¡EN VOZ ALTA!
MEXICO'S RESPONSE TO U.S. IMPERIALISM, 1821-1848

By

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ABSTRACT

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This purpose of this dissertation is to explore and convey Mexico's response to the aggressive actions of both the Texas colonists and the U.S. government between 1821 and 1848. In order to accomplish this task, I engaged a variety of sources that included newspapers, foletins, governmental documents, travel journals, dime novels, letters, diaries, diplomatic correspondence, treaties, speeches, poetry, and books, all of which addressed the events leading up to the United States War against Mexico. However, the breadth and depth of material available in the published primary source record required that I focus my inquiry. Therefore, I emphasized three specific topics; Anglo immigration into Texas, the Texas colonist rebellion, and the efforts of the U.S. government to acquire the Texas territory beginning with the Louisiana Purchase and terminating with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Additionally, I expanded my time parameters and considered a contemporary response to the memories of that war, represented in the Mexican-produced telenovela *Ramona* (2000). In this manner, the story that appears in the following pages represents Mexico's response, both then and now.

This dissertation stands on a strong foundation of previous Mexican and Chicano scholarship. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo articulated its own mythological narrative that not only sought to maintain discord, but also solidify a subordinate role for both Mexico as a nation, and Mexicans as a people who chose to remain on their land. The real-life ramifications of these events have been topics that scholars such as Rodolfo Acuña, Arnoldo de León, Paco Ignacio Taibo II, Gilberto López y Rivas, Mario Gill, Gastó García Cantú, David Montejano, Jesús F. de la Teja, Andrés Tijerina, and Josefina Zoraida Vásquez de Knauth have critically engaged. In doing so, their work has provided a space for this dissertation.

Finally, in its widest scope, the topic of this dissertation connects to other violent acts of oppression, specifically those that seek to silence the voice of the oppressed. In that context, the works of Franz Fanon, Roland Barthes, Benedict Anderson, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Albert Memmi have significantly influenced my analysis. Of particular note to the conversation that follows is the development of a large structure mythological narrative that I have termed the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican, how mythmakers utilized this narrative to indoctrinate the public in *their* truths, and how they disseminated it on a large scale through genres of popular culture.

Dedicated to the belief that through multilingualism, all things are possible.

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This dissertation is the result of a 19-year journey to better understand the world in which I live. Along the way, I have encountered many individuals who have recognized my passion and offered a helping hand. However, before expressing my gratitude to those individuals, I must first thank the Chican@/Latin@ community that has fought for more than fifty years to create and sustain a relevant space of learning. In particular, I thank the REAL Chicano/Latino Studies at Michigan State University for their unwavering dedication to that struggle. Without their efforts, this dissertation would not have been possible.

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No project of this magnitude is achievable without the support of friends and family. To my late father Roy Trotter, I repeat his words of encouragement; Illegitumus non carborundum est. Nope! I did not let the bastards grind me down! I also send my love and gratitude to the unwavering support of my stepmother Judy Trotter. To my late and dear friend Corkey Davis, I say thank you for your words of inspiration and encouragement, I carry them with me through this day. Finally, I wish to acknowledge the contributions and unwavering support of a variety of individuals: Jeff Boike, Beth Glessner-Calkins, Lorenz Chan, Melissa, Audrey, Ethan, and Parker Cummings, Tom Cummings, Sarah, Onalee, and John Davis, Roy and Sue Gosser, Rick Hosler, Bob, Kathy, and Samantha Maloney, Jim and Lori Mark, Charlie Miller, Javier Roman, Dr. Harry Shao, Dr. Christine Sorenson, Dr. Xiaohong Tan, and Darlene VanRavensway. It has been a very long road. I thank you for your encouragement and efforts on my behalf along the way.

PREFACE

Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly. "They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth."

But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel – because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth.

~Genesis 11:1-9 New International Version

THE PROMISE OF SHINAR

My journey began with one goal, to *learn* Spanish. In my mind, that meant learning the Spanish words for my thoughts in English. I quickly learned how naïve such a thought was. The last class of my Spanish undergraduate program was a course in Latin American Vanguard poetry. In the closing words of my final paper I reflected on two very important lessons that I felt I had learned over the course of my studies. The first was that all knowledge was fluid and that humanity's ability to understand the world depends upon its willingness to engage that fluidity. The second lesson was that language shapes knowledge. Through several years of study, I had come to realize that the stories that our family, friends, and institutions tell us heavily influence our understanding of the world in which we live. Each one of these narratives is uniquely created through language and it is with that information that we each made sense of our experiences. Therefore, I concluded, language was the focal point of all knowledge.

Up until the point in which I embarked upon my journey, English was the only language I had known. Moreover, I had only known it through the confines of an institutionalized educational system that prioritized teaching me how to perform the tasks necessary to make a productive contribution to a larger economic machine. This arrested development was further entrenched by

my participation in that economic process for more than fifteen years. Once I began to expand my horizons, I quickly saw just how thick the walls of my prison were, and how daunting a task it would be to break them down.

Although I do not feel that my journey is yet complete, I count my ability to engage the fluidity of knowledge as a victory. As a result, I no longer read the story of the Tower of Babel as a lesson of God's punishment of humanity. To the contrary, I find a story that illuminates how humanity can come together in order to achieve its greatest accomplishments. However, as the story teaches, such a promise, the promise of Shinar, is only obtainable if each one of us is willing to critically examine what we *think* we already *know*. Through that internal reflection we will discover that Shinar is not a geographical location where humanity will once again return to work together under one language, one perspective, or one set of truths. To the contrary, the promise of Shinar represents humanity's ascendance to an existence that embraces the multifarious nature of the human experience, and the many languages that articulate it.

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CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION

Once upon a time, there lived a group of brave and courageous pioneers who looked towards the setting sun and envisioned their Destiny. With Liberty in one hand and Freedom in the other, they ventured west, carrying these truths into the barren wastelands of Texas. Undaunted by the challenges that this savage wilderness would bring forth, they set about the task of taming the land, persuading others to join them as they proclaimed, "in this land we will build a peaceful community in which to raise our families." Known to history as the Texas colonists, these brave pioneers imagined an agricultural utopia where they could reap the benefits of bountiful crops. Alas, it was a dream that Mexico would viciously disrupt. Out of the ashes of political chaos came the bloodthirsty tyrants of Mexico who turned their gluttonous ambitions towards the Paradise that these brave pioneers had built. To their military forces, the benevolent colonists extended a hand of fellowship. Sadly, such divine nobility was repaid with the bloody slaughter of many of their brethren. Thus, these brave pioneers had no choice but to fasten the belt of Truth, don the breastplate of Righteousness, and fight in defense of their Land, their Liberty, and most of all their Freedom.

This was the story that mythmakers told in 1848 as they recounted the events surrounding the Texas conflict and the United States War against Mexico.[1] Structurally, it was a narrative that connected a variety of descriptions characterizing the Mexican as inferior, wild, barbaric, savage, cowardly, irrational, emotional, opulent, and evil. By contrast, the Anglo was depicted as superior, benevolent, industrious, brave, rational, rustic, humble, and good. It was from these stereotypical descriptions that the mythological narrative was born, a story that praised the benevolence of the Texas colonists and demonized the Mexican government that had encroached upon their land.[2]

However, this story was not the only version. A far less common one spoke about the Texas conflict within the context of the territorial ambitions of the United States. In this narrative, mythmakers emphasized the efforts of the U.S. government to both overtly and covertly affect a

rebellion in Texas. Within that context, the colonists were pawns in a much larger game that sought to force Mexico into a confrontation with only two possible outcomes; territorial submission or war. Structurally, this story reflected a contrastive picture in which Mexico was the victim, possessing a weak and dysfunctional governmental body and a populace too ignorant to control them. On the other hand, the United States possessed a far superior government and a people empowered to aptly implement the premises of self-rule. As a result, the central message of this story analogized the actions of the U.S. government to a bully on the world-stage, aggressively attacking a debilitated and weaker nation.

Although these two mythological narratives appear to be different on the surface, the first conveying support for and the second opposition to the territorial ambitions of the United States, such a conclusion is a dangerous oversimplification. In particular, it overlooks a critical commonality; the absence of Mexico's response to the actions of both the colonists and the U.S. government. Although we might anticipate this silence within stories that are extolling the virtues of the pioneer, it is noteworthy that Mexico's voice is also absent within narratives that are focused on the aggressive actions of the United States. However, it is just that silence which underscores their common premise; that Mexico as a nation, and Mexicans as its people, were unworthy of a place at the table of emerging nations.

Notably, these stories, which originated primarily in the 1830s and 1840s, remain virtually unchanged in contemporary times. Such resilience is a direct result of our willing complicity to accept them without considering Mexico's point of view. In this dissertation, I reject such passivity and engage Mexico's response to not only the aggressive actions of the Anglo colonists, but also the U.S. government between 1821 and 1848. With that response in hand, I give an account of the events surrounding the conflict. Moreover, I engage and interrogate the ways in which mythmakers sought to ensure that Mexico's voice would remain silent. Finally, as a means to connect the past to the present, I examine a 21st century response to the United States War against Mexico that both

disrupts and rejects the mythological memory of that war by reimaging both its events and their real-life ramifications.

In accomplishing the objectives of this dissertation, I hope to make a significant contribution to the growing corpus of Chicano Studies. I believe that this work is relevant to that field since the United States War against Mexico, and the resulting Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, mark the beginning of the Chican@ community's struggle to secure its constitutionally guaranteed rights. Moreover, the content of this dissertation supports what Rodolfo Acuña asserted in *Occupied America* (1972), that "the Mexican did attempt to organize against his oppressors."[3] By prioritizing Mexico's voice, I demonstrate that "a study of his [the Mexican's] reactions to the Anglo colonization supports what many Chicano scholars have claimed: that the movement did not begin in the 1960s but that is has been an ongoing struggle toward liberation."[4] The longevity of that struggle is given a historical context in Manuel Payno's 1845 article "Tejas."

> Poco tiempo después de la caída de Moctezuma, varias familias nobles que no querían sufrir al yugo español, definitivamente sentado sobre el poderoso imperio, y que tampoco tenían medios para resistir, abandonaron las orillas de los hermosos lagos, y echaron a vagar de nuevo por los desiertos, por donde muchos años antes habían transitado. Huyendo de la dominación y de la tiranía, atravesaron florestas, valles y montañas, y se establecieron en las orillas de los grandes ríos del Norte, donde juzgaron que nunca podrían llegar los hijos de Oriente. Unas familias se establecieron en las orillas del Bravo, otras en las cabeceras de la Nueces, y otras, no contentas con haber puesto tanta distancia de por medio entre los conquistadores y ellos, se establecieron en las orillas de Mississipí.*[5]

Payno's narrative is remarkable in its ability to connect the past with the present, both then and now. In 1845, it provided a historical foundation for Mexico's claim to Texas that was more than

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* A short time after the fall of Moctezuma, various noble families who no longer wished to suffer the Spanish yoke, now permanently in charge of the powerful empire, nor had the means to resist, abandoned the banks of the beautiful lakes [of Mexico] and began to wander a new through the deserts, from which many had come years before. Fleeing from domination and tyranny, they crossed forest, valleys, and mountains, and established themselves along the banks of the great rivers of the north, where they swore they would never allow the children of the East to arrive. Some families established themselves along the banks of the Bravo [Río Bravo del Norte], others at the headwaters of the Nueces, and others, not content with having put enough distance between the Conquistadores and themselves, established themselves along the banks of the Mississippi.

300 years old. In the late 1960s, its representation of Aztlán appeared within the narratives of the Chicano Movement. Thus, in 2014, Payno's narrative articulates a struggle for liberation that has endured for nearly 500 years.

¡EN VOZ ALTA!

Engaging Mexico's response some 180 years after its articulation demanded that I transcend the confines of any one academic discipline and seek out methods that were both reciprocal and unifying.[6] When making decisions about which documents I would include as part of my research, I prioritized published primary sources rather than the archives. This was an intentional effort to show that Mexico not only responded to the events in their time, but that the absence of its voice from scholarly and popular works, both then and now, has been deliberate. Not surprisingly, such an approach netted a large amount of material that included a variety of genres including newspapers, foletins, governmental documents, travel journals, letters, diaries, diplomatic correspondence, treaties, speeches, poetry, and books. As a matter of fact, relative to the silence that mythmakers have attempted to portray, the results were so extensive that I pondered the extent of the unpublished archival record regarding this topic.

Owing to the sheer breadth and depth of available material, I found it was necessary to adopt some generalized terms in order to maintain my focus on Mexico's response. Therefore, I have employed the term *mythmakers* to refer to those individuals engaged in the development of a large structure/complex mythological narrative of Mexico and Mexicans that I refer to as the *Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican*. I use the term *scholarly and popular works* to point to the totality of their published writings. Interested readers will find a detailed list of the works and authors that I have included within these terms in the bibliography section of this dissertation. Furthermore, I have used the term *Mexico's voice* and *Mexico's collective response* in an interchangeable manner when speaking about Mexican authored documents. However, it is important to note the narrow scope of this voice/response between 1821 and 1848.

