpretation of the 'western question' will be evaluated to see to whether Paris agreed with the claims of the Conservative Party that the continuing rise of US power posed as much of a threat to Europe as it did to Mexico.

I

"Always the Americans":[8] The US Threat to Mexico

In a letter of 1860 to the French foreign minister, Édouard Thouvenel (1818-66), the representative of the Mexican Conservative government in Paris, Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar, wrote that the civil war which raged between the Conservatives and the Liberals could not be considered merely as a conflict between two parties disputing power. Rather, it was a struggle between a party that fought for independence and national territory of Mexico against one that had no support other than the "sympathy of the United States", a nation whose people, "by education and political system", were "the irreconcilable enemy of the Latin race, and the Catholicism which it professes."[9] Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar was a well-known

[6] On the revolutions of 1848 see Axel Körner (ed.), *1848: A European Revolution? International Ideas and National Memories of 1848* (London: Macmillan, 2000). On the impact of 1848 in Latin America see Thomson, *The European Revolutions of 1848*.
[7] An approach followed as regards post-1848 European governments by Christopher Clark, 'After 1848: The European Revolution in Government', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 171-97.
[8] 'Siempre los Americanos', *El Orden*, 23 October 1853, front page.
[9] Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar to Édouard Thouvenel, 12 May 1860, AHGE, Francia, L.38; e. 558.

monarchist and supporter of French intervention, who was later appointed as the Emperor Maximilian's minister to France. Looked at in isolation, his letter could be dismissed as evidence only of a desperate appeal, in language designed to flatter a French audience, on behalf of an ailing Conservative Party on the point of defeat by Juárez's Liberals. However, as chapters two and three have shown, Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar was making an argument that conservative Mexican politicians, intellectuals, journalists and writers had advanced, in one form or another, from independence onwards. A point made by *La Sociedad*, which from 1856 replaced *El Universal* as the principal organ of the Conservative Party:[10] "[s]ince the first days of independence, truly right-thinking men knew that with time the expansionist spirit of the Anglo-Saxons had to be fatal to the Latin […] race of America."[11]

The end of the US-Mexican War in 1848 did not mark an end to the threat of further US expansion. Franklin Pierce (1804-69) and James Buchanan (1791-68) served as presidents from 1853 to 1861 and were elected on expansionist tickets, and both coveted Mexico's northern states.[12] There was widespread support for their policies and many in the United States categorised Mexicans alongside the United States' indigenous population in a racial hierarchy.[13] An article in *The Democratic Review* expressed from a US perspective the fears outlined in *La Sociedad* above: "the Mexican race now see, in the fate of the aborigines of the north, their own destiny. They must amalgamate and be lost, in the superior vigor of the Anglo-Saxon race, or they must utterly perish."[14] Most US policymakers and diplomats shared these racist and ethnocentric biases towards Mexico,[15] which in

[10] Miguel Ángel Castro and Guadalupe Curiel, *Publicaciones periódicas mexicanas del siglo XIX, 1856-1876: Fondo Antiguo de la Hemeroteca Nacional de México* (Mexico City: UNAM, 2003), 551-62.
[11] 'El partido liberal y los Estados-Unidos', *La Sociedad*, 15 May 1858, p. 1.
[12] Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire* in the Cotton Kingdom (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2013), 307-8 and 320-21; Meinig, *The Shaping of America*, 160; Donathon Olliff, *Reforma Mexico*, 26.
[13] Meinig, *Continental America*, 191; Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981), 210; Thomas Hietala, *Manifest Design: Anxious Aggrandizement in Late Jacksonian America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 134-35.
[14] 'The War', *United States Democratic Review*, 20 (1847), 100.
[15] Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 153.

turn increased the disdain of Conservative politicians, who witnessed these attitudes first hand, for the United States.[16]

Pierce's foreign policy goals as regards Mexico were to move the US border with Mexico southwards, to purchase significant territory beyond this revised border and to secure favourable transport rights across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. Ominously for Mexico, Pierce stated in his inaugural address that his administration would not be held back by "any timid forebodings of evil from expansion".[17] The Sale of La Mesilla (known in the United States as the Gadsden Purchase), ratified in 1854, saw the United States pay $10 million for 29,640-square miles of additional Mexican territory. The US minister, James Gadsden (1788-1858), charged with securing Pierce's foreign policy goals, made it clear to the Conservative Mexican foreign minister, Manuel Díez de Bonilla (1800-64), that the southern and westward migration of US citizens was unavoidable. To oppose it would only encourage it, and all Mexico could do was to "conciliate and harmonize, what was not to be diverted; [sic] overawed or crushed".[18] Fearing that the United States would take by force what Mexico could not defend, and faced with acute financial difficulties at home, Santa Anna accepted a treaty which, in these circumstances, he considered favourable.[19]

Although this marked the last acquisition of Mexican territory by the United States, it did not end the desire to obtain more, which increased under Buchanan. He outlined his vision to the Senate: "it is beyond question the destiny of our race to spread themselves over the continent of North America, and this at no distant

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[16] *El Universal* frequently translated, published and commented upon US articles expressing views towards Mexico inspired by the ideas of Manifest Destiny. For example, on *The New York Herald*, 'Temores permanentes de la política americana respecto de nuestra pais', 8 and 9 January 1852, front pages; on *The United States Review,* 'La prensa de los Estados-Unidos y la República de México', 2 February 1853, front and second pages. *El Universal* also dedicated a series of editorials to "Manifest Destiny" itself: 'La raza española y la raza anglo-sajona', 15, 25, 29 September and 5 October 1853, pp. 2-3, pp. 2-3, p. 2 and p. 2. See also *El Orden* on the *The Weekly Picayune*: 'México – su porvenir', 28 April 1853, front page.

[17] Franklin Pierce, 'Inaugural Address', 4 March 1853, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/index.php (accessed 4 October 2014).

[18] James Gadsden to Manuel Díez de Bonilla, 14 and 29 November 1853 in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 650-63 and 667-69.

[19] Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 306-7; Carmen Vázquez Mantecón, *Santa Anna*, 116-130; Richard Johnson, *The Mexican Revolution of Ayutla, 1854-1855: An Analysis of the Evolution and Destruction of Santa Anna's Last Dictatorship* (Rock Island: Augustana College Library, 1939), 35.

day […] nothing can eventually arrest its progress."[20] In preparation for this, Buchanan's secretary of state instructed the US minister to Mexico, John Forsyth (1821-77), to purchase from Mexico much of its northern territory.[21] Forsyth informed the Conservative Mexican foreign minister Luis Gonzaga Cuevas (1800-67), that, regardless of whether Mexico sold these lands or not, "great natural causes in steady operation and progress, [will] diminish the Mexican value, and weaken the Mexican tenure […] until, in the end, they may pass from her possession."[22] In a despatch to Cass, Forsyth made his own views on US expansion clear: "I am, of course, a believer in […] 'Manifest destiny'. I believe […] that our race, I hope our institutions, are to spread across this continent and that the hybrid races of the West must succumb to, and fade away before, the superior energies of the white man."[23] Nonetheless, for Buchanan destiny was not working quickly enough. He advised Congress at the end of 1858 that the United States should "assume a temporary protectorate over the northern portions of Chihuahua and Sonora". A year later Buchanan was even more direct, requesting that Congress authorise him to intervene militarily in Mexico.[24]

Conservatives, then, had ample demonstrations of the hostile intentions of the United States and the racist attitudes that lay behind them. What set the anti-American discourse of the Conservative Party apart from previous decades, however, was that the US threat was increasingly seen as one posed not only to Mexico, but to Latin America as a whole. Moreover, expansionism in the 1850s was not merely the preserve of the US government. Two additional factors ensured that the United States was represented as engaged in war against the entire Latin race in the Americas: filibusters and Cuba.

Filibuster expeditions launched from the United States increased Mexican fears of US aggression. Mexican politicians were well aware of the dangers posed to

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[20] James Buchanan, 'Message to the Senate on the Arrest of William Walker in Nicaragua', 7 January 1858, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=68291 (accessed 4 October 2014).
[21] Lewis Cass to John Forsyth, 17 July 1857, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 234-38.
[22] John Forsyth to Luis Gonzaga Cuevas, 18 March 1858, in *ibid.,* IX, 971-76.
[23] Forsyth to Cass, 4 April 1857, in *ibid.,* IX, 902-9.
[24] James Buchanan, 'Second Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union', 6 December 1858; James Buchanan, 'Third Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union', 19 December 1859. The American Presidency Project: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/index.php (accessed 4 October 2014).

nearby states by the recruitment of volunteers on US soil to overthrow the legally constituted sovereign authorities. Over three quarters of the soldiers who fought against Mexico in the Texan revolt from January to March 1836 had crossed the US-Mexican border after the insurrection had begun in October 1835.[25] William Walker (1824-60) began a long filibustering career with an expedition into Baja California in 1854. The Mexican authorities also had to contend with sporadic raids from the United States led by a liberal Mexican, José María Jesús de Carvajal (1809-74), but using largely US citizens as soldiers, and two expeditions made up of Frenchmen recruited in California.[26]

Regardless of Washington's disavowal of these expeditions, many Mexican politicians considered the United States complicit in them either by acts of commission or omission. The then Mexican minister to the United States, Almonte, argued in a despatch to the foreign minister that until the United States punished these "adventurers" severely and garrisoned California properly, US and foreign nationals would continue to organise and arm themselves for attacks on Mexico. Almonte went as far as to warn that "in my view, even the President of the United States [is] involved" in these filibuster raids, and, for this reason, Mexico should not rely for its security on the promises of friendship from the US government, which, Almonte argued, Washington ignored when convenient.[27]

The most significant filibuster expeditions, however, were directed towards Cuba and Nicaragua.[28] Nicaraguan liberals had asked Walker and his mercenaries to help them in their civil war against conservatives. In 1856, having won the civil war,

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[25] Robert May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 9.

[26] For a narrative account of the various filibusters faced by Mexico see Charles Brown, *Agents of Manifest Destiny: The Lives and Times of the Filibusters* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), Part Two: 'El Dorado in Mexico'. For Carvajal see Joseph Chance, *José María Jesús de Carvajal: The Life and Times of a Mexican Revolutionary* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2006). For the French filibusters see Delia González de Reufels, 'La Découverte du Sonora par les français (Mexique, 1848-1854)' in Michel Bertrand and Laurent Vidal (eds.), *À la redécouverte des Amériques. Les voyageurs européens au siècle des indépendances* (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2002); Rufus Wyllys, *The French in Sonora, 1850-1854: The Story of French Adventurers from California into Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1932).

[27] Juan Nepomuceno Almonte to Bonilla, 'reservada', 18 February 1854, AHGE, Estados-Unidos, L. 43; e. 2.

[28] Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams*, ch. 12; May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, 23-32.

Walker executed his opponents and set himself up as president.[29] Walker's policies while president, according to his own third-person account, were to dispossess the Spanish and indigenous population and place "a large proportion of the land [...] in the hands of the white race."[30] The diplomatic recognition of his government by the Pierce administration in May 1856, combined with clashes between locals and US citizens in Panama,[31] fuelled anti-US sentiment throughout the Spanish-speaking world.[32]

US designs on Cuba similarly increased tensions between Spain, its former colonies and the United States, which in turn had ramifications for Mexico.[33] In the 1850s US ambitions towards Cuba were made clear through the publication of the Ostend Manifesto (a document signed in 1854 by US diplomats, including Buchanan, that advocated the acquisition of Cuba by purchase or war), an attempt to buy the island from Spain for $100 million, and filibustering expeditions launched from the United States. The importance of this for Mexico lay, first, in the alarm the United States' aggressive attitude towards Cuba caused in Europe, calling the attention of the France, Britain and Spain to the western question. And, second, Mexican Conservatives saw US attempts to procure Cuba as part of a wider policy pursued at the expense of the Latin race, which increased the threat to Mexico of further US attacks and led to calls for hemispheric unity. *La Sociedad* warned: "Our neighbours do not distinguish between Cuba and our own territory. Both are the objects of their avarice [….] It falls to the Latin race in America to fend off the danger".[34]

As with previous decades, it was not only territorial expansion that alarmed conservatives. They were worried by Washington's support for Mexican liberals. In

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[29] Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams*, ch. 13; May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, 193-214.
[30] William Walker, *The War in Nicaragua* (Mobile: S. H. Goetzel & co., 1860), 253-4; 279.
[31] See Aims McGuinness, *Path of Empire: Panama and the California Gold Rush* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).
[32] See, for example, 'Revista Américana: Filibusterismo á mano armada – Filibusterismo pacífico', *El Correo de Ultramar*, 15 February 1858, third page.
[33] The effects of events in Cuba on Spanish-Mexican relations is explored in Laura Muñoz Mata, 'De independencia a independencia. Cuba en las relaciones hispanoamericanas durante el siglo XIX' in Agustín Sánchez Andrés and Raúl Figueroa Esquer, *México y España en el siglo XIX. Diplomacia, relaciones triangulares e imaginarios nacionales* (Mexico: Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, 2003).
[34] 'La política norte-americana', *La Sociedad*, 1 May 1858, p. 1.

part this stemmed from the argument, outlined in chapter two, that the United States had deliberately exported federalism to Mexico in order to weaken it. *El Universal* wrote that the result of US influence was loss of territory, internal anarchy and the constant threat of external danger: "the error of 1824 [the federal constitution] inevitably led to the bitter ignominy of 1847 [when US troops occupied Mexico City]."[35] *La Sociedad* continued in a similar vein on a hemispheric scale: "The Spanish American nations, notwithstanding their monarchical traditions and their Catholic religion, committed the shameful error of taking [the United States] as a model". In so doing they condemned themselves to thirty years of anarchy and civil war.[36] This was far from a new argument, but it was given renewed impetus by the US-Mexican War. Liberals were appalled by the US invasion, and the majority of *puros* urged the government to reject any peace negotiations in favour of continuing the war; however, a minority worked with the United States during the occupation and advocated the establishment of a protectorate over Mexico.[37] *El Universal* took advantage of this fact and proclaimed that liberals were traitors, a charge frequently reiterated in the conservative press, which represented the Conservative Party as the true defender of the Mexican nation.[38] US support for liberals, combined with the continual threat of US expansion, was an important element in the self-definition of the Conservative Party.

It is worth emphasising that not only did Washington back liberals, but they did so in full awareness of the polarising effect their policies had in Mexico during

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[35] 'Relaciones de México con las potencias estranjeras', *El Universal*, 1 May 1853, front page. *El Orden* made the same argument, 'Nuesta fe política', *El Orden*, 21 and 22 August 1852, front pages; 'México y los Estados-Unidos', *ibid.,* 8 December 1852, front page; 'Desenlace de la revolución: La federación mexicana comprada con otras (concluye el sexto articulo)', *ibid*., 5 January 1853, front page.

[36] 'Reflexiones sobre los gobiernos, aplicadas a la República', *La Sociedad*, 6 January 1858, front page.

[37] Santoni, *Mexicans at Arms*, 215-6; Dennis Berge, 'A Mexican Dilemma: The Mexican Ayutamiento and the Question of Loyalty, 1846-1848', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 50 (1970), 229-256.

[38] Examples are numerous, see for example, 'Traición de la patria – inconsequencias', *El Orden*, 3 May, front page; 'Los anexionistas', *ibid.,* 12 and 16 May, front pages; 'No hay anexionistas', *ibid.,* 30 May and 2 June, front pages; 'Los Partidos', *ibid.*, 11 May 1853, front page; 'Situación actual de la República. – El pasado y el porvenir', *El Universal*, 11 October 1850, front page; 'El porvenir de México. – La idea anexionista y la idea conservadora', *ibid.,* 13, 16 and 18 October, front pages; 'El espiritu anexionista, *ibid.,* 29 July 1853, front page; 'Estado de la cuestión', *La Sociedad*, 5 April 1858, front page.

the 1850s. James Gadsden noted that the "Church-Army-Conservatives" look with "deep mistrust, I might say, hatred towards the [United States]." For Gadsden, the liberal revolt which resulted in the end of Santa Anna's dictatorship, was "a most signal triumph" for the United States.[39] According to Gadsden's successor, during the War of Reform, the Conservative government at Mexico City would "sooner fall than treat with the detested Yankees".[40] Buchanan made his views plain in his Annual Message to Congress in 1858: The United States should intervene militarily in Mexico because a Conservative victory in the War of Reform was against US interests.[41] The defeat of Mexican Conservatives had thus become official US policy. This was not disinterested support for the cause of liberalism; rather, a course of action calculated to secure US expansionist aims. William Churchwell (1826-62), charged with reporting on which faction Washington should recognise in Mexico during the War of Reform, concluded that, as long as the United States did not "despoil Mexican territory", Juárez's Liberals would look to the Washington as a "virtual Protector [...] and as if she were sub-divided and erected into sovereign States of the Union."[42] On this advice, Buchanan recognised the Liberal government at Veracruz.[43]

As has been well documented, Juárez's government at Veracruz worked to secure US recognition in order to help raise loans in the United States and, more importantly, to secure a treaty that would provide immediate financial aid.[44] The result was the 1859 McLane-Ocampo Treaty which, in return for $4 million, gave favourable transit rights to the United States.[45] Buchanan envisaged the treaty as a means to annex Mexico's northern territory without having to secure authorisation from Congress. The treaty, had it been ratified, would have allowed the United

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[39] Gadsden to William Marcy, 5 November 1855, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 792-4. Gadsden argued that Washington should actively promote liberals. Gadsden to Marcy, 25 November 1855, in *ibid*., IX, 797-99.
[40] Forsyth to Cass, 1 July 1858, in *ibid.,* IX, 1010-12.
[41] James Buchanan, 'Second Annual Message to Congress', 6 December 1858.
[42] William Churchwell to Cass, 8 February 1859, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 1024-30.
[43] Olliff, *Reforma Mexico*, 124-28.
[44] Schoonover, *Dollars over Dominion*; Olliff, *Reforma Mexico*; Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'Los últimos intentos expansionistas' in *México y el mundo: historia de sus relaciones exteriors,* 8 vols. (Mexico City: Senado de la República, 1990), I, 151-180.
[45] See Patricia Galeana, *El tratado McLane-Ocampo: la comunicación interoceánica y el libre comercio* (Mexico City: UNAM, 2006).

States to "trespass Mexican sovereignty at will" and turn a temporary presence into a permanent occupation because it permitted the United States to intervene without the consent of the Mexican government if the lives or property of US citizens were endangered in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.[46]

For Conservatives, that Liberals were willing to come to such an arrangement with Mexico's national enemy was further proof of their complicity with Washington, but the final event that confirmed to Conservatives the extent of the Liberals' collaboration with the United States occurred in March 1860. Two naval vessels purchased by the Conservatives were intercepted and captured by the US navy as they steamed to attack the liberal-held port of Veracruz at the same time as General Miramón's Conservative forces approached from land.[47] The *Diario Oficial del Supremo Gobierno*, the official newspaper of the Conservative government, denounced the incident and argued that the United States was a "barbaric and savage nation", which had abrogated the universally accepted conventions of international law, whose civilisation was founded entirely on money and whose principles were based solely on its own material interests. Worse, it had intervened in Mexico's internal affairs as a result of the "outrageous treachery of the men of Veracruz, who did not hesitate to accept foreign help in order to achieve the triumph of principles that the nation detests."[48] Without naval support, Miramón abandoned the siege of Veracruz and by January 1861 Liberals had defeated Conservatives and Juárez took Mexico City.

That the United States was a factor in the inability of conservative politicians to consolidate their political system from 1821 to 1855 is unlikely, and whether US support was a significant cause in Juárez's victory in the civil war is an open question,[49] but such was the interpretation of the Conservative Party. Moreover,

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[46] Pearl Ponce, '"As Dead as Julius Caesar": The Rejection of the McLane-Ocampo Treaty', *Civil War History*, 53 (2007), 346.

[47] A French report on the incident concluded that the incident must be considered an intervention by Washington in the War of Reform on behalf of Juárez's liberals. 'Saisie des bateaux à vapeur le Miramon et le Marquis de la havane par le frégate américaine, le Saratoga, Captain Turner', 28 April 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53.

[48] 'Los yankees en el gulfo mexicano', *Diario Oficial del Supremo Gobierno* (Mexico City), 20 March 1860, front and second pages. See also 'Los Yankees prestando ayuda a nuestros demagogos – La campaña de Veracruz', *La Sociedad*, 18 March 1860, front page.

[49] Josefina Zoraida Vázquez and Lorenzo Meyer, *The United States and Mexico* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 66.

Washington threatened to expand further at Mexico's expense and appeared hostile to Latin America in general, particularly because of filibusters. In addition, conservatives had long held US federal republicanism as anathema to Mexico's traditions, customs and religion as well as deliberately exported in order to weaken Mexico, but, while conservatives had always accused liberals of working with the United States, the War of Reform saw the Liberal government at Veracruz in open collusion with the United States, receiving diplomatic and military assistance, and thus this confirmed Washington was hostile to the political projects of the Conservative Party. It is within this context, in which Mexican Conservatives understood the state that they wished to construct upon conservative principles was threatened by an external power, that the consolidation of their ideas and their calls for European intervention, discussed below, needs to be placed.

II

"This Beautiful Cry, 'Reaction'":[50]

Mexican Conservatism and the European Revolutions of 1848

As noted in the introduction, the collapse of the French Second Empire, the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War and the dominance of French Republican historiography created a black legend around Louis-Napoléon. The judgements of his contemporary critics endured and Karl Marx (1818-83) provided the epitaph for the last Bonapartist regime at its inception: "the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce".[51] Marx, however, showed less disdain for historical repetition in Mexico. In an 1854 letter, in which he claimed that Mexicans were merely degenerate Spaniards, he nonetheless noted that "the Spanish have produced no talent comparable to that of Santa Anna."[52] Had Marx followed Mexican affairs closely he might have been more reserved in his praise for the caudillo. At the time of his letter, Santa Anna, the self-proclaimed Napoleon of the

[50] A phrase from 'Miguel Miramón, general de division, en gefe del éjercito, y Presidente sustituto de la República Mexicana, a la Nación', *Diario Oficial del Supremo Gobierno*, 12 July 1859, front and second pages.
[51] Karl Marx*, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, trans. Eden and Cedar Paul, (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1926), 23.
[52] Quoted in James Dunkerley, *Americana: The Americas in the World around 1850* (London: Verso, 2000), 127.

West, was serving for the fifth and final time as Mexican president. His new government "had decided to follow the same path as the Emperor of the French."[53] And the press that supported Santa Anna's ascent to power praised Louis-Napoléon as the man who had defeated socialism in France,[54] and saw the French Second Empire as a paradigm for Mexico.

From independence conservatives had argued that the solution to Mexico's endemic internal instability and external weakness was the application of their principles. As has been seen in chapter two and three, for some prominent politicians, such as Alamán, constitutional monarchy provided the answer. But conservatives were pragmatic: monarchy under a European prince was merely one way of implementing their programme.[55] They explored a range of alternative possibilities through articles in *El Universal*, first published on 16 November 1848 and edited by many of those who had been associated with *El Tiempo*, including Alamán. Editorials in this periodical drew on conservative arguments of the previous decades and argued for a strong, centralised government based on order, religion, economic prosperity, and support from the property-owning classes.[56]

What distinguishes Mexican conservative thought after 1848 is the importance of European events and models to conservative ideas, which resulted in major changes in previously held positions on topics such as popular sovereignty or the course of revolutions. Initially, however, post-1848 Europe merely provided conservatives with a new vocabulary with which to attack their enemies. The 1848 revolutions were seen as France in 1793 writ large and inspired by the same ideas: Émile de Girardin (1802-81) and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865), "socialists" and "communists" respectively according to *El Universal*, were admitted into an unholy pantheon alongside Diderot, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Robespierre. The newspaper's analysis of the February revolution in France, and subsequent events in Europe, initially fell into the framework of conservative thought as outlined in

[53] José Ramón Pacheco to Drouyn de Lhuys, 24 October 1853, AAE, CP Mexique, 41.
[54] 'La República necesita un hombre', *El Universal,* 13 February 1853, front page.
[55] The conservative politician Luis Gonzaga Cuevas argued Chile as a republic, Brazil as a monarchy and Cuba as a colony enjoyed peace and progress. *Porvenir de México ó juicio sobre su estado político en 1821 y 1851* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1851), 551.
[56] See Palti, *La política del disenso*.

chapters two and three. Events in Europe were cited as proof that sovereignty of the people was a dangerous doctrine, elections should, as Alamán's 1846 electoral law had outlined, be based not on universal manhood suffrage, but on class defined by occupation (both for the electorate and the elected) and revolutions brought to power radicals who were intent on destroying governments and endangering property.[57] Therefore Britain was identified as the model of constitutional government and the only nation which had avoided these evils.[58]

However, analysis in the newspaper quickly changed because of the course events in France. Rather than demonstrating what the newspaper had argued, and what conservatives had long believed, that universal manhood suffrage was inherently incompatible with good government, the election of Louis-Napoléon as president of the Second Republic was seen as the triumph of conservative principles. France wanted to overturn the false revolutionary doctrines and, inspired by this example, a reaction was sweeping across Europe.[59] This had important implications for Mexico, which had been both "spectator and actor in the great revolutionary drama".[60] As had happened in France, it was imperative in Mexico that "THE PARTY OF ORDER ORGANISES ITSELF".[61] It was hoped that the newly formed Conservative Party would fulfil this role as the party of order in Mexico, an aspiration which appeared to become a reality when Conservative candidates secured impressive results in the Mexico City council elections of July 1849.[62]

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[57] 'Sistema electoral', *El Universal,* 3 December 1848, first and second pages. Popular sovereignty was discussed in a series of articles title 'Soberanía popular', 7 and 10 December, front and second pages, 13 December, front page, 17, 18 and 27 December 1848, front and second pages, 5 January, front page, 7 and 28 January, front and second pages, 15 and 24 February 1849, front page. See also 'La revolución francesa de 1791 y la de 1848. Comparaciones – Consequencias', *ibid.,* 13 January 1848, front and second pages.

[58] 'Estado político de Europa', *ibid.*, 16 November 1848, p. 2; 'Las constituciones y los gobiernos', 21 March 1849, front and second pages.

[59] 'Revista política del mes de Febrero de 1849', *ibid.,* 10 May, p. 2; 'Situación de Europa - Término probable de la lucha - Sus consecuencias para la América - Interés de las Repúblicas americanas', 19 May, p. 2; 'Revista política de Europa. Mes de marzo de 1849', 10 June 1849, p. 2.

[60] 'Espíritu positivo del siglo - Su origen - Sus consecuencias - Aplicaciones en Méxcio', *ibid.,* 8 July 1849, front and second pages.

[61] 'Principios conservadores', *ibid.,* 2 July 1849, front page. Capitals in the original.

[62] Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XIII, 291-92.