In general, after the insurgency, we can speak about four primary social groups in Mexico. The Creoles represented the smallest portion of Mexico's population but were the best-educated, dominated commercial interests, and held the most institutional power. Mestizos far outnumbered the Creoles, and accounted for two groups; those that either owned or managed commercial interests and had access to varying levels of formal education, and those who had significantly less opportunities to either. Finally, the Indigenous peoples of Mexico, although by far the largest segment of the population, possessed no institutional or economic power. Therefore, when I use the terms *Mexico's voice* or *Mexico's collective response*, I am speaking about a very limited number of individuals who not only had institutional access, but also the means to publish, either directly or indirectly. It is noteworthy, although not an emphasis within this dissertation, that the scope of this voice began to rapidly expand in the mid 1840s, led largely by individuals such as Ignacio Ramírez, El Nigromante.

In sum, Mexico's collective response represented an immediate, concise, and powerful protest to the aggressive actions of the Anglo colonists and the U.S. government. Specifically, it denounced Mexico's portrayal within the confines of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. Writers conveyed this response through discourses that were counter-mythological, corrective, resistant, and truth illuminating. However, what was most notable about these works was the variety of issues that they addressed in the process. For instance, they spoke about land rights based on antiquated colonial law, the dispossession of native populations, the enslavement of Africans for profit, and the parameters of sovereignty in a new non-monarchial world order. It was through these discussions that they attacked the vulnerabilities of the mythological narrative.

The Anglo-centric Myth of the Mexican

I have used the term Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican to speak about a complex mythological narrative that was used as a tool of U.S. imperialism. Although my development of the term draws from a variety of scholars, I prioritize the theoretical framework of Edward Said in

Orientalism (1979).[7] In this work, Said asserted that the narrative of the Orient did not represent an "inert fact of nature"[8] but rather an artificially created concept that the West used to define the parameters of its own mythological narrative. Simply put, before creating its own self-conceptualization, the West had to determine the characteristics that it did not wish to embrace. Once this negatively produced narrative, the Other, was in place, it was necessary to attribute it to a group of people. As Said asserted, that process of assignment was yet another artificial creation. Once developed and assigned, the story of the Other played an integral role in the West's self-conceptualization.[9] Furthermore, the spaces in between the Self and the Other offered additional sites of identification. Mythmakers utilized those spaces to characterize people it envisioned as marginalized. In some cases, they portrayed these assignments as representative of the exotic, individuals who could potentially assimilate into the center self-conceptualization. Other individuals were cast so far from that center that they were seen as monstrous and evil.

In my use of the term Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican, I point to this same process in relationship to the development of the United States as a social, economic, political, and cultural nation-state. In particular, I mark the evolution of the Anglo-self conceptualization after the American Revolution, as it looked westward towards territorial expansion.[10] In considering these two major projects, one of identity and one of territorial possession, the mythological narrative of Divine Providence played a critical role as Reginald Horsman outlined in *Race and Manifest Destiny. The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (1981): "Externally American pressure on adjacent territories was justified by the argument that only the American Anglo-Saxons could bring the political and economic changes that would make possible unlimited world progress. These arguments were used to justify the annexation of sparsely populated areas and the economic penetration of areas that were heavily populated with "inferior" races."[11]

Horsman also noted that as mythmakers constructed the narrative of the Other, they envisioned the usefulness of assigning it to both the Indigenous peoples of the United States and Mexicans: "The United States shaped policies which reflected a belief in the racial inferiority and expendability of Indians, Mexicans and other inferior races and which looked forward to a world shaped and dominated by a superior American Anglo-Saxon race."[12] In this manner, the U.S. government justified the consequences of its territorial ambitions. Moreover, by describing Mexicans as the antithesis of the Anglo self-conceptualization, they opened the door to narratives of deficiency that could portray the Mexican nation as unworthy of God's favor.

Emphasizing Mexican deficiency links the development of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican to other narratives of colonization, such as those discussed in Albert Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (1965). In his portrait of the colonized, Memmi directly addressed the colonizer's portrayal of the deficiencies of the colonized. Furthermore, he outlined how these narratives were linguistically dehumanizing.[13] In Anglo writings on the Texas conflict and the war, we find that the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican communicated a variety of deficiency-based characterizations that conveyed Mexican inferiority. Moreover, these narratives asserted that the people themselves were at fault for that deficiency. A common portrayal that represented that deficiency was a lack of industry, often conveyed through the characterization of laziness.

Memmi spoke to the false premise of inherent laziness when he discussed the colonizer's portrayal of the colonized. He asserted that such an accusation "has nothing to do with an objective notation, therefore subject to possible changes, but of an institution. By his accusation the colonizer established the colonized as being lazy. He decides that laziness is constitutional in the very nature of the colonized. It becomes obvious that the colonized, whatever he may undertake, whatever zeal he may apply, could never be anything but lazy."[14]

When we engage how mythmakers represented laziness in Mexicans, we find the same paradox that Memmi outlined. In those narratives, mythmakers represented Mexican laziness as an

essential, biological, immutable state of being from which there was no possible escape, resolution, or fix. Furthermore, the immutability of this deficiency extended outward to the totality of the large-structure narrative, functioning to hyper-mythologize it, in other words, make it so normalized and so transparent that it became impervious to any outside influence. In short, mythmakers institutionalized the concept of laziness, and then assigned that trait to Mexicans.[15]

At the constructive level, the immutable deficiencies of the Mexican provided the foundation for all of the mythmaker's characterizations. Thus, Mexicans were (inherently) evil, cowardly, weak, passive, indolent, doomed, indifferent, incapable, fearful, mean, opulent, barbaric, aggressive, devious, deceitful, sly, crafty, cunning, savage, uncivilized, ignorant, and illiterate. At the narrative level, they connected these basic characteristics into easily absorbed descriptions that produced didactic narratives that in turn indoctrinated the public in these deficiencies. Thus, mythmakers empowered the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican to create a variety of mythological narratives that forcefully silenced Mexico by simply reiterating its unworthiness to be heard.

The Trajectory of Anti-Mexican Narratives

Although I prioritize the creation and use of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican between 1821 and 1848, I do not mean to suggest that mythmakers created this narrative out of nothingness. Nor do I claim that it was the only mythological narrative under construction during that time period. On the contrary, during this time, mythmakers were creating a variety of narratives including those addressing the disposition of Indigenous peoples and African slaves. Although the dynamic nature of these narratives often led to their convergence, I trace the specific origins of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican itself back to at least the 16th century.

In his article "The Origins of Anti-Mexican Sentiment in the United States," Raymund A. Paredes located anti-Mexican sentiment within negative English views of the Roman Catholic Church.

> Propagandists denounced the Mass as blasphemous, indicted the clergy for the encouragement of superstition and ignorance, and assailed the Pope as the anti-Christ. Eventually, resentment of Catholicism transcended religious issues. Englishmen came to regard the Roman Church as a supra-national power which sought to overthrow their government…It was in the context of this fear that English anti-Catholicism intersected and merged with a nascent hispanophobia.[16]

Hispanophobia travelled with the English colonists to the North American colonies. Therefore, many colonists imagined "themselves as guardians against Spanish penetration into the northern regions of the New World, its economic rival's intent on undermining the fragile structure of Spanish mercantilism, and as Protestant missionaries who would carry the Gospel unperverted to the American savages."[17] Once the colonists arrived in North America, they maintained close contact with English ideas through new arrivals. In this manner, the vast expanse of an ocean did not prevent the appearance of the same negative narratives of the Spanish people and Catholicism on the North American continent.

The American Revolution, and the resulting independent nation-state, profoundly affected the development this emerging Anglo self-conceptualization. As a newly formed entity, the United States sought to define its own institutional structures. During that process, many of the same elements of the past sought to recast their mythological descriptions into a new story that would serve a new set of ambitions. We see this convergence in a 1776 letter that John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail regarding discussions with Jefferson on the design of the Great Seal of the United States. In that letter he said that Jefferson had "proposed the children of Israel in the wilderness, led by a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night; and on the other side, Hengist and Horsa, the Saxon chiefs from whom we claim the honor of being descended, and whose political principles and form of government we have assumed."[18] Through this description, Adams represented the divinely ordained Destiny of a new U.S. American identity.

In Mexico, during the insurgency and in particular after it gained its independence from Spain, many leaders emphasized a Mexican self-conceptualization that embraced its Indigenous

origins. Race, as a tool of colonial domination, came under attack. We see this process at work as intellectuals began to pen the parameters of an independent Mexican identity. One example is José Maria Morelos y Pavón's *Los sentimientos de la nación* (1814). In that document, Morelos called for an inclusive nación that rejected slavery and removed the boundaries of the caste system. In doing so, he wished to level the playing field for all people who had been born upon Mexican soil. To the oppressors, the Spanish administrators, he called for their expulsion. In this manner, Morelos sought to break the yoke of more than 300 years of colonial enforced identity and replace it with one that embraced the racial diversity of Mexico. [19]

Not surprisingly, Morelos' efforts reflected the actual meaning of the Spanish language word nación at that time. However, this point often goes unaddressed since English language scholars have erroneously translated the word *nación* to *nation* in their works. Between 1734 and 1869, the primary definition of the word nación reflected its Latin root *natio* and referred to the act of being born in a specific place.[20] It did not convey the form of government under which these individuals lived, the word *república* used for that purpose. Therefore, while mythmakers in the United States were discussing who was entitled to the benefits of democracy, as a form of governing, in Mexico the conversation emphasized who belonged to the newly independent nación.

In general, that conversation emphasized the inclusion of all individuals born upon the soil that was within the territorial boundaries of the newly independent nación. In this manner, writers rejected a Spanish heritage, centering their narrative of the Other on the same characterizations of the Spanish that the Anglo self-conceptualization had employed under the label the Black Legend. Moreover, in embracing indigenity as central to a Mexican self-conceptualization, these writers condemned the genocide of Mexico's Indigenous peoples, as well as the destruction of a civilization that they described as superior to any in Europe. It was through this common tie of an Indigenous past that they hoped to unite all Mexicans.

One of the most prolific authors of this effort was Carlos María de Bustamante. Shortly after the success of the insurgency, Bustamante published a variety of texts that worked in tangent to weave together his vision of the elements of a Mexican self-conceptualization. For example, one of his earliest works, *Galeria de antiguos principles mejicanos dedicada a la suprema potestad nacional que les succediere en el mando para su major gobierno* (1821), reimagined the protagonists of Mexico's past, setting them within a narrative of civilization that paralleled ancient Europe. With that story in hand, he then rearticulated an Indigenous peoples perspective of the conquest in *Historia de la conquista de Mexico, escrito por el R.P. Fr. Bernardino Sahagun del orden de S. Francisco, y uno de los primeros enviados a la Nueva España para propagar el evangelio, publicada por separado de sus demás obras Carlos María de Bustamante, diputado de la cámara de representantes del congreso general de la federación por el estado libre de Oaxaca, quien lo dedica á los beneméritos generales Nicolás Bravo y Miguel Barragan, y á sus dignos compañeros en la confinación que hoy sufren* (1829).

In the introduction to that text, Bustamante embraced a new Mexican identity as a means of defense against Spanish tyranny.

> … nosotros los mexicanos, sí debemos conservar la memoria de aquellos horroroso sucesos para evitar que se nos repitan por el gobierno de su actual monarca que se resiste tenazmente á reconocer nuestra independencia, y trabaja cuanto puede por reconquistarnos; desdichados nosotros si tal sucediera, pues tornariamos á los años de 1521 y siguientes, y seriamos tan maltratados como lo fueron nuestros antepasados! He aqui la mira con que doy á luz este precioso y no publicado escrito.[*21]

[*] Mexicans must keep the memory of those horrible events in their mind in order to prevent a monarchical government from doing the same to us, a government that tenaciously resists recognizing our independence and works as much as possible to re-conquer us; we would be unworthy if we allowed that to happen, we would go back to 1521 and would be treated as poorly as our ancestors! This is the objective with which I give light to this valuable and unpublished writing.

As we can see, Bustamante focused on Spain's attempt to prevent Mexico from consolidating its newly acquired independence. Moreover, he underscored that such a tactic was similar to that used against their ancestors, the Aztecs. Therefore, in order to prevail against colonial oppression, Bustamante called on Mexicans to set aside their internal differences and unite as one nación against Spanish domination.

This emphasis on the Mexico's Indigenous past also affected Anglo mythmakers who were in the process of defining their own narrative of the Other. For example, in "Origins," Paredes highlighted the importance of William Robertson's *History of America* (1777) to that development. According to Robertson, prior to the Spanish conquest, the Indigenous peoples of Mexico were the "fiercest and most detestable of the New World peoples, inferior culturally to the Incas and in qualities of character to the North American natives."[22] Paredes noted the dangers of Robertson's portrayal. By casting the Indigenous peoples of Mexico in such a light, and then adding the characterization of Spaniards who relocated to America as "the most undesirable elements of their society,"[23] Paredes asserted that Robertson merged anti-Indigenous imagery with Hispanophobia, and "offered to his readers a Mexico populated by two extraordinary breeds of scoundrels already mixing their bloods."[24] Furthermore, Paredes noted that, "*The History of America* helped to codify and disseminate anti-Mexican sentiment and raise it to a more nearly equal level of importance. These various antipathies eventually linked and merged as Americans came to recognize the phenomenon of cultural and racial fusion between Indian and Spaniard which had been proceeding since the Conquest."[25]

Documents from the United States support Paredes' conclusion. In particular, they contain narratives that reflect Robertson's portrayal of Mexico's mestizo population and how that characterization significantly influenced the way in which the U.S. government perceived the emerging Mexican nation-state. One common theme was the belief that the newly independent Mexico was weak, a nation that could be easily convinced to capitulate to their territorial demands.

However, a critical engagement of Mexico's response shows that such a belief was a severe miscalculation. As we will see in the chapters to come, it was an error that forced the U.S. government to take action that was seen, both internally and externally, as blatantly aggressive. As a consequence, mythmakers had to redouble their efforts and create narratives that could justify that aggression in the court of public opinion.

The Implications of Complicity

The ramifications of maintaining the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican with all of its degrading and oppressive characterizations was, and continues to be, profound. As it proliferates into all the corners of society, this large structure mythological narrative legitimizes and justifies acts of racism, obscures the realities of inequality, and feeds a dysfunctional political system. Our continued unwillingness to challenge its foundations only furthers our consent for it to inflict its destructive power. Examples of this immense power can be grandiose and complicated, often outlined and obscured even further by scholarly works financed by large foundational grants. Other instances describe the simplest encounters, whose ramifications are easily seen. It is in those moments that we truly engage the brutal power of this mythological narrative.

Victor Villaseñor eloquently illustrated the destructive power of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican in his work *Burro Genius* (2004). Born in Carlsbad, California in 1940, Villaseñor's journey to the authorship of more than sixty short stories and nine novels was profoundly impacted by his own early encounters with institutional racism. Unwilling to engage Villaseñor due to his Mexican heritage, the education system devalued him, putting up language and cultural barriers that were particularly insurmountable for a young boy struggling with dyslexia. The result was his early departure from school and the decision to relocate to Mexico. Once there, he embarked on a journey that nourished an emerging appreciation of literature, art, and music, cumulating in the development of his own personal spirituality and appreciation for the richness of his Mexican heritage.[26] When Villaseñor returned to the United States, he dedicated himself to the task of using

literature as a tool to confront the generalizations and stereotypes that had so disillusioned his youth. The power of his stories resides in their ability to communicate the experiences of his life. Whereas *Rain of Gold* (1992), *Wild Steps of Heaven* (1996), and *Thirteen Senses* (2001) tell the story of his family, *Burro Genius* (2004) spoke directly to his encounters with the brutality of the racism while attending school. One particular encounter came in the form of a young boy named Howard.[27]

When Victor and his buddies entered the hallowed halls of institutionalized education they quickly learned that the system would devalue their Mexican heritage. For instance, teachers labeled their accented English as evidence of their ignorance. They said that the solution was to immerse them in English, physically punishing them if they uttered a single word of Spanish. As the saying goes, misery loves company, so Victor and his friends were excited by the arrival of a freckled-face, redheaded boy named Howard whose English was even worse than theirs was. As a matter of fact, Howard's accent was so bad that the boys figured he would suffer the same physical punishments they had endured. This created an immediate bond, and the boys extended Howard a hand of friendship. However, when they heard the teacher complement him on his accent, they quickly realized that they had reached the wrong conclusion.

When the boys asked the teacher why Howard had not been punished for speaking English so poorly, she got upset and told them that Howard's accent reflected his upbringing in Boston, a very important historical city. Therefore, the boys should admire Howard's pronunciation of English. This perplexed Victor and his friends, since they couldn't even understand him when he said his own name! Nonetheless, young Victor liked the newcomer and one day he and Howard got into a wrestling match on the playground. As the two battled, Victor's friends gathered around shouting, "*No te dejes! Pegale!* Don't let him get you! Hit him!"[28] Upon hearing these strange words, Howard stopped wrestling and said in his best Bostonian, "Are you Mex-eee-can?"[29] When Victor replied that he was, a look of shock and horror fell over Howard's face and he began to cry. He told

Victor that his parents had told him that all Mexicans carried knives. Now, this revelation confused Victor since he had never heard of this *fact of all Mexicans*. Nonetheless, he assured Howard that he did not have a knife and he was not going to hurt him. This helped Howard calm down.

When the two boys met on the playground the following day, Victor invited Howard to come to his ranch one afternoon. He offered to show him how to bow hunt or ride bucking pigs. Howard declined the invitation telling him that he was not allowed to be friends "Because I had a talk with my parents last night, and they explained to me that I can't be around Mexicans because they are bad, dirty people and you can't trust them."[30] This newest revelation confused Victor even more. Since he did not know about this *fact of all Mexicans* either, he found himself unsure of how to respond. Nonetheless, he really liked Howard and did not want him to get in trouble, so he decided to just walk away: "I'd never known that Mexicans were bad, dirty people and you couldn't trust them. I'd just thought that we were stupid people, closer to the animals, and not as smart as White people, as the playground teacher kept explaining to us."[31]

As Victor arrived home from school, the impact of this encounter was only beginning to take shape. Recalling his teacher's affirmation of Howard as an authority, Victor's perception experienced a radical transformation: "I could now see very clearly that what Howard had told me about us, *los Mexicanos*, being bad, dirty people was absolutely true."[32] He saw that the farm and its animals were dirty as well as the members of his family: "My mother, who I'd always thought was so beautiful, I could now clearly see that she wasn't. Her brown skin was the color of dirt and her dark eyes were too large, and her hair was black and her lips were too big. Also, she was chubby with large breasts and looked disgusting, the way she kept letting my baby sister Linda's hands all over her, nursing all the time."[33] When he turned to his father, Victor was horrified: "And my father, my God, he had a big head with curly black hair and a real thick neck like a bull, and he was so loud. He ate with his fingers, using his *tortilla* to scoop the food into his mouth, and he chewed

with his mouth open, laughing and telling story after story, showing the food that he was chewing."[34]

The shock of these revelations was more than the five-year-old Victor could bear, and he began to sob uncontrollably.

> I finally felt so sick, sitting at the table with these ugly, dirty, bad people, *mi familia*, that I got up and went to the bathroom to get away from them. Then in the bathroom, I'll never forget I puked in the toilet, then stood on my little stool so I could wash out my mouth in the sink. And this was when I saw in the mirror, that oh, my Lord God, I, too, was Mexican and ugly! I had big teeth, a wide face with high cheekbones, and my skin was also a dirty brown color!
>
> "Oh, my Lord God, *Papito*!" I screamed. "WHY DID YOU LET ME BE BORN A MEXICAN?"[35]

Victor Villaseñor's recounting of this moment powerfully captures the violence, brutality, and inhumanity of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that it does not represent an isolated incident, but rather countless encounters that have been, and continue to be, played out on schoolyards all across the United States.

These schoolyard lessons are reinforced when students arrive at the Academy. In this environment, the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican thrives, legitimized through the development and dissemination of a variety of social, historical, anthropological, and literary studies. One such example is the social theory of deficiency as an explanation for the failure of minorities to achieve the economical and social benefits of the United States. In *Race and Class in the Southwest* (1979), Mario Barrera outlined this approach. Commonly termed deficiency theory, the premise of this theory identifies a socially disadvantaged group and then states that the cause of their disadvantage is their failure to perform. In seeking to explain this failure, deficiency theory focuses on the culture of the group, seeking out those particular attributes most likely responsible. However, as Barrera noted, the model itself is deficient in methodological depth due to the inaccuracy of its assumptive base: "Deficiency explanations of racial inequality are superfluous in that all of them assume that

equal opportunity exists and has existed for the minority races in American society, and that they have failed to seize the opportunity because of their own deficiencies."[36]

The deficiency of deficiency theory is nowhere more apparent than when a minority group it claims to study acts in a manner that is inconsistent with the false premise upon which it has built its conclusions. As an example, we need look no further than the current battle to reinstate Mexican American Studies in Tucson Unified School District. In an effort to stem a national Latin@ dropout rate of around 56%, TUSD teachers came together to create a program that would produce culturally relevant classes that allowed students to "see themselves in the curriculum and make them see why education is important for them."[37] What began as a grassroots effort quickly grew into a nationally recognized program that graduated more than 96% of its students. Thus, it defied the conclusions of the social deficiency theorists. However, that success alarmed Anglos who feared the threat posed by empowered minorities. As a matter of fact, their fear was so great, that State officials went on the offensive, characterizing the program as fomenting sedition, treason, belligerency, and finally, an overt attempt to overthrow the U.S. government by Communist teachers.[38] However, officials did not just attack the teachers in the program, but rather included community leaders who had supported them. The accusation was that all parties were perpetuating discourses of racial hatred and abusing youth for their own political advantage.[39]

Young Victor's encounter with Howard combines with the case of Tucson Unified School District to act as a juncture from which we see the obvious hypocrisy of deficiency theory. Whereas it is permissible for the institution of education to brutalize a five-year-old child into seeing himself and his family as dirty, ugly, bad people, he cannot, under any circumstances, be allowed to challenge that narrative without being labeled seditious or a Communist. However, it is what is less obvious that harbors the core of the problem; that this double standard can only exist through our

willing complicity to maintain the narratives that support it, stories that justify and reaffirm the truths that support this oppression.[40]

Thus, the first step in destroying the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican requires *our willingness to recognize it*, and take responsibility for *our complicity in maintaining it*. In order to accomplish that task, we must embark on a dual journey, one that is simultaneously very private and individual, and very public and communal. It begins by looking inward and digging deep, through the palimpsest of façades that have instructed our perception. Since the layers themselves have been rendered so opaque and normalized in our daily lives that we no longer readily see them, we must reach out into the community and seek assistance in identifying our encounters with this mythological narrative.

Recognizing and Interpreting the Anglo-centric Myth of the Mexican

The approach that I utilized to identify the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican drew from various sources. In defining the relationship between historical production and myth narratives, I adopted Robert Slotkin's definition: "Myth is the primary language of historical memory: a body of traditional stories that have, over time, been used to summarize the course of our collective history and to assign ideological meanings to that history."[41] Additionally, I acknowledged his warning concerning the tendency of the analytical processes to convert "ideas, metaphors, and linguistic conventions" into concrete things, as if they "were palpable aspects of material reality."[42] In agreement with his resolution of this challenge, I too accepted the premise that such behavior is inevitable, and rather than allow it to inhibit analysis, I embrace its presence as part of the process.[43]

Since it is through representation that the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican creates its characterizations and subsequent narratives, I turned to Stuart Hall's *Representation Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (2003). In this work, Hall emphasized the importance of the concept of representation and its utilization in describing, depicting, and symbolizing our world.

As Hall stated, representation provides us with the way "you give meaning to things through language. This is how you make sense of the world of people, objects and events and how you are able to express a complex thought about those things to other people, or communicate about them through language in ways which other people are able to understand."[44]

Hall pointed to two systems of representation. The first consists of mental representations (images). The second is the system of representing what we see through language. Since written discourses avail themselves of the language system, his definition of the discourse is critical to our understanding.

> Discourses are ways of referring to or constructing knowledge about a particular topic of practice: a cluster (or formation) of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society. These *discursive formations*, as they are know, define what is and is not appropriate in our formulation of, and our practices in relation to, a particular subject or site of social activity; what knowledge is considered useful, relevant and 'true' in that context; and what sorts of persons or 'subjects' embody its characteristics.[45]

Simply put, discourses become narratives. These narratives are stories that render experience, that in turn, create and give meaning to the narrative. Once the story has meaning, we can authorize it as a valid experience. As Hall points out, a group of stories can combine into a didactic narrative that instructs us in what is and is not appropriate. Since appropriateness is a value-based judgment, we turn to Roland Barthes' conceptualization of mythology.

In his book *Mythologies* (1972), the mythological sign is pure value in which neither truth nor lies play a role. Barthes began his explanation by defining myth as the highest level of connotation. This is a very critical concept, since we perceive myth as denotative, or in other words, a representation of what is true. Therefore, he then explains how language functions to obscure the connotative nature of mythological narratives. Drawing on Saussure, he describes a first level of meaning that consists of the vacant, mental, acoustic signifier and an abstract signified. Their arbitrary relationship creates the filled sign of the first level (meaning). Barthes then

introduces the mythological level stating that the filled sign (meaning) of the first level enters into the second level where it plays a dual role. It is both the filled sign (meaning) of the first level and the vacant signifier of the mythological level. However, in this second level, the signifier cannot be vacant, but rather has a prior understanding that is related to its first level meaning. The signified of the second level is neither abstract nor arbitrary, but it too has its own history that gives shape to the signifier while at the same time deforming it.[46]

Thus, Barthes explained that the mythological signified is always representing the mythological signifier and that the oscillation between this form, and its prior understanding, creates the mythological sign (meaning). Through instruction in the proper interpretation of this oscillation, the resulting myth is rendered normal, a representation of the truth that forms part of our common knowledge.[47] The association between the power of this oscillation and its hegemonic power to erase complexities, lulls the receiver into a passive acceptance of the mythological narrative. Through this process, the oscillation successfully silences the first level non-mythological meanings, complexities disappear, and institutional power takes hold to deform the myth and put it in service of a particular agenda. Keeping in mind Hall's discursive formations, Barthes description demonstrates the destructive power of mythological narratives to grow outward from just one sign into strings of signs.