Indeed, so dramatic was the Mexican Conservative Party's conversion to democracy on the back of Louis-Napoléon's example in France, and Conservative success in municipal elections in Mexico, that Alamán claimed he now favoured direct and popular elections. Realising, however, that this was not possible in the current circumstances, he proposed indirect primaries and secondaries, with elections for the former based on the election law of 1841, which gave the right to vote at this stage to all adult male Mexican citizens over the age of eighteen.[63] This model could not have been further removed from the electoral law he had authored in 1846, discussed in chapter three, or the Seven Laws he had supported, discussed in chapter two. For its part, *El Universal* had gone from depicting direct universal franchise as the root of all evil in recent history to criticising liberals in congress who refused to back this system, and thus betrayed their own liberal principles.[64]

Conservatives hoped that their presidential candidate, the independence leader Nicolás Bravo (1786-1854), would repeat their local success nationwide in the 1850 presidential election. However, the moderate liberal candidate Mariano Arista (1802-55) was victorious, with Bravo in third place.[65] Conservatives' flirtation with democracy therefore resulted in ambivalent conclusions. On the one hand, the Conservative Party had some success in local elections, and Louis-Napoléon's victory in France had convinced them that conservative principles could be supported by the masses. On the other hand, they had not been able to translate local success nationwide and had been defeated in the presidential election. It was therefore necessary to find a figure, like Louis-Napoléon, who could rally popular support. There was only one man in Mexico with such appeal: Santa Anna.

Again, France provided inspiration. Louis-Napoléon's 2 December 1851 coup d'état and the foundation of Second French Empire in November 1852 was not

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[63] 'Camara de Diputados. Proyecto de ley electoral presentado en la camara de diputados por el Sr. Alamán', *El Universal*, 18 April 1850, p. 2.
[64] 'Elección de presidente de la república', *ibid.,* 12 April, front page and 'Sistema electoral', 18 April 1850, front page.
[65] The election is detailed in Michael Costeloe, 'Mariano Arista and the 1850 Presidential Election in Mexico', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 18 (1999), 51-70.

interpreted in the conservative press as a military despotism.[66] Rather, Louis-Napoléon had saved France and lessons for Mexico were apparent. France occupied a key position in world affairs: it had been the centre of the revolutions that swept across Europe, but it remained a "beacon of modern civilisation" that "set the tone for the whole universe".[67] Fortunately, the "civilised world" seemed destined to follow France in its "return to the right path" as well as in its mistakes. Louis Napoléon was the embodiment of this path and France was now the "theatre of reaction, and the shining focal point from which the lights of religious and social truths were again spread."[68]

This happy outcome, however, had by no means been certain in the analysis of European events which served as a parable for Mexico. The revolutions of 1848 had destroyed peace in Europe and resulted in "absurd" doctrines and disastrous theories of government. France especially had been on the edge of an abyss because the "red party" wanted to turn it into a "theatre of horrors".[69] Nonetheless, the revolutions of 1848, and the Second Republic itself, had never enjoyed popular support. *El Universal* identified two forces in France. The first consisted primarily in secret societies formed in Paris, with branches in some provincial cities, and were essentially socialist. They were small in number, but they made up for this by their political activism. The second force was conservative, its motto was "God, *patria* and family" and it comprised almost all the remainder of the nation. It had immense power, but was undermined by a "lamentable apathy and indifference that characterises this part [of the population] everywhere in the world."[70]

It was this latter force that Louis-Napoléon had energised. His election as president of the Second Republic was proof that the people were opposed to the

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[66] This was the role Bourbonist newspaper *El Sol* had ascribed to Napoléon Bonarparte in French history after his 1799 coup d'état. 'Política. Continúa el anterior', *El Sol*, 29 December 1821, pp. 31-32.

[67] 'Carácter de las últimas noticias de Europa. Un pensamiento que asoma en Francia', *El Universal*, 15 and 22 November 1850; front pages; 'Luis Napoleón Bonaparte', *El Orden*, 25 and 26 November 1852, front pages.

[68] 'Reacción que ha tenido lugar en Europa y en América respecto de las ideas políticas', *El Universal,* 16, 19, 22 and 24 December 1853, p. 2.

[69] 'Luis Napoleón Bonaparte', *El Orden*, 25 and 26 November 1852, front pages.

[70] 'Una ojeada sobre el viejo continente – Reacción', *El Universal*, 29 January 1853, front and second pages.

"new and exotic institutions that had been imposed on them", the language echoing the conservative argument against liberalism in Mexico. The explanation for this was simple: Louis-Napoléon represented the "monarchical principle" and his opponent, Louis-Eugène Cavaignac (1802-57), the "republican". France demonstrated the key conservative argument: "systems of government must conform to the character and customs of a nation". [71] They elected the Prince-President because he represented a principle the people loved (monarchy), because they feared "socialists" would return France to the horrors of 1793 and because he represented not only monarchy, but "military monarchy" – "the most energetic principle in the repression of disorder" and the most effective means to save the nation from "socialist barbarism".[72]

The lessons were obvious: "every country, every nation, every people that have felt the shameful effects of liberalism […] can take France as a beautiful example to imitate." In this view, Louis-Napoléon's success was because he had enacted a programme in France that the Mexican Conservative Party had outlined for Mexico.[73] And the result in France was that the emperor had re-established confidence, restored order, brought peace, secured property, increased France's credit, regenerated the sciences and developed commerce and industry; in short the benefits Conservatives argued would result in Mexico with the application of their ideas.[74]

Conservatives also drew conclusions from Louis-Napoléon's election as president in 1849 and the plebiscites of December 1851 and November 1852 that confirmed his seizure of power and the creation of the Second Empire. In its editorial *El Universal* wrote that this was the "final defeat of the democratic idea, vanquished on its own ground and by its own weapons."[75] The lessons learned from Louis-Napoléon's rise to power would be applied in Mexico. As outlined in chapter

[71] 'Luis Napoleón Bonaparte', *El Orden*, 25 and 26 November 1852, front pages.
[72] 'Un ojeada sobre el viejo continente. – Reacción', *El Universal*, 28 and 29 January 1853, front and second pages.
[73] Alamán outlined the Conservative Party programme to Santa Anna in a letter, Alamán to Santa Anna, 27 March 1853, printed in in Vicente Riva Palacio (ed.), *México a través de los siglos*, IV, 807-9.
[74] 'Luis Napoleón Bonaparte', *El Orden*, 25 and 26 November 1852, front pages.
[75] 'Un ojeada sobre el viejo continente. – Reacción', *El Universal*, 28 and 29 January 1853, front and second pages.

three, the political vision of Paredes, and the monarchical conspirators who supported him, was elitist. Those who supported him aimed at curtailing the democratic nature of Mexican republicanism and the constituent congress, which it was hoped would vote for monarchy, was elected on an extremely restricted franchise. What the French Second Empire demonstrated was that, properly managed, mass participation in politics could be a legitimating force for conservative regimes. Louis-Napoléon supposedly said "do not fear the people, they are more conservative than you".[76] Whether or not this was actually one of his aphorisms, the implied marriage of direct democracy with authoritarianism was an experiment the Mexican Conservative Party was willing to try with Santa Anna as president in 1853.

For these Conservatives, the French case also proved that Mexico needed a dictator to restore order. Louis-Napoléon presented "[Mexico] with an example of his heroic valour" and showed that [n]othing [was] easier than to save a country destroyed by factions".[77] *El Universal* concluded that while parties and assemblies could destroy a nation, only an individual could save it. This was a thinly veiled reference to the plan to bring Santa Anna to power. In case the didactic nature of the editorial was lost on the reader, the paper asked rhetorically who did not see the parallels between France since 1848 and Mexico? Mexico, like France, had been ruled "by a miserable minority, whose power only consists in the indifference and apathy" of the majority and had been deprived of light and almost of hope. Mexico, therefore, required "a saviour" like Louis-Napoléon.[78]

Those who brought this "saviour" (Santa Anna) to power identified his government with an international "reaction" that "today is in operation, as much in Europe as in America, in favour of conservative principles."[79] In a private conversation with the French minister plenipotentiary, André-Nicolas Levasseur (1795-1878), Alamán made it clear what these principles were: "they are those of your illustrious sovereign […] principles of order, of justice and of religion". Santa

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[76] Anonymous, *Le Tiers Parti et les libertés intérieures* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1866), 13.
[77] 'Luis Napoleón Bonaparte', *El Orden*, 25 and 26 November 1852, front pages.
[78] 'Un ojeada sobre el viejo continente. – Reacción', *El Universal*, 28 and 29 January 1853, front and second pages.
[79] 'Los principios conservadores y el progreso', *El Universal*, 5 July 1853, front page.

Anna's foreign minister explained further what this meant: "It is upon your country, it is upon your sovereign, that we base all our hopes for the future, we want to model our political institutions on those of France." Alamán added that "[w]e would even like to follow [France's] example to the point of establishing a hereditary monarchy", but, failing that, "we would like [Santa Anna] to have [an emperor's] authority and strength."[80]

The orientation of Santa Anna's regime towards France saw Levasseur notice a distinct improvement in his relations with Mexican politicians. The French minister was the sole representative of the diplomatic corps invited to a political banquet held by Tornel, who had been previously been seen as hostile to France,[81] in February 1853, at which the only toast to a foreign sovereign was to the Emperor of the French. General Uraga (1810-85) toasted Louis-Napoléon at a similar banquet held at the end of the same month. Yet another banquet in March saw the *santanista* General Lombardini (1802-53), the interim president charged with ensuring Santa Anna's return to power, toast the French sovereign again to the exclusion of all others. Levasseur reported these incidents to demonstrate the high regard for Louis-Napoléon and support for the French Second Empire in Mexico.[82]

The first overt manifestation of this propensity for the French model was a press law of 25 April 1853.[83] Alamán had asked Levasseur to send him a copy of the French 19 February 1852 press regulations, which the legation provided along with laws passed 11 August 1848 and 11 August 1849. After consulting the documents, Alamán sought Levasseur's approval of the law.[84] Press censorship was a key Conservative policy because it was considered as "one of the first necessities for the establishment of good government.[85] The moderate liberal paper, *El Siglo XIX*, criticised the law for being an imitation, but *El Universal* responded that the law was not a copy, and, even if it was, plagiarism did not undermine it. In France, as in

[80] Levasseur to French Édouard Drouyn de Lhuys, 30 April 1853, AAE, CP Mexique, 41.
[81] Alphonse Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 3 October 1853, CP Mexique, 41.
[82] Levasseur to Drouyn de Lhuys, 2 March and 27 April 1853, CP Mexique, 41.
[83] Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 297; Mantecón, *Santa Anna,* 201-18.
[84] Levasseur to Drouyn de Lhuys, 27 April 1853, AAE, CP Mexique 41.
[85] Alamán to Francisco Serapio Mora, 2 May 1853, AHGE, Francia, L. 29; e. 365. 'Ley sobre imprenta', *El Universal*, 29 April 1853, front page; Anonymous, *El partido conservador*, 913.

Mexico, the periodical press had been an obstacle to the solid foundation of "peace, order and public tranquillity."[86]

Elements of the Conservative Party's programme were enacted in the early months of Santa Anna's rule. Federalism was revoked and states were renamed departments with governors appointed from Mexico City. An advisory council of state replaced Congress and Santa Anna appointed all ministers who were only answerable to him. Finally, the army was enlarged and reorganised.[87] Levasseur approved of these measures, claiming that the council of state was made up almost entirely of Conservative Party members, who wanted, in lieu of a hereditary monarchy, a strong, almost despotic, centralised power, which was, in Levasseur's words, "the only [government] appropriate for Mexico." He thus praised Santa Anna's initial legislation as "wise" and "firm".[88] With the blessing of Alamán, Santa Anna had been granted extraordinary dictatorial powers for one year in 1853. A *pronunciamiento* of 17 November 1853 in Guadalajara called for his powers to be extended indefinitely and was adopted by enough communities for Santa Anna's council of state to declare that this represented the will of the people.[89] A year later, Santa Anna made the distinctly Bonapartist move of holding a plebiscite on whether he should continue in his extraordinary powers.[90]

However, for Conservative Party apologists the death of Alamán in June 1853 marked the end of their influence over the government of Santa Anna.[91] Levasseur agreed: Alamán's death was a significant loss for Santa Anna, but also for Levasseur himself because the former Mexican minister of foreign affairs had shared exactly his own opinions, including a complete agreement over the political institutions appropriate to Mexico. Moreover, Levasseur felt there were no other Conservative politicians equal to Alamán in ability.[92] Conservatives did still support Santa Anna's regime, but Alamán's death, followed shortly afterwards by Tornel's,

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[86] 'La prensa periódica'.*El Universal*, 8 June 1853, front page.
[87] Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 296-303.
[88] Levasseur to Drouyn de Lhuys, 27 April 1853, AAE, CP Mexique 41.
[89] Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 297; Johnson, *Ayutla*, 19
[90] Mantecón, *Santa Anna*, 54-57; Johnson, *Ayutla*, 63.
[91] Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, II, 340-1; Anonymous, *El partido conservador*, 909-10; Miranda, *Esposición pública*, 41.
[92] Levasseur to Drouyn de Lhuys, 3 June 1853, AAE, CP Mexique 41.

ensured that the General's domestic programme departed significantly from what was envisaged in the first half of 1853.

Santa Anna's dictatorship may have deviated from the domestic Conservative Party programme, but Bonilla, a Conservative, replaced his friend Alamán as foreign minister and tried to put into practice the foreign policy principles they had outlined seven years earlier in *El Tiempo* (see chapter three), namely to orientate Mexico towards Europe. *El Universal*, which was the organ of the Conservative Party and by extension the foreign ministry under Alamán and Bonilla, argued that in order to avoid another "Yankee" occupation of Mexico City, Mexico needed to look to Europe, and base itself, as Europe did, in conservative ideas because this would lead to the formation of an "alliance of conservative principles between […] the nations of the old and new world".[93] This reaction in the Americas and Europe was motivated by the same beliefs, but in Europe it was merely a question of "wellbeing" whereas in Mexico it was more urgent because it was also one of "existence" as a result of the US threat.[94]

The worldview of the Conservative Party was subordinated to this US threat. In his conversation with Levasseur, Alamán had explained that in order to construct the Mexican state along the lines of the French Second Empire it was necessary to have "the sympathy of Europe and in particular the support of France, and when we have accomplished our work of regeneration we will still need the support of our friends to conserve it because we are constantly threatened by [US] invasion." Was not, Alamán asked, the extension of US power over all of Mexico and perhaps as far as Panama" a danger for Europe too? This was a serious question for Britain and Spain, but France was key to Mexico's future: "[w]e are convinced that if [Louis-Napoléon] desires to save us, he can do it, he can assure our independence and contribute to the development of our power, which would become a counterweight to the United States."[95] In short, Alamán summarised in 1853 what would become French policy in 1862.

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[93] 'Política europea y americana - necesidad de estudiar la primera y de abrir un camino á la segunda - alianza de los principios conservadores para el porvenir de la raza española - reformas importantes en el 'Universal', *El Universal*, 1 August 1853, pp. 2-3.
[94] 'Congreso Americano', *ibid.*, 23 June 1853, front page.
[95] Levasseur to Drouyn de Lhuys, 30 April 1853, AAE, CP Mexique, 41.

Alamán and Bonilla had argued for the foundation of a monarchy in 1846 and this remained a possibility under Santa Anna's dictatorship. The British minister to Mexico reported that Santa Anna would readily renounce power if a monarch could be found to rule Mexico.[96] Gutiérrez de Estrada wrote that Santa Anna wanted to restore the empire of Iturbide, but he would have abdicated in favour of a European monarch if one could have been found to take the throne.[97] In 1854 Gutiérrez de Estrada wrote privately to Lord Aberdeen that he had been entrusted with a "confidential matter" of grave importance for the future of Mexico, presumably finding a monarch so Santa Anna could step down, and requested an interview to discuss it further.[98] Aside from the search for a monarch, European intervention in almost any form was called for. Santa Anna asked the Prussian minister to Mexico for military officers to train the Mexican army and, if that was not possible, for 5,000 to 6,000 troops to be sent instead.[99]

The rationale for European intervention in Mexico rested on the conservative interpretation of the United States' role in Mexican history discussed in chapters two and three combined with its continued expansionist aims outlined above. Bonilla restated these in a letter to the then French minister to Mexico, Alexis de Gabriac. New to the discourse of anti-Americanism in the 1850s was the fact that the United States harboured filibusters, but more importantly Bonilla now argued that US ambition was not limited to destabilising Mexico: Washington wanted to export its radical democracy across the Atlantic. It supported the "rebels of Hungary", the "reds of Italy", the "socialists of France" the "disloyal subjects of Spain" as well as the "scum of Mexican politics". As the Ottoman Empire was to Russia, so was Mexico to the United States, and it was in France's interests to enter into an alliance or mutual agreement in order to "contain" the United States and

[96] Percy Doyle to Lord Clarendon, 3 December 1853, FO 50/260.
[97] Gutiérrez de Estrada to Thouvenel, 28 November 1861, 'Privée et confidentielle', AAE, CP Mexique, 56; Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar, *Apuntes para escribir*, 27-28.
[98] Gutiérrez de Estrada to Aberdeen, 16 March 1854, Aberdeen Papers, British Library, Add MS 43252. Gutiérrez de Estrada told William Senior Nassau that Santa Anna had charged him to find a monarch. Senior, *Conversations with Distinguished Persons*, II, 277-8, a claim backed up by Arrangoiz, *Historia de Méjico*, II, 341-42.
[99] Levasseur to Drouyn de Lhuys, 4 May 1853, AAE, CP Mexique, 41.

maintain the balance of power in the Western Hemisphere,[100] views reiterated numerous times in *El Universal*.[101]

The revolt of Ayutla (1854-55) forced Santa Anna into exile (again) and his dictatorial regime was replaced by a reformist liberal one. The subsequent War of Reform ensured Conservatives were fighting for their political survival as well as their ideas. This resulted in an increasing number of appeals for foreign support. *El Universal* was so symbolic of the Conservative Party that its offices were destroyed in 1855 when liberal forces entered Mexico City.[102] It was replaced by *La Sociedad*, which continued its foreign policy line. An 1856 editorial entitled 'La intervención europea' gives the tone of its views. Europe had brought civilisation to the Americas and the two regions were intimately connected. Since independence, Spanish American politics had followed the "old continent" for good and bad because it was the "our progenitor and teacher of civilisation." This was followed by the usual accusations of US hostility, which required Europe to intervene in order to maintain the independence of the "Spanish race", the balance of power and bring order and prosperity to Mexico.[103]

From 1858 to 1860, the Conservative government at Mexico City was even more desperate to procure European aid, and preferably intervention, to support

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[100] Bonilla to Gabriac, 2 March 1854 contained in Gabriac to foreign minister, 'Reservé et confidentielle', 4 March 1855, AAE, CP Mexique, 43.

[101] See, for example, *El Universal*: 'Temores de la política de la Unión Americana', 6 December 1851, front page; 'Situación política de Europa', 15 March 1852, front page; 'Cuestión de Oriente', 24 October 1853, p. 2; 'Los estados unidos a favor de la Rusia', 25 March 1854, front page; 'La guerra oriente - Nuestra intereses y nuestra simpatías', 15, 16 and 18 December 1854, front pages; 'La demagogia y los Estados-Unidos – La cuestión de Cuba en España', 10 and 14 April 1855, front page; 'La revolución en Europa y en America – quienes son los enemigos de nuestro gobierno', 6 August 1855, front page.

[102] Gabriac to Walewski, 18 January 1857, AAE, CP Mexique, 46; 21 January 1858; AAE, CP Mexique, 48; Gadsden to Marcy, 19 August 1855, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 782-84.

[103] Félix Ruiz, 'La intervención europea', *La Sociedad*, 10 June 1856, front page. Similar examples in *La Sociedad* are numerous, for example: 'Que sería México bajo el domine norte-Americano', 18 April, front page; 'El partido liberal y los Estados-Unidos', 15 May 1858, front page; 'Las potencias occidentales de Europa y la Unión norte-americana respecto de los asuntos de Centro América y México', 7 January, front page; 'Allianza de los constitucionales y el gobierno de los Estados-Unidos – Los discursos de Mac-Lane y de Juárez – La circular de Ocampo – Protesta solemne del gobierno de la República, 17 April 1859, front and second pages. These same arguments were also made in the diplomatic correspondence of the Conservative government: Bonilla to Almonte, 20 April 1859; Muñoz Ledo to Almonte, 24 Febraruy 1860, AHGE, Francia, L. 38; e. 558; Castillo Lanzas to Almonte, 1 May, 1 August, 1 September and 2 October 1858, AHGE, Francia, L.38. e. 550. Muñoz Ledo to Almonte 29 March; Hidalgo to Almonte and Tomás Murphy Jr., 23 March 1860. Francia, L. 38; e. 558.

its cause than Santa Anna had been. From Mexico City, the French minister, Gabriac, forwarded petitions for French intervention to the Quai d'Orsay. One, at the behest of Ignacio Aguilar y Marocho (1813-84), a former minister and councillor of state under Santa Anna, asked for the support of France in order to prevent "the ruin of [Mexico] and its fall into the hands of the United States." It cited the 1857 Constitution as opposed to the political, moral and religious senses of all Mexicans and asked for European intervention to restore the principles of order.[104] Another petition asked for forces to pacify the country,[105] and, when president, Zuloaga requested 5,000 to 6,000 French troops to support his government.[106]

As has been seen, both Liberals and Conservatives looked abroad for material aid in their domestic conflicts. However, the triumph of Juárez and, subsequently, of liberal historiography ensured Conservatives remained traitors to the *patria* while Liberals saved it from foreign oppression, but in the 1850s the calls of both factions for foreign intervention proved what Mariano Otero (1817-50) had written in 1848: there were two parties in Mexico which "defend the same idea: that of our own incapacity to govern ourselves."[107] On their own terms, Conservative fears were justified: the victory of Juárez in 1861 meant that army and church *fueros* could never be restored, Catholicism was no longer the established religion of state and a federal republic increasingly tied economically to the United States became a reality. Alphonse Dano (1819-92), Levasseur's interim replacement, wrote of Alamán that "the most skilful thing he did in his life was the timing of his death".[108] In one sense he was right, had the founder of the Conservative Party lived another eight years he would have seen that the future was everything his histories of Mexico had warned against. The last chance Mexican Conservatives had to overturn this liberal triumph was to secure the European intervention they had long argued for.

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[104] Petition of Ignacio Aguilar to Louis-Napoléon, 15 December 1858, contained in Gabriac to Walewski, 'Personnelle et particulière', 1 January 1859, AAE, CP Mexique, 50.
[105] Petition of Joaquin Velásquez de León, 15 January 1859 enclosed in Gabriac to Walewski, 1 February 1859, 'Particulière', 1 February 1859, AAE, CP Mexique, 50.
[106] Gabriac to Walewski, 11 May 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 48.
[107] Mariano Otero to Mora, 14 October 1848, 'Muy reservado' in García, *Documentos*, VI, 120.
[108] Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 18 July 1853, CP Mexique, 41.

III

"The European Party and the American Party":[109]

The French Response to the Western Question

Historians maintain that Louis-Napoléon intervened in Mexico at the behest of a small clique of Conservative Party émigrés in Paris and as a result of poor information provided by the agents of the Quai d'Orsay in Mexico.[110] Leaving to one side the questionable premise that the success of an imperial project need be predicated upon an accurate and in-depth understanding of the political and economic conditions of a country, Section II has demonstrated that calls for European intervention were not the dreams of a few isolated Mexicans in exile, but lay at the heart of the anti-liberal programme. Numerous *santanistas,* monarchists and republicans in the Conservative Party advocated European intervention in one form or another and instructed their representatives in France to work to secure it. This section will evaluate the evidence for the hypothesis that Louis-Napoléon "failed to understand completely the reality of Mexico, and, misled as much by his diplomats as by the Mexican Conservatives in exile", blundered into an ill-advised intervention is correct.[111]

Certainly the diplomatic despatches of French agents in Mexico consistently favoured the Conservative Party. As has been seen, Levasseur described himself as entirely in agreement with Alamán on all matters political and diplomatic, while his successors, Dano, Gabriac and Dubois de Saligny, were equally sympathetic to the Conservative cause. The latter two are especially implicated by historians as diplomats who misled Paris as to the situation in Mexico in close collaboration with individuals who had dubious connections to financial reclamations France hoped to secure from the Mexican government.[112] However, in advocating French intervention they merely reiterated what nearly every French representative to Mexico had proposed since France recognised Mexican independence in 1830.

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[109] Quote from Gabriac to Walewski, 31 Decemeber 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 49.
[110] A view most recently restated by Delmon, 'Les acteurs de la politique', 75-99. See also Dugast, *La tentation mexicaine,*; Gouttman, *La guerre du* Mexique; Lecaillon, *Napoléon III;* Barker, *The French Experience in Mexico 1821-1861*; Schefer*, La Grande Pensée de Napoléon III*.
[111] Delmon, 'Les acteurs de la politique impériale', 99.
[112] Barker, 'In Quest of the Golden Fleece'; Barker, 'The French Legation in Mexico'; Cunningham, *Mexico*, 4-5.

That they were in favour of the Conservatives can be explained by the fact that they believed the Conservative political programme to be the most appropriate to Mexico. Like Mexican Conservatives, they understood democratic federal republicanism to be the cause of Mexico's endemic instability. The solution was a strong, limited franchise and centralist government, or, better still, a monarchy under a European prince. Forsyth's description of Gabriac to the US Secretary of State was, excepting the hyperbole, accurate: "This gentleman […] has been the open [and] active partizan of the [Conservative Party....] His head is filled with dreams of a European protectorate, to be followed by a Mexican kingdom or Empire."[113] Gabriac had close relationships with the principal Mexican Conservative politicians,[114] frequently gave them advice, constantly promoted their cause to Paris and even went as far as recommending, against the advice of the rest of the diplomatic corps and much to the annoyance of the French foreign minister, that French nationals in Mexico pay Miramón's government a forced loan.[115] Indeed, Miramón's administration took the unusual step of sending Louis-Napoléon a letter, signed by prominent members of the Conservative Party, celebrating Gabriac's six years in Mexico and praising his conduct.[116] Gabriac's sympathies, then, were not in doubt and he did, whether deliberately or not, represent the Conservative cause as more likely to succeed than it in fact was.

The Quai d'Orsay, however, viewed Gabriac's efforts on behalf of the Conservatives as unenthusiastically as it had done all calls for intervention in Mexico since 1838. The French foreign minister, in response to a despatch detailing the possibility that Conservatives would request French troops to defeat the Liberals, instructed Gabriac to decline any overture of this nature.[117] In 1859, the then French foreign minister, Alexandre Colonna-Walewski (1810-68), warned the

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[113] Forsyth to Cass, 25 June 1858, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 1007-10.
[114] And with the moderate liberal president Comonfort, who in several meetings Gabriac encouraged to renounce the liberal government he headed and suspend the 1857 Constitution. A course of action that Comonfort took in December 1857. Gabriac to Walewski, 5 February 1857, CP Mexique, 46; same to same, 22 November, 18, 28 and 31 December 1857, CP Mexique, 47.
[115] Gabriac to Walewski, 30 May 1858; Walewski to Gabriac, 29 July 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 48; Walewski to Gabriac, 28 August 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 49.
[116] Bonilla to Louis-Napoléon, 9 May 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53; *La Sociedad*, 9 May 1860, 'El exmo. Sr. ministro de Francia en México'.
[117] Gabriac to Walewski, 1 August 1858; Walewski to Gabriac, 28 August 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 49.