However, the willingness of the receiver to passively accept the truth-value of the mythological narrative remains central. One example of how mythmakers guided readers through a passive interpretation of the Texas conflict is observable in David Lee Child's *The Taking of Naboth's Vineyard, or History of the Texas Conspiracy* (1845). In this essay, Child asserted that Mexico was the victim of a multitude of covert actions perpetrated by a group of capitalists working in conjunction with the U.S. government to forcibly acquire the territory of Texas from Mexico. Although the majority of his work was dedicated to providing the details and evidence of that conspiracy, Child regularly digressed to strike a strong moral tone condemning U.S. aggression

against Mexico: "Suppose a man to covet something in his neighbor's house, but fearing to take it by open force, he engages confederates to enter as friends, to partake of hospitality, and in the dead of night to rob the owner, and, if he resists, murder him; and share the treasure in common."[48] It is noteworthy, however, that in focusing on the aggression of the U.S. government, Child never engaged Mexico's response to those actions. Instead, he prioritized the need to protect the moral integrity of the United States.

> The people of the United States cannot be said to have contrived and premeditated this great crime, yet by accepting the booty, they are partakers of the iniquity, and obnoxious to the punishment. King Ahab did not contrive nor execute the murder of Naboth, but he coveted, he had sought to buy, and after the murder, seized his inheritance, and although the punishment was deferred, yet the avenging prophecy was at length fulfilled, and "the dogs licked up the blood of Ahab in the place, where they licked the blood of Naboth."[49]

By emphasizing the moral obligations of the United States rather than critically engage Mexico's response to the injustice of the actions perpetrated against it, Child controlled his reader's focus, keeping it squarely upon his didactic warning of the consequences associated with acquiring land through deceit and conspiracy. Moreover, he authorized that warning by associating it with the Biblical story of Naboth's Vineyard that he referenced both in his title and in the body of his work.

However, if we briefly examine the entire story as told in 1 Kings 21, we reveal his manipulation of our interpretation.

> Sometime later there was an incident involving a vineyard belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. The vineyard was in Jezreel, close to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. Ahab said to Naboth, “Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth.” But Naboth replied, “The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my ancestors.”
>
> So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my ancestors.” He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat. His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, “Why are you so sullen? Why won’t you eat?” He answered her, “Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, ‘Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’” Jezebel his wife said, “Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I’ll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

> So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, placed his seal on them and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city with him. In those letters she wrote: "Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people. But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them bring charges that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death." So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city did as Jezebel directed in the letters she had written to them. They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth in a prominent place among the people.
>
> Then two scoundrels came and sat opposite him and brought charges against Naboth before the people, saying, "Naboth has cursed both God and the king." So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death. Then they sent word to Jezebel: "Naboth has been stoned to death." As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, "Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell to you. He is no longer alive, but dead." When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth's vineyard.
>
> Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: "Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth's vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it. Say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?' Then say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!'[50]

In the same way that Child omitted Mexico's response to the aggressive and deceitful actions of the U.S. government, the Biblical story omits Naboth's response to the aggressive and deceitful actions of Jezebel and her scoundrels. In both works, this silencing once again underscores the need for the didactic story to maintain its reader's focus on the lesson of the story rather than allow an active and critical contemplation that could shift that emphasis.

For example, in the case of the Biblical story, we could reasonably infer from the content of the story that Naboth's appearance at the head of the table reflected his acceptance of the invitation made to him by the elders and nobles under Jezebel's direction. However, in the absence of his voice, we are unable to determine if said acceptance indicated any awareness of Jezebel's plans. If we accepted that possibility, the moral imperative of the story would expand beyond its principal message to include a demonstration of the willingness of Naboth to exhibit the strength of his faith by placing his fate completely in the hands of God. However, this line of contemplation would

divert our focus away from Child's warning of the dire consequences of acquiring land through conspiracy and deceit by opening up a discussion regarding the role of the strength of one's faith.

In the case of Child's essay regarding Mexico, the absence of Mexico's voice combines with the reader's encounter with the title of the essay to fix their perspective. Thus, the actions of Presidents Andrew Jackson and James Polk as well as Samuel Houston, Anthony Butler, and Joel Poinsett are equated with the actions of Jezebel and the scoundrels. Furthermore, the people of the United States play the role of Ahab. By closing his essay with a direct reference of the actions and inactions of Ahab in the Biblical story, Child ensured that his reader would successfully receive his warning. However, what is most striking to our present conversation is how his that message rendered Mexico's response to the aggressive actions of the United States completely irrelevant.

Overview of Chapters

The scope of Mexico's collective response to the Texas conflict and the United States War against Mexico, even refined to published primary sources, encompasses a vast amount of material. Therefore, I focused my inquiry by identifying three primary mythological narratives to which Mexico responded. Although I artifically imposed these parameters, they are instructive in revealing the various layers of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican and its development between 1821 and 1848. I have termed these narratives *the façade of the benevolent colonist, the façade of U.S. neutrality,* and the *façade of necessitated action in self-defense*. In the first three chapters, I recount Mexico's story of the Texas conflict through its response to these mythological narratives.

In Chapter 1, I discuss Mexico's response to the façade of the benevolent colonist. In particular, José María de Tornel y Mendivil's essay *Tejas y los Estados-Unidos de América en sus relaciones con la República Mexicana* (1837). Published shortly after the recognition of the Republic of Texas by the United States, Tornel's essay is relevant to our discussion in that it contextualizes the events surrounding the rebellion within the framework of the sworn obligations of the Anglo colonists to the Mexican nation. This was a highly productive approach that restored numerous

events that have been homogenized out of the published historical narrative. For when we explore the totality of the experiences and events that are influencing Tornel's writings, we do not find a colony of benevolent and peaceful farmers following the laws of Mexico that they have sworn to uphold. Quite to the contrary, we reveal their aggressive and intentional efforts to thwart that authority in service to their larger ambitions.

In Chapter 2, I address the duplicity of U.S. policy with an emphasis on Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza's pamphlet *Correspondencia que ha mediado entre la legación extraordinaria de México y el departamento de estado de los Estados Unidos sobre el paso del Sabina por las tropas que mandaba el General Gaines* (1836). In its largest measure, this work responded to the façade of U.S. neutrality by revealing the efforts of the U.S. government to give direct aid and support to the Anglo colonists in their attempt to separate from Mexico. In particular, Gorostiza's pamphlet, and its supporting documents, spoke to the events surrounding the Gaines Affair, an event that illuminated the façade of U.S. neutrality by underscoring its direct efforts to ensure the success of the Anglo rebellion.

Chapter 3 explores a collection of Mexican responses that rejected the façade of necessitated action in self-defense. The letters, speeches, poems, and essays that compose this response represent the expressions of a variety of individuals who revealed this façade as a tactic from behind which the U.S. government was attempting to justify its seizure of Texas. In particular, I prioritize the examination of three events that scholarly and popular works have largely omitted; the 1844 Treaty to Annex Texas, the 1845 Texas Convention, and John Slidell's mission to Mexico. In its largest scope, Mexico responded to these events through an interrogation of how the United States, a nation claiming to be the standard-bearer for democracy and freedom throughout the world, could justify such outright and brutal attempts to acquire the expressed sovereign territory of Mexico.

Chapter 4 shifts our focus away from Mexico's response and examines the process of creating and disseminating stories that could instruct the public in the proper reproduction of the

Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. In particular, I discuss George Lippard's *Legends of Mexico* (1847), Ned Buntline's *Magdalena, The Beautiful Mexican Maid. A Story of Buena Vista* (1846), and Charles Averill's *The Mexican Ranchero: or, The Maid of the Chapparal* (1847). With that instruction in hand, we can then observe how it was used to silence one of Mexico's most eloquent responses to the United States War against Mexico by examining General Albert C. Ramsey's English translation of *Apuntes para la historia de la guerra entre México y los Estados Unidos* (1848) titled *The Other Side: Or Notes For the History of the War Between Mexico and the United States* (1849).

The public's reproduction of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican was a critical componenent in maintaining a positive historical rememberance of the war for generations to come. Therefore, as a means to conclude this dissertation, chapter 5 discusses a 21st century response to that mythological memory. Based on Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 serialized novel of the same name, Lucy Orozco and Humberto Robles adapted Francisco Sánchez's reimagination of Jackson's work and produced the telenovela *Ramona* (2000). Through its sixty-seven episodes, it eloquently defied mythological characterization. In particular, it revealed the distortions and duplicity of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican by peeling away its many layers. However, its most powerful act of resistance was the rejection of the memory of that war through its melodramatic representation of an act of oral storytelling. In this manner, *Ramona* (2000) rewound the clock, and reimagined both the events of the war, and their real-life ramifications.

On a closing note, in order to maintain Mexico's response in its own voice, I have kept all citations in their original language, maintaining all original spelling and punctuation. For ease of reference, I have provided translations of all Spanish citations in a footnote. My approach to the work of translation was specific. When I found a published record of the piece that was translated into English, I deferred to that source in order to underscore the accessibility of that response to historians over the years. The citation for that source appears alongside the translation in the footnote. When no source information appears, the translation is my own work.

[1] I have chosen to utilize Frederick Douglas' term for this war as stated in his article "The War with Mexico," The North Star, January 21, 1848.

[2] For more regarding my use of the term mythological narrative, see Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972).

[3] Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America: The Chicano's Struggle for Liberation*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 8.

[4] Ibid.

[5] "Tejas," in *Revista científica y literaria de Méjico, tomo I* (Mexico: Redactores del Museo Mejicano, 1845), 144.

[6] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (UK: Zed Books, 1999; Malaysia: University of Otago Press, 2007).

[7] Specifically focused on the issue of identity in Texas between 1821 and 1848 is Andrés Reséndez, *Changing National Identities at the Frontier: Texas and New Mexico, 1800-1850* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Other authors of significant influence include Theodore Allen, *The Invention of the White Race* (1994; repr., London, Verso, 2000); Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); Antonia Darder, ed, *Culture and Difference: Critical Perspectives on the Bicultural Experience in the United States* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1995); Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, *The Latino/a Condition: A Critical Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); Laura E. Gómez, *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race* (New York: New York University, 2007); Gilbert González, *Culture of Empire: American Writers, Mexico, and Mexican Immigrants, 1880-1930* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004); A.J. Greimas and J. Courtés, *Semiótica. Diccionario Razonado de la Teoría del Lenguaje* (Madrid: Gredos, 1985); Martha Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race: The Indian, Black, and White Roots of Mexican Americans* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001); Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988); Ramón Saldívar, *Chicano Narrative: The Dialectics of Difference* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990); Alexander Saxton, *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (London and New York: Verso, 1990).

[8] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1979; repr., New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 4-5. Citations refer to the 1994 edition.

[9] It is important to note that in simplifying Said's theory we must not forget the powerful dynamics occurring in identity constructions. The process is not a linear one, but rather circular, and therefore the construction of the Other affects the Self and vice versa.

[10] In this dissertation, I define the center of the Anglo self-conceptualization as northern, white, and elite.

[11] Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny. The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 189.

[12] Ibid., 190.

[13] Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (New York: Orion Press, 1965), 79-89.

[14] Ibid., 81.

[15] Mario Monteforte Toledo, *Literatura, ideologia y lenguaje* (Mexico: Editorial Grijalbo, 1976).

[16] Raymund A. Paredes, "The Origins of Anti-Mexican Sentiment in the United States," in *En Aquel Entonces* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000), 46.

[17] Ibid., 47.

[18] Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, 22.

[19] See David García Pantoja Morán and Jorge Mario García Laguardia, *Tres documentos constitucionales en la América Española preindependiente* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1975), 45-7.

[20] "Nuevo Tesoro Lexicográfico de la Lengua Española," accessed August 18, 2009, http://buscon.rae.es/ntlle/jsp/NtInformeLis.jsp. This website no longer appears on the web page for the Real Academia Española. They have replaced it with web.frl.es/DH/org/login/Inicio.view, that provides the same historical information. I accessed that website on June 1, 2014. However, real-life usage always precedes official recognition by the Academia, and documents of this time period in Mexico point to an effort to merge the idea of nación and república as early as the late 1830s.

[21] Carlos M. Bustamante, *Historia de la conquista de Mexico, escrito por el R.P. Fr. Bernardino Sahagun del orden de S. Francisco, y uno de los primeros enviados a la Nueva España para propagar el evangelio, publicada por separado de sus demás obras Carlos María de Bustamante, diputado de la cámara de representantes del congreso general de la federación por el estado libre de Oaxaca, quien lo dedica á los beneméritos generales Nicolás Bravo y Miguel Barragan, y á sus dignos compañeros en la confinación que hoy sufren* (Mexico: Impr. de Galvan, 1829), PDF e-book, HathiTrust Digital Library, IV.

[22] Paredes, "The Origins," 51.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] "Victor Villaseñor," accessed February 16, 2014, http://victorvillasenor.com/about-2.