French minister in Mexico that he must show strict neutrality in the internal disputes of the nation.[118] A few months later, the foreign minister further admonished Gabriac for his partisanship towards Conservatives: France had no obligation or desire to support the Conservative government against the Liberals at Veracruz.[119]

Saligny did not arrive in Mexico until the end of 1860, just in time to see Mexico City fall to Juárez's Liberals. In his first despatch to Paris he wrote that information about the state of the country was difficult, if not impossible, to acquire, but one thing was incontestable: "Miramón does not occupy more than two important places, Mexico City and Puebla. The rest of the country is controlled by his enemies, who are concentrating their forces, which number 25,000 to 30,000 men, as quickly as possible in order to attack the capital." Saligny reported that Miramón, without money, starved of resources of any kind, betrayed or abandoned by his generals, retaining, with difficulty, some thousand or so discouraged and demoralised troops, whom he was unable to pay and who deserted his cause each day, would not be able to prolong much longer an impossible struggle. "Success", concluded Saligny, would require nothing less than a miracle and miracles had become "extremely rare."[120] It is hard to discern in this précis of Conservative fortunes which element of it was seized upon as proof by Louis-Napoléon or his foreign minister that a French expeditionary force on behalf of the Conservative cause would result in inevitable triumph.

It was not, then, the pro-Conservative sympathies of French diplomats or their misrepresentation of the Party's fortunes which convinced Paris to intervene in Mexico. The Quai d'Orsay was, however, more receptive to the view that US expansion needed to be prevented. Just as Mexican conservatives had always presented their political programme as a response to external threats as much as a solution to the internal problems of Mexico so too did French diplomats present their recommendations to the Quai d'Orsay. Chapter three has shown that de Cyprey consistently argued for European intervention in support of monarchy

[118] Walewski to Gabriac, 30 May 1859, AAE, CP Mexique 51.
[119] Walewski to Gabriac, 30 November 1859, AAE, CP Mexique, 52.
[120] Saligny to Thovenel, 26 November 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53.

partially because he believed that without this form of government Mexico would be lost to US expansion. His successor, Levasseur, supported Alamán's ideas in 1853 not only because of shared principles, but because "republicanism and federalism would achieve the ruin of [Mexico] and deliver it to the [United States]."[121] Dano made the exact same point and argued that monarchy was essential for the survival of Mexico.[122]

Gabriac was no exception to this trend and in him Mexican Conservatives found a kindred spirit and a fellow advocate for the western question. Placing Mexico in the context of the Crimean War, Gabriac warned "Mexico seems to have become the Constantinople of America". He argued that if it fell into US hands it would be difficult to prevent their complete domination of the hemisphere. "Masters of this immense territory", he asked rhetorically, "will they not dictate the law to Europe?"[123] Gabriac agreed with the ideas of the Aimé- Louis Victor du Bosc, marquis de Radepont (1810-89), who had served as a military attaché to the US army during the US-Mexican War and had settled in Mexico afterwards. In a plan submitted to the Quai d'Orsay, Radepont, claiming to speak on behalf of the "most eminent men in Mexico", argued, just as Bonilla had done in his letter to Gabriac, that the United States was a radical democratic power that gave asylum to the revolutionaries of Europe. Radepont added the Crimean analysis: US foreign policy was the same as Russia's in Europe and Asia, worse, filibusters were used openly to advance its expansionism, and Mexico was the Ottoman Empire of the west. "The Spanish population, or the Latin race of the New World", knew that the "Anglo-Saxons" were their implacable enemies. Only a monarchy, he argued, could save Mexico from internal disorder and inevitable conquest. During a trip to Paris, Radepont was granted an audience with the emperor and was able to discuss his ideas on two separate occasions.[124]

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[121] Levasseur to foreign minister, 2 June 1853, AAE, CP Mexique, 41.
[122] Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 4 January 1854, AAE, CP Mexique, 42.
[123] Gabriac to Drouyn de Lhuys, 31 December 1854, 1 January and 25 January 1855, AAE, CP Mexique 43.
[124] Radepont 'Project pour la régénération du Mexique', undated, enclosed in Radepont to Gabriac, 4 October 1856, AAE, CP Mexique, 46. See also Radepont to Louis-Napoléon, 25 February 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 48. Radepont remained in contact with Louis-Napoléon during the intervention and his correspondence to the emperor is contained in AN, AP400/62.

In light of the US threat French diplomats concluded that the Conservative Party was the only one that could save Mexico. They argued, like Mexican Conservatives, that the Church and Catholicism were the most significant barriers which could prevent US expansion.[125] As Guizot had done with the River Plate in the 1840s, Gabriac divided Mexican politics in the "European Party" (Conservatives) and the "American Party" (Liberals).[126] In his view, the so-called "reaction" was an expression of "conservative politics and conforms to the interests of Europe in America". It was contrasted with the ideas of federalism, which had led to religious persecutions and disorder, and had been supported for "forty years by the agents of Washington in Mexico."[127] The 1857 Constitution was a series of "social and political paradoxes" formed from "socialist, demagogic and irreligious" ideas that would further ruin Mexico.[128] Gabriac accused the US representatives, Gadsden and Forsyth, of aiding Liberals and pointed out to Paris that Liberals were pro-Washington.[129] He argued that the recognition by Washington of Juárez's government had proved his warnings correct.[130] The McLane-Ocampo Treaty provided yet more evidence of US ambitions and the complicity of Liberals with the United States, which would irrevocably damage European interests.[131]

In Gabriac's view the United States aimed at the complete exclusion of Europe from Mexican affairs either through direct annexation or indirect domination, which would destroy the hemispheric and, one day, global balance of power.[132] Gabriac secured a copy of a despatch from the US minister, Forsyth, which he forwarded to the Quai d'Orsay as proof of US designs on Mexico. In the despatch the US representative outlined his own support for Manifest Destiny, his attempts to secure territorial concessions and his view that Mexico was the "battleground for the maintenance of American supremacy in America, a theatre

[125] Gabriac to Walewski, 2 October and 29 October 1856, AAE, CP Mexique, 46.
[126] Gabriac to Walewski, 31 December 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 49.
[127] Gabriac to Walewski, 1 December 1856, AAE, CP Mexique, 46.
[128] Gabriac to Walewski, 14 March 1857, AAE, CP Mexique, 46.
[129] Gabriac to Walewski, 25 August, 26 September, 1, 12 and 17 October 1855, AAE, CP Mexique, 44; 1 and 14 August, 19 September, 11 November and 1 December 1856, AAE, CP Mexique, 46; same to same, 5 February, 11 April, 20 and 25 October 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 49;
[130] Gabriac to Walewski, 18 April 1859, CP Mexique, 51.
[131] Gabriac to Walewski, 19 December 1859 and 20 February 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 52.
[132] Gabriac to Walewski, 30 January 1857,

for the practical illustration of the value and virtue of the Monroe Doctrine."[133] For Gabriac, this would be a disaster both economically and politically. US industry would soon compete with Europe's and its control of precious metals would exacerbate financial crises,[134] while it would export its political doctrines internationally to the detriment of the European social order. Even if the United States did separate into various republics, "these Anglo-Saxon societies all aimed at the same goal: the enslavement of Southern America to the yoke of their material interests". US policy in California and Texas demonstrated what awaited these conquered people – "the Latin race there was harried like the Indian".[135]

In a conversation with the newly arrived Prussian minister, Gabriac found a fellow anti-American who outlined the imminent danger facing Europe. Baron Emil von Wagner (1825-99) had just arrived from the United States and argued it was motivated by nothing more than "fever for the dollar". This material culture made it "the most disgusting country in the world, and the country that glories the most in being disgusting." The Prussian minister argued that Buchanan wanted to create a balance between the slave South and the free North by conquering Mexico. The consequences of the McLane-Ocampo Treaty would be ruinous for Europe. It was therefore more urgent each day that Europe make Mexico the centre of a policy that would create an equilibrium in the Americas. The only way to do this would be if Louis-Napoléon, in concert with the other powers of Europe, established a monarchy in Mexico.[136]

US diplomats similarly represented Mexico as a site of geopolitical contest. They warned of imminent European intervention and advised Washington that Mexico was a battleground between European principles (monarchy) and US institutions (federal republicanism).[137] Gadsden recognised that Conservatives represented their cause as analogous to that of the Ottoman Empire and wrote that they were hoping to turn Mexico into "the Turkey of Europe" in order to gain

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[133] Enclosed in Gabriac to Walewski, 22 April 1857, AAE, CP Mexique, 47. The forwarded despatch is identical to Forsyth to Cass, 4 April 1857, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 902.
[134] A view shared by Chevalier, *Des mines*, 93-97.
[135] Gabriac to Walewski, 11 May 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 48.
[136] Gabriac to Walewski, 27 January 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 52.
[137] Gadsden to Marcy, 5 and 25 November 1855, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 792-94; 797-99.

French support.[138] Forsyth pointed out that Liberals were pro-Washington and their success was in the interests of the United States.[139] The Conservative Party, on the other hand, "looked to the continent of Europe for the means, material and political, of its subsistence". Therefore United States should back the Liberals and "[i]n the present demoralized condition of Mexico […] no course can be adopted but one that will give the [the United States] an effective but indirect Protectorate."[140] These were not only the arguments of Democrats: the moderate Republican paper *The New York Times* supported the McLane-Ocampo Treaty and argued European influence in Mexico must be opposed at all costs: "if our Government goes back of [sic] the Monroe doctrine, there is a chance at last that a barrier may be placed to the Anglo-Saxon wave. If it be established, a sad future opens upon liberal Republican institutions in America."[141]

As has been seen, the Quai d'Orsay had given no encouragement to the various interventionist schemes of its agents prior to 1861, but it did make it clear that further expansion of the United States was antithetical to the interests of France. Although more sober in their analysis of US ambitions, French foreign ministers agreed throughout the 1850s that the United States was an ambitious power that wanted to expand. The then French foreign minister, Édouard Drouyn de Lhuys (1805-81), wrote to Levasseur that the "interests of our policy make us strongly desire that Mexico be independent and prosperous." He opposed the Gadsden Purchase and argued that it was necessary to support Santa Anna's regime as far as possible in establishing its prestige because it worked to check the ambitions of the United States and improve relations with Europe.[142] Gabriac's forwarding of Forsyth's despatch which outlined the US diplomat's support for Manifest Destiny had "particularly caught [Walewski's] attention".[143] Walewski had

[138] Gadsden to Marcy, 17 November 1855 in *ibid*., IX, 795-97.
[139] Forsyth to Cass, 1 July and 1 August 1858, *ibid.,* IX, 1010-12; 1016-18.
[140] Churchill to Cass, 8 February, Churchill to Buchanan, 22 February 1859, *ibid.,* IX, 1024-30; 1032-35.
[141] 'Mexican Affairs; Decision of the European Powers upon their Mexican Policy – Cruelties Practised by Rojas – A Terrible Affray – Anxiety for the Fate of the McLane Treaty', *The New York Times,* 14 April 1860, no page nos. given.
[142] Drouyn de Lhuys to Levasseur, 29 Decemeber 1852, AAE, CP Mexique, 40; Drouyn de Lhuys to Dano, 31 January 1854, AAE, CP Mexique, 42; Drouyn de Lhuys to Dano, 30 November 1854, AAE, CP Mexique, 43.
[143] Walewski to Gabriac, 2 July 1857, AAE, CP Mexique, 47.

already warned that the fall of Santa Anna meant Mexico had been plunged into complete dissolution which provided the United States "with new opportunities for aggrandisement".[144] He feared Mexico might cease to exist, and warned that the War of Reform threatened the independence.[145]

France had hoped that the combination of internal divisions within the United States, Mexican opposition to its attempts to secure more territory and diplomatic pressure from Britain, France and Spain would be enough to prevent US expansion. However, by 1860 it was clear that a Washington alliance with Juárez's Liberal government would at best result in US hegemony or, worse, further annexation. Saligny's instructions from the French foreign ministry stated that "the United States, already masters of the provinces which formerly belonged to Mexico" worked towards new "territorial acquisitions". The recognition of Juárez's government at Veracruz was part of this process because the Liberals, unlike Conservatives, were willing to sell concessions to the United States in return for Washington's support. The interest of France, like all other European powers, was that Mexico did not lose its independence and therefore "our sympathies" are for Miramón's government which had shown itself "more anxious to preserve the integrity of the national territory".[146] This was a reiteration the Quai d'Orsay's analysis of Mexican affairs outlined a month earlier: "Nothing, unfortunately, confirms the doctrine of Manifest Destiny more than the current state of Mexico [….] The successive absorption of its provinces by the United States has already begun and will continue". In this analysis, the United States had been reluctant to annex territory too early because of the dangers it posed to the Union, but it had worked to fuel civil war in Mexico in order to weaken it and had allied itself with Juárez to further this goal. The anarchy which now reigned in Mexico was the pretext Washington would use to occupy it. Buchanan's message to Congress of 19 December 1859 demonstrated beyond doubt that this was the policy of his administration.[147]

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[144] Walewski to Gabriac, 15 November 1855, AAE, CP Mexique, 44.
[145] Walewski to Gabriac, 29 November 1856, AAE, CP Mexique, 46; 27 February 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 48.
[146] Thouvenel to Saligny, 30 May 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53.
[147] 'Note pour le Ministère', April 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53.

As discussed in chapters two and three, fear of US expansion had concerned French diplomats since the 1830s, an interpretation frequently expressed in French public discourse.[148] However, this fear was not only voiced by pan-Latinists or French imperialists. In a letter to Lord Clarendon (1800-70), Palmerston wrote "I have long felt inwardly convinced that the Anglo Saxon Race will in Process of Time [sic] become Masters of the whole American Continent North and South" and Britain "ought to delay [this] as long as possible." However, Palmerston believed there was little Britain could do. Treaties could not prevent the US advance because it would continue through "the indirect agency" of filibusters "in alliance with the [United States]". "In short", he concluded, "Texas over again."[149] Clarendon held the same view: "unless Britain and France are prepared to occupy Central America and Mexico with a large land force and to have their fleets to support it in both oceans we may be sure that sooner or later those countries will be overrun and occupied just as have been Louisiana, Texas, and California added to the Union."[150] These two leaders of British foreign policy understood the expansion of the United States to be detrimental to the interests of Britain, but impossible to stop without extraordinary measures. It was partially for these reasons that Palmerston privately supported Louis-Napoléon's attempt to establish the Second Mexican Empire.[151]

Indeed, there was nothing controversial about intervention in Mexico from a British perspective; the first European power to argue for it was Britain, not France. In the British view, Mexico was, to use an anachronism, a failed state. It had been riven by civil war and instability since independence. The current division of the country between two parties was the most recent, and the most anarchic, demonstration of this. The British government proposed a cease fire that through the mediation of Britain and France be agreed between Liberals and Conservatives

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[148] Stève Sainlaude, *La France et la Confédération sudiste, 1861-1865: la question de la reconnaissance diplomatique pendant la guerre de Sécession* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011), 192; Thier, 'The View from Paris'; Thier, 'A World Apart, A Race Apart?'; Roger, *The American Enemy*; Rémond, *Les États-Unis*.

[149] Palmerston to Clarendon, 31 December 1857 quoted in Richard van Alstyne, 'Anglo-American Relations, 1853-1857: British Statesmen on the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty and American Expansion', *American Historical Review*, 42 (1937), 491-500.

[150] Clarendon to Cowley, 21 May 1857, FO 519/175.

[151] Palmerston to Russell, 13 August 1863; Palmerston to Russell, 11 September 1863; Palmerston to Russell, 26 September 1863, PRO 30/22/22.

for a period of six months during which a national assembly would be convened in order to constitute whatever form of government the nation wished.[152] France agreed to the British proposal, but it was rendered irrelevant by Juárez's refusal to accept mediation.[153] However, France had reservations because Washington's open sympathy for Juárez. The French foreign ministry maintained, echoing the language of Guizot over Texas discussed in chapter three, that France had an "incontestable interest in maintaining the independence of Mexico [and] delaying the invasion of this vast market by the [United States] to the detriment of Europe", but it would not countenance any policy that would prejudice French relations with Washington. The report remarked that France had for a long time received numerous requests from the Mexican Conservative Party to lead a European intervention or to support a monarchical restoration, but Washington's objections to this policy made it impossible to carry them out.[154] The US Civil War, then, was the occasion which allowed Louis-Napoléon to prosecute freely France's "incontestable interest" without fear of US protest or reprisal.[155]

It was further US aggrandisement that was Louis-Napoléon's greatest concern and therefore it was to this that representatives of the Conservative government appealed, not the reaction against liberal reforms or the popularity of the Conservative Party or enthusiasm for monarchy in Mexico. Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar saw it as his primary duty to highlight this threat and he brought it up whenever possible with Thouvenel, who expressed a "strong interests in Mexico", understood with the US threat and had wanted "to do something for [Mexico] in 1854 and 1855".[156] Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar argued that the McLane-Ocampo Treaty would end Mexican independence, upsetting the balance of power in the Americas. France must intervene as the principal power of the Latin race and to protect French strategic and economic interests. Mexico would be stable once the US threat was no more, when the Liberals had been defeated and a government conforming to

[152] 'Note verbale remis par Lord Cowley', 7 February 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 52.
[153] Gabriac to Thouvenel, 24 April 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53.
[154] 'Proposition anglaise', January 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 52.
[155] Louis-Napoléon states clearly that the US Civil War afforded him a free hand to pursue his policy in Mexico. Louis-Napoléon to Count Flahault, 9 October 1861, AN, 400AP/63.
[156] Hidalgo to foreign minister, 30 March 1860, AHGE, Francia, L. 38; e. 558.

the interests of Mexico had been set up. The cause of Mexico was "civilisation, Catholicism and European commerce",[157] and in making this argument, which tied pan-Latinism to monarchy and European trade, he was preaching to the converted. It was not the Conservative programme in itself that convinced the French government of the necessity to intervene, nor was it the representation of the political situation in Mexico by French diplomats or Mexican émigrés. Rather it was an acceptance of their geopolitical and geostrategic interpretation, and the belief that Mexican Conservatives could act as auxiliaries in the prosecution of a French foreign policy goal.

Conclusion

US expansion remained a constant threat to Mexico throughout the 1850s. Moreover, Conservatives understood the United States to be in alliance with Liberals and during the War of Reform Washington did actively work to secure the triumph of Juárez. Therefore, in order to find support for their own political vision, Conservatives increasingly looked overseas for material and diplomatic assistance as well as political models. Already predisposed towards Europe, Louis-Napoléon's success after 1848 in constructing an authoritarian and stable regime further drew Conservatives, who placed themselves within the context of a European-and-American-wide reaction against anti-clerical democratic and liberal doctrines, towards France. Conservatives adapted lessons drawn from post-1848 France for Mexican elections in 1849 and 1850 as well as seeing the French Second Empire as inspiration for the dictatorship of Santa Anna. The failure of their political projects followed by the polarisation of Mexican politics further convinced members of the Conservative Party that their salvation lay outside the nation. This in turn meant that France found sympathetic local elites through which it could pursue its long-term objective of checking US power in the Americas while developing French influence in the region.

[157] Almonte to Thouvenel, 26 January 1860, Almonte to Mons, 31 January 1860; Hidalgo to Almonte and Thomas Murphy Jr., 23 March 1860; 'Note verbale remise à Monsieur Thouvenel par Monsieur Hidalgo après l'audience du 19 April 1860'; Note verbale remise à Monsieur Thouvenel par Monsieur Hidalgo après l'audience du 21 May 1860', AHGE, Francia, L.38; e.558.

This foreign policy goal was praised by the French statistician and senator Charles Dupin (1784-1873). It was not possible for him congratulate the French emperor in public because it would mean "imprudently lifting the veil with which it is necessary to cover the true reason for the [French intervention in Mexico]." Far above the nominal causes, Dupin was able to see the thought that truly directed the intervention, and this was the "boldest of our century, I would say further, of modern times". It was to stop the expansion of the United States. Dupin noted that the population of the US had been 2 million in 1763, was 32 million in 1863 and calculated that in 1963 it would be 512 million. The United States would need more land for these people, exactly as Louis-Napoléon and Chevalier feared the United States would thus absorb Mexico, cross over the Isthmus of Panama and invade South America. In a hundred years the Anglo-Saxon race would number more than half a million. "Jealous of Europe, enemies of the old world, it would be capable of trying to enslave the universe." Of all the sovereigns only Louis-Napoléon had understood the danger the United States posed and this was the idea that lay behind his attempt to save Mexico.[158] This was the exactly the rationale of pan-Latinism discussed in chapter three; a zero-sum interpretation of the world that argued for an equilibrium between races. And for this reason, the article which contained the first use of the term "Latin America" also described Mexico as a "new Eastern question", but in the Western Hemisphere.[159]

The rationale for intervention was a joint creation by French imperialists and Mexican Conservatives as collaborating elites. Indeed, the War of Reform was to some extent a struggle over whether Mexico would be under US hegemony or European tutelage. What the Liberals were offering Washington was a virtual economic protectorate. Juárez's minister to Washington made this clear: "the [United States] will derive all the advantages which they might obtain from annexation of Mexico, without suffering any of the inconveniences which such a step would produce."[160] Conservatives wanted European protection rather than US,

[158] Charles Dupin to Louis-Napoléon, 9 November 1863, 'Du Mexique dans ses rapport avec Napoléon III par le baron Charles Dupin, sénateur', AAE, MD Mexique, 10.
[159] Belly, 'Du conflit anglo-américain', 122.
[160] Quoted in Olliff, *Reforma Mexico*, 150-51.

and France wanted the benefits Liberals offered to Washington for itself. And Dupin's fears were proved correct: the Spanish-American War of 1898 and US construction of the Panama canal was everything that France (Britain and Spain as well for that matter) feared in the 1850s. French intervention was, above all, the outcome of a geostrategic and geopolitical contest between Europe and the United States. The means that France adopted to challenge Washington' regional hegemony was informal empire on a grand scale, and its failure was as great as its ambition. In order to explain this failure, chapter five will explore the form that the French intervention and the Second Mexican Empire took.

Chapter Five

The Limits of Informal Empire: French Intervention and the Mexican Second Empire

Introduction

In a study of the fall of James II and the Glorious Revolution, Louis-Napoléon concluded: "March at the head of the ideas of your century, and these ideas will follow and support you. March behind them, and they will drag you along. March against them, and they will overthrow you."[1] Although he embodied the very ideas that the Emperor of the French extolled, Maximilian's execution alongside the leaders of Mexican conservatism at Querétaro on 19 June 1867 makes him more reminiscent of Charles I than of William III. His regime, and the French policy that brought it into existence, united an unlikely variety of critics. The ultramontane and reactionary Archbishop of Mexico, Pelagio Antonio de Labastida y Dávalos (1816-91), used the same word to describe the intervention as the French republican Favre: it was "a chimera".[2] That opponents and supporters of the intervention could come to the same conclusion is indicative of its politically ambiguous nature. Intended to appeal to Mexicans across the political spectrum, the regime it created was condemned by opponents and supporters alike after its collapse, while both the French and Mexican Second Empires themselves came to be seen as anachronisms, like James II, and merely painful interludes before the triumph of republicanism in Mexico and France.

As this thesis has argued, in order to understand why France intervened in Mexico to help found this empire it is necessary to imperialise the French intervention as well as to Mexicanise it. Chapter one has shown that French policymakers wished to extend French influence and that they showed a preference for informal means of achieving this. It also demonstrated that Latin America in general, and Mexico in particular, were important areas in the French worldview. Chapters two, three and four have analysed the political circumstances and shared discourses in French and Mexican history (monarchism; pan-Latinism; anti-

[1] Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, *Oeuvres de Napoléon III: mélanges*, (Paris: Plon et Amyot, 1862), 140.
[2] Arrangóiz, *Méjico desde 1808 hasta 1867,* III, 159; Favre, *Discours parlementaires*, II, 334-35.

Americanism) that meant that some members of the political elite in Mexico favoured French intervention by the 1850s. This final chapter will show that the French imperial context shaped the Mexican Second Empire, but also that Mexican factors limited French freedom of action.

The French intervention was not an exceptional "adventure", but an example of French informal imperial expansion. The basic aims of the intervention were simple: to develop the Mexican economy (and secure much of the consequent benefit for France) and to create a powerful and stable regime in North America tied to France that would prevent further US expansion. However, unlike other contemporary examples of French imperialism, the intervention ended in catastrophic failure.

To help explain this failure, this chapter will place the French intervention in the Mexican and French imperial context of the 1860s.[3] Section I will explore the economic and administrative ideas of Mexican Conservatives, which provided another powerful rationale to support French intervention. However, The French vision for the political direction of the Mexican Second Empire clashed with the clerical wing of the Mexican Conservative Party, which came to disown the empire which they had called for because of (what they saw) as its liberal regulation of Church-state relations. Section II will then investigate the architecture of French informal imperialism, the means by which France hoped to establish "a close solidarity of interests" between the Mexican and French empires through a political system that aimed to rally moderates from both parties that had fought in the War of Reform.[4] Finally, section III will discuss the reasons for the spectacular failure of this imperial project.

I

Order and Prosperity: The Mexican Case for Empire

As has been discussed in chapter four, Mexican Conservatives had called for European intervention prior to the War of Reform (1858-61), and their defeat in

[3] For a detailed breakdown of the events in Mexico 1861-67 please refer to Chronology 3, pp. 261-64.

[4] A term used by Drouyn de Lhuys, quoted in 'La Doctrine Monroe et L'Empire du Mexique', *Le Mémorial diplomatique*, 12 March 1865, p. 173.

this conflict provided another reason to welcome the intervention as a final opportunity to implement their ideas and vanquish their Liberal opponents. Thus those who initially supported the intervention belonged to the Conservative Party. From a French point of view, these individuals acted as "auxiliaries" to the French cause.[5] The most important "auxiliary" to France for the first two years of the intervention (from January 1862 to May 1864) was Juan Nepomuceno Almonte. He enjoyed Louis-Napoléon's, and Maximilian's, confidence and was sent to Mexico under French protection to organise local forces against Juárez and to act as an intermediary between the French intervention and the Conservative Party.[6]

As has been shown throughout this thesis, Mexican politics was fluid, categorisations difficult and political affiliations changed over time. Santa Anna provides a typical example as he charted a course from *puro* federalist to authoritarian centralist; Almonte is another striking case in point. He had been a member of the *yorkinos* in the 1820s, but gravitated towards the anti-liberal spectrum of Mexican politics and the *Santanistas* in the 1830s and 1840s. He fought alongside Santa Anna against the Texan rebels and later served as a diplomat to Washington and the major courts of Europe. He was minister of war in 1840 and directed a proclamation to the army calling Gutiérrez de Estrada a traitor for his monarchical tract published in the same year. Similarly, in 1846 he had been a vocal critic of *El Tiempo*'s monarchical arguments.[7] He stood as a candidate in the 1850 presidential election and came second to Arista (see chapter four), but performed better than the Conservative candidate. Under Santa Anna's dictatorship he served again as minister to the United States (1853-56). He supported the Conservative governments of Zuloaga and Miramón and was their minister to Britain (1856-58) and France (1857-61), but had been appointed to these positions by the moderate liberal Comonfort; his republican credentials were not questioned until the late

[5] Jurien de la Gravière to Thovenel, 9 February 1862, AAE, CP Mexique, 57.
[6] Almonte personally corresponded with Louis-Napoléon, the Empress Eugenie and Maximilian. His letters to Louis-Napoléon are in AN, AP400/61. His letters to Maximilian are reproduced in [**J**]uan [**N**]epomuceno [**A**]lmonte Papers, 1834-1865, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin. Correspondence to Almonte is contained in El archivo del [**C]**entro de [**E]**studios de **H**istoria de [**M**]éxico Carso Juan Nepomuceno Almonte, Fondo XXIII.
[7] Manuel Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México: galería de biografías y retratos de los vireyes, emperadores, presidentes y otros gobernantes que ha tenido México, desde don Hernando Cortes hasta el c. Benito Juárez*, 2 vols. (Mexico City: J. M. Aguilar Ortiz, 1872-3), II, 638-9.