[27] The following story is from chapter five in Victor Villaseñor, *Burro Genius: A Memoir* (New York: Rayo, 2004).

[28] Ibid., 67.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid., 68-9.

[32] Ibid., 69.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid., 70.

[36] Mario Barrera, *Race and Class in the Southwest: A Theory of Racial Inequality* (1979; repr., Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 181.

[37] "Save Ethnic Studies," accessed February 2, 2014, http://saveethnicstudies.org/meet_us.shtml.

[38] Tom Horne, "Finding by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Violation by Tucson Unified School District Pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-112(B)," in "Tom Horne: Tucson Unified School District Runs Afoul of Ethnic Studies Law," *The Arizona Republic*, January 3, 2011.

[39] Ibid. Additionally, the film documentary *Precious Knowledge* (2011) documents the struggles of this program.

[40] See Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (MacGibbon & Kee, 1963, New York: Grover Press, 2004).

[41] Richard Slotkin, "Myth and the Production of History," in *Ideology and Classic American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 70.

[42] Ibid., 73. This is by no means the only work that influenced this dissertation. Also see, Hayden White's works *The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), and *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

[43] Ibid., 74.

[44] Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London: Sage in association with the Open University, 1997), 16.

[45] Ibid., 6.

[46] Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), 114-16.

[47] Ibid., 109-158.

[48] David Lee Child, *The Taking of Naboth's Vineyard, or History of the Texas Conspiracy* (New York: S. W. Benedict & Co, 1845), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926, 29.

[49] Ibid.

[50] New International Version, "1 Kings 21," accessed June 1, 2014, www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+21.

CHAPTER 1

Torrents of Dust:
José Tornel y Mendivil Describes the Dark and Barren Desert of Anglo Honor

Mythmakers created an inspirational story to recount the events surrounding Anglo immigration to Texas. They began by describing the arrival of hundreds of brave and courageous pioneers to the barren wastelands of Texas. The year was 1824. Under the leadership of the great Stephen Austin, these men and women came to fulfill their destiny. Together with their Mexican brethren, they sought to build a harmonious community and convert the land of Texas into a Garden of Eden. In was a sublime scene that was viciously disrupted by the actions of a centralized Mexican government that abandoned its march towards liberty. The bloodthirsty tyrants that rose from the ashes of political chaos attacked the benevolent colonists, intent on severing them from their land. In a perfect representation of the heart of this mythological narrative, Austin told a group of supporters in Kentucky that the colonist's "object is *freedom* - civil and religious freedom - emancipation from that government and that people, who, after fifteen years experiment, since they have been separated from Spain, have shown that they are incapable of self-government, and that all hopes of anything like stability or rational liberty in its political institutions, at least for many years, are vain and fallacious."[1]

This façade of the benevolent colonist composed one aspect of the larger Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. The intention of this story was to convey a proper understanding of the plight of the Texas colonists. As such, its central message was the victimization of the colonists at the hands of an inept and barbaric Mexican government. Although the development of this mythological narrative pertains primarily to the 1830s, it is a story that has remained largely unchanged, as demonstrated in its near verbatim reproduction within a variety of scholarly and popular works. However, such longevity does not mark its veracity. To the contrary, what it signals is the oppressive silencing of a Mexican response that detailed an endless cadence of broken

promises and duplicitous dealings. There is an old Arabian saying, "A promise is a cloud; fulfillment is rain." In sum, Mexico's response asserted that in Texas, nothing fell from the clouds but torrents of dust. It is in José María de Tornel y Mendivil's essay, *Tejas y los Estados-Unidos de América en sus relaciones con la República Mexicana* (1837), that we find the heart of that counter narrative.

In his work, Tornel emphasized the Anglo colonists' violation of their sworn duties under Mexican law. Such an approach was highly productive, restoring a series of events that were not only ignored by mythmakers in that era, but also homogenized out of the subsequent published historical record. Moreover, Tornel's essay represented a powerful counter narrative that posed a serious threat to the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. For those reasons, Tornel's work was, and continues to be, dismissed as mere political dogma. However, this type of dismissal cannot withstand critical examination. For in the end, Tornel's removal of the façade of the benevolent colonist forces us to consider exactly who left the footprints of tyranny upon the land of Texas.

José María de Tornel y Mendivil was born in Mexico in 1795 as Spain's control over its colony was waning. At the age of 14, his father sent him to the prestigious El Colegio de San Ildefonso in Mexico City. It was there that he became interested in the Mexican independence movement as he nurtured his political and military interests. Although his father called him home shortly after the crucial liberation of Orizaba, Veracruz in 1812, Tornel continued his efforts to secure Mexican autonomy. Through those efforts, he made many invaluable connections and gained political experience that prepared him to hold a number of official roles in the emerging Mexican nación. In those roles, Tornel dealt directly with the U.S. government on a variety of topics, including Anglo immigration to Texas.[2]

Tornel's first assignment to the United States came after José Manuel Rafael Simeón de Mier y Terán's trip through Texas. As the head of the Limits Commission, the Mexican government had charged Terán with the responsibility of drawing the border between the United States and Mexico. The report he submitted expressed his grave concerns regarding the number of Anglo colonists

immigrating to Texas in 1824. In particular, he felt their large numbers posed an immediate threat to Mexico's autonomy in the region. The Mexican government heeded this warning. Additionally, it became concerned with the appearance of Texas land sale advertisements in the newspapers of the United States. Consequently, Tornel was dispatched to Washington City as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to assess the situation.

It was from this vantage point that Tornel witnessed the growth of the expansionist movement in the United States. Writing from Washington City on March 6, 1830, he speculated that the actions of the colonists represented a coordinated strategy that the U.S. government could employ if it failed to secure the purchase of Texas through diplomatic channels. Moreover, Tornel underscored that such a plan would necessarily involve the silent support of both the U.S. government and capitalist interests for colonization. He concluded that once those interests established themselves as land grantees on Texas soil, they could attempt to separate from Mexico and seek annexation to the United States.[3] The events of 1836 would prove the accuracy of these conclusions.

A Deluge of Dissension

In the opening pages of *Tejas*, Tornel emphasized that the primary goal of the U.S. expansionist movement was not to build an empire: "No es un Alejandro, ó un Napoleón el ambiciosos de conquistas para estender su dominio ó su gloria, el que inspira á la orgullosa raza anglo-sajona ese deseo, ese furor de usurpar y dominar lo ageno; es la nación entera la que poseída del carácter inquieto de los bárbaros de otro Norte de otra época, arrolla cuanto se le opone en la carrera de su engrandecimiento."[*4] On the contrary, what he described was a group of individuals whose avarice was driven by greed, for nothing more than greed's sake.

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[*] The ambitious conqueror is not Alexander or Napoleon wishing to extend their dominion or glory. That which inspires the prideful Anglo-Saxon is a desire towards a violent usurpation, a wish to dominate that which belongs to another. It is an entire nation, possessing the anxious and uneasy character of other barbarians of the North from a previous era, that crushes whoever resists

Although Tornel felt that this movement originated in 1763, he placed its current development squarely on the shoulders of Thomas Jefferson: "será muy raro encontrar un americano que no rinda á Jefferson las adoraciones de un semi-dios, porque lo considera como al revelador de sus destinos, como al depositario de los secretos de la Providencia."*[5] Tornel felt that it was Jefferson's acute knowledge of U.S. citizens that enabled him to construct a message that would excite their illusions. Furthermore, he noted Jefferson's success, pointing out the creation of three groups of expansionists; those intent on placing the southern border of the United States in Panama, those looking only towards the Rio Panuco, and finally those who wished to extend the boundaries of the United States to the Río Bravo del Norte. For all of these individuals, the purchase of the Louisiana territory marked a significant advancement towards their ambitions.[6]

In discussing the Louisiana Purchase, Tornel's essay sought to capture the complexity of events that surrounded it. He began by drawing heavily from Spanish Minister Luis de Onís y González-Vara's work *Memoría sobre las negociaciones entre España y los Estados-Unidos de América que dieron motivo al tratado de 1819* (1822) that addressed the negotiations between the United States and Spain to resolve the territorial disputes arising from the Louisiana Purchase. Tornel stated that the conflict over Texas had begun when the U.S. government attempted to attach the territories of Spanish Florida, New Orleans, and Texas to the purchase. Spain rejected such claims and sent Onís to negotiate.

Onís' essay merits attention since he outlined what he saw as a well-thought out strategy, on the part of the U.S. government to achieve its territorial ambitions. He stated that the first step

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it while in its march towards expansion. Translation source: I received significant help with this translation from Dr. Gilberto López y Rivas, Profesor-Investigador, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico.

* it would be a rare encounter to find an American that does not worship Jefferson as a semi-god, because they consider him the revealer of destinies and the depository of the secrets of Providence.

involved sending a significant number of private U.S. citizens into a desired area to foment rebellion. Publically, the U.S. government disavowed any support. Privately it conveyed assurances. The individuals that arrived in these areas were most effective when they stoked the flames of current tensions. In this manner, they successfully increased the number of confrontations, a situation necessitating the intervention of the Foreign Minister.[7]

It is important to note that Onis' description applies to a variety of conflicts that were occurring during the 1810s. In fact, Anglo immigration affected a multitude of locations throughout the region between Florida and the Sabine River in Louisiana. Conflict between these immigrants and Spanish officials was constant. For example, Anglo immigrants that located in present day southeast Louisiana and southern Alabama resisted Spanish rule and declared their independence under the flag of the Republic of West Florida. In his essay, Onís stated that he attempted to work through diplomatic channels to lodge his complaint against these uprisings, however, the response from U.S. officials stated that the government's policy of neutrality prohibited any interference in the issue. Moreover, the United States claimed that the freedoms ensured under the U.S. Constitution prohibited the restriction of its citizen's actions, even when they were on foreign soil.[8]

This unwillingness to address Spain's complaint left Onís with no other choice but to take the issue out of the private diplomatic sphere and place it in front of the people. Thus, he published *Observations on the Existing Differences between the Government of Spain and the United States* (1817) in Philadelphia under the pseudonym Verus. In this essay, Onís asserted that the claims of the United States were strictly a result of its attempt to impose its will on Spain.[9] The publication of his remarks angered U.S. officials who immediately rejected the Minister's claims. They said that the facts pointed to the oppression of the rights and liberties of U.S. citizens while residing in the contested area. Furthermore, such oppression was causing financial injury to its citizens. Therefore, the U.S. government intended to parley for compensation on their behalf.

However, Onís was quick to point out that the acknowledgement of the actions of its citizens for the purpose of indemnification in no way represented an intention to act on the original complaint. To the contrary, U.S. officials maintained their original position, reiterating that the government was neutral in foreign affairs and unable to control the actions of its free citizens. Thus, the result was a bait-and-switch strategy where the United States claimed neutrality in a conflict it had intentionally started. In order to ensure the desired outcome, Onís pointed to a well thought out narrative under the auspice of persecuted brethren. Once disseminated to the public at-large, the U.S. government was free to abandon its policy of neutrality and aggressively act in order to secure its ambitions. It was in this manner that the United States could portray itself as an innocent bystander, victimized by a foreign power, and acting in accordance with its Divine Destiny.[10]

The experiences that Onís expressed spoke to the manner in which Anglo attitudes of superiority played out on the world stage. Mexico's first Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States, José Manuel Zozaya, made similar observations of Anglo superiority during his first trip to the United States: "La soberbia de estos republicanos no les permite vernos como iguales sino como inferiores; su envanecimiento se extiende en mi juicio á creer que su Capital lo será de todas las Américas; aman entrañablemente á nuestro dinero, no á nosotros, ni son capaces de entrar en convenio de alianza ó comercio sino por su propia conveniencia, desconociendo la recíproca."[*11] For Zozoya, it was the inability of the U.S. government to respect Mexican as an equal nation that was a concern. He felt that such an attitude would soon result in a significant threat to Mexico's territorial sovereignty.[12]

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[*] The arrogance of these republicans does not permit them to see us as equals, but rather as inferior, in my judgment, their vanity extends to believing that their Capital will (one day) be the Capital of all the Americas; they intimately love our money, not us, nor are they capable of entering into an agreement of alliance or commerce unless it is for their own convenience, unaware of reciprocation.

Tornel's inclusion of the experiences of Onís, as well as the addition of the initial impressions of Mexico's first Minister to the United States, serves to rearticulate the complexities of the long-standing relationship between Spain, Mexico, and the United States. Tornel's essay reminds us that Spain came to the aid and assistance of the U.S. government in its fight for independence from Great Britain. In return for this loyalty, the government immediately challenged Spain's North American boundaries. The ensuing conflict added to the overall burden on Spain, leaving it in a position of subjugation when Napoleon rose to power in France. One consequence of this situation was France's imposition of the 1800 Treaty of San Ildefonso.