1850s.[8] The son of one of the heroes of Mexican independence, José María Morelos, his political journey took him from the company of radical liberals to the Conservative Party and then the leader of France's "auxilaries" during the intervention.[9]

Almonte represented a distinctive strand in conservative Mexican thought that emphasised economic development and administrative rationalisation. This had always been a part of conservative discourse,[10] but as outlined, for example, in *El Sol* in the 1820s, by Gutiérrez de Estrada in 1840 or *El Tiempo* in 1846, there were only vague assertions that order would lead to progress. After 1848 economic concerns formed a more coherent part of conservatism in Mexico. *El Universal* argued in 1849 that progress, "the spirit of the century" and "positivism" had been confused with the ideas of the French revolutions of 1789 and 1848. In this sense, the "positivism that marks the current era" had resulted in "disappointments" because it had brought violence and disorder. Rather, the paper argued, "what is positive" is "peace" and the best government was the one which brought this to the nation. Just as with "liberty", liberals had misunderstood what "progress" meant. The paper did not doubt that the "spirit of the century [was] the spirit of progress", but this should not be confused with democracy. For the newspaper, "progress" meant "peace, individual security, the perfection of the arts, the development of agriculture, the increase of industry and commerce". Moreover, "the enemies of modern democracy and the defenders of the conservative principle, they are the true men of progress, and the legitimate sons of the century." Nowhere demonstrated this more than France, argued the editorial, where Louis-Napoléon

[8] Oseguera warned the liberal minister in Paris that Almonte had fallen under the influence of Gutiérrez de Estrada. Oseguera to Juan Antonio de la Fuente, 29 October 1859, AHGE, Francia, L. 38; e. 553.

[9]His public service is chronicled in Anonymous, *Hoja de meritos y servicios del ... General de Division D. J. N. Almonte ... hasta 30 de agosto de 1864* (Mexico City: Imp. Andrade y Escalante, 1864), and his diplomatic career is detailed in AHGE, L. 302; A, B and C – 'expediente personal'**.** Almonte's life is covered briefly in Jack Jackson (ed.), *Almonte's Texas: Juan N. Almonte's 1834 Inspection, Secret Report & Role in the 1836 Campaign* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2003). See also Helen Willets Harris, 'The Public Life of Juan Nepomuceno Almonte' (PhD thesis: University of Texas at Austin, 1935).

[10] Alamán was an entrepreneur and an industrialist, had always supported the development of Mexican mining and industry. See Hale, *Liberalism*, ch. 8.

embodied the triumph of the conservative principle, which, unlike socialism, represented all classes.[11]

The arguments outlined above were part of a debate with the moderate liberal *El Siglo XIX* and the editorials were staking out conservative claims to idea of progress,[12] but economic and administrative reform became a central part of the 1850s consolidation of Mexican conservatism. The focus of conservative thought on economic progress is illustrated by policies enacted under Santa Anna's final dictatorship, particularly the creation of the ministry of *fomento* (development).[13] Almonte's own concern for economic matters is shown by the fact that he founded and chaired the *Sociedad Promovedora de Mejoras Materiales y Morales* in 1851, which encouraged economic development in Mexico during the 1850s,[14] and his published works reflected his interests in administration, forestry, statistics and geography.[15]

It was not true, as liberal opponents claimed, that "[t]he reactionary party lacked a positive program; its war cry was simply the negation of liberal ideas and principles" or that the Conservative Party could only "repeal, destroy; postpone the rest for a better time."[16] For example, Miramón, who became president of the Conservative government in 1859, presented his ideas for the Mexican nation in a manifesto. What is striking about this document is that in it he did not attribute Mexico's problems to the 1857 Constitution and liberal anti-clericalism: only one

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[11] 'Espíritu positivo del siglo – su origen – sus consecuencias – aplicaciones en México', *El Universal*, 8 July, front and second pages; 'Progreso – espíritu del siglo – espíritu de los mexicanos', *ibid.,* 15 August, front page; 'El espiritu del siglo presente no es la democracia pura - Pruébase con la actual revolulción de Europa', *ibid.,* 1 and 2 September 1849, front pages.

[12] Although *El Universal* used the word "positivism" (*positivismo*) it is not clear what, if any, link this had with the ideas of Comte or earlier Saint-Simonians. The classic studies of positivism in Mexico see it introduced after the Mexican Second Empire. See Leopoldo Zea, *El Positivismo en México* (Mexico City: Colegio de México, 1943), and *Apogeo y decadencia del positivismo en México* (Mexico City: Colegio de México, 1944). See also Hale, *Transformation of Liberalism*.

[13] Mantecón, *Santa Anna,* 40; 44-6.

[14] Anonymous, *Hoja de meritos*, 5; Reports from the society were published in the newspaper *El Orden*. See also *Reglamento interior para el gobierno de Sociedad Mexicana, etc.* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido**,** 1851), and *Actas de la Sociedad Mexicana promovedora de mejoras materiales y morales, desde su instalacion* (Mexico City: M. Murguia y compañia, 1854).

[15] Juan Nepomuceno Almonte, *Noticia estadistica sobre Tejas* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1835); *Catecismo de geografía universal para el uso de los establecimientos de instrucción pública de México* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1837); *Guía de Forasteros, y repertorio de conocimientos útiles* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1852).

[16] Vigil, *México a través*, 281; 367.

paragraph out of thirty five mentioned the Church. Instead, Miramón argued that every branch of Mexico's government needed reform, including the treasury, tax collection, education and justice. In addition, he proposed public works to stimulate the economy and provide employment. Finally, disorder in Mexico threatened the existence of the nation because of the US threat; Miramón, therefore, wanted to create a government so loving of "true liberty, civilisation and progress" that it would attract the United States and Washington would (by implication) abandon its support for Juárez.[17]

For those who supported this programme, the French intervention provided an opportunity to put it into effect under French guidance. In 1863, *La Sociedad* ran a series of articles outlining the fiscal, commercial, agricultural and industrial reforms necessary to modernise what the author saw as Mexico's largely colonial system. These began with an article entitled 'Finances'. This was, according to the writer, a word borrowed from the French language, and French administrators had already begun the reform of Mexican government revenues. The article argued that "administrative science" was not as advanced in Mexico as it was in other countries, not because Mexico lacked men who had indicated the route that needed to be followed, but the incompetence of those in power, or vested interests, had prevented reform. Crucially, the systems of internal customs needed to be abolished and replaced with direct contributions.[18]

What followed over the next few months was a discussion of political economy which ranged from the purpose of and types of taxation to the role of industry, agriculture and commerce, questions which the newspaper considered to be equally as important as the political and constitutional ones being debated at the same time. The central theme to the articles was the need for reform. Mexico's

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[17] Printed in 'Miguel Miramón, general de division, en gefe del éjercito, y Presidente sustituto de la República Mexicana, a la Nación', *Diario Oficial del Supremo Gobierno*, 12 July 1859, front and second pages. The Plan of Tacubaya, the document with which Conservatives announced the overthrow of the constitutional government in 1857, similarly emphasised the need for "order and progress", administrative reform, a short dictatorship for the "pacification" of the country, the development of the economy and the establishment of a constitution conforming to the "history, traditions and customs of Mexico". 'Plan de Tacubaya', 17 December 1857, Saint Andrews University, 'The Pronunciamiento in Independent Mexico 1821-1876' database: http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/dates.php?f=y&pid=1006&m=12&y=1857.

[18] 'Finanzas', *La Sociedad*, 10 August 1863, front page.

fiscal policy was "truly monstrous and totally unsupportable". Theorists from Jovellanos to Adam Smith were invoked, but on a practical level there was a model to imitate: "truly admirable, as it is in all other branches of public administration, France." This "perfect type" had two advantages for Mexico: first, it was intrinsically good and, second, Mexican society, based as it was on Spanish customs and traditions, was ideally placed to implement French ideas because Spain had based its own institutions on France. Moreover, unlike Spain, Mexico had the opportunity to overhaul completely its old practices because it was now unencumbered by interests which would resist the "patriotic task of properly ordering our economy."[19]

The editorials argued that indirect taxation was inefficient and archaic. Instead, direct taxes, traditionally disdained in Mexico, and which hardly figured in government revenues, were the foundation of European fiscal systems, especially in France, and needed to be adopted by Mexico. Mexico was not an exception in the civilised world, and with the help of France, the same principles applied in Europe would work across the Atlantic. The reform of Mexico's fiscal structures, combined with order and peace, would mean that "[Mexico's] economic problem, which includes [its] national debt and is the fundamental basis of all [its] social problems, would be definitively resolved".[20]

Many of these articles were initialled "M. P. y C." and were most likely written by Manuel Piña y Cuevas (1804-77) who was a member of the Assembly of Notables that voted for Maximilian as monarch and a councillor of state under the Empire. He had been finance minister under the moderate presidencies of Herrera and Arista and had argued for the formation of a national bank to manage Mexico's debt.[21] He was described by a French diplomat as a member of the "reactionary party", but clearly one with a positive programme as far as economic reform

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[19] 'Hacienda. Contribuciones directas,' *ibid.,* 4 September, front page; 'Hacienda. Contribución territorial', *ibid.,* 6 September, front page; 'Hacienda. Catastro para la repartición del impuesto territorial', 11 September, front page; 'Hacienda Pública. Agriculutura', *ibid.,* 1 November, front page; 'Hacienda', 28 November 1863, front page.

[20] 'Hacienda', *ibid.*, 16 and 22 August 1863, front and second pages.

[21] Pani, 'Appendice 1: El Personal del Imperio', 374. His attempts to found a national bank in 1848 are described in Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XII, 230-39.

went.[22] He is illustrative of a current of thought in Mexican conservatism that belies simple categorisation as "reactionary", and viewed the increasing economic power of France with admiration.

Development and modernisation were central to the Second Mexican Empire, or at least to its rhetoric. One of the first acts of Maximilian's reign was to set up an "Economic Commission", which was "formed of people sincerely interested in the prosperity of the country." The Commission was charged with examining all aspects of the Mexican economy, particularly the inability of the treasury to cover expenses, the system of taxation, the national debt, colonization, industry as well as concessions for the construction of railway and telegraph lines.[23] The Emperor's speech for the inauguration of the Imperial Academy of Sciences and Literature began by highlighting the benefits of modernisation for the Mexican economy through railways and steam ships.[24] Limited progress was made in railway construction,[25] but urban regeneration, the introduction of the metric system, decimalisation of the currency and administrative reform along European lines were successfully implemented.[26]

The promise of policies such as these was one of the principal justifications for intervention. The conservative newspaper *El Pájaro Verde* editorialised: the civil war in Mexico had severely damaged industry, agriculture and commerce and therefore improvement of public finances, administration and the economy were as important as the moral and social regeneration of the country.[27] In December 1863, *La Sociedad*, wrote that "[w]ith hopes of the political and social regeneration of the country, come projects of material development of similar importance**.**" The paper noted and translated appreciatively an article from the French press, which listed schemes such as draining the Valley of Mexico, piped drinking water, gas lighting,

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[22] Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 26 June 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62.
[23] *Boletín de las leyes del Imperio Mexicano, ó sea Codigo de la restauración*, 4 vols. (Mexico: Imprenta literaria, 1863-65), III, 45-49; Pani, *Para mexicanizar*, 244-49.
[24] 'Discurso Pronunciado por S. M. el Emperador en la solemne instalación de la Academia de Ciencias y Literatura, día de su cumpleaños', *El Pájaro Verde* (Mexico City), 13 July 1865, front page.
[25] Railway construction is detailed in a report by the minister of development, Luis Robles Pezuela, *Memoria presentada á S. M. el Emperador por el Ministro de Fomento L. Robles Pezuela de los trabajos ejecutados en su ramo el año de 1865* (Mexico: Imprenta de J.M. Andrade y F. Escalante, 1866).
[26] Duncan, 'Political Legitimation', 34-35; 45-48.
[27] 'Agricultura, comercio, industria', *El Pájaro Verde*, 28 July 1863, p. 2.

improved mining, development of cotton, tobacco and coffee for export.[28] The paper concluded that draining the Valley of Mexico was the most important of all of these measures and the editorial ended with a report from the moderate liberal José Fernando Ramírez (1804-71), at the time an opponent of the intervention, on this subject. Later, Ramírez rallied to the empire and was appointed Maximilian's foreign minister. In this position, he outlined and praised the various schemes of Maximilian to develop the Mexican economy.[29] As with economic reform, intervention would facilitate this process through European capital, expertise and immigration, a point made by various pro-intervention newspapers.[30] For *imperialistas*, as supporters of Maximillian became known, a strong government aided by European expertise would be able to fulfil the long-held desire for economic and administrative reform.

They also believed the Mexican empire was a solution to the endemic political instability of Mexico. In a proclamation of January 1863, Almonte restated that the aims of the intervention were to "end the civil war" and contribute to the establishment of a solid government based on "order and morality", which would leave it to the Mexican people to elect a government "of the form most suited to them".[31] His first proclamation identified Juárez's government as "the enemies of order", opposed to "morality". The oldest refrain in the canon of anti-federal conservative thought was ever present: Mexico needed a government in accordance with its "character, needs and religious beliefs", which would finally end "anarchy" and guarantee "life and property", and, as a consequence, allow commerce to develop and take advantage of the "immense resources" of the country.[32] The provisional executive council set up by the French intervention, and

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[28] 'Mejoras materiales proyectadas - desagüe de la ciudad y del Valle de México - un opusculo inedito del José Fernando Ramirez', *La Sociedad*, 6 December 1863, front page.
[29] Ramírez to Hidalgo, 29 October 1864, AHGE, Francia, L. 41; e. 622.
[30] 'Ultimas noticias de Europa. - Celebridad de la toma de Puebla en Paris. - Manejos de los partidarios de la política de Prim. - Proyectos de mejoras materiales en México', *El Cronista de México* (Mexico City), 21 July, front page; Miguel García Vargas, 'Mejoras Materiales', *ibid.,* 9 November, front page; 'Algunas observaciones económico-políticas', *ibid.,* 21 November 1863, front page; 'Editorial', *L'Estafette* (Mexico City), 21 July 1863, front page.
[31] 'Manifiesto Del general de division D. Juan Nepomuceno Almonte, á sus conpatriotas', 12 January 1863 enclosed in Saligny to Drouyn de Lhuys, 21 January 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60.
[32] 'Proclamation du Général Almonte [French translation]', enclosed in Jurien de la Gravière to Thouvenel, 18 April 1862, AAE, CP Mexique, 57.

known as the Regency from June 1863, was described by Almonte as a step towards the "moral, social, political and industrial restoration of Mexico".[33]

The intervention and the Regency government always emphasised "order and stability", together with various combinations of "progress", "peace" and "prosperity". A letter from the Conservative general, Antonio Taboada (1833-71), to his Liberal friend, Tomás O'Horán y Escudero (1819-67), began by appealing to the latter's "ideas of order and patriotism". Taboada wrote that O'Horán must, as he himself had done, have studied the situation of "our unfortunate country" and concluded that Mexico lacked the capacity to find within itself "the radical remedy, much less the peace, progress and much-vaunted freedom" the nation needed in order to find stabilty. Similarly an *imperialista* pronunciamiento in Chiapas called for the foundation of a government based "on the principle of order […] a strong and robust government".[34]

For supporters of the intervention, monarchy was a solution to the perceived anarchy of Mexico because, for its advocates, it was synonymous with "order, peace, prosperity and respect for individual rights",[35] and would provide "strong and robust government" without descending into tyranny. One monarchist argued that Mexico since independence had been "tyrannised" by "military dictatorships", like Santa Anna's, which were "immoral", but respected property and "gave guarantees of security", or by governments of "unchecked demagoguery", as exemplified by Juárez, that "respected nothing, neither religion, nor those who did not think like them, nor property". Having seen the country lose nearly half of its territory, and in order to safeguard the existence of the Mexican nation, the Conservative Party, therefore, "finally turned to the only remedy that could save their nationality and traditions […]: monarchy."[36] It was hoped monarchy would end the "vicious circle" or revolts that around which the nation had revolved

[33] 'Manifiesto del Supremo Poder Ejecutivo á la Nacion', enclosed in Saligny to Drouyn de Lhuys, 26 June 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60. Many of these proclamations are printed in Román Iglesias González (ed.), *Planes políticos, proclamas, manifiestos y otros documentos de la independencia al México moderno, 1812-1940* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1998).
[34] Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 495.
[35] *Ibid.*, XVI, 592.
[36] Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808,* IV, 345-46.

"without cease since independence".[37] Monarchy was a solution to this endless conflict because, as Gutiérrez de Estrada had argued in 1840, the person of the monarch was above party conflict and thus factional fighting would cease. And the same argument made by *El Sol* in 1821-22 was made again in 1863: the hereditary principle provided stability in contrast to the elected presidents of a republic.[38] In response to those who argued that monarchy was retrogressive or incompatible with liberty, independent Mexico was contrasted with the constitutional monarchies of Europe. Personal and commercial liberty, political rights and freedom of the press, which in Mexico had only existed on paper, would become a reality as they were in the "great European monarchies".[39]

Other arguments from Mexican monarchist discourse discussed in chapter two were deployed. The conservative press countered those who claimed that with the French intervention Mexico would renounce its independence and abdicate its sovereignty; Mexico would only lose the presidential seat, which would be replaced by a throne. Moreover, monarchy was a chance to complete the Plan of Iguala and guarantee independence. Indeed, Mexico would affirm the latter because at present "the weakness of our industry means we depend on foreign nations**,** and a powerful neighbour [the United States] still conspires to weaken us." Furthermore, by tying itself to the great powers of Europe, Mexico would assure its independence in the event of any future international threat.[40] And it was not only Spanish colonialism that made Mexico's customs suited to empire, Mexico had been a monarchy for as long as a thousand years under various different pre-Columbine rulers.[41] For committed monarchists the intervention was presented as the

[37] 'La Cuestion del día', *La Sociedad*, 4 July 1863, front and second pages.
[38] 'República y monarquía', *ibid.*, 29 June 1863, front and second pages.
[39] Sebastián Monterde, 'La monarquía y la democracia', *La Sociedad,* 30 June, front page; Sebastián Monterde 'La Libertad y la monarquía', *ibid.,* 29 July 1863, front and second pages; Miguel García Vargas, 'La Intervención Francesa en la República de México. – Opúsculo escrito por Miguel García Vargas, ciudadano jalisciense', *El Cronista de México*, 6, 7 and 9 July 1863, first and second pages.
[40] Sebastián Monterde, 'El Plan de Iguala', *La Sociedad,* 13 July, front and second pages; Sebastián Monterde, 'El Imperio Mexicana', *ibid.* 16 July 1863, front page.
[41] Sebastián Monterde, 'México bajo la monarquía', *ibid.,* 2 July, front page; J. M. Roa Barcena, 'La clase indigena y la intervención', *ibid.,* 11 July 1863, front page. Similar arguments were made in the Assembly of Notables, Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 73-74; 593-95*;* 599-607.

culmination of the work of (what they called) the "monarchist party" begun by *El Tiempo* in 1846.[42]

The Regency marked the high-water mark both of Franco-Mexican cooperation in support of the intervention and of optimism for the future. In a manifesto to the Mexican people immediately prior to the formal dissolution of the Regency and the proclamation of the Empire, Almonte celebrated a government which owed its existence to the "combined action of the national interest and the magnanimous and civilizing France".[43] From fiscal reform to political institutions, France was seen as a model, the French army was the portrayed as the restorer of order and the intervention was a legitimate means of saving Mexico. Pro-intervention publicists combed through the pages of Emer de Vattel (1714-67) and Fortuné-Barthélemy de Félice (1723-89) to find justification for France's actions in international law. They concluded that since the revolt of Ayutla (begun in 1854), Mexico had been in state of perpetual anarchy and, far from diminishing Mexican sovereignty, France had come to restore and guarantee it. The French were, therefore, not "conqueror[s] of the country", but "supporters of [conservative] ideas".[44] The combined French and Mexican forces that entered Mexico City in June 1863 were the "allied army", the French were "generous helpers",[45] and "auxiliaries to the conservative cause" who "would take down the [Liberal] government and prepare a situation of order and stability."[46]

For Mexican defenders of the intervention, the political institutions set up by France were proof that there was no intention of "conquest", "domination", "or of a "French colony". Moreover, the material benefits of the Franco-Mexican relationship would be vast. *La Sociedad* recognised that the interests of France were not absent from its policy, but they were combined with those of Mexico: railways, telegraphs, immigration, capital and the development of national

[42] M. Acevado, 'Forma Monarquía', *El Cronista de México*, 1 July 1863, front page; 'Apuntes biograficos del Señor Don Manuel Diez y Bonilla', *El Pájaro Verde,* 20 and 21 August 1864, front and second pages.
[43] 'La Regencia del Imperio', *La Sociedad*, 22 May 1864, front and second pages.
[44] Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 146.
[45] 'El Ejercito alliado en México', *La Sociedad*, 11 June 1863, front page.
[46] Miranda to the Duke of la Torre, 10 June 1862, quoted in García, *Documentos inéditos*, IV, 110-15.

industry.[47] Panegyrics to Louis-Napoléon were published, hyperbolic propaganda even by Bonapartist standards: "[w]e pray to heaven that the Bonapartist dynasty lasts forever, and that it continues the work of the current emperor".[48] In the ideal view of committed *imperialistas*, the election of Maximilian was the free wish of the Mexican people and there was no interference in internal political affairs. The French Second Empire was a paradigm to emulate and the "work undertaken in France by [Louis-Napoléon] has much in common with the ongoing work of Maximilian".[49]

It can be seen then that there was support amongst Mexican Conservatives for French intervention for a variety of reasons. Central amongst these was the hope that the empire of Maximilian would create order and stability, the conditions necessary for the administrative reforms and economic development at the heart of the Conservative programme. Conservatives theorised a mutually beneficial relationship between themselves and France that would further their political project as well as French interests without compromising the independence of Mexico. As will be seen below, however, there was a disjuncture between the French vision for the Mexican Empire and that of some in the Conservative Party, which, within the asymmetrical relationship between the two, could only be resolved in France's favour.

France would not have intervened in Mexico without the support of the Conservative Party, but the utility of these Mexican collaborating elites was that they provided a government in waiting which gave a semblance of legitimacy for the establishment of the Mexican Second Empire. Louis-Napoléon's letter to General Forey, who was appointed leader of the French intervention after the 5 May 1862 defeat at Puebla, outlined this policy. He wrote that the general should treat with "greatest consideration all the Mexicans" who rallied to the intervention. These "notable persons" would then be called upon to form a provisional

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[47] Sebastián Monterde, 'La intervención francesa y la indendencia nacional', *La Sociedad,* 14 September, front and second pages; Sebastian Monterde, 'Motivos de la intervención', *ibid.,* 17 September, front and second pages; Sebastian Monterde, 'Carácter de la intervención', *ibid.,* 6 October 1863, front page.

[48] 'Napoleón III – El Arbitro de la paz del mundo', *El Pájaro Verde,* 15 August 1863, p. 2.

[49] 'Conciliación de los partidos – discurso de Mr. de Morny', *La Sociedad*, 8 July 1864, front page.

government that would choose an assembly to deliberate on the future form of Mexico's government.[50] This resulted in the *Junta Superior del Gobierno*, composed of thirty-five men, predominantly members of the Conservative Party,[51] set up by decree in June 1863. This body nominated a triumvirate Regency Council as an "executive power" and selected an "Assembly of Notables" made up of 215 men, who supposedly represented the will of the Mexican people which voted on the form of government Mexico should adopt. The process was, of course, carefully stage-managed: Forey was able to report to Paris, and Almonte to Maximilian, that the assembly would vote in favour of monarchy before it had delivered its verdict.[52]

In this sense the establishment of the Mexican Second Empire was an elite project, which relied on the "respectable and wise portion of the Mexican public to express its wishes [in favour of monarchy]".[53] Chapters two and three have shown just how narrow French commentators considered the "respectable and wise" portion of the Mexican public to be. As will be seen, once established, the Mexican Empire was presented as the will of the Mexican people and, eventually, to be constituted on lines not dissimilar to the French Second Empire, but, to continue the parallel, the intervention was Louis-Napoléon's coup d'état of 2 December 1851; plebiscites would come later. And, in this sense, discussion of the popularity or otherwise of monarchy in Mexico, and whether Louis-Napoléon was misled over this, somewhat misses the point: there was support for monarchy amongst limited – but crucial – sections of the Mexican elite. Moreover, as will be discussed in section II, the Mexican Second Empire did rally significant support from across the political spectrum of Mexico.