Tornel asserted that the significance of this treaty was often erroneously overlooked. Specifically, he emphasized the size of the territory that Spain was ceding to France.[13] The disturbing nature of this treaty also concerned the United States. It feared that the transfer of Louisiana to France would deliver a devastating blow to its own ambitions to secure the territory. A summary review of the published primary correspondence on the topic reveals a series of frantic diplomatic efforts to determine if such an agreement had been executed and if so, what boundaries it incorporated.[14]

However, the fact that this treaty was negotiated in secret presented U.S. diplomats with many obstacles. Months passed before they were able to confirm its formal acceptance by both parties. Once the United States confirmed the transfer of Louisiana to France, they immediately changed strategy and sought to negotiate with France. At a minimum, it wanted to ensure that any purchase would include East and West Florida, as well as New Orleans. The tactic the government ultimately used was one that would soon become a staple in the U.S. diplomatic arsenal. Emphasizing the previously settled damage and loss claims owed to U.S. citizens by France, Secretary of State James Madison instructed U.S. Envoy Robert R. Livingston to pressure France into the sale of the Louisiana territory. If France did not comply, Livingston was to go public with a story that the French government was not acting in good faith with regards to the repayment of its

indemnification claims.[15] The approach worked. Although the resulting purchase treaty ultimately excluded the Floridas and New Orleans, the United States purchased the vast expanse of the Louisiana territory for approximately three-cents an acre.[16]

Tornel's essay adds to this corpus of U.S. diplomatic correspondence by further contextualizing the events surrounding the purchase. In his work, he asserted that Napoleon's inability to spare the necessary resources to defend Louisiana was a primary reason he agreed to the purchase. In particular, he wished to turn his attention towards securing his power within the European continent. Additionally, since the Haitian Revolution had been a financial burden for the French Revolutionary government, money was urgently needed. The sale of Louisiana to the United States not only provided the government with this desperately needed cash, but also included the cancellation of all indemnification debts.[17]

Despite the successful outcome for the United States and France, Spain did not see the situation in the same light. Tensions rose quickly. Spain protested the sale of Louisiana to the United States based on prohibitions that existed within the Treaty of San Ildefonso. The situation was further aggravated when the U.S. government publically claimed that the purchased territory incorporated the Floridas to the east and the Río Bravo del Norte to the west. Tornel characterized such assertions as nothing more than self-flattery. He pointed out that the boundary language of the purchase accord was left intentionally vague to ensure its passage through the French Revolutionary government. Moreover, he noted that when U.S. Envoys James Monroe and Charles Pickney attempted to present their territorial claims in front of the Court of Madrid, they were promptly rejected. Neither the Floridas, nor the Internal Provinces of Mexico (Texas), had ever been part of the territory called Louisiana. When Spain asked France to clarify the situation, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand's response simply repeated the purchase language.[18]

Published primary sources demonstrate that despite the disagreement concerning the boundary, President Jefferson moved forward with his expansionist doctrine. In particular, he

crafted a narrative that would excite the emotions of the citizenry in an attempt to obtain an advantage in the negotiations. Within that narrative, we find the heart of this territorial dispute, one that would go unresolved for the next forty-five years.

> The enlightened Government of France saw, with just discernment, the importance, to both nations, of such liberal arrangements as might best and permanently promote the peace, interests and friendship of both; and the property and sovereignty of all Louisiana, which had been restored to them, has, on certain conditions, been transferred to the United States, by instruments bearing date the 30th of April last.[19]

The first element of importance in these remarks referred to the territory sold to the United States as land "restored to them [France]." This statement references Article 3 of the 1800 Treaty of San Ildefonso that read:

> His Catholic Majesty promises and undertakes on his part to retrocede to the French Republic, six months after the full and entire execution of the above conditions and provision regarding his Royal Highness the Duke of Parma, the colony or province of Louisiana, with the same extent that it now has in the hands of Spain and that it had when France possessed it, and such as it ought to be according to the treaties subsequently concluded between Spain and other states.[20]

The war of meaning over the word "retrocede" was not resolved to the satisfaction of the United States until the ratification of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Throughout the entire dispute, the U.S. government persisted in its claim that France had previously held Texas as part of its possessions in Louisiana. They based this assertion on the arrival of René-Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle at Matagorda Bay in 1684.

The second element of significance involved the transfer of "the property and sovereignty of all Louisiana" to the United States. The issue surrounding this statement would far outlive the retrocede argument, extending into contemporary times, where it continues to appear in land dispute cases in Texas courts. Although this topic is beyond the scope of this dissertation, an examination of published primary sources does show that at the time of the purchase, many residents of Spanish Louisiana were distressed with the transfer of their sovereignty to the United States. In particular, they expressed concern regarding the strength of their land rights under the

ambiguous language of Article 3. One of these inhabitants, Moses Austin, was so outraged at what he described as the wholesale robbery of land from its rightful owners that he wrote U.S. Secretary of Treasury Albert Gallatin.

Austin's 1806 letter to Gallatin reflected the same type of frustrations he had previously experienced after the failure of his Virginia lead mining venture. In that instance, Austin had turned his sights to Spanish Louisiana in search of new life. In 1796, three years after the birth of his first son Stephen, the family arrived at the community of St. Genevieve, just southwest of present day St. Louis, Missouri. Within two years, he secured a small land grant from a French-Canadian businessman, Commandant François Valle. Although Valle lacked the authority to grant the land, Austin established a mine at Breton. He claimed that it held great promise to bring him untold riches. For the next seven years, this sentiment would prove true.[21]

However, Austin's luck changed when the Louisiana Purchase transferred this grant to the territorial jurisdiction of the United States. Immediately, his ownership of the Breton mine came under fire. In his letter to Gallatin, Austin described a closed system of extensive corruption, each branch doubling back on itself in order to affect the desired outcome. He attributed the pervasive nature of this corruption to a dangerous combination of land speculator greed and the vague language of Article 3. As an example, he cited the requirement that all landholders in Louisiana present their grants in a form acceptable to the courts of the United States. Such a requirement effectively nullified Spanish grants since they had been executed under Spanish law. Consequently, the only way a landholder could secure title was to obtain a new survey of the land. However, the cost of a new survey was out of reach for the majority of people. Lamenting the additional burden of a strict timetable in which to accomplish all the steps, Austin underscored a significant number of land forfeitures. Furthermore, on those rare occasions when a rightful owner did succeed in meeting all the requirements, his title was often denied when a pre-dated survey or grant mysteriously appeared.[22] Austin blamed Governor James Wilkinson for these misfortunes,

accusing him of intentionally preventing the confirmation of land grants as a means to secure his own title. He pointed out that once Wilkinson held title, he could sell the land at a profit.[23]

Although Austin did not receive a response from Gallatin, Spain did not ignore what was happening to its former colonists in Louisiana. In an effort to provide relief, it extended the inhabitants the opportunity to relocate to any Spanish territory of their choice. Once there, they could apply for a new land grant. It was an opportunity that Austin would eventually exploit in an effort to avoid complete financial ruin, for the second time in his life.

In addition to the challenges that Austin faced concerning his land grant, the War of 1812 caused significant damage to the operations at the Breton mine. Despite his initial assessment that the mine would one day provide a near endless supply of riches, war had posed two major problems; men to mine the ore, and a steady flow of currency. To address the issue of labor, Austin turned to slavery. His reasoning was simple; a slave did not require a wage. Thus, he sent his brother to Russellville, Kentucky to make the purchase from the wealthy plantation owner Colonel Anthony Butler. However, when Austin quickly exhausted his funds, he realized that he had misjudged the situation: "In December, 1814, Austin had to stock pork to provide for the 900-pound-per-month consumption of the slaves and household he already had. He bought the meat, but was unable at the same time to satisfy a demand against him for a mere $100.00."[24]

Austin's attempt to resolve the problem of a steady flow of currency would not work out any better. In 1813, he joined forces with Risdon H. Price, Rufus Easton, Sam Hammond, as well as several other businessmen to create the first bank in the Missouri territory, the Bank of St. Louis. Sadly, the venture suffered from a costly delay when it took three years to sell a sufficient number of subscriptions to open the bank. By the time they did manage to open the doors, the bank found itself plagued with a series of problems. The first issue stemmed from large-scale speculation in 1816. In order to meet the demand for capital, the bank had made loans far exceeding its ability to secure. The second issue involved direct competition from the Bank of Missouri. Despite the

efforts of Austin's son Stephen to block the charter of the Bank of Missouri in the territorial legislature, it had successfully opened at almost the same time as the Bank of St. Louis. The combined threat of overextension and strong competition was magnified when the Bank of Missouri won the contract to hold deposits stemming from public land sales. Although the Bank of St. Louis did manage to survive this misfortune, it would not fare as well with the scandal that followed.[25]

In late 1817, the board learned that their cashier, John Smith, had had purchased large sums of cash without their approval. An investigation showed that Smith had sold that currency, pocketing the profits for himself. The result was a bitter feud that led to Smith's removal during February 1818. As a consequence of that incident, Moses Austin resigned his position. Approximately four weeks later, and for reasons unknown, he took out a loan for $15,000, guarantying repayment with his estate at Durham Hall. However, when the Panic of 1819 hit, the bank demanded he immediately repay the entire loan.[26]

Stephen Austin was furious that the bank had taken such an action. He wrote a scathing letter to its board members and condemned their action, asserting that their only purpose was to ensure his father's financial ruin. It was a failure that would mark a crossroads in the life of a young Stephen Austin, profoundly influencing his future actions. For Moses Austin, it was a financial and emotional blow that was so significant that he would never recover. The year was 1819, and for a second time in his life, he was bankrupt. Rather than remain within the boundaries of the United States, the elder Austin once again turned his sights towards Spanish Territory, this time fixing his vision squarely upon the lands of Spanish Texas.[27]

While Austin struggled to survive the challenges of life in St. Genevieve, the unresolved border conflict between Spain and United States continued. As Onís remarked in his essay, both commercial and political interests continued to stoke the flames of discord in their effort to obtain their territorial ambitions. For its part, Spain stood firm against the territorial demands of the U.S.

government. The stalemate was broken when the United States decided to force Spain's hand by using a version of the same tactic it had previously used against France.

This time the target was Spanish Florida. To support the effort, mythmakers created a narrative that articulated the grievances of U.S. citizens suffering injuries at the hands of the Seminole Indians. We see the apex of this narrative in President James Monroe's 1818 State of the Union address. In that speech, Monroe said that he had no option but to cross into Spanish territory in order to protect the lives of those U.S. citizens who have fallen victim to the relentless barbarism of the Seminole Indians. Furthermore, he justified this action by asserting that the Seminoles had not only violated U.S. law, but they had also been directly involved in frauds, committing "every kind of outrage on our peaceable citizens, which their proximity to us enabled them to perpetrate."[28] Hoping that Spain would not see an invasion into its sovereign territory in a negative light, he announced that U.S. troops would cross the "imaginary line" between the United States and Spain and dispense with what he referred to as the Seminole savages.

We cannot feign surprise that such flagrant disregard for Spanish sovereignty resulted in significant damage to the relationship between the two countries. Two more years passed before the territorial disputes resulting from the Louisiana Purchase finally reached a resolution via the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty.[29] Generally known as the Adams-Onís Treaty, the 1819 treaty centered around two main issues; the eastern boundary of Louisiana below the 31st parallel, and the western boundary of the purchase accord. The compromise was simple. Spain surrendered all of its territory then known as East and West Florida in exchange for the U.S. government's relinquishment of any purported claim to Texas. The parties set the western boundary of the United States at the Sabine River located slightly west of the Mississippi river. The eastern boundary was the Atlantic Ocean.

Despite the apparent straightforwardness of this accord, it failed on all counts to resolve the dispute. Specifically, it enraged U.S. commercial interests who watched their anticipated fortunes

disappear before their very eyes. Under this accord, they could no longer hope to realize a profit from the sale of their Texas land grants. Yet another group saw the accord as the wholesale surrendering of territory rightfully belonging to the United States. These individuals were the faithful followers of the retrocede argument. For them, France had been in possession of Texas since 1684.

Tornel directly addressed these arguments in his essay, supporting Spain's rejection of the U.S. claim through its unbroken administration since 1690. He then furthered his position by pointing to the 1762 Secret Treaty of Fontainebleau in which France sought to mitigate the anticipated territorial losses resulting from the end of the French-Indian war. In that accord, France had relinquished all of Louisiana west of the Mississippi to Spain. That action left only the eastern portion of France's territory for negotiation with Great Britain at the Treaty of Paris (1763).[30]

Moreover, he rejected the idea that de La Salle's arrival at Matagorda Bay in 1684 conveyed possession of the territory to France. Many U.S. proponents of this argument pointed to the diaries of Henri Joutel, a member of that mission, to support their claim. Since Tornel had previously translated these diaries into Spanish, he was uniquely positioned to address their content. In his rebuttal, he stated that Joutel's diaries told the story of a failed mission rather than the completion of a successful one. The voyage had begun with the expressed intention of discovering the mouth of the Mississippi. Instead, a navigation error led the ships astray. The result was an encounter with a devastating storm that destroyed all the ships. Therefore, rather than the fulfillment of a mission to discover Texas, de La Salle's arrival at Matagorda Bay was the result of a shipwreck and drifting currents. This, Tornel contended, did not convey territorial possession. More to the point, he listed the numerous Spanish explorers who had traversed the Texas territory long before de La Salle was even born; Juan Ponce in 1512, Lúcas Vazquez de Ayllon in 1525, Pánfilo de Narvaez in 1527, Hernando de Soto in 1538, and Pedro Melendez in 1545.[31]

Finally, Tornel asserted that the pretended claim of the United States extend well beyond any that France had ever lodged.

> Francia, en ninguna de sus transaciones diplomáticas estendió los límites de la Luisiana a donde aspiran los americanos, para quienes los viages verdaderos ó supuestos, las patentes de privilegio, bien ó mal concedidas, las historias ó las novelas, los sueños ó las realidades, todo alhaga, todo favorece, *porque su derecho es su deseo y la justicia su conveniencia.* ¡Cómo ha jugado y juega todavia en los intereses de su codicia, su venturosa compra de la Luisiana! Para ellos no ha valido que la Francia reconociese ciertos límites como notorios, y continúan presentando el fenómeno de considerarse mas instridos en los derechos de aquella potencia que ella misma, y con doble celo para reclamarlos.*[32]

Thus, he concluded, that the retrocede argument was one that was founded solely upon the *right of desire*, a fictional claim that lacked any substance.[33]

After the ratification of the 1819 treaty, expansionists sought out alternative strategies to secure Texas. Tornel noted that one such strategy was the encouragement of the ongoing independence movement in Mexico. He contended that expansionists believed that an independent Mexico would be unstable and more willing to capitulate to their demands. Furthermore, Tornel asserted that many expansionists felt that the power vacuum created by Mexican independence would permit the U.S. government to place itself in a position of domination over the entire region.[34]

The expansionists saw the first sign of encouragement when Juan de O'Donojú y O'Ryan signed the 1821 Treaty of Córdoba. Although the Viceroy of Mexico had recognized Mexican independence through this document, he did so without the consent of the Spanish crown. Therefore, it was promptly rejected. This rejection, however, did not dismay the power brokers in

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* France, in none of its diplomatic transactions extended the limits of Louisiana to where the Americans aspire, for whom true or supposed journeys, privileged patents, well or badly obtained, histories or novels, dreams or realities, all flatter, all favor, *because their right is their desire and justice is their convenience*. How well they have played and play still in the interests of their avarice, their successful purchase of Louisiana! For them, there is no validity that France recognized certain well-known limits, they continue presenting the phenomenon of considering themselves more instructed in the rights of France than France itself, and with double fervor to claim them.

the United States. To the contrary, they moved rapidly to seize the opportunity that the accord offered. One such example was the March 10, 1822 *Memorial de los infrascriptos ciudadanos de los Estados-Unidos de América, al govierno independiente de México, en el cual exponen respetusamente* signed by sixty individuals. Through this document, petitioners sought a significant land grant within the territorial boundaries of Texas, now purportedly under Mexican rule. Termed the Leftwich grant in most scholarly and popular works, the significance of this particular Memorial is the participation of a seated member of the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressman Samuel Houston of Tennessee.

In agreement with fifty-nine others, Houston acknowledged that the petition represented a blatant and willful violation of U.S. neutrality: "Aunque la forma de nuestro gobierno prohíbe á todo Ciudadano tomar parte en las controversias entre las otras potencias, ¿Cuánto no deberemos apreciar los motivos de vuestro pueblo en una causa semejante á la nuestra, al recordar las penas, fatigas, privaciones, y peligros experimentados en las días de nuestra guerra de la independencia?"[*35] Therefore, he called on the narrative of brotherhood against European oppression, reminding Mexico of the unwavering support it gave the United States during its own fight for freedom and liberty. Houston and other petitioners then requested permission to establish themselves on Texas territory, to live in peace with their Mexican brethren, and become productive citizens under Mexican law.[36]

That Sam Houston, a seated member of the U.S. House of Representatives, openly and directly violated the expressed neutrality of the United States supports Tornel's assertion that the Anglo colonists were not benevolent. Moreover, that this event has been homogenized out of scholarly and popular works underscores the complexities of the larger strategies playing out in the

[*] Although our form of governmental prohibits all Citizens from taking part in conflicts between other powers, how can we not appreciate the motives of your nation in a similar cause to ours, to the documented trials, hardships, deprivations, and dangers experienced in the days of our war for independence?

background. For instance, the Leftwich Grant illuminates the reality of U.S. recognition of Mexico some nine months later. Rather than an act of solidarity with a nation seeking freedom from European oppression, what we find is the U.S. government acting in response to private land interests, in this case, those of a seated member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

A Nebulous Oath of Allegiance

The Leftwich Grant is only one of countless Memorials that came from citizens of the United States. Additionally, the newly independent Mexican government had to address countless unresolved requests that had been previously submitted to Spain by inhabitants of Spanish Louisiana. Many officials charged with the responsibility to address these issues expressed severe reservations about allowing Anglos to immigrate to Mexico. They were convinced that such a move would be tantamount to handing the territory to the United States.[37]

Tornel's position regarding Anglo immigration into Texas was largely influenced by his encounters with Stephen Austin. In sum, he felt that Austin repeatedly demonstrated a deep and profound disrespect not only for Mexico as a nation, but Mexicans as a people.[38] Such an impression was not without merit. For example, the following excerpt from Austin's letter to his brother J.E.B. on June 13, 1823 supports Tornel's opinion.

> Animo animo hermano mio muy breve nos veremos, y engordaremos con cibolo y maiz en el Colorado porque te aseguro que soy tambien flaco - flaquisismo. Pais mas miserable que se halla entre México y esta (espero) no existe en el mundo, los indios Chocktaws viven en lujo en comparación pero nada de esto a los *buenos habitantes* de Béxar, porque ellos creen que este pais es la jardin del mundo - to be candid the majority of the people of the whole nation as far as I have seen them want nothing but tails to be more brutes than the Apes. The Clergy have enslaved them to the last degree of oppression - fanaticism reigns with a power that equally astonishes and grieves a man of common sense - but keep this to yourself, it wont do to tell them so - thank God there are no fryars near the Colorado and if they come there to distress me I shall hang them to a certainty, unless an army protects them.*[39]

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* Keep your spirits up brother, very soon we will see one another and fill up on onions and corn at the Colorado because I assure you I am also thin, very thin. I hope that nowhere in the world there is a country more miserable than the one found between here and Mexico, the Choctaw live in luxury by comparison, but nothing of this to the *good inhabitants* of Bexar, because they

Austin's own words, readily available within published primary sources since 1924, validate Tornel's position. In listening to Austin speak about Mexico, it would be difficult for us to imagine any context in which his statements could be interpreted as respectful. On the contrary, what they confirm is that in 1823, Austin saw Mexicans as no better than animals. Furthermore, he professed a violent attitude towards the representatives of the very Church he had just sworn an oath to follow.

Moreover, it is important to note that this excerpt is not an unusual one. In reviewing the entire collection of his published letters, we find that similar sentiments are commonplace within letters to his family. Taken as a whole, these letters create a narrative that reflects a significantly different portrait of the man that mythmakers would one-day label the Father of Texas. In that story, Austin had ventured into Texas to fulfill a deathbed promise to his father. Once there, his superior Anglo intellect immediately recognized the value of the land and he sought out his Anglo brethren to help him convert the wastelands of Texas into an oasis.

However, what this story carefully obscures are the real reasons that Moses Austin went to Texas in the first place. As we have just seen, those reasons were related to his disillusionment with the U.S. government following the Louisiana Purchase, the failure of the Breton Mine, and the calling in of the loan secured with Durham Hill. Furthermore, it ignores the profound impact of these failings on the course of Austin's own endeavors in Texas. That impact is what we encounter when we critically examine Austin's letters to his family. Through those writings we meet a man who carried a very deep, burning anger, and an intense frustration for the manner in which his father was treated by capitalists. Moreover, we learn that his drive to succeed in Texas was a

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think that this country is the garden of the world. To be candid the majority of the people of the whole nation as far as I have seen them want nothing but tails to be more brutes than the Apes. The Clergy have enslaved them to the last degree of oppression - fanaticism reigns with a power that equally astonishes and grieves a man of common sense - but keep this to yourself, it wont do to tell them so - thank God there are no fryars near the Colorado and if they come there to distress me I shall hang them to a certainty, unless an army protects them.

means to transcend this father's failings and build a space in which he could control his destiny. Thus, Austin's colony was an idyllic imagining that collided with reality when the colonists arrived. At that juncture, emotion and reality unified and transformed his ambitions into an obsession. For Stephen Austin, success was equated with vengeance. Vengeance against all those who had wished to see his father ruined.

We can support such an interpretation by looking at an excerpt from his sister Emily Perry's letter to their brother J.E.B. on April 10, 1825. In this letter, Perry expressed concern for how this obsession was affecting their brother. She begged J.E.B. to try to convince him to come home to Missouri for a rest. However, she realized it was not a likely prospect until such a time that "he has it in his power to satisfy every clame that is against him, and I trust it will not be long before he will be able to realize as much Money as will set him clear of the world, and have something considerable to compensate him for all the fatigue boath of body and mine, that he has suffered for the Last *six years*."[40] That this obsession drove Austin to transcend the mere accumulation of wealth and create a space in which he could control his destiny was conveyed in his own words to his cousin Mary Austin Holley on July 19, 1831: "The credit of settling this fine country and *laying the foundation for a new Nation which at some future period will arise here can not be taken from me;* and that part of my family who have ventured to follow me will be sufficiently provided for."[41]

Now, despite the agricultural foundations of the United States in 1831, it is important to keep in mind that by this time, the forces of capitalism had been in place for more than five decades. Combined with his drive to transcend his father's failures, it is unlikely that his declaration to "lay the foundation of a new Nation" envisioned success through benevolent substance farming. On the contrary, Austin's immediate push to obtain permission from the Mexican government to cultivate the prohibited tobacco crop, as well as his attempts to extend the time frame in which the colonists could trade duty-free, make the case that he saw capital expansion as the only path to realizing his vision. Nevertheless, Austin did acknowledge the value of creating and maintaining the façade of

passive benevolence: "A thorough knowledge of the Mexican character, the policy of the Government and the feelings of the mass of people towards foreigners convinced me at an early day that Texas must be settled *silently*, or not at all."[42]

In his essay, Tornel not only recognized this façade of benevolence for what it was, but also responded directly to the Austin family's role in creating it.

> La concesión se hizo como un don gratuito, y sin una sola de aquellas precauciones, cuya necesidad estaba indicada por las circunstancias de los nuevos pobladores. *Moises Austin* se puso al frente del la empresa, considerándose acaso su nombre como fatídico en la invasión que se meditaba, pasando por desiertos, hasta llegar á la tierra de promision. Admira tanta destreza por parte del caudillo *del nuevo pueblo de Dios*, y tanta ignorancia é imprevision por parte de las autoridades españolas: ellas debian considerar que los Estados-Unidos emprenden y llevan al cabo sus conquistas por caminos silenciosos, sin poner en riesgo la paz con la nación que va á ser despojada de su territorio; que en lugar de preparativos abiertos y hostíles, se sirven de medios y arbitrios disimulados, lentos é ineficaces al parecer, pero que dan un resultado indefectible.[*43]

In constructing his interpretation of Moses Austin's personal motives as a component of a larger U.S. project of continental domination, itself a model articulated upon the concepts of Providence and God's blessings, Tornel succeeded in tying the past to the present. He then removed the façade of the benevolent colonist by shining a spotlight directly upon the aggressive intentions behind the Texas Declaration of Independence and the resulting battle at the Alamo.

Nowhere does his essay more eloquently portray this poor repayment of Mexico's generosity than the twelve pages he dedicated to a brief description of the various land grants awarded to the colonists. From those pages, we learn that between April 27, 1825 and January 10,

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[*] The [land] grant [to Moses Austin] was conveyed as if it were a free gift, made without any of the precautions that were necessitated by the circumstances of the new immigrants. *Moses Austin* put himself at the head of the enterprise, perhaps considering his name as prophetic in the invasion that he was taking on, passing through the desert, until he reached the Promised Land. One admires such skill by the leader *of the new city of God*, and such ignorance and lack of foresight on the part of the Spanish authorities; they should have considered that the United States undertook and finished its conquests through silent means, without risking peace with the nation that it was going to dispossess of its land; that in place of open preparations and hostilities, it utilized arbitrary and underhanded methods, slow and difficult to see, but that gave an unfailing result.

1832 the Mexican government granted Empresarios permission to bring more than 7,000 families to Texas.[44] Through this summary, Tornel rejected the mythological narrative of Mexico as a tyrannical government: "Si el libro incierto y oscuro de los destinos del mundo está escrito que alguna vez ha de perderse el departamento de Tejas, permanezca este documento con el mismo desaliñado estilo con que se formó, para dar testimonio de la perfidia sin ejemplo de los colonos y pobladores, y de que la generosidad mexicana, tan mal correspondida, no conoció límite alguno de los que aconseja la prudencia."[*45]

The Right to Enslave

The façade of the benevolent colonist was an important tool in the narrative arsenal of the U.S. government. Not only did it mask the true intentions of the Anglo colonists, it also provided a didactic story that would be critical in convincing the public-at-large that the aggressive actions of the colonists during 1836 were self-defensive. However, the usefulness of this myth did not stop there. Anglo colonists also utilized it to mask their actions in response to Mexico's prohibition of slavery.