The political course of the French intervention and the empire of Maximilian demonstrates that neither were intended for the benefit of the Conservative Party alone, as contemporary critics, and many historians, have alleged. As soon as the Regency was established, French policy broke with those who had done most to

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[50] Louis-Napoléon to Forey, 8 June 1862, AAE, MD Mexique, 10.
[51] A list of the members of both bodies is included in a revised version of Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar, *Apuntes para escribir la historia* republished as *Proyectos de Monarquía en Mexico* (Mexico City: F. Vasquez, 1904), 359-73.
[52] Forey to Drouyn de Lhuys, 7 July 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60; Almonte to Maximilian, 26 June 1863, JNA.
[53] As Drouyn de Lhuys remarked to Senior, *Conversations*, II, 290-91.

bring about and support the intervention, which in turn led some Mexican Conservatives to disown both the intervention and later Maximilian. Hence the ultramontane Labastida could agree with the republican Favre that French policy was a chimera. Louis-Napoléon's vision for Mexico was Bonapartist. The clerical-conservative wing of Mexican conservatism would have agreed with the French Emperor that "a country torn by anarchy cannot be regenerated by *parliamentary* liberty." However, they were less enamoured with Louis-Napoléon's solution: "What is needed in Mexico is a *liberal* dictatorship; that is to say a strong power which shall proclaim the great principles of modern civilisation", which included "religious liberty".[54] The Emperor had made it clear to Almonte that "as long as my army is in Mexico, I will not permit the establishment of a blind reaction that compromises the future of this beautiful country and, in the eyes of Europe, dishonours our flag."[55] Instructions to Forey and Bazaine were unequivocal: do not follow a reactionary policy because France represents the "cause of civilisation and progress in Mexico".[56]

The French interpretation of civilisation and progress in Mexico differed from the clerical wing of the Conservative Party in one important aspect: relations between Church and state. One of the primary aims of clerical conservatives was the revocation of the reforms against the Church enacted during the War of Reform and confirmed by Juárez after his victory. The intervention was supported not only because monarchy would restore order and prosperity, but also because the new government would be founded upon "the principles of Catholicism and the Church", principles which, Conservatives argued, liberal republicanism had attacked. The clerical conservatives could not in any event accept a religious settlement unless it was authorised by the Pope; in their eyes France had been sent by providence to rescue Mexico from the irreligious abyss Juárez had plunged it

[54] Louis-Napoléon to Maximilian, 2 October 1863, printed in Corti, *Maximilian*, I, 389-90. Emphasis in original.
[55] Louis-Napoléon to Almonte, 16 December 1863, CEHM, Fondo XXIII; 1-1. 3. 1.
[56] Louis-Napoléon to Forey, 8 June 1862, AAE, MD Mexique, 10; Louis-Napoléon to Bazaine, 30 July 1863, quoted in Paul Gaulot, *L'Expédition du Mexique (1861-1867) d'après les documents et souvenirs de Ernst Louet ... Nouvelle èdition*, 3 vols. (Paris: P. Ollendorff, 1906), I, 144-45; Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, 17 August 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60; Louis-Napoléon to Bazaine, 12 September 1863, in García, *Documentos*, XVI, 34-36.

into.[57] Liberals had oppressed the Church in Mexico and wherever, argued a conservative newspaper, there "exists an oppressed people, there will go the flag of France to protect them".[58] Unfortunately for Mexican clerical conservatives though, French policymakers believed that "the secret of [France's] influence in the world, is that she represents those immortal ideas known as the principles of 1789". The intervention must, therefore, "foster in Mexico those liberal and progressive ideas which she has introduced into [France] with so much success."[59]

It was over this divergence that clerical conservatives soon became disillusioned with the intervention despite the role they had played in bringing it about. Almonte worked with the French and refused to revoke the sale of Church property, but in so doing he earned the disdain of other Conservatives, such as Labastida, who was also a member of the Regency (along with Almonte and José Mariano de Salas (1797-1867), a former interim president of Mexico) and tried unsuccessfully to restore mortmain property to the Church. Arrangoiz, a clerical conservative and supporter of Labastida, argued that Almonte presented himself as the leader of the "progressive Conservatives" in contrast to those, like Labastida or Gutiérrez de Estrada, who belonged to the "retrogressive Conservatives".[60] Another clerical conservative, the Bishop of Puebla, Javier Francisco Miranda (1816-64), warned: "[Almonte] counts on no elements [of support] and by his apathy, moderatism (*moderantismo*) and indolence he may yet lose those I have so painstakingly put into his hands." The Bishop argued that Almonte was determined "to follow a policy of half-measures and compromises" to the detriment of the Conservative Party.[61]

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[57] Sebastián Monterde, 'México independiente', *La Sociedad*, 27 June, front page; José de la Luz Pacheco Gallardo, 'La religión y independencia', *ibid.,* 12 July, front page; Sebastian Monterde, 'El episcopado Mexicano', *ibid.,* 4 October, front page; Sebastian Monterde, 'Carácter de la intervención', *ibid.,* 6 October 1863, front page; Moralidad pública', *ibid.,* 11 September 1864, front page; *Zamacois*, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 853.

[58] 'Napoleón III – El Arbitro de la paz del mundo', *El Pájaro Verde,* 15 August 1863, p. 2.

[59] Chevalier, *Mexico Ancient and Modern*, trans. Thomas Alpass, 2 vols. (London: John Maxwell and Company, 1864), I, vii-viii. The English edition has an introduction written by Chevalier not contained in the first or second French editions from which this quotation is taken from. The settlement of Church-state relations in accordance with the principles of "modern civilisation" forms the final section of the work, *Le Mexique*, 547-603.

[60] Arrangoiz*, Méjico desde 1808*, III, 176-77; Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 852-53.

[61] Miranda to Santa Anna, 5 June 1862; Miranda to Márquez, 21 September 1863, quoted in García, *Documentos inéditos*, IV, 103; 176-7. Emphasis in the original.

Many leaders of the Conservative Party refused to be associated with this moderate policy.[62] However, Almonte's "eminently practical" nature,[63] which Liberals and later clerical conservatives attacked as "ambition" and an absence of principle, made Almonte useful to the French, and he enjoyed the support of Louis-Napoléon, Thouvenel and Saligny.[64] He acted as an intermediary between the French political vision for the intervention and the ultramontane members of the Conservative Party, attempting to reconcile their views with the liberal settlement envisaged by Louis-Napoléon. It was hoped that Almonte would form a "liberal-conservative" party, which would be "wise, moderate, fighting Juárez and opposed to [the clerical conservatives]."[65] Moreover, he represented a current of thought in Mexican politics, discussed in section I, that emphasised economic development. Almonte was thus amongst the first of the hundred or so Mexican elites who rallied to the empire.[66]

As chapters three and four have shown, transnational ideas such as pan-Latinism and anti-Americanism were flexible enough to be embraced by Mexican Conservatives. They were not, however, flexibly interpreted in Paris. Louis-Napoléon was determined to impose his own vision on Mexico through an informal-imperial framework and if this was unpalatable to clerical conservatives, which it was, then so be it. This was not only an ideological decision, but also a pragmatic one. Mexican Conservatives had proved themselves unable to defeat Juárez's Liberals. If the Mexican empire were to survive, it was necessary to attract moderate liberals to the cause as well. It was the implementation of liberal ideas during the intervention and under Maximilian which followed from this policy that led Arrangoiz to conclude the "disastrous end" of the Mexican Second Empire was "exclusively" the result of the "improvidence of the Emperor of the French" because of the "complete ignorance of his ministers in Mexican affairs" and the

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[62] Sierra, *Juárez;* 303-4. Sierra did not count Almonte amongst these men because "he was a "man of resentment and ambition; a politician." Rivera Cambas similarly attributed ambition as the driving motivation for Almonte's actions in *Los gobernantes de México*, 638-43.
[63] Emmanuel Domenech, *Le Mexique tel qu'il est, la vérité sur son climat, ses habitants et son gouvernement* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1867), 222.
[64] Saligny to Thouvenel, 11 March 1862, Thouvenel to Saligny, 20 March, 31 May 1862, AAE, CP Mexique, 58; Louis-Napoléon to Lorencez, 15 June 1862, AAE, CP Mexique, 59.
[65] Domenech, *Le Mexique tel qu'il est*, 222-3; Gaulot, *L'Expédition du Mexique*, I, 352; 360.
[66] Pani, *Para Mexicanizar*, 189-242.

"desire to govern [Mexico] from Paris and in a French fashion". As regards the initial collaborating elites who supported the intervention, the failure of Mexican Second Empire was "not the fault of the Conservatives […] or the clergy".[67] Arrangoiz was right: it was not the Conservatives who were responsible for the collapse of the Mexican Second Empire, but nor was it the interference in the internal affairs of Mexico from Paris he criticised. Rather, it was the model of imperialism that France adopted. The final two sections will address what this model was, and why it failed.

II

"You Are Free, Govern Yourself!":[68] The Architecture of Informal Rule

French imperialism in Mexico followed the model it did because policymakers of the French Second Empire wished to avoid the burden of formal rule. The lawyer and economist, William Senior Nassau (1790-1864), in conversation with French foreign minister Drouyn de Lhuys, remarked "[y]our presence and your influence [in Mexico] can do [Britain] nothing but good. I should be glad to see you make an Algeria of [Mexico]." Alarmed, Drouyn de Lhuys replied "[s]o should I not". He continued, "We are mad, perhaps, to go thither at all; but we are not mad enough to wish for a dependency, four thousand miles off […] which would cost us two or three millions sterling a-year, and would be lost the first time that we quarrelled with you, or the Southern Anglo-American States. What we might do, and what it is your interest that we should do, is to establish there a constitutional monarchy with European sympathies."[69]

As Drouyn de Lhuys made clear in December 1863 to the French minister in Mexico Charles-François-Frédéric, marquis de Montholon (1814-86), "the part that [France] has taken as the guardian of [Mexico's] regeneration" meant Montholon was charged with imprinting on "the administration of this country a direction conforming to the ideas France attempts to make prevail everywhere it extends its influence."[70] Or what Louis-Napoléon described as the necessity that "in Mexico

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[67] Arrangoiz, *Mejico desde 1808*, IV, 346.
[68] The quote is from a poem that celebrates the creation of the Second Mexican Empire: Mariano A. Bejarano, 'Variedades. Al Fundador del Imperio', *La Sociedad*, 20 June 1864, p. 3.
[69] Senior, *Conversations*, II, 290-1.
[70] Drouyn de Lhuys to Montholon, 15 December 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 61.

you [General Forey] are [in charge] without appearing to be so".[71] In short, the aim was exactly that identified by Walter Bagehot in *The Economist*: "[Louis-Napoléon] has contrived to obtain a splendid position upon the American continent without incurring all the responsibility a colony would have imposed."[72]

Aside from Chevalier's work, the clearest articulation of the French plan for the Mexican Empire modelled on the French was sketched by Emmanuel Masseras (1830-99), a journalist and former editor of the *Courrier des États-Unis*. He had been hired by Montholon to edit *L'Ere Nouvelle*, a newspaper set up by the French legation in order to promote French interests. Having spent only fifteen days in Mexico, Masseras published *Le Programme de l'Empire*, a small brochure which outlined familiar pan-Latinist ideas behind the intervention and the problems caused by republicanism in Mexico followed by the imperial solution. Previously, argued Masseras, the word "empire" had been associated with "absolute" government, but Louis-Napoléon had made "an intimate alliance" between the "modern principles of progress" and "democracy" with conservatism and stability. France's role in founding the government in Mexico would ensure that the regime could not be a "retrogressive" one.[73]

This was an argument frequently made during the intervention: France was "one of the freest [regimes] in Europe", founded on the principle of universal suffrage so it would never impose colonial government on Mexico.[74] The brochure concluded by outlining what underwrote the Mexican Empire: the reconciliation of parties, the organisation of a stable government supported by the law, religion and the nation, material and moral transformation and "democracy in the empire". Mexico would perhaps one day supersede the United States, it was claimed, and for those who thought such dreams unrealisable, one need only compare the sad state

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[71] Louis-Napoléon to Forey, 14 February 1863, quoted in Gaulot, *L'Expédition du Mexique*, I, 132.
[72] 'The New Mexican Empire', *The Economist*, 22 August 1863, pp. 925-26.
[73] Emmanuel Masseras, *Le programme de l'empire* / *El Programa del Imperio* (Mexico City: Imprimerie de J.M. Lara, 1864), 18-19. A copy of the brochure is contained in Montholon to de Lhuys, 28 May 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62. It is printed in *Boletin de las leyes*, II, 416-443. Masseras published a history of his time in Mexico, *Un essai d'Empire au Mexique* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1879).
[74] Proclamation of Saligny and Forey, 16 April 1862, enclosed in Saligny to Thovenel 18 April 1862, AAE, CP Mexique, 57.

of France in 1851 with its present day glory.[75] The brochure, written by a Frenchman, commissioned by the French minister, agreed by Bazaine and Almonte, was sent to Maximilian for his approval the day he disembarked at Veracruz.[76]

The paper that Masseras edited, *L'Ere Nouvelle*, was set up to defend the French worldview: "conservative and liberal […] it worked to spread the doctrines of equality before the law, the abolition of Church and aristocratic privilege" – the "doctrines of 1789".[77] It was, as Masseras described it, an "organ of French policy". The contract stated that intervention had established "a special bond" between France and Mexico, which it was necessary to maintain through "moral influence" in the press. The paper, therefore, would be "devoted to the interests and legitimate influence of France".[78] According to Montholon's replacement, Dano, the paper was not a success. It had failed to attract the sympathies of anyone – either amongst the French or the Mexicans – and it would have folded without the financial support of France. It had only a quarter of the subscribers of the other French language paper, *L'Estafette*.[79] This paper, edited by Charles de Barres (dates not known), existed prior to the intervention, when it was liberal and pro-Juárez.[80] Barres welcomed Juárez's entrance to Mexico City in 1861, but was equally happy to celebrate the arrival of the French in 1863,[81] his contentment no doubt facilitated by the subsidy he received from the new government.[82] Given that the French backed the Church reforms enacted under Juárez there was no change in the newspaper's arguments in favour of the sale of Church property, freedom of worship and the independence and supremacy of the state in ecclesiastical matters.[83]

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[75] Masseras, *Le programme de l'empire* (Mexico City: Imprimerie de J.M. Lara**,** 1864), 21; 36.
[76] Montholon to de Lhuys, 28 May 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62.
[77] Gaulot, *L'Expédition du Mexique*, II, 5-6.
[78] Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 28 August 1864.
[79] Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 'Confidentielle', 10 July 1865, AAE, CP Mexique, 64.
[80] Zamacois; *Historia de Méjico*, XV, 91; 267; 583-4. Gabriac to Walewski, 2 December 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 49.
[81] 'Courrier', *L'Estafette*, 2 and 7 January 1861, front pages; 'Courrier', *ibid.,* 2 July 1863, front pages.
[82] Eugene Lefèvre, *Documents officiels recueillis dans la Secrétairerie privée de Maximilien. Histoire de l'intervention française au Mexique*, 2 vols. (Brussels: n.p., 1869), II, 34-41.
[83] For example see, 'Courrier', *L'Estafette*, 14 July, 14 and 30 September, 21, 24 and 26 October and 7 November 1863, front pages.

A proclamation of 12 June 1863 issued by Forey outlined the general French vision for Mexico. The key points were: the sale of Church property would be confirmed; the press would be regulated as it was in France; army recruitment was to be reformed; the system of taxation would be overhauled; and Catholicism was to be "protected", but Louis-Napoléon would welcome the freedom of worship if it were possible. However, while Forey confirmed the sale of existing Church property, the proclamation contained the caveat that fraudulent purchases could be revised,[84] which gave hope to clerical conservatives who further expected that Maximilian would not implement a liberal religious settlement, or that at least that any settlement would be agreed by the Pope. Nonetheless, clerical conservative opposition forced the French to shatter whatever illusion there was of Regency autonomy. This was precipitated by the return of Archbishop Labastida to Mexico, who was opposed to the French idea of "civilisation" and the "ideas of the century". He attacked the political direction of the French intervention. He explained to Bazaine that "to search for the elements of a restoration [in Mexico] similar to those that have consolidated order [in Europe] is a chimera." Mexico could not be understood through the prism of Europe and to judge it so was a mistake that would have disastrous consequences, "the revolution here has sacrificed everything to greed", concluded the Archbishop, "and as regards the century, we are part of the current one, but only chronologically; Mexico shares nothing more with this century than the date, that is all." [85]

Labastida, as a member of the executive council of the Regency, and as Archbishop of Mexico, had power and influence. Regardless, Bazaine had been instructed to ensure that the Regency governed in accordance with "modern civilisation" and Louis-Napoléon relied on him "in order to direct the Provisional Government towards justice and reconciliation."[86] Bazaine had succeeded in coercing the Regency to reverse a decree confiscating the property of those who had fought against the intervention, although it did so "reluctantly", but he considered the problem more serious than merely controlling the executive power

[84] 'Manifeste à la nation mexicaine', 12 July 1863, AN, 400AP/61.
[85] Arrangóiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 159.
[86] Louis-Napoléon to Bazaine, 12 September 1863, Garcia, *Documentos*, XVI, 34-6.

because the government's administration was anti-liberal and therefore could carry out retaliatory measures, especially through the judiciary.[87] Therefore the revocation of the sequester of property was not carried out, the high clergy urged renters of property formerly belonging to the Church not to pay the new owners and refused to issue bearer bonds to those who had acquired Church property under Juárez's reforms. In a letter to Almonte, Bazaine threatened to employ the powers granted to him by Louis-Napoléon in order to ensure that Forey's declaration of 12 June was carried out, and in a letter to the French Emperor he claimed that, if it were necessary, he would "place this weak and spiteful power [the Regency] under guardianship". Nonetheless, Bazaine was able to accomplish what was asked of him: to follow a moderate liberal policy in the hope that it would rally liberals to the intervention. According to Bazaine, Almonte remained well disposed towards France and Bazaine was able to control the Regency.[88] When Labastida's protest became too much he was removed from the xecutive council, which thereafter governed with Almonte and Salas alone. Furthermore, the Tribunal Supremo de Justicía was dismissed for ruling against those who had purchased property from the Church.[89]

It was hardly an exercise in the subtleties of informal influence, but France was at least able to achieve its aims, and Bazaine's conduct was approved by Louis Napoléon and Drouyn de Lhuys.[90] Partially to convince Maximilian that he was called by the will of the Mexican people, and partially as a means of fulfilling the Bonapartist model of government, a plebiscite was undertaken in the states under French occupation to endorse the Assembly of Notables' decision to declare in

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[87] Bazaine to Drouyn de Lhuys, 8 October 1863, CP Mexique, 62; 'Derogación de todas las disposiciones sobre secuestro de bienes de individuos hacen armas contra la Intervención' in *Boletín de las leyes*, I, 386-7.

[88] Bazaine to Almonte, 7 November 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, Bazaine to Drouyn de Lhuys 10 November 1863; Bazaine to Louis-Napoléon, 25 October 1863, Bazaine to Budin, 29 October 1863 and Bazaine to Louis-Napoléon 10 November 1863 in García, *Documentos*, XVI, 133-44; 197-199; 223-31; Bazaine to Almonte, 20 November 1863, in *ibid*., XVII, 9-12. Despite his cooperation with the direction of French policy, Almonte was not happy with the erosion of Mexican sovereignty and what he saw as the overly liberal policy of France. Almonte to Maximilian, 27 October, 10 and 27 November 1863. JNA Papers.

[89] Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 25 January 1865, AAE, CP Mexique, 61; Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 819-40; Gaulot, I, 235-44.

[90] Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, 15 December 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60.

favour of monarchy and invite Maximilian to become emperor. Drouyn de Lhuys left to Bazaine's discretion the best way to procure this vote according to the customs and traditions of Mexico,[91] which General François Claude du Barail (1820-1902), one of those charged with collecting the vote, described in his memoirs: Mexicans "would have acclaimed the devil or the Grand Turk, if we had presented them as a candidate at the end of our sabres and bayonets."[92] Montholon admitted that to implement "universal suffrage" as it was understood in Europe was impossible and therefore the figures that were sent to Paris were merely a census of the states that had adhered to the empire. Using this measure it was declared that 5,498,587 Mexicans had pronounced in favour of the empire and Maximilian, while 2,184,468 remained in states not under control of the Regency.[93] Here, and on other key issues such as confirmation of the sale of Church property and the composition of the Regency or the Tribunal Supremo de Justicía, France was able to push policy in the direction that it wanted.

Once Maximilian accepted the imperial crown of Mexico, the relationship between France and Mexico was legally formalised by the Treaty of Miramar. This was signed on 10 April 1864 and marked a new phase in the relations between the two empires. The treaty regulated, amongst other things, the number of French troops and the pace of eventual French withdrawal. In addition to 270 million francs payable at three percent interest for the cost of the intervention up to 1 July 1864, Mexico undertook to cover the expense of a continued French presence at 1,000 francs "per man per year" as well as a transport service between France and Veracruz. Moreover, the treaty contained a secret clause, which demonstrates the importance France attached to its liberal policy in Mexico, that committed Maximilian to "the principles and promises announced in General Forey's proclamation, dated 12 June 1863, as well as the measures taken by the Regency and by the French general-in-chief in accordance with said declaration".[94] On top of

[91] Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, 17 August 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60; Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, Drouyn de Lhuys to Montholon, 6 February 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 61.
[92] François Charles du Barail, *Mes Souvenirs, etc.* 3 vols. (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit et Cie, 1895-1896), II, 483-84; The process was similarly ridiculed by Ollivier, *L'Empire liberal,* VI, 455-7, and Charles Blanchot, *Mémoires: L'intervention française au Mexique*, 3 vols. (Paris: E. Nourry, 1911), II, 133.
[93] Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 29 March 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 61.
[94] The various drafts of the treaty are contained in AAE, CP Mexique, 61.

this, two loans totalling 534 million francs were raised by British bankers and French capitalists.[95] If these financial ties were not enough, a "Commission of Finances" was set up in Paris, the purpose of which was to make sure that the financial stipulations of the treaty and French reclamations were paid using money kept in France from the loans.[96]

In Mexico itself, institutions were modelled on France, often with French administrators to oversee them. A Legion de Gendarmería, which was to be commanded by officers from France, was set up in consultation with the French gendarmerie.[97] Moreover, a Corsican who had organised the police in French-controlled Cochinchina,[98] was appointed head of the Mexican police.[99] France provided civil and military engineers and teachers as well as advice on economic and administrative reform, mining and the development of railways and telegraph lines.[100] The Scientific Commission of Mexico, a Franco-Mexican venture, was intended as much to encourage the rationalisation and modernisation of the Mexican state, as it was to add to the canon of knowledge.[101]

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[95] The loans are discussed in detail in Manuel Payno, *Cuentas, gastos, acreedores y otros asuntos del tiempo de la intervención francesa y del imperio. De 1861 a 1867 / obra escrita y publicada de orden del Gobierno Constitucional de la República, por M. Payno* (Mexico City: Imprenta de Ignacio Cumplido, 1868 1868), 757-815 and Anonymous, *Révélations sur l'occupation française au Mexique au point de vue financier documents officiels et inédits trouvés dans les archives de Mexico et publiés par ordre du gouvernement constitutionnel de la république*, (Brussels: Typ. de D. Brismée, 1869), 97-107. For a contemporary British analysis see 'Confidential Memorandum', 28 August 1866, Peter Campbell Scarlett to Lord Clarendon enclosed in Scarlett to Cambell, 26 August 1866. FO 50/396. The loans are analysed in Jan Bazant, *Historia de la deuda exterior de México, 1823-1946* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1968), 84-96, and Steven Topik, 'When Mexico Had the Blues: A Transatlantic Tale of Bonds, Bankers, and Nationalists, 1862-1910', *The American Historical Review*, 105 (2000), 714-19.

[96] The organisation of the commission and its relationship with Maximilian's government is documented in AHGE, Francia, L. 43; e. 652.

[97] Hidalgo to Arroyo, 30 May 1864; Peza to Hidalgo, 10 August 1865, AHGE, Francia, L. 46; e. 703.

[98] Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 1034-5; Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 295-6.

[99] *Boletín de las leyes*, IV, 490-1.

[100] For economic and administrative reform see, AHGE, Francia, L. 45; e. 653; exploitation of mines, L.43; e. 655; French administrators in Mexico, L. 45; e. 697; gendarmerie, L. 46; e. 703; railways and telegraphs, L. 48; e. 727.

[101] On the Scientific Commission see, Paul Edison, 'Conquest Unrequited, French Expeditionary Science in Mexico, 1864-1867', *French Historical Studies*, 26 (2003), 459-495; Nadia Prévost Urkidi, 'La Commission scientifique du Mexique (1864-1867): un exemple de collaboration scientifique entre l'élite savante française et mexicaine?', *Revue d'Histoire des Sciences Humaines*, 2 (2008), 107-116; Alberto Soberanis, 'Sabios, militares y empresarios Sansimonismo y exploración científica' in *México Francia*, II, 243-268.

Maximilian's empire was thus financially indebted to France, owed its establishment and continued existence to French troops and was bound by treaty to approve and continue the moderate liberal policy begun by the intervention. However, less than a month after Maximilian had been crowned Emperor of Mexico, Montholon already identified "worrying tendencies for the future" in his government, which rapidly demonstrated anti-French tendencies. Maximilian showed his determination to reconcile factions in Mexican politics by appointing a mixed cabinet. Thus the moderate liberal and formerly republican José Fernando Ramírez, who had opposed the intervention, was appointed foreign minister, while Joaquín Velázquez de León (1803-82), a prominent Conservative, served as minister of state.[102]

Montholon was unhappy with these ministerial appointments. He noted that one belonged to the "retrograde party" and the other the "moderate party", but believed that both were part of the "Hispano-Mexican school" and therefore hostile to France. Moreover, these Mexicans charged with directing affairs were "not up to the task".[103] These frustrations with the government of Maximilian were expressed by Drouyn de Lhuys in a despatch that was to be brought to the attention of Ramírez: "The lustre of a court, academic solemnities and the spread of compulsory education are the lights of the most advanced civilisation", wrote the foreign minister, and "we would applaud these intentions and acts more willingly if we were able to observe at the same time the effects of [Maximilian's] government on the social, political, administrative, financial and military reorganisation of a country, where, despite our efforts and our sacrifices, everything remains in crisis." A government "born under [the French] flag, and defended by [French] arms" seemed determined in its political direction to "make every day the task of sustaining it more onerous [for France]."[104]

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[102] Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 431; Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 219-20.
[103] Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 26 June, 10 July and 28 July 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62.
[104] Drouyn de Lhuys to Dano, 15 August 1865, AAE, CP Mexique 64. The Empire's education policies are covered in María de Lourdes Herrera Feria and Rosario Torres Domínguez, 'El proyecto educativo del Segundo Imperio Mexicano: resonancias de un régimen efímero', *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos*, (2012).

This criticism was a consequence of the slow progress that was made in the development of the two areas Paris identified as critical to the survival of the Mexican Empire: its finances and the organisation of its own armed forces. Louis–Napoléon blamed Maximilian: "I cannot understand by what fatality it always happens that the most essential measures are always adjourned or opposed. Mexico owes her independence and her present regime to France, but it looks as though some mysterious influence constantly stepped in to prevent French agents from devoting themselves to the good of the country."[105] French frustrations, however, were largely of their own making. Maximilian appointed numerous French administrators to positions of power. In addition to the post and positions described above, Bazaine headed the commission set up to deliberate on military reform, a French civil servant was the vice-chairman of the economic commission, Léonce Détroyat (1829-98), a French naval officer, was named head of the Imperial Navy.[106] In his correspondence with Louis-Napoléon, Maximilian wrote that it was difficult to find capable Mexicans and therefore he relied on French advisers, especially for financial matters. He even claimed that Mexicans had told him that they were incompetent and finances were too important and must be left to foreigners. In a letter to the Emperor of the French he concluded: "the more I study the Mexican people, the more I arrive at the conviction that it will be necessary to make them happy without their aid, and perhaps even in spite of themselves."[107] Montholon wrote to Paris that Maximillian would therefore soon come to arrangement that would favour French over Mexican administrators and this would advance French interests. The minister looked forward to a day when France would exercise complete control over the Mexican administration, particularly its finances.[108]

However, as Maximilian explained, it was impossible to have a government composed completely of Europeans.[109] The Emperor needed to construct an image

[105] Louis-Napoléon to Maximilian, 16 April 1865, quoted in Corti, *Maximilian*, II, 901-3.
[106] Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 278; Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 1033-34; *Boletín de las leyes*, IV, 398.
[107] Maximilian to Louis-Napoléon, 26 July, 9 August, 27 December 1864 quoted in Corti, *Maximilian*, II, 841-42; 845-47; 860-62.
[108] Montholon to de Lhuys, 10 October 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62.
[109] Maximilian to Louis-Napoléon, 27 December 1865, in Corti, *Maximilian*, II, 925-30.

that overcame the contradiction between Mexican nationalism, European dynastic rule and French intervention.[110] If independence and national sovereignty were largely a fiction under the intervention and Regency, under the Empire, despite the enormous pressure France was able to exert on the regime, they became too real for Paris. Maximilian's commitment to continue the liberal path of Forey's 12 June 1863 manifesto, combined with the attempt to reconcile the parties and attract moderate liberals to his cause, meant that he had to appoint Mexicans, not French nationals, to key positions in his ministries, his council of state and other branches of the Mexican government.

Moreover, the French appointments that were made contributed to the very thing France complained about: anti-French attitudes. Ramírez complained to Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar that the idea had been to create an independent empire and not have Maximilian as a puppet, but French administrators behaved as if Mexico were a conquered country and Bazaine was treated better than the Emperor himself.[111] Referring to the new gendarmerie Arrangoiz noted that it was "not very wise" to staff this organisation with those who did not know Spanish and that a "foreign police force" would not be looked upon kindly by Mexicans. Conservatives, he argued, did not mind the appointment of capable men regardless of nationality, but they did object to the "appalling number of foreign mediocrities" involved in the empire. Distrust of foreign influence was exacerbated by the multi-national nature of the Empire itself, which manifested itself through Maximilian's privy council. This body was described by Arrangoiz as "polyglot, a sort of Tower of Babel, composed of French, Belgians, Hungarians and I do not know what other nationalities".[112]

Many in the Conservative Party were further angered that France retained control of the military command, refusing their generals, with the exception of Tomás Mejía (1820-67), a significant role in the pacification of the country.[113] This was a deliberate French policy. Louis-Napoléon instructed Bazaine: "[in order to]

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[110] The means by which Maximilian attempted to do this are discussed in Ibsen, *Maximilian*, ch. 1 and Duncan, 'Political Legitimation'.
[111] Ramírez to Hidalgo, 18 November 1864, AHGE, Francia, L. 43; e. 660.
[112] Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 220-21; 267-8; 278-9.
[113] For Mejía's career see Hamnett, 'Mexican Conservatives, Clericals, and Soldiers'.

prevent the reaction in Mexico, make sure that it is always the sword of France that commands [….] Organise a small Mexican army".[114] Furthermore, the liberal policy necessitated excluding many clerical conservatives from positions of power in favour of moderates. Arrangoiz described Ramírez, Maximilian's first foreign minister, as formerly "one of the reddest republicans" and claimed his appointment was "agreed in the Tuileries". Wrong on the specifics, Paris had no more love for Ramírez than the clerical conservatives, Arrangoiz was correct in general: France wished to see moderate liberals appointed to positions of prominence. In addition to Ramírez, Arrangoiz noted that Pedro Escudero y Echánove (1818-97), the minister of justice and ecclesiastical affairs was a "moderate republican", and the interim minister of war merely a "republican";[115] the appointment of moderate liberals necessarily reduced the number of Conservatives serving in the highest positions of state.

What was worse for clerical conservatives like Arrangoiz was that Maximilian continued the "anti-Catholic" policies of the Regency and the intervention. Apart from their exclusion from office – Miramón and Márquez leaving Mexico on diplomatic missions to Berlin and the Ottoman Empire respectively was the most striking example of this – the Mexican Emperor decreed that government employees should work on Sundays, gravitated to merging the two independence holidays into one celebrated on 16 September, the *Grito de Dolores*, rather than the Conservative preference for 27 September, which marked Iturbide's entry into Mexico City.[116] The liberal *pièce de résistance* which most angered clerical conservatives was, of course, the confirmation of Juárez's reforms, namely freedom of worship, civil registry, the sale of Church property and the supremacy of the state over the Church and Rome, which Maximilian enacted through a series of decrees and laws between December 1864 and December 1865 after he had failed to arrange a concordat with a Papal nuncio.[117]

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[114] Louis-Napoléon to Bazaine, 29 September 1863, Garcia, *Documentos*, XVI, 49-51.
[115] Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 219-220; Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 431.
[116] Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 228, 249-252; Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 342-46.
[117] Patricia Galeana, *Las relaciones iglesia-estado durante el Segundo Imperio* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1991), 123; 181-83.

These policies were satirised by the periodical *La Orquesta*, which depicted Maximilian as more liberal than Juárez, and described by the Empress Carlota as "going beyond the programme of the liberal party", were intended to attract adherents to the empire, strengthen the moderates and facilitate a fusion of the parties along Bonapartist lines.[118] They were successful in so far as many did rally to the empire.[119] Tomás O'Horán, was one such example, who had fought against the intervention at Puebla and refused Taboada's overtures to join the intervention in 1862, but he was killed in Mexico City in 1867 defending the capital against liberal forces. He decided to join the *imperialistas* because, like many republicans, according to Zamacois, he realised that "national independence" was not threatened and that the Empire had widespread support.[120]

The failure of the Mexican Second Empire was therefore not a consequence of its inability to rally support from across the political spectrum to its side, certainly not at elite level. As Pani has shown, the Second Mexican Empire attracted "an impressive list of Mexicans of relatively diverse social and ideological or partisan backgrounds, distinguished in the fields of law and culture, with experience in high-level politics since the 1840s."[121] Adherents were attracted for a number of reasons, many of them outlined in previous chapters. There was significant support for Maximilian beyond monarchists, or those whose association with the Conservative Party made their support something of a default option (although, as has been seen, clerical conservatives disowned his liberal policies). As this thesis has demonstrated, many of the factors that drew Mexican elites to the empire were concerns that stretched back in Mexican history long before the 1860s. The fear of US expansion, the economic programme of the empire as outlined in section I above, the hope that the empire would end party conflict, the creation of a strong centralised government, and the belief that a French-backed regime would bring order and stability were mutually reinforcing reasons to support it.

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[118] Ibsen, *Maximilian*, 32-35; Charlotte to Eugenie, 8 December 1864, in Corti, *Maximilian*, II, 857-58.
[119] For a list of the Mexicans who served in government positions under the Mexican Empire see Pani, *Para Mexicanizar*, Appendices 1-4.
[120] Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 419-22.
[121] Pani, 'Dreaming of a Mexican Empire', 3-4. See also Pani, *Para Mexicanizar*; Duncan, 'Political Legitimation'.

Moderates were, therefore, rallying to the empire. Moreover, French arms had been successful in every major engagement they had fought since the 5 May 1862 battle of Puebla. By 1865, Juárez had been pushed back to the US border at Paso del Norte (today Ciudad Juárez), Porfirio Díaz had been captured at the siege of Oaxaca and Bazaine was optimistic that the pacification of Mexico was nearly complete.[122] Why, then, seemingly on the brink of military success, with French troops occupying Chihuahua City, only a four day march from Juárez's last refuge on the border, did Louis-Napoléon order the withdrawal of his soldiers? And why did Maximilian's regime collapse so swiftly without French bayonets to support it?

III

"The Empire Can do no more than Prolong its Agony":[123]

The Failure of the Second Mexican Empire

The Times' Mexican correspondent proclaimed the Mexican Empire to be in the name of "humanity and civilisation",[124] and hoped that the "Mexican people [would] seize the opportunity so unexpectedly offered to them, and rise to that position among civilised nations which […] they ought long before this have attained."[125] In 1864, *The Economist* argued that Louis-Napoléon's intervention had been a success.[126] The English commentator on foreign affairs, Robert Hogarth Patterson (1821-86), argued "[o]f all the projects of [Louis-Napoléon], this is the one which is to be the most applauded for the good which it will accomplish for the world" and added "it may happen that the House of Hapsburg […] be the head of a great and flourishing empire in the New World after the original empire in Europe has been broken into pieces."[127]

Yet the empire ended with the execution of its emperor only months after the final withdrawal of French troops. As has been noted, for many contemporary

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[122] Thus in Paris *Le Mémorial diplomatique* announced that the forces of Juárez had been defeated by French arms, 'Politique – Bulletin de la semaine', 27 August 1865, pp. 553-54.
[123] The conclusion of Dano as stated in Dano to Lionel de Moustier, 28 November 1866, AAE, CP Mexique, 68.
[124] 'The Emperor of Mexico', *The Times,* 13 July 1864, p. 12.
[125] 'The French in Mexico', *ibid*., 17 May 1864, p. 12.
[126] 'The Prospects of the New Regime in Mexico', *The Economist*, 6 August 1864, pp. 986-87.
[127] Robert Hogarth Patterson, 'The Napoleonic Idea in Mexico', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 96 (1864), 72; 83.

critics, as well as subsequent historians, the explanation was simple: the French intervention was undertaken because Louis-Napoléon was misled over the true situation of Mexico. It is to be hoped that this thesis has demonstrated this interpretation is not true, but even if it were the assumption inherent within the conclusion is that a detailed knowledge of the economic, political and social 'reality' is necessary for imperialism to succeed. A cursory glance at nineteenth-century imperialism elsewhere on the globe would suggest otherwise.

The claim that France lacked knowledge of Mexico has an element of truth to it. An anecdote told by France's minister of war suggests that France was not best prepared: the army had no good maps of Mexico and thus Louis-Napoléon was obliged to lend Forey, the leader of some 30,000 troops, one from his own personal collection.[128] However, such seemingly farcical levels of preparation were hardly uncommon in nineteenth-century imperialism. In 1830, France launched its expedition against Algiers; the primary reference material for commanding officers was Sallust and Livy.[129] Even so, the long conquest of Algeria was eventually completed. In Mexico, by comparison, France could rely on local allies, knowledge gained from the 1838-39 intervention and maps and narrative accounts from the US-Mexican War.[130] In this sense Mexico was not a "terra incognita".[131]

If the failure of the intervention was not predicated upon a lack of knowledge, and the policy never relied upon the clerical conservatives for its success, then another explanation must be sought for its catastrophic denouement: the model of imperialism France adopted. It was precisely because Algeria took over seventeen years to 'pacify', with more than 100,000 French troops deployed at enormous expense, that French imperialism elsewhere was informal in nature. Syria, Cochinchina and China were all small-scale expeditions, usually in cooperation with one or more power and which did not aim at territorial conquest.

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[128] Randon, *Mémoires*, II, 72.
[129] Lorcin, 'Rome and France in Africa', 298-99.
[130] The French explorer, who had travelled to Mexico in the early 1840s, Eugène Duflot de Mofras, published *Expéditions des Espagnols et des Américains au Mexique en 1829 et en 1847* (Paris: impr. de Panckoucke, 1862). Jurien de la Gravière studied the US invasion prior to arriving in Mexico. Jurien de la Gravière to Thouvenel, 7 and 9 December 1861, AAE, CP Mexique, 57.
[131] Jean-Yves Puyo argues that it was in 'The French Military Confront Mexico's Geography: the Expedition of 1862-67', *Journal of Latin American Geography*, 9 (2010), 139-157.

In Mexico, the defeat at Puebla saw significant reinforcements sent to Mexico, but the intention was always to create a stable regime that would ultimately sustain itself, indemnify France for the intervention, pay for the ongoing cost of French occupation and honour its foreign debts to ensure access to international credit markets.

However, the Mexican Second Empire was not able to pay for the privilege of French intervention and occupation and nowhere was France's frustration more apparent than in its attempts to reform Mexico's finances. The Mexican Second Empire, like all Mexican governments before it,[132] failed to establish itself on a firm financial footing. This was in no small part a consequence of the financial burdens the French imperial model imposed upon Maximilian's treasury. France had a "direct interest" in Mexican finances: "the proper management of the public money is the guarantee of our debts […] we have good reason to exercise active control over the financial administration." A succession of financial advisors, "special agents delegated for [the purpose of reforming Mexico's finances] by the [French] minister of finance",[133] were sent to Mexico including a deputy of the *Corps législatif*, Charles Corta (1805-70), who provided a glowing report on the financial future of the empire upon his return to France.

According to Corta, Mexico, properly governed, had more than enough resources to cover its deficits and from a financial point of view the government of Mexico "has a chance of strength in the future, providing it hastens to develop the numerous resources which are in the country."[134] However, Montholon lamented that Corta had left Mexico at the "most painful period in a time of transition full of dangers and difficulties."[135] In a dispatch of 10 October 1864 to Drouyn de Lhuys, Montholon wrote, "I cannot hide [from you] how worried I am about the financial

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[132] See Tenenbaum, *The Politics of Penury*.

[133] Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, 17 August 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60. Louis-Napoléon made clear to Forey that it was essential to "introduce to [Mexican] finances the regularity for which France offers the best model. To this end, we will send [to Mexico] men capable of helping its new organisation." Louis-Napoléon to Forey, 3 July 1862, quoted in Gustave Niox, *Expédition du Mexique, 1861-1867: récit politique & militaire* (Paris: J. Dumaine, 1874), 212-15.

[134] The speech was published, Charles Eustache Corta and Eugène Rouher, *Mexique; discours de M. Corta député au Corps législatif et de S. Exe. M. Rouher, ministre d'état* (Paris: Typ. E. Panckoucke et cie 1865), 15; 21.

[135] Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 27 September 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62.

situation". Expenses were increasing while income was diminishing – the overall situation warranted "strong concern for the immediate future". The weakness of Mexican finances, the difficulty of reforming the treasury and the penury of a government which often required advances from the French treasury were the consistent complaints of French diplomats.[136]

Whether these complaints were founded or not is somewhat irrelevant given the enormous burden of debt that the two loans undertaken by Maximilian and the Treaty of Miramar placed on Mexico. It was expected that under the "enlightened influence" of France's financial advisors, the "seeds of prosperity […] cannot fail to be rapidly developed".[137] In this, however, France proved no more successful than previous Mexican governments: between 1822 and 1856 only one had managed to run a budget surplus (for nine months, 1822-23).[138] The French counsellor of state, Jacques Langlais (1810-66), was sent to Mexico in 1865 on a salary of 150,000 francs a year, and his team of French employees, were given "dictatorial powers" to reorganise Mexican finances. He died before he could complete his task, but his report was finished by his assistant. It was withering in its assessment of the Mexican treasury: "properly speaking, up to the present, there has been no budget in Mexico" and "it is impossible with such a system, which excludes all idea of order or control, to have good finances."[139]

Nonetheless, Langlais was no more successful than those sent before him balancing the Mexican budget. Based on the estimates of the Mexican Ministry of Finance for the year 1866, the treasury would receive 18.43 million piastres. Of this, over half (54 percent) would go to service the Mexican loans and just over a quarter (26 percent) to honour the Treaty of Miramar, the majority of which was to pay for the French army in Mexico. Thus financial obligations arranged with France as a consequence of the intervention took up over four-fifths of the Empire's budget,

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[136] Monathalon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 10 and 29 October; 10 and 28 November 1864, CP Mexique, 62; Montholon to de Lhuys, 8 January 1865, CP Mexique, 63; Dano to de Lhuys, 28 November 1865, CP Mexique, 65.

[137] Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, 17 August 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60.

[138] Tenenbaum, *Politics of Penury*, Appendix, 'Table C: Income vs Expenses, 1821-1856', 182.

[139] 'Rapport a sa Majesté l'Empereur sur le budget de 1866' enclosed in Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 29 May 1866, AAE, CP Mexique, 67. Langlais' predecessor had similarly disparaged the Mexican budget and despaired at it being balanced, Bonnefons to Monsieur le Ministre, 9 April 1865, AN, 400AP/61.

while the British and Spanish debt added another 6 percent. With the application of Langlais' proposed cuts to expenditure, the budget deficit for the year 1866 would be roughly 11.5 million piastres. This was to be partially dealt with by various measures that intended to raise revenue through new and more efficient taxation. However, even with a reduction in expenditure combined with the proposed increase in revenue, a deficit of 1.1 million piastres remained. In short, even in the imagination of French administrators, where all their reforms were not only carried out, but their hypothetical estimates for increased revenue met, the Mexican budget could not be balanced.[140]

The Empire was not a model of austere government, and was more expensive than the previous republican regimes.[141] But it was not domestic expenditure that bankrupted Maximilian. The foreign and domestic debt was calculated at nearly 510 million francs to which it was necessary to add the 270 million Maximilian agreed to pay France as the cost of the intervention.[142] Moreover, of the 534 million francs raised by the two loans Maximilian only received 34 million.[143] The Emperor complained to Louis-Napoléon, "without order and economy in the finances, with a constantly recurring deficit, I cannot govern." Maximilian argued Mexican finances were in a "deplorable" state because the vast majority of revenue went to cover the cost of the military expenses.[144]

The miscalculation, then, that France made was not political, as contemporary French critics and many subsequent historians alleged, but financial. The historian Paul Gaulot (1852-1937), who completed his history from the notes and correspondence of Ernest Louet, the paymaster general of the French army in Mexico, wrote that the French government, and the *Corps législatif* which voted for the funds to finance the intervention, "counted on the riches which are usually attributed to faraway countries in order to cover the cost with interest. It seems",

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[140] The figures are taken from 'Rapport a sa Majesté l'Empereur sur le budget de 1866' enclosed in Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 29 May 1866, AAE, CP Mexique, 67.
[141] Payno, *Cuentas, gastos, acreedores*, 599-612.
[142] 'Bulletin financier', *Journal des économistes*, 124 (1864), 149-52.
[143] Bazant, *Historia de la deuda exterior*, 93-96.
[144] 'Note lue par l'Empereur à M. M. Dano et Langlais', contained in Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 'Confidentielle et réservée', 27 October 1865, CP Mexique, 66; Maximilan to Louis-Napoléon 27 December 1865, in Corti, *Maximilian*, II, 930.

he continued, "so simple to our regularly organised societies to establish order amongst all nations, and by this order bring them a wonderful prosperity." No one doubted that Mexico would soon find the resources to pay its debt to France. This in itself was not an illusion. Gaulot estimated that the cost of governing Mexico was about 100 million francs annually and it could easily secure revenues of 250 million francs. "The illusion consisted in believing that these results could be reached in months, and that they could be achieved by the sole fact of the French army occupying Puebla and Mexico [City]."[145]

Drouyn de Lhuys made it clear that France would not take upon itself "the burdens of the Mexican government"; the French army could not be responsible for Mexico's defence, nor the French treasury for its administration. In January 1866 the French foreign minister wrote that French "public opinion has pronounced with an irrefutable authority that the limit of sacrifices has been reached."[146] Similarly, Louis-Napoléon announced in his 1867 speech from the throne that when the day was reached where "our sacrifices seemed to me to surpass the interests which had called [France] to the other side of the ocean, I spontaneously decided to recall our troops."[147] The reason for the withdrawal of French forces was the non-payment by the Mexican government of the costs imposed by the Treaty of Miramar. However, France was willing to withdraw its troops gradually from Mexico and leave behind the foreign legion. What caused the "spontaneous" withdrawal, at the height of French military success, was US pressure.[148] Indeed, Bazaine, acting on instructions from Paris, had recalled French troops from northern Mexico in pursuit of Juárez because of fears they would become involved in clashes with US troops stationed on the border. The sacrifices Louis-Napoléon was unwilling to make were not only continued financial support, but also confrontation with Washington.

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[145] Gaulot, *L'Expédition du Mexique*, I, 118-22.
[146] Drouyn de Lhuys to Dano, 14 and 15 January 1866, AAE, CP Mexique, 66.
[147] 'Discours de l'Empereur', *Journal des débats*, 15 February 1867, front page.
[148] The diplomatic role of the United States in hastening French withdrawal from Mexico is well documented, as is the material and moral support Washington provided to Juárez. See Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon the Third*; Robert Ryal Miller, 'Arms Across the Border: United States Aid to Juárez During the French Intervention in Mexico', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society (*1973), 1-68; Schoonover, *Dollars over Dominion*; Arnold Blumberg, 'The diplomacy of the Mexican Empire, 1863-1867', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, (1971), 1-152; Dabbs, *French Army*, 157-59.

France further undermined Maximilian's government through a treaty which replaced Miramar. This convention, signed on 30 July 1866, and to come into effect on 1 November of the same year, secured half of all Mexico's customs receipts raised on imports entering from the Atlantic seaboard and a quarter of all Pacific coast exports to pay French debts,[149] thus denying Maximilian his principal source of revenue. Bereft of French support, Maximilian was forced to rely on the only section of Mexican politics willing to support him in continuing the struggle against Juárez: the Mexican Conservative Party. Moderate liberals deserted the empire once it became clear that Maximilian would solely embrace the Conservative Party's cause and that France's withdrawal, combined with US diplomatic and material support for Juárez, made the survival of the Mexican Second Empire highly unlikely.[150] The limited resources Conservatives could mobilise meant that Maximilian's empire was swiftly defeated militarily: the leaders of the Conservative Party, Miramón and Márquez, who returned to Mexico from their diplomatic missions in November 1866,[151] proved no more able to vanquish Juárez then they had done in the War of Reform.

Conclusion

After the shock of the defeat at Puebla on 5 May 1862, the fortunes of the French intervention improved. France was able to impose on Mexico a political system that attracted adherents from Liberal and Conservative moderates, particularly as a consequence of the economic and administrative reforms which appealed across the political spectrum. France created a regime closely tied to Paris and wielded considerable influence over it. However, this informal imperial model, which placed the financial burdens of the French intervention and occupation on the Mexican Empire, was unable to pay for itself. This meant that the Mexican Second Empire was unable to divert resources to consolidation. Moreover, Louis-

[149] For the terms of the convention see 'Projet de Convention' contained in Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 28 July 1866, AAE, CP Mexique, 67.
[150] In Jaunuary 1867 some of Maximilian's former liberal ministers departed for Europe, notably Ramírez, and most high-level politicians who supported the empire but were not clerical conservatives advised Maximilian to abdicate on 11 January 1867. Many of those who had submitted to the empire took up arms again in favour of Juárez once the French withdrawal became known. Zamacois, VIII, 876-77; 484-85; 881-92.
[151] Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVIII, 657-58.

Napoléon refused to countenance devoting more French military resources than were already in Mexico, which proved insufficient to pacify Mexico in the time afforded to France before the end of the US Civil War resulted in US demands for complete withdrawal.

The monumental failure of Louis-Napoléon's Mexican intervention led Émile Ollivier (1825-1913) to claim that he "had searched vainly for a great thought in the mass of contradictions" that made up French policy in Mexico. However, it was not his inability to comprehend the ideas behind the intervention that led him to this conclusion, but rather his conviction that "what is impossible in politics is not great, it is absurd".[152] On the other hand, Jacques-Louis Randon, Louis-Napoléon's minister of war at the time of the intervention, admitted that the ideas behind the expedition "were undoubtedly great." However, he agreed with Ollivier in that these ideas had one fault, but "a serious one: they were impossible."[153]

However, for those Frenchmen in Mexico who fought for and helped administer the Mexican Empire the problems were of a more practical nature. In his memoirs, the military commander Barail asked if the conquest of Mexico had been conceivable: "Yes, obviously […] it is impossible to say what would have happened if the [intervention] had been better conducted […] by sending sufficient forces to crush all resistance", but he believed that had this been done then Mexico would have been "reconciled and reunited under the incontestable rule of Maximilian".[154] In his history of the French intervention, the French soldier who served as part of France's "counterguerilla" forces, Émile de Kératry (1832-1905), complained that the French "army spent itself gloriously in the immensity of space", and that "our troops traversing Mexico resembled a ship gliding through the water and leaving behind it no traces of its track."[155] French troops temporarily occupied territory, but their departure resulted in "scenes of horror" as the local population was assailed by armed bands, "so-called liberals, who pillage".[156] Bazaine wrote that "the empire

[152] Ollivier, *L'Empire libéral,* V, 241.
[153] Randon, *Mémoires*, II, 59-60.
[154] Barail, *Mes Souvenirs*, II, 303; 488. See also Blanchot, *Mémoires*, II, 328.
[155] Kératry*, L'élévation et la chute*, 41; 179.
[156] Montholon to de Lhuys, 9 February 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 61. A view shared by another French officer who served in Mexico, Pierre Henri Loizillon, *Lettres sur l'expédition du Mexique* (Paris: L. Baudoin, 1890), 160-61.

built by [France] does not yet have deep roots." The problem was not a lack of sympathy amongst the "great majority of the intelligent population of Mexico", but rather that there was little confidence in the civil and military functionaries because it was believed the support of France was only temporary.[157] The diplomats Montholon and Dano both concluded that Mexico's financial problems could only be resolved under French control.[158] Indeed, one naval officer summed up what many others on the ground had concluded: the solution was "none other than the permanent occupation of Mexico […] and the complete absorption of all the branches of government and administration."[159]

This solution was, however, exactly what Louis-Napoléon had hoped to avoid by backing the creation of the Second Mexican Empire. This regime's survival was not impossible, but French policy did make its success highly improbable. In the end, the Second Mexican Empire collapsed because of the informal-imperial model France imposed on it. By refusing to take on the burden of pacification, and placing the financial cost of this on a regime that was unable to pay for it, France ensured that the Mexican Second Empire remained on shallow foundations.

[157] Bazaine to Drouyn de Lhuys, 2 January 1866, AAE, CP Mexique, 66. A point also made by Henri Agustin Brincourt who temporarily occupied Chihuahua in 1865. Brincourt to Castagny, 17 October 1865 printed in Henri Agustin Brincourt, *Lettres du Général Brincourt, 1823-1909* (Plon-Nourrit et Cie, 1923), 342-46.
[158] Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 9 February 1864, AAE, CP Mexique 61; Dano to same, 'Confidentielle et reservée', 28 May 1865, CP Mexique, 63.
[159] Didelot to Roncière, 3 June 1866 in Camille Clément de La Roncière-Le Noury, *Correspondance intime de l'Amiral de la Roncière le Noury avec sa femme et sa fille, 1855-1871*, 2 vols. (Paris: H. Champion, 1928-29), II, 289-90.

Conclusion

In 1863 the pro-intervention French-language newspaper *L'Estafette* understood French imperialism in Mexico as qualitatively different to that practised in Algeria. An editorial argued: "[w]hat comparison can seriously be made between Algeria and Mexico"? In "Africa", ran the article, France was faced with a people to "fight, reduce or to exterminate", but in Mexico "we have six and a half million allies calling us". In Algeria, it was necessary to "conquer" a nation; in Mexico "to liberate and constitute" one.[1] As has been noted, *L'Estafette* was a (paid) supporter of the Mexican Second Empire, nonetheless in its differentiation between the French intervention and other examples of imperialism it echoed the sentiments of many who backed the creation of a monarchy in Mexico.[2] This thesis has argued that in order to understand why many in France and Mexico believed the Second Mexican Empire to be the solution to internal problems of Mexico and beneficial to the interests of France it is necessary to analyse both the imperial and Mexican context within which it took place; to imperialise and mexicanise the French intervention and the Second Mexican Empire.

By placing the French intervention in the context of French policy in other parts of the world light has been shed on the rationale behind Louis-Napoléon's course of action towards Mexico. Rather than viewing it as an aberration, the French expedition to Mexico was part of the informal assertion of French power and influence globally during the period 1820-67, which reached its high-water mark under the French Second Empire. This was underpinned by a discourse of European civilisation within which France occupied a privileged position and, as chapter one has shown, Latin America, and Mexico specifically, were marked out as areas especially receptive to French approaches to a non-colonial form of imperialism. Moreover, there was nothing particularly controversial at the time

[1] 'Courrier', *L'Estafette*, 3 October 1863, front and second pages.
[2] For example, the conservative newspaper, *El Pájaro Verde*, ran a series of articles which discussed different types of foreign intervention. 'Bibliografía. La Intervención Europea en México', 4, 5, 6 and 7 August 1863, pp. 1-2. Conservatives made the point that the United States owed its independence to French intervention. For example, 'Discurso pronunciado en la Alameda de México el 16 Septiembre de 1863 por Joaquín M. de Castillo y Lanzas', *Ibid.,* 24 September 1863, p. 2.

about Louis-Napoléon's general goals in Mexico: the development of French influence and commerce. As Favre, one of the most ardent French critics of intervention, remarked: a monarchy "placed in [France's] orbit" founded on French "civilisation" was a great "dream".[3] Favre's point of departure, like Thiers, was not the aims of the French intervention, but its impracticality. For contemporary critics of Louis-Napoléon, and for many historians, the Mexican Second Empire was always an impossible dream.

This thesis has challenged this conclusion. The attempt to consolidate the empire of Maximilian was the greatest effort, transnational in both the ideas that underpinned it and the means mobilised to support it, to establish an informal-imperial relationship anywhere on the globe in the nineteenth century. Aside from the resources France mobilised across its formal and informal empire, and the Mexican soldiers who fought for it, the empire attracted thousands of Austrian and Belgian volunteers, 534 million francs of European capital raised by two separate loans, recognition by the major powers of Europe and support in the press from influential periodicals such as *The Times* and *The Economist*. If it was a dream, it was one dreamed by many, and the weight thrown behind it convinced others that it would become reality.

Mexicanising the French Intervention

However, the call to both imperialise and mexicanise shows that French intervention should not merely be considered a delusion of the Emperor of the French which he tried to will into existence. Nor should the Mexican origins of the Mexican Empire be dismissed as only existing in the imagination of a few Mexican émigrés defeated in civil war. Chapter two has shown the endurance of monarchism in Mexico as a solution to the endemic instability of Mexican politics. The foundation of a federal republic was seen by some as the cause of Mexico's inability to constitute an enduring and constitutional regime after independence. In this view, Mexico's political traditions were monarchical and independence had been achieved on these principles. The failure of the First Mexican Empire was

[3] Favre, *Discours parlementaires,* II, 334-35.

attributed to the inadequacies of Iturbide rather than a disproof of the Plan of Iguala and the ideas behind it.

Monarchism had a transnational dimension from early on, therefore, because those who supported monarchy in Mexico looked overseas for both a monarch and material aid from European powers in order to found a kingdom. This was not limited to avowed monarchists, such as Gutiérrez de Estrada, but remained an option for conservative politicians in Mexico, such as Alamán, who tried to found a monarchy with Spanish support in 1845-46, or Santa Anna, who in 1854 authorised the search for a monarch to replace him during his dictatorship. From a European perspective it was a generally accepted truth, at least amongst those who were not republicans, that monarchy was the form of government best suited to Mexico. It is hardly surprising that policymakers and diplomats under the Bourbon Restoration, the July Monarchy or the French Second Empire considered, what they saw as, overly-democratic federal republicanism to be the cause of the so-called anarchy in Mexico. And it is even less surprising that Louis-Napoléon believed the cure for the tumultuous politics of post-independence Mexico was the same medicine he had seemingly applied so effectively in France. But it was not only those tied to these French regimes who saw monarchy as a panacea for Mexico: it was a view frequently stated in British and French commentary and travel writing on Mexico.

Nonetheless, monarchism in Mexico, at the level of public political discourse at any rate, had limited support even amongst conservatives after the fall of Iturbide in 1823. What further drew conservatives towards Europe was the increasing anti-Americanism within conservative thought. As chapter two has shown, this was in evidence in the 1820s, but the Texan revolt followed by the US-Mexican War confirmed what conservatives already held to be true: the United States was the avowed national enemy of Mexico intent on its destruction.

US expansionism, which caused Mexico to lose nearly half its national territory within thirty two years of its independence, was bad enough for conservatives. However, conservative discourse was concerned about the role the United States played in Mexican politics as well. In the conservative view, the US government, through the agency of Poinsett, had deliberately exported federal

republicanism, which was ill-suited to Mexican political traditions, in order to weaken Mexico and facilitate the seizure of its northern states. As has been shown in chapters three and four, this narrative was present in the 1820s, but conservative fears had become more acute in the 1850s for two reasons. First, US expansion was no longer a fear, it was a fact. Second, the polarisation of Mexican politics saw Washington openly side with Juárez's Liberals diplomatically and materially during the War of Reform. European intervention, therefore, was deemed to be a solution to the external threat to Mexico posed by the United States and the internal one posed by US-backed liberalism.

It was within this context of a hostile power, which conservatives viewed as ideologically opposed to their vision for the nation and which posed an existential threat to Mexico, that the transnational discourse of pan-Latinism found adherents amongst members of the Conservative Party in the 1850s. Here monarchism and anti-Americanism, combined with French influence and power, came together. However, as chapter three has demonstrated, pan-Latinism can be traced back much earlier than the 1850s where it is usually first identified. The idea of Latin America was not a French construct of the 1850s, and nor was pan-Latinism an ideology composed to legitimate French imperialism under the French Second Empire. Moreover, Mexico shows that it was by no means the case that early adopters of the term "Latin America" tended to be liberals. In Mexico the opposite was true. It was the Conservative Party that was waging an anti-democratic crusade against Juárez's US-backed Liberals.

In part, the conservative association with pan-Latinism may be seen as a logical outcome of the European sympathies of conservative Mexican politicians and intellectuals, such as Alamán, who never renounced Mexico's Spanish past. However, the declining power of Spain, and the hispanophobia ingrained in much of Mexico's political culture, meant that France was a more attractive and useful European benefactor. As outlined in chapter three, one of the first arguments for French intervention in Mexico made at a government level and depicted in pan-Latinist terms was advanced not by French pan-Latinists, but José Ramón Pacheco and Buenaventura Vivó – Santa Anna's ministers to Paris and Madrid respectively. They asked France to cash the cheques written out by French pan-Latinists in their

repeated assertions that France was the leader of Latin civilisation and must take an active role to defend it.

Finally, the international dimension to the consolidation of Mexican conservatism was crucial. As chapter four has argued, it was not only Louis-Napoléon who saw in his own regime the cure for Mexican ills: the Mexican Conservative Party identified itself as part of an "international reaction" based on "conservative principles". Alamán believed that the French Second Empire was the model upon which to construct the dictatorship of Santa Anna in 1853. Furthermore, the Conservative Party argued that French politics after the revolution of 1848 mirrored Mexico: a small cabal of radical and well-organised liberals had overthrown the government against the wishes of the people, who were a silent conservative majority. What was needed was a strong leader to defeat revolution and restore order. The groundwork for the hyperbolic praise of Bonapartism in the conservative press during the early years of the intervention had, therefore, been laid in the 1850s. In this decade, France under Louis-Napoléon appeared to have been restored as the greatest continental power in Europe. Victory in the Crimean War demonstrated the prowess of the French military, and French policy towards the Ottoman Empire was transplanted to the Americas in order to present Mexico as the "western question", which argued European powers, headed by France, should intervene in Mexico in order to save it from the United States.

Mexican Conservatives believed the French Second Empire had married authoritarian government with economic development and democratic politics. In short, it was an ideal example for Mexico to follow. Moreover, French administration was seen by many in Mexico as a model to imitate in order to achieve rationalised government combined with material progress, a goal which formed a significant part of Conservative Party's programme, and was given particular prominence by Almonte. In 1867, the Emperor of the French stated that behind his Mexican policy lay the desire to "implant there ideas of order and progress".[4] For the reasons outlined above, there were many in Mexico who, even

[4] 'Discours de l'Empereur', *Journal des débats*, 15 February 1867, front page.

if they had not called for French intervention, ultimately rallied to the Mexican Empire and saw in it the best chance for Mexico to become a stable and constitutional regime free from US interference.

Maximilian's empire did rally support from moderate liberals as well as from the Conservative Party, but it was from this latter institution that France initially found its collaborating elites and its imperial bridgehead in Mexico. This was a consequence of the fissure in Mexican politics between Liberals and Conservatives during the 1850s, which reached its apogee in the War of Reform. From independence, Mexican conservative politicians were never strong enough to impose their vision on Mexico. Administrations in Mexico in which conservatives actively participated (and subsequently approved of) were short-lived. Bustamante's regime directed by Alamán lasted for two years (1830-2); Paredes was president for only seven months in 1846; Santa Anna's last dictatorship endured from 1853 to 1855; the de facto Conservative governments of Zuloaga and then Miramón contested power with, and were defeated by, Juárez from 1858 to 1861. Whatever configuration conservatives relied upon in Mexican politics to remain in power, be it in alliance with moderate liberals or *santanistas*, and with the backing of the Church, proved insufficient to sustain them in power. Partly as a consequence of this weakness, many in the Mexican Conservative Party called for European intervention throughout the 1850s.

When it finally arrived, French arms provided what seemed a providential opportunity to implement the Conservative Party's conception of the Mexican nation after defeat by Juárez. The transnational ideas which underwrote French imperialism were, initially at least, embraced by Mexican Conservatives, who represented an intervention led by, what they called, the most civilised power in Europe as necessarily civilizing in itself. In this view, France, as it had (supposedly) done elsewhere, would protect Christian civilisation, impose order, rationalise administration, increase commerce and develop the economic potential of Mexico, while at the same time safeguarding the social order, protecting Mexico from further US invasion and stemming the tide of radical *puro* liberalism. In this sense, locating Mexico within Latin civilisation was not merely a sensible geostrategic option, but a shorthand expression for the core aims of the Conservative Party in

the 1850s. This helps explain why some Mexican elites supported French intervention: transnational ideas supported by French arms could be adapted to local circumstances and French power could be co-opted to further the ends of collaborating elites.

Imperialising the French Intervention

At least that was the theory. The asymmetrical relationship between Mexican Conservatives and France is demonstrated by the fact that they were swiftly marginalised once the intervention was underway. Certainly France's initial allies in Mexico were Conservatives, but the problem for Mexican Conservatives who supported the intervention was that France had little interest in Mexican conservatism except insofar as it could deliver immediate French goals: the swift pacification of the country and the establishment of stable regime tied closely to France. With the defeat at Puebla, 5 May 1862, it became clear to Paris that Mexican Conservatives were unable to secure this and, therefore, what little autonomy they enjoyed in the intervention ended. As chapter five has shown, the utility of Mexican Conservatives was not primarily, for the French, military, but rather political in that they provided an imperial bridgehead as well as acting as collaborating elites to set up and administer the empire. However, once the regime was established those who proved inimical to French, or later Maximilian's, broadly liberal policy were discarded.

The disavowal of the Mexican Conservative programme, or at least the clerical wing of Mexican conservatism, calls into question the conclusion that France intervened at the behest of a those who supported it. In fact, Louis-Napoléon had a singular vision for the French intervention that had little to do with the clerical-conservative plans of many of those who called for the intervention. Transnational ideas such as pan-Latinism were flexible enough to be shaped to fit Mexican conservatism, but they were not interpreted quite so freely by policymakers in Paris. As chapter five has shown, Louis-Napoléon ordered his commanders not to follow what he called a "reactionary" course in Mexico. French intervention was predicated upon the assumption that a moderate liberal government, ordered on the principles of French civilisation and backed by French

arms, was the solution to endemic political instability in Mexico and one that would quickly defeat opposition. Although driven by the belief that French civilisation was the apex of modernity and inherently attractive, the attempt to rally moderates from both parties was also a pragmatic choice. The weakness of the Conservative Party meant the Mexican empire needed support from moderate liberals as well as clerical conservatives in order to survive.

This was the vision for Mexico that lay behind the French intervention. But why try to implement it in Mexico in the first place? As outlined in chapter two, Latin America occupied a position of increasing importance for French global trade, the protection and development of which was at the forefront of French policy in the region, as much for Thiers as it was for Louis-Napoléon. Mexico was identified as a particularly lucrative potential market because, it was argued, its immense wealth under Spanish colonialism could be restored by bringing an end to the so-called anarchy that reigned there after independence. A strong, regular, government administered along French lines, would develop the mineral resources and agricultural potential of the country. Mexico had been cut off from European capital markets, while immigration had been low because of political instability, but the Mexican Second Empire would attract both. It would, therefore, be easy to restore Mexico's place as a world-leading economy under French tutelage.

As chapter two has shown, French diplomats, policymakers and many commentators argued that the political solution for Mexico, from which economic progress would follow, was monarchy. This shared discourse of monarchism undoubtedly influenced French thinking towards Mexico under the French Second Empire. In 1861, Gutiérrez de Estrada thanked Chevalier alongside Eugène Duflot de Mofras and Alleye de Cyprey for their continued support for monarchy in Mexico.[5] It is worth stressing that without European support for the idea of monarchy in Mexico it would never have been realised, and that this support, unlike in Mexico, was not confined to a minority, but was shared by many in Britain and Spain as well as France. Although monarchy enjoyed only limited support amongst elites in Mexico itself, the endurance of the idea and the willingness of some Mexicans to

[5] Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Le Mexique et l'archiduc*, 14; 17-18.

declare in favour of it meant that Mexico was the only country in Latin America, certainly by the 1860s, where a European attempt to establish a monarchical regime could be seriously entertained.

The economic development of a wealthy nation subordinated to French interests and part of the European dynastic system was an attractive one in itself, but it was the geopolitical significance of Mexico that placed it at the forefront of Louis-Napoléon's worldview. As outlined in chapter three, French fears of US aggrandisement in Mexico and the circum-Caribbean were a leitmotif of foreign policy discussion as regards Latin America from the Texan revolt onwards. These were often expressed in pan-Latinist terms. And the ideas that lay behind pan-Latinism were expressed beyond the canonical texts of influential proponents, such as Chevalier, and shaped the views of diverse French diplomats and commentators on Mexico. Indeed, Guizot's insistence on an equilibrium in North America between the Protestant United States and (what he termed) southern Catholic nations was pan-Latinist in all but name.

Pan-Latinism was central to the intervention because, as discussed above, it drew some Mexican conservatives towards France and it demarcated Latin America as a sphere of French influence. In this sense, pan-Latinism was a confident assertion of the primacy of French civilisation in Latin regions, but it should also be noted that it was also an explanation for the diminishing influence of France in the face of rising US and Prussian power. A pan-Latinist worldview greatly expanded the reach and power of France, but at the same time made this influence precarious because any Latin nation challenged by a non-Latin nation undermined France and upset the balance of power between races.

US policy had shown itself to be openly hostile towards Cuba, Central America and especially Mexico, while at the same time threatening European interests in the Caribbean. As discussed in chapter three, many French commentators identified rising US power as a direct affront to Latin civilisation and Mexico as a battleground between races and civilisations, which, if not fought, would result in the destruction of the one by the other. Even for those like Guizot who did not openly discuss the US in pan-Latinist terms, Mexico was seen as a bulwark to prevent US expansionism because it was feared further US annexation

would limit European access to markets and, more generally, US power threatened the global geopolitical balance. As chapter three and four have demonstrated Louis-Napoléon and Chevalier, alongside many others, understood French intervention in Mexico to be a response to the rise of US power and a chance to reassert French influence in the Americas.

Any analysis of the French intervention must therefore place Latinity at its heart because it underpinned the intellectual argument for geopolitical concerns, marked Latin America as an area of French imperial influence and saw some Mexicans welcome France in this role. It is also worth noting that Thiers opposed both Guizot's policy over Texan annexation and Louis-Napoléon's in Mexico because he dismissed the idea that the United States was a threat to France. For Thiers, the rise of the United States benefitted France because it diminished Britain. Guizot and Louis-Napoléon, on the other hand, were both anglophiles who largely understood Anglo-French cooperation as a means to extend European influence in the extra-European world and to protect British and French interests in Europe itself.

France was prepared to intervene militarily across the globe in order to advance its interests with a marked preference for limited military expeditions, in conjunction with other European powers, rather than colonial conquest. Mexico should be placed within this context of the extension of French global influence, especially the Orleanist interventions in Latin America of 1838 and the joint overseas expeditions of the French Second Empire: the Second Opium War (Anglo-French, 1856-60), Syria (with international agreement, 1860-61) and to Cochinchina (initial campaign, Franco-Spanish, 1858-62). In addition, France was consolidating its long-term influence in Egypt, particularly with the construction of the Suez Canal. Nonetheless, the currents of French thought outlined above and the trends in French imperialism should not be seen as an ineluctable march towards French intervention. It was the outbreak of the US Civil War which provided France with a free hand to prosecute its goals in Mexico, while it was the end of civil war in Mexico which increased the number of elites willing to work with France in order to further their own ends.

The Failure of the Mexican Second Empire

Nonetheless, if the French intervention is placed within French imperialism generally and the Mexican origins of Maximilian's empire are taken seriously the question still remains: why did it fail? For some in the Conservative Party who requested French intervention, its collapse was a consequence of too much imperialism. Directing affairs from Paris, and with little understanding of events in Mexico, Louis-Napoléon's refusal to follow the Conservative Party programme was the primary cause for the failure of Maximilian's empire. This charge can be dismissed: it is clear that the Mexican empire did not collapse because it was not conservative enough. Contradicting the Mexican Conservative interpretation, contemporary French critics, and many subsequent historians, argued that it was precisely because the intervention was launched in favour of a clique of Mexican Conservative émigrés, who misrepresented the chances of success, that it did not succeed.

From a military point of view, however, the temporary conquest and occupation of Mexico had been demonstrated to be a very real possibility by the US-Mexican War. Certainly the French defeat at Puebla by the republican Mexican army was a shock, but this was a consequence of the assumption that 6,000 battle-hardened French troops, veterans of various conflicts such as the first Carlist War, the conquest of Algeria, the Crimean War and the Italian campaigns, would easily defeat the forces of Juárez. Furthermore, the 23,000 or so reinforcements sent by France ensured that there were no major subsequent military defeats. The military campaign in Mexico was expensive, requiring more soldiers than originally anticipated in 1862, and the resistance of Juárez and his liberal supporters proved much more determined than expected. Nonetheless, as the 1864 Treaty of Miramar made clear, France was willing to maintain a significant level of troops in Mexico with numbers reduced to no fewer than 20,000 by 1867, and with an 8,000-strong French Foreign Legion remaining in Mexico for six years after the departure of all other French troops (after which it would pass into the service of the Mexican government).

It was not, therefore purely military concerns that led to the announcement of the withdrawal of French troops in 1867. France faced determined resistance to imperialism in Algeria and Indochina, but what local leaders in these regions did not have was the support of a major regional power, with an army of 500,000 over the border, that refused to recognise the legitimacy of the French-backed regime, provided material aid to Juárez and ultimately threatened France with war if it did not withdraw its troops. Far from checking US power, French intervention in Mexico merely afforded Louis-Napoléon the opportunity to witness its reality.

Still, if US pressure explains the withdrawal of French troops it does not account for the collapse of the Mexican Second Empire. Indeed, Louis-Napoléon had always taken into account that the Union was hostile to French intervention, reasoning that even if the North won the US Civil War Maximilian's empire would have been consolidated, internationally recognised and internal opposition crushed. Presented with a fait accompli, and with France legally bound to withdraw its troops, the United States would have no choice but to acknowledge the Mexican Second Empire.

In large part, the reasons why the Mexican Second Empire failed to establish itself before the end of the US Civil War can be found in the informal-imperial model that France adopted in Mexico. The nominal reason for the French withdrawal of troops given to Maximilian was the inability of the Second Mexican Empire to comply with the terms regulating the French intervention in the Treaty of Miramar. As discussed in chapter five, the exhausted Mexican treasury was unable to maintain the payments agreed in order to finance the French army in Mexico. This was the pretext for French abandonment of Maximilian, but it was symptomatic of a wider problem that made the consolidation of his empire problematic.

All Mexican regimes after independence suffered from financial difficulty, which was why Juárez suspended international payments in 1861 precipitating the intervention, but the Treaty of Miramar, combined with the Mexican loans contracted in Paris and Spanish and British claims which predated the intervention, meant that 86 percent of Maximilian's budget for 1866 was taken up with foreign debt repayment. The French goal was to create a stable regime that would

ultimately sustain itself, indemnify France for the intervention, pay for the ongoing cost of French occupation while building up its own military and honour its international debts to ensure access to international credit markets. However, the Treaty of Miramar made it highly improbable that the French aim of establishing a self-sustaining regime could be achieved given the weight of debt it put on the Mexican treasury. After the announcement of the French withdrawal in 1866, France replaced the Treaty of Miramar with a convention that appropriated Mexico's customs receipts to cover French debts, thus further starving Maximilian of the resources required to administer his empire.

This problem was exacerbated because, like many previous Mexican regimes, the Second Mexican Empire did not control the entire territory of the nation it claimed to rule. In part, this was also a failure of French policy. French forces did not take Puebla until May 1863, the French army only reached Mexico City in June of the same year and Maximilian did not accept the crown until April 1864. This meant that the French army and French administrators alongside Mexican *imperialistas* had little over a year in which to consolidate the Second Mexican Empire before the end of the US Civil War. This short period of time proved insufficient to secure and legitimise the regime, let alone organise a Mexican army capable of defending the empire independently of French troops. Although many moderate liberals did rally to the empire, their support proved ephemeral and once it became clear that French soldiers would leave Mexico these liberals encouraged Maximilian to abdicate. In short, it was the shallow foundations of the regime and the lack of resources available to Maximilian in order to maintain his government, combined with the unwillingness of France to commit more money and men to maintain the state it had help create in Mexico – the consistent reluctance of France to assume the costs of formal empire – that led to its swift collapse in the face of republican forces after French withdrawal.

Informal Empire

As has been noted in the introduction, the commitment of French resources to Mexico was far larger than any other contemporary imperial French project, with the exception of Algeria. This scale of French military involvement in Mexico has

obscured historians' understandings of the intervention. However, to categorise the intervention as "formal empire" and "colonialism" is to conflate the means by which French intervention was conducted with the ends of the imperial project: at no point did France want to establish direct rule, acquire territory or maintain a permanent military presence in Mexico.

This disjuncture between the practice of French imperialism in Latin America and the desired outcome highlights one of the distinguishing features of French imperialism in Latin America which separates it from British policy, namely in both Mexico and the River Plate, France was willing to deploy military force in order to achieve its ends. In addition, it became involved in domestic politics in the hope of securing its goals. France distanced itself from the Mexican Conservative Party once Mexico City was occupied in 1863, but those who initially fought alongside the intervention were those who had lost the War of Reform. Similarly, as discussed in chapter two, in the River Plate, French forces aided Argentine Unitarians who had recently been defeated in civil war by Rosas, while they backed Uruguayan liberals in their civil conflict against the pro-Rosas Oribe. Furthermore, in the 1838-39 Mexican intervention Admiral Baudin briefly flirted with liberal federalists in revolt against the central government and lifted the blockade on liberal-held ports. The trend is clear: France was willing to involve itself in domestic politics because it was thought that factions in Latin America would further French policy goals. These elites were attracted to France because of a sympathy for French ideas, but also because French arms were a means advancing local ambitions. Moreover, in both the River Plate and, more dramatically, in Mexico, the combination of local allies and French support proved incapable of founding long-lasting informal influence, or even securing the aims of those local elites who sided with France.

The contrast with Britain is perhaps not as marked as it initially appears. As chapter two has shown, Britain supported some French policy goals in the region. Furthermore, they did commit limited naval forces in support of these aims and in conjunction with France. Britain jointly blockaded Buenos Aires from 1845-47 and was part of the tripartite intervention of 1861. Furthermore, Palmerston privately welcomed the 1838 expedition against Mexico and hoped that the Second Mexican Empire under Maximilian would be a success. Influential British periodicals such as

The Economist and *The Times* also championed the Mexican Second Empire. While Britain was not willing to deploy military force on anywhere near the same scale as France, particularly not in support of such an ambitious project as overturning the political institutions of Mexico and establishing a Mexican empire under French tutelage, Britain was willing to acquiesce, and at times openly collaborate, with French imperial ambitions in Latin America.

Nonetheless, Lord Aberdeen made clear that if he had 20,000 British troops to spare he would not send one to the River Plate, while Lord Clarendon similarly baulked at the resources that would be necessary to contain US expansionism in Mexico and Central America. How, then, to account for the willingness of France to mobilise its forces to develop its influence in Latin America? Many French policymakers, including Chateaubriand, Guizot, Thiers and Louis-Napoléon, believed that the extension of French influence in Latin America was a desirable outcome. The question was how to achieve it. All of them, albeit to different degrees, were prepared to send French forces in order to further this goal.

This may perhaps be explained by the fact that France lacked the economic hegemony enjoyed by Britain. In the classic model of informal empire commerce and capital, backed by the threat of military intervention, are the means to procure political influence. In the case of France, to secure political influence it was first necessary to create the conditions for it. The threat of force was not the means by which French influence was to be maintained; rather force was the method that would establish French power in regions, like Mexico, where it was thought French civilisation would be welcomed. The preferred means of doing this was through collaborating elites influenced by elements of French political culture who, at times of domestic political conflict, were willing to embrace French arms in support of transnational ideas, which were adopted and adapted to their local circumstances in order to promote their own vision of the nation.

In terms of what they hoped to create in Mexico, namely an independent regime tied closely to French interests, the model of French informal imperialism is closer to Darwin's categorisation, discussed in the introduction, of the "eastern" version of British informal empire, which was underwritten by legal and/or

territorial concessions.[6] There were no territorial concessions, but France's relationship with Mexico was regulated by the Treaty of Miramar. This document outlined the financial obligations undertaken by Maximilian in return for the military support of France, while a secret clause bound the Second Mexican Empire to continue the policies enacted by France at the beginning of the intervention and followed by the Regency government. The two Mexican loans tied the Mexican government to French capital, and intellectual institutions, such as the Franco-Mexican Scientific Commission and the Imperial Academy of Arts and Sciences were intended to spread culture, but French capital (the first Mexican loan was raised in 1864) and French culture (the Academy was opened in 1865) followed the establishment of French political influence (the Regency was proclaimed in 1863), they did not create it. Commerce was always an important consideration, and French trade with Mexico was second to that of Britain and equal to the United States, but, again, the intervention was intended to protect and develop French economic interests, which had not in themselves secured much, if any, political influence for France in its relations with Mexico. French informal empire Mexico was, then, an aspiration and one that policymakers were willing divert considerable resources to in order to create, even without the economic bases which British informal influence in Latin America is conventionally understood to have been predicated upon.

This thesis has shown that French regimes which in the (until recently) dominant historiography have frequently been dismissed as failures or anachronisms were admired by many Latin American intellectuals and politicians. Moreover, it was not merely the political thought of the widely influential pantheon of French intellectuals, such as Constant, Guizot or Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-59), that drew some towards France in this period, but also the constitutional, administrative and, in the case of the French Second Empire, economic examples French regimes provided. Indeed, in 1853, as discussed in chapter four, it was Alamán's interest in the apparent success of Bonapartism in France that led him to seek legislation from the French minister to Mexico, Levasseur, to base Santa

[6] Darwin, 'Imperialism and the Victorians', 617.

Anna's press law on and saw the French minister feted at various banquets held by various important politicians in 1853. In this sense, it was this French political model that gave Levasseur what he termed influence in Mexican politics, not French capital or commerce.

The thesis has argued that the concept of informal empire elucidates our understanding of the Mexican Second Empire because it theorises a relationship through which those who embraced French imperialism hoped to benefit from French intervention. This was not based on economic self-interest; the advantageous economic relationship with France never developed beyond the commerce endemic to the period, but rather was motivated by an ideological conviction that Conservative Party's vision for Mexico was the only one that could save the nation, and that it could only triumph with the help of French arms.

Finally, if the intervention is placed within French imperialism regionally and globally, it also should be situated within the context of the US Civil War, the study of which has undergone a "transnational turn". This has led one historian to conclude that the French intervention and the Union's conflict against the South were linked as an "illiberal alliance between the slaveholding Confederate States of America and monarchical France […] an ideological conflict centred in North America's southern tier."[7] The thesis has demonstrated that such a conclusion is not plausible. A central aim of the French intervention was to prevent the further expansion of the United States, and this threat was understood by French policymakers to emanate primarily from the South, while the liberal face of the Second Mexican Empire belies any attempt to tie it ideologically to the Confederacy. As regards the United States, the intervention should be understood as a direct and deliberate challenge to US regional hegemony, the greatest defiance of the Monroe Doctrine until the Cuban Missile Crisis. The discourses that underwrote monarchism, pan-Latinism, conservatism and French imperialism were part of this challenge and tied to anti-Americanism. The attempt to support and

[7] Patrick Kelly, 'The North American Crisis of the 1860s', *Journal of the Civil War Era*, 2 (2012), 337; 339. For an overview of the US Civil War in an international context see Don H. Doyle, 'The Global Civil War' in Aaron Sheehan-Dean (ed.), *A Companion to the US Civil War*, 2 vols. (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), II, 1103-1120.

further these currents of thought in Mexico was in part provided by the break-up of the Union, and the failure of the Second Mexican Empire was in no small part due to reconstitution of the United States in 1865.

By analysing sources not normally utilised in the history of ideas, the thesis has demonstrated that currents of thought often considered to be the preserve of well-known intellectuals and politicians were part of a wider political culture that influenced French policy in Mexico, and shaped the contours of Mexican political discourse. It has demonstrated that the ideas of Alamán or Chevalier, for example, were not merely the preserve of elite intellectuals, but were shared and developed by diplomats, travel writers and publicists, who discussed and debated them in their published works and correspondence. However, more research into the popular appeal of these ideas, especially those of Mexican conservative thought, their regional reach, particularly in the different states of Mexico, would deepen our understanding of Mexican conservatism. In addition, the links between anti-Americanism, conservatism and pan-Latinism in Latin America would be especially interesting to explore in order to see if Mexico is an exceptional case in the region, or whether similar currents of pro-European or pro-French thought were shared by other Latin American conservatives.

The thesis has placed French imperialism in its global and Latin American context; however, the focus has necessarily been on Mexico. Further research into French imperial projects worldwide, and regionally in Latin America, particularly comparative case studies, would help elucidate links, commonalities and differences. Pan-Latinism, for example, was not just a discourse applied to Latin America, but to Africa and Asia too, while France's role as the defender of Catholicism in the period 1815-70, particularly under the French Second Empire, may have more important implications for its appeal to Mexican conservatives than this thesis has been able to identify. The impact of the failure of the French informal-imperial model in Mexico on French imperialism may also perhaps help explain the move to formal colonialism under the Third Republic. Ultimately, informal empire building in Latin America was, for France, an expensive and futile exercise and thus may have led French imperialists towards other imperial strategies on other parts of the globe.

An article published in 1863 in *El Pájaro Verde* concluded that the memory of Louis-Napoléon would remain engraved in the hearts of all Mexicans.[8] In the aftermath of the French intervention it was, although not in the manner that the pro-intervention newspaper or the Emperor of the French would have hoped. The importance of the French intervention in the construction of Mexican national identity, as one of the foundational myths of Mexican history, is well documented.[9] However, if Louis-Napoléon is remembered at all today in public discourse it is generally because of Marx's oft-repeated quip on history, the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce, or because of the catastrophic defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, rather than his Mexican policy. Maximilian would be an even more obscure footnote to European history than he is if it were not for Manet's 'Execution of Maximilian'. Juárez, by contrast, has Mexico City's international airport named after him.

Despite Louis-Napoléon's fondness for the "ideas" or "spirit" of the century, contemporaries and historians have generally concluded that the Emperor of the French, the Mexican Conservative Party and Maximilian were on the 'wrong side' of history. This thesis has built on the work of scholars who have deepened our understanding of ideas that underpinned their projects, especially recent work in Mexican history which has demonstrated that the Manichean division between Liberal patriots and traitorous reactionaries is unhelpful. As Van Young writes, "revolutionary mythologies […] blur or efface others altogether, the act of creative remembering implies selective forgetting as well."[10] After all, Juárez's Liberals disagreed with Alamán, but his analysis of the best course for Mexico, namely economic development combined with political authoritarianism, was one largely adopted by the PRI in the twentieth century. And Porfirio Díaz may have fought against French ideas on the battlefield, but he would surely have agreed with Louis-

[8] 'Editorial. Napoléon III – El Arbitro de la paz del mundo'. *El Pájaro Verde,* 15 August 1863, p. 2.
[9] See, for example, Knight, 'Peculiarities of Mexican History', 125.
[10] Van Young, *Writing Mexican History*, 160.

Napoléon's judgement that "[w]hat is needed in Mexico is not parliamentary liberty, but a liberal dictatorship".[11]

[11] Louis-Napoléon to Maximilian, 2 October 1863, quoted in Corti, *Maximilian*, I, 389-90.

Chronology 1: Mexico, 1820-61

1820

March – Spanish Constitution of 1812 reintroduced in Spain and throughout the Americas.

1821

24 February – Agustín de Iturbide issues the Plan of Iguala.

27 September – The Army of Three Guarantees, led by Iturbide, enters Mexico City.

1822

19 May – Iturbide proclaimed Emperor of Mexico.

1822-23 FIRST MEXICAN EMPIRE

2 December – Santa Anna in Veracruz revolts against Iturbide.

1823

1-2 February – Plan of Casa Mata issued which unites opposition against Iturbide.

19 March – Iturbide abdicates.

1824

19 July – Iturbide executed after returning to Mexico.

1824-35 FEDERAL REPUBLIC

September – 1824 Constitution proclaimed; Guadalupe Victoria first elected president of Mexico (in office 1824-28).

1825

Masonic Rite of York, whose members are known as *yorkinos*, is set up with the cooperation of Joel Poinsett, US minister to Mexico, to counter the influence of the Scottish Rite, whose members are known as *escoceses*.

1827

10 May and 20 December – laws approved which expel Spaniards from Mexico.

1828

August to September – Presidential elections held; Manuel Gómez Pedraza wins.

16 September – Santa Anna leads *yorkino* revolt which proclaims Vicente Guerrero president (in office 1829).

4 December – Fighting in Mexico City which brings Guerrero to power sees sack of the Parián market.

1829

26 July – Spanish expedition to reconquer Mexico lands at Tampico.

11 September – Santa Anna defeats Spanish troops.

4 December –Anastasio Bustamante revolts against Guerrero.

1830

January – Bustamante president, heads an administration directed by Alamán from 1830 to 1832.

6 April – Law drafted by Alamán passes which restricts Anglo-American immigration to Texas.

1831

14 February – Vicente Guerrero executed.

1832

2 January – Santa Anna revolts against Bustamante's presidency.

23 December – Bustamante steps down as president.

1833

1 April – Santa Anna becomes president, does not take up office; Valentín Gomez Farías rules as vice-president (in office 1833-4).

1834

25 May – Plan of Cuernavaca begins a series of revolts against liberal reforms enacted by Gomez Farías. Santa Anna intervenes, annuls reforms and strips Gomez Farías of vice-presidency.

1835

April – Federalist revolt against centralism breaks out in Zacatecas.

11 May – Santa Anna defeats federalists in Zacatecas.

22 June – Revolt in Texas begins.

1835-46 CENTRAL REPUBLIC

23 October – The federal 1824 Constitution is replaced by a Centralist Constituent Congress.

1836

2 March – Declaration of Texan independence.

6 March – Santa Anna defeats Texan rebels at the Alamo.

21 April – Texan forces defeat Santa Anna at the battle of San Jacinto.

29 December – The *Siete Leyes* (Seven Laws) consolidate centralist political system and create the Supreme Conservative Power.

1837

April –Bustamante elected president (in office 1837-41).

1838

16 April – French fleets blockades Mexico

7 October – José Antonio Mejía begins federalist revolt in Tampico

27-28 November –French navy bombards and then occupies fort of San Juan d'Ulúa at Veracruz.

1 December – Mexican government declares war on France.

1839

22 January – José Urrea begins federalist revolt in Tamaulipas.

9 March – Peace treaty between France and Mexico signed.

1840

6 June – Yucatán proclaims itself independent of Mexico.

15 July – Urrea leads federalist revolt in Mexico City; Bustamante taken hostage in the National Palace.

27 July – Revolt defeated and Bustamante restored to power.

October – Gutiérrez de Estrada publishes pamphlet in favour of monarchy.

1841

August to October – Triangular Revolt overthrows Bustamante; Santa Anna becomes president (in office 1841-44).

6 October – *Bases de Tacubaya* approved; new constitution awards Santa Anna temporary dictatorial powers

1842

19 December – Congress dominated by federalists is closed down and replaced with a *Junta de Notables* to draft a new constitution.

1843

8 June – *Bases Orgánicas*, *santanista* constitution, is imposed.

1844

6 December – Revolt in Mexico City overthrows Santa Anna.

7 December – José Joaquín de Herrera nominated president (in office December 1844 to December 1845).

1845

1 March 1845 – US President Tyler signs bill admitting Texas into the Union.

14 December 1845 – General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga issues plan of San Luís Potosi against the national government; Paredes wishes for the election of a Constituent Congress to decide on the form of government best suited to Mexico. He is backed by Alamán, who wishes to see Mexico constituted as a monarchy.

1846

12 February – *El Tiempo* publishes 'Nuestra profesión de fe', first public argument for monarchy in Mexico since Gutiérrez de Estrada's pamphlet.

April – War with the United States begins.

6 August – Paredes is overthrown by a federalist revolt; centralist constitution is overturned and 1824 Constitution is reinstated.

1846-55 SECOND FEDERAL REPUBLIC

1847

15 September – US army occupies Mexico City.

1848

2 February – Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed. Mexico loses nearly half of its national territory in return for $15 million.

June-July – José Joaquín de Herrera elected president (in office 1848-51).

1849

February – Conservative Party formed.

1850

August to October – presidential elections.

1851

8 January – Mariano Arista declared winner of the presidential elections; Juan Nepomuceno Almonte second placed.

15 January – Arista assumes power (in office to January 1853).

1852

26 July – Plan of Blancarte issued in Jalisco which called for the return of Santa Anna.

1853

7 January – In the face of growing support for the Plan of Blancarte Arista renounces the presidency.

8 January – Juan Ceballos nominated interim president.

6 February – Ceballos renounces the presidency; Manuel María Lombardini becomes interim president until the return of Santa Anna.

23 March – Alamán writes letter to Santa Anna outlining Conservative Party programme and offering support if Santa Anna follows this manifesto.

1 April – Santa Anna returns to Mexico and is declared dictator.

LAST DICTATORSHIP OF SANTA ANNA, 1853-55

2 June 1853 – Alamán dies.

1854

1 March – Plan of Ayutla issued. This plan rallied liberal opposition against Santa Anna.

25 April – Sale of La Mesilla, known as the Gadsden Purchase in the United States, ratified by US Congress.

1855

12 August – Santa Anna resigns.

4 October – Juan Álvarez nominated president; appoints Benito Juárez as minister of justice.

November – Juárez Law (*ley Juárez*) abolishes Church and army *fueros*.

11 December – Álvarez renounces presidency and is replaced by moderate liberal Ignacio Comonfort (in office 1855-58).

1856

25 June – Lerdo Law (*ley Lerdo*) forced the sale of corporate property owned by the Church and Indian communities.

1857

5 February – 1857 Constitution ratified.

17 December – Plan of Tacubaya issued by Conservative leader Félix María Zuloaga calling for the suspension of the 1857 Constitution.

1858

WAR OF REFORM (1858-61)

11 January – Zuloaga becomes de facto presidency of a Conservative regime in Mexico City; Juárez as President of the Supreme Court becomes president by virtue of the constitution and heads a de jure Liberal government.

May – Juárez reaches Veracruz which becomes the capital of the Liberal government.

1859

6 April – US government recognises Liberals as government of Mexico.

July – Liberals pass a series of laws further secularising the state.

14 December – McLane-Ocampo Treaty signed between Mexican Liberal government and the United States.

1860

6 March – Two Conservative ships seized by the US navy before Veracruz at battle of Anton Lizardo.

25 December – Liberal troops enter Mexico City.

1861

1 January – Liberal ministers reach Mexico City, end of the War of Reform.

March – Juárez elected president.

Chronology 2: France, 1815-70

1815-30 BOURBON RESTORATION

1815

7 July – After Napoléon Bonaparte's defeat at Waterloo, Louis XVIII returns to Paris to rule as King of France.

1821

December – The royalist *ultra* Jean-Baptiste de Villèle forms his first ministry.

1822

28 December – Chateaubriand appointed foreign minister, a position he occupies until August 1824.

1823

October – Britain and France sign Polignac Memorandum, which disavows armed intervention in Latin American wars of independence.

April – French troops invade Spain to restore Ferdinand VII to absolutist rule.

1824

16 September – Louis XVIII dies and is succeeded by his brother Charles X.

1825

17 April – Royal ordinance proclaims Haiti independent on condition of paying France an indemnity and granting favourable commercial terms.

June – Haitian government accepts French conditions under threat of naval action.

1827

8 May – Declaration signed in Paris by France and Mexico which regulates commerce between the two nations, but does not recognise Mexican independence.

1830

June – French troops enter Algiers.

1830-48 JULY MONARCHY

July-August – July Revolution overthrows Charles X; Louis-Phillipe becomes King of the French.

4 September – Count Molé, French foreign minister, announces that France will recognise independence of former Spanish American colonies.

1834

October – Government of New Granada (Colombia) accedes to French demands under threat of military action from French navy.

1838

28 March – French blockade of Buenos Aires begins.

1839

29 September – France recognises independence of Texas.

1840

21 October – Thiers ministry falls; Guizot, as foreign minister until 1847 and then as prime minister, heads governments of July Monarchy.

29 October – French blockade of Buenos Aires raised.

1845

July-August – Anglo-French blockade of Buenos Aires begins.

1847

July – British blockade of Buenos Aires raised.

1848

23 February – Guizot resigns as French prime minister after civil unrest in Paris marking the beginnings of the revolutions of 1848.

1848-51 SECOND REPUBLIC

August – Second French blockade of Buenos Aires raised.

20 December – Louis-Napoléon named as President of the Second Republic after securing 74 percent of the votes cast.

1849

April – French troops, in conjunction with Spanish, reach Italy to forcibly the restore Pope Piux XIX to temporal rule in Rome.

1851

2 December – Louis-Napoléon launches coup d'état and seizes control of the French state.

20-21 December – national plebiscite held on whether the French people approved the actions of Louis-Napoléon; of the votes cast, 92 percent vote yes.

1852

21-22 November – second referendum on whether to make Louis-Napoléon "Emperor of the French"; 97 percent approve.

1852-70 FRENCH SECOND EMPIRE

2 December – French Second Empire proclaimed.

1854

27 March – Crimean War begins.

1856

1 February – Crimean War ends.

1859

17 February – Joint Franco-Spanish expedition takes Saigon in Cochinchina.

3 May-11 July – Italian War of 1859.

1860

August-September- As part of an international agreement, French forces occupy Syria to protect local Christian population.

21-22 November – China signs the Convention of Peking which brings to an end Anglo-French intervention in China known as the Second Opium War.

1863

14 April – Treaty of Hué confirms French possession of Saigon as well as declaring a protectorate over three provinces of Cochinchina.

1866

14 June-23 August – Austro-Prussian War.

1869

27 December – Former republican opposition deputy, Émile Ollivier, appointed prime minister of France in order to oversee the creation of the Liberal Empire.

1870

8 May – Plebiscite held on whether the French people accept the liberal reforms introduced to the Second Empire; over 82 percent vote in favour.

19 July – France declares war on Prussia.

1 September – Louis-Napoléon surrenders at the battle of Sedan. Third Republic proclaimed on 4 September.

1873

9 January – Louis-Napoléon dies in exile in England.

Chronology 3: The French Intervention and the Second Mexican Empire, 1861-67

1861

12 April – US Civil War begins.

4 July – Gutiérrez de Estrada writes to Austrian ambassador to France, to ask his views on whether Austria and Maximilian would welcome a proposal for the Archduke as a candidate for a Mexican empire.

17 July – Mexican Congress passes law suspending payments on foreign debt for a period of two years.

25 July – France and Britain break diplomatic relations with Mexico.

9 October – Louis-Napoléon writes to French ambassador to Britain outlining his desire to see Mexico constituted as a monarchy, preferably under Maximilian.

31 October – Convention of London, signed by France, Britain and Spain, regulates the means by which the three powers will intervene in Mexico in order to restore payment on foreign debt.

15 December – Spanish troops occupy Veracruz.

1862

7-9 January – French and British contingents reach Veracruz. French forces, commanded by Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, consist of roughly 2,000 marines and 600 soldiers.

19 February – Representatives of France, Britain and Spain sign the Convention of La Soledad which recognises the government of Juárez as the legitimate government of Mexico and promises not to interfere in the internal affairs of the Mexican republic.

March – Juan Nepomuceno Almonte arrives at Veracruz under the protection of the French flag. This same protection is extended to prominent members of the Conservative Party.

6 March – French reinforcements, 4,573 men and an artillery battery, arrive; commanded by Charles Ferdinand Latrille, Comte de Lorencez.

19 April – France breaks terms of the Convention of La Soledad and military operations begin.

24 April – Last Spanish and British forces leave Mexico.

5 May – French forces defeated at battle of Puebla.

24 September – General Forey arrives at Veracruz with French reinforcements. By the end of the year, the French general

commanded roughly 30,000 men, a figure that remained constant throughout the French intervention.

1863

17 May – French troops occupy Puebla.

29-31 May – Juárez evacuates Mexico City.

7 June – First French troops enter Mexico City.

10 June – Forey enters Mexico City in a triumphal procession.

12 June – Forey issues proclamation outlining the direction of the French political policy in Mexico. This proclamation is the basis of French political direction for Mexico throughout the intervention.

16 June – Provisional government created by decree. A "Junta Superior de Gobierno" of thirty five Mexicans created with two principal aims: i) nominate an executive council made up of three Mexicans and ii) the appointment of an Assembly of Notables made up of 215 Mexicans. The Assembly of Notables will then deliberate on the form of government the Mexican nation is to adopt, while the executive council will govern until the government decided upon is established.

24 June – Almonte, Archbishop Labastida and General Salas named as the members of the executive council.

11 July – The Assembly of Notables decrees that the nation adopts constitutional, hereditary and Catholic monarchy as the form of government for the Mexican nation and that the crown will be offered to Archduke Maximillian. The executive council to govern as the "Regency of the Mexican Empire" until the acceptance of the crown by Maximilian and his arrival in Mexico.

16 July – Forey promoted to Marshal of France and recalled from Mexico.

30 July – Achille Bazaine appointed commander of French forces in Mexico responsible for military and political direction of the intervention.

3 October – Mexican commission, headed by Gutiérrez de Estrada, charged with offering the Mexican crown to Maximilian presents itself at Miramar, home of the Archduke.

1864

10 April – Maximilian formally accepts the Mexico throne; signs Treaty of Miramar, which regulates relations between France and Mexico.

April – First Mexican loan issued.

28 May – Maximilian arrives at Veracruz.

12 June – Maximilian enters Mexico City.

July – Maximilian appoints his first cabinet, which includes moderate liberals, such as José Fernando Ramírez.

November – Former president of Mexico and leader of the Conservative Party, Miguel Miramón, departs Mexico City on a diplomatic mission to Berlin.

December – The Conservative Party's most notorious military commander, Leonardo Márquez, is sent to the Ottoman Empire as minister plenipotentiary.

27 December – After failing to arrange a concordat with the Papacy, Maximilian confirms many of the Church reforms enacted by Juárez during the Reform era.

1865

21 January to 8 February – Siege of Oaxaca, French forces take Oaxaca City and capture Porfirio Díaz.

9 April – General Robert E. Lee, commander of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, surrenders to Union forces.

April – Second Mexican loan issued.

15 April – Abraham Lincoln assassinated.

9 May – President Andrew Johnson proclaims the end of the US Civil War.

June – Ulysses S. Grant sends 50,000 US troops to Texas; US forces garrison Brownsville on the US-Mexican border.

15 August – French soldiers occupy Chihuahua City; Juárez had fled from this city to Paso del Norte (today Ciudad Juárez) on the US-Mexican border four days earlier.

6 November – Secretary of State William Seward writes to inform the French government that the United States will not recognise any government other than Juárez's in Mexico.

1866

15 January – Louis-Napoléon informs Maximilian that French troops will withdraw from Mexico.

22 January – Louis-Napoléon announces in the *Corps législatif* that French troops will withdraw.

January – French forces begin retreat from their northernmost positions in order to avoid clashes with US troops; Chihuahua abandoned 31 January.

23 June – Mexican forces loyal to Maximilian surrender Matamoros to Juárez's troops.

30 July – Maximilian's government signs a convention which gives half of all Mexico's customs receipts raised on imports entering from the Atlantic seaboard and a quarter of all Pacific coast exports to France.

August-September – Maximilian appoints Conservatives to key ministerial positions.

October –General Castelnau sent from France by Louis-Napoléon to encourage Maximilian to abdicate reaches Mexico.

1 November – 30 July convention comes into effect.

10 November – Miramón and Márquez return to Mexico.

1867

11 January – Junta convened to discuss whether Maximilian should abdicate; body votes in favour of the continuation of the empire.

19 February – Maximilian arrives in Querétaro to take personal command of imperial forces.

5 March – Liberal forces begin siege of Querétaro.

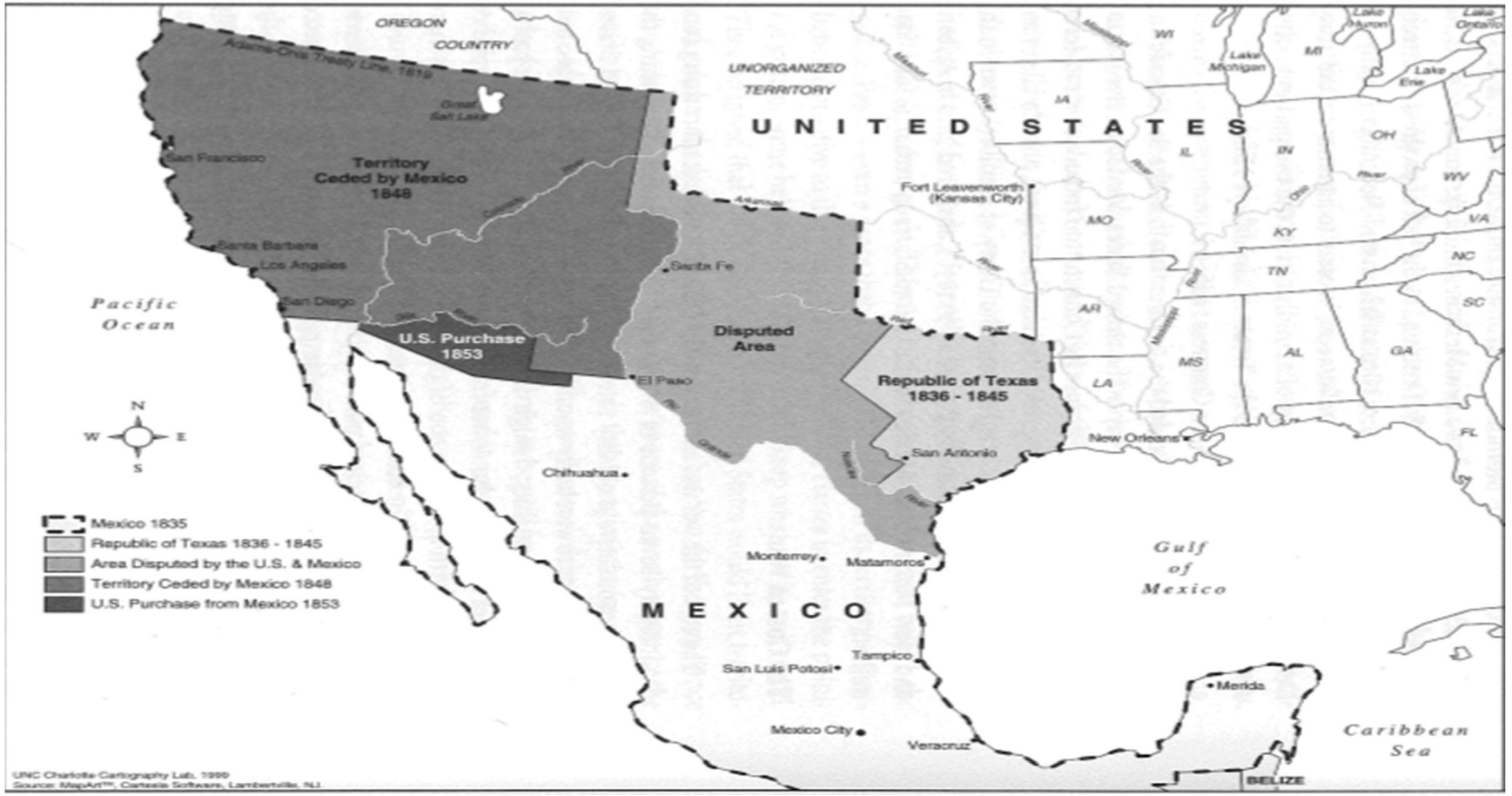
11 March – Last French troops leaves Veracruz.

15 May – Liberal forces enter Querétaro and capture Maximilian.

13 June – Military trial convened, Maximilian sentenced to death.

19 June – Maximilian executed alongside his Conservative Generals Tomás Mejía and Miramón.

Map 1: Mexican Territorial Losses, 1836-53



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