From the outset, the colonists characterized Mexico's prohibition to slavery as a violent restriction of their private property rights. In January 1825, James A.E. Phelps expressed his concerns regarding that prohibition and the growth of the colony. He warned Austin that it could significantly "check the tide of emigrating spirits at once."[46] Phelps requested that Austin send him a copy of the Mexican Constitution. In that way, he hoped to refute newspaper reports in the Middle States claiming that Mexico had prohibited "the introduction of negro property into the Mexican Republick, without exception: Subjecting the persons so offending to the severest

[*] If one day, in the uncertain and unclear book of destinies, it is written that Texas had to be lost, this document will remain, with the same untidy style with which it developed, in order to give testimony to the never before seen treachery of the colonists and settlers, and of Mexican generosity, that was so badly reciprocated, and knew no limit of those that advised prudence.

penalties, and also an immediate emancipation of thos[e] slaves now belonging to the citizens of the province of Texas."[47]

We can only understand Phelps' concern if we remember that the Anglo colonists viewed their slaves as nothing more than chattel. For them, the transportation and sale of a slave was no different than selling a table or chair. However, the view that many Mexicans held was quite different and they were very vocal in their criticism of the United States. In particular, they questioned how the U.S. government could maintain the institution of slavery while simultaneously ringing the bell of freedom and equality for all people. Moreover, they criticized government-sponsored programs of extermination that focused on Indigenous peoples. They concluded that such behavior demonstrated that Anglos did not see people of color as human beings, but rather inferior beasts to be disposed of at will. Mythmakers in the United States branded this response as hypocritical, pointing to three hundred years of European colonial domination where the barbaric and vicious Spaniards exterminated the Meso-American populations of Mexico. Furthermore, they declared that Mexico's current system of debt peonage was merely slavery by a different name.

Despite these retorts, Mexico continued to point out the duplicity of a nation articulating equality to the chained and condemned masses. Manuel Payno's 1845 article "Esclavos-Cuarteronas-Irlandeses" eloquently contextualized why the United States and Mexico perceived slavery in such radically different ways.

> En el seno de algunas naciones, y haciendo contraste con el lujo, el bienestar y la opulencia, se encuentran algunas clases desgraciadas, y cuyos sufrimientos y miserias pasan de generacion en generacion como si fuera un anatema del cielo. En Inglaterra son los irlandeses, en México los indios, en los Estados-Unidos los negros. La diferencia consiste en que en Inglaterra y los Estados-Unidos es un sistema, una política, un designio espreso y terminante de arrojar el oprobio y el trabajo sobre esas clases, mientras en México no es el gobierno ni la población la que ha reducido á los indios a la condicion que tienen, sino las costumbres propias y raras de los restos degradados é inconocibles que han quedado de las antiguas y nobles razas que segó la cuchilla de los conquistadores. ¡Cuánto honra esta observacion á México! Pobre, llena de convulsiones y trastornos, desordenada en las rentas, loca en sus procedimientos, desgraciada, si se quiere, pero noble, caballerosa, jamas la nacion

> mexicana se ha manchado con un acto criminal é injusto, jamas ha formado un sistema, que digo, ni un solo pensamiento para envilecer y oprimir á nadie.*[48]

In this passage, Payno differentiated between the past, as configured under Spanish rule, and the present/future as it was emerging under the newly independent Mexican nación. He pointed out that as a new entity, Mexico had legislatively incorporated all of its inhabitants. Thus, he drew a sharp distinction between an institutionally supported system in the United States, whose purpose was to enslave solely for the financial benefit of another (labor profit), and the situation in Mexico, where old and foreign customs (those of Spain in this case) were still being observed.

His point was further illuminated when he recounted his own personal observation of the sale of a young 19-year old girl on the streets of New Orleans: "El esclavo trabaja del dia á la noche, y el producto de este trabajo es para el amo. En compensacion se les tira un pedazo de pan para que no mueran de hambre, y un vestido para que no mueran de frio."†[49] In presenting these views, Payno conveyed the duplicity of the Anglo self-conceptualization. On the one hand this narrative spoke of capital growth, progress, and modernity. On the other, freedom, liberty, and other essential elements of enlightened thought. Payno's essay illuminated the conflict of such duplicity, stating that mythmakers resolved the contradiction by fashioning a story of Anglo Providence and

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* In the bosom of some nations, and making a contrast with the luxury, well-being, and opulence, one finds some wretched classes, whose suffering and misery are passed down generation to generation as if they were cursed from above. In England, they are the Irish, in Mexico, the Indians, in the United States, the Blacks. The difference is that in England and the United States, it is a system, a politics, an expressed plan to categorically throw out shame and oppress these classes, while in Mexico, it is not the government nor the population that has reduced the Indians to the condition they have, but rather the rare customs of the unrecognizable and deteriorated remains that have come down from the old and noble races that cut the knife of the Conquistadors. How much pride this observation brings to Mexico! Poor, full of unrest and troubles, disorderly in incomes, crazy in processes, unfortunate, if you will, but noble, chivalrous, never has the Mexican nation stained itself with such a criminal and unjust act, never has it formed a system, I say, or one thought in order to degrade and oppress anyone.

† The slave works dawn to dusk and the product of their labor is for the owner. As compensation, they are thrown a piece of bread so that they do not die of hunger, and clothing so that they do not freeze to death.

Destiny that justified the extermination and/or enslavement of people of color in service to that destiny.

Tornel's essay mirrored these same sentiments. Moreover, the following passage affords us the opportunity to engage him through the expression of his lived experience rather than dismissing his discourse a mere political dogma.

> En ninguna parte del globo son mas perceptibles que en los Estados-Unidos las antipatías de la raza blanca, sobre las gentes de color, y ellas eran suficientes para escluir y despojar de sus propiedades á los hombres bronceados, *redmen*: ello era conveniente, porque en el suelo que habitaban algunas de estas tribus se habian encontrado masas del funesto y codiciado metal: ellas habian desmontado los bosque, y los terrenos eran ya productivos. ¿Qué podia detener a los codiciosos anglo-americanos? Nada: el poder estaba de su parte, la debilidad por la de los míseros indigenas.*[50]

A critical contemplation of this passage demonstrates that Tornel spoke directly to the developing narrative of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. In particular, he acknowledged that it was looking him straight in the eye and seeing a person of color, living upon the fertile and profitable land that the U.S. government sought to obtain. In that context, all Mexicans were expendable.

Primary sources show that Mexico's concern regarding Anglo immigration was warranted. Despite its protest, the colonists saw the prohibition of slavery as nothing more than an obstacle in their silent march towards domination. Their intent to subvert that law was clear. On July 13, 1824, the Mexican government passed a federal decree prohibiting the selling and trafficking of slaves into and within the Mexican territory. Any slaves obtained in such a manner would be set free and the penalty for violating the law would be severe.[51] While this law was being drafted, Austin, along with Jared E. Groce, James Cummings, and John P. Coles, petitioned the Mexican

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* Nowhere in the world are the antipathies of the white race for people of color more perceivable than in the United States. These aversions are sufficient enough to allow them to reject and dispossess tanned men from their homes, *redmen*: he is convenient, because underneath the land that some of these tribes inhabit [the Anglo American] has found masses of ill-fated and coveted metal. They have taken apart the forest, and the land that was already productive. What can stop the greedy Anglo-American? Nothing. Power is on their side, weakness on the side of the wretched natives.

government for exclusion for the Anglo colonists.[52] They claimed that the slaves brought to Texas were "not brought here for the purpose of Trade or speculation neither are they Africans but are the family servants of the emigrants and raised by them as such from their infancy."[53] Their petition also highlighted the essential need of the slaves as a "right of property they [colonists] have to their slaves that they brought them here as a necessary part of the Capital required by the desert State of the Country to establish their farms and Ranches."[54]

The law of July 13 rejected Austin's petition. Moreover, the August 18, 1824 Colonization Law reaffirmed that the colonists had to abide by Mexico's prohibition: "La nación mexicana ofrece a los extrangeros que vengan a establecer en su territorio, seguridad en sus personas y sus propiedades, con tal que se sujeten a las leyes del país."*[55] Despite the clarity of this statement, the colonists found ways to thwart the law. For example, they had slaves sign a mark on agreements of indentured servitude that extend for ninety-nine years.[56] Furthermore, Austin's own actions demonstrated his own willful disregard for the prohibiton of slavery. Within his published letters, we find a *Contract for Hire of Slaves* dated August 1, 1824. In this document Austin transferred Lucy, Patsy, Elsy and Henry to Thomas Westall "untill the first day of January Eighteen hundred and twenty Six, for which the said Austin agress to pay to said Westall at the rate of one hundred and Eighty Dollars pr year and to clothe and feed them and Lucys young child Catharine - The said Westall hereby pays over the said hire to said Austin towards the Expences on said Westalls land in the said new Colony formed by said Austin."[57]

When we combine this contract with Austin's expressed opinion of the Mexican people, we connect with Tornel's frustration regarding the disingenuous behavior of the colonists. Moreover, we understand why he declared that Mexico had given Eden to the colonists and in return, they

* The Mexican nation offers foreigners that come to establish in its territory, security in their persons and properties, so long as they submit to the laws of the country.

were using it in the service of their own ambitions, spitting in the face of the Mexican nación along the way.[58] On April 6, 1830, the resulting tensions surrounding the issue of slavery reached a boiling point. Mexico slammed the door of Eden squarely in the face of the Anglo colonists. The ensuing prohibition of any North American immigration to Texas marked a crossroads in the conflict as capitalists once again saw their potential fortunes threatened. Although the door would not remain closed for long, the damage was irreparable. The colonists and Mexico were on a short train ride destined for war.

This Land is My Land

The façade of the benevolent colonist also played a critical role in narrating land-use disputes in Texas. In this instance, mythmakers stated that a dictatorial Mexican government had violated the land rights of the colonists. The concepts of private property in the United States were prevalent in this construction, stating that the Mexican government had no authority to restrict how the colonists used the land. Therefore, they were free to build their homes and grow their crops as they saw fit. Moreover, if they chose to convey their land to a family member or sell it outright, Mexico had no authority to intervene. It was from this narrative construction that the aggressive actions of the Anglo colonists were once again portrayed as self-defensive.

However, what mythmakers conveniently chose to leave out were the facts. First, the colonists were residing on land that Mexico had granted them. Furthermore, these grants came with specific restrictions, including the prohibition of certain crops. Mexican law also specifically forbade the conveyance of land grants to other parties, and since the colonists could not obtain title to the land until they had lived and worked on it for at least six years; they had no right to sell it. Additionally, Mexican law stated that all colonists were required to either be Catholic or convert to Catholicism. Finally, all colonists were required to swear allegiance to the Mexican government, promising to uphold the laws and the constitution of Mexico.

The dichotomy between the mythological narrative and Mexican law can be best understood by returning to Austin's colony. Austin's land grant request had been unique since it originated from his father's request as a dislocated inhabitant of Louisiana. Under Spanish law, this displacement entitled Moses Austin to relocate and apply for a land grant in a different Spanish territory. He chose Texas. However, shortly after a trip to that territory, he fell ill and passed away. Therefore, his son picked up the project and sought confirmation of his father's request. However, during that process, Mexico achieved its independence from Spain. Therefore, the newly independent Mexican government officially conveyed the grant to Moses' son in February of 1823. Immediately thereafter, Austin began to bring in colonists.

It would be another full year before Mexico published its 1824 Law of Colonization. Nonetheless, a review of Austin's letters demonstrates that he was keenly aware of the content of these upcoming laws. Moreover, he clearly expressed his intention to thwart such laws by bringing in as many families as he could before the government could finalize them. A perfect example of his intention was his decision to sell incoming colonists plots of land within his grant for the price of 12.5 cents per acre. It was a move so brazen that it even angered his fellow Anglo land petitioners. In order to protest his actions, they lodged a public complaint. At the heart of their accusation was the fact that Austin did not hold title to the land that he was selling.

In a lengthy letter to his colonists on June 5, 1824, Austin directly addressed the charges, denying their accuracy. In his defense, he claimed that the 12.5 cent per acre charge was a *fee* to cover the costs associated with his attempts to obtain title to the land. Most specifically to cover "The risks of property, of Life, of all, which I have exposed myself to."[59] Furthermore, he stated that he had informed Mexico of his intention to charge it. However, despite Austin's lengthy oration, what remains unclear is if he informed the colonists handing him 12.5 cents per acre that their money was not for the purchase of land, but rather the payment of a fee. Furthermore, Austin's letter did not address how he informed the colonists that despite paying said fee, they would not be

entitled to apply for title to the land that they were working for a minimum of six years. Nor did it specify how he informed them that during those six years, they would have no permanent rights to the land upon which they were building their homes and cultivating their crops. Finally, the letter did not speak to how he informed the colonists that Mexican law required them to practice Catholicism as well as swear allegiance to uphold the laws of Mexico.

Austin's contention, that he was not selling the land, but rather charging a fee is further contradicted in his July 17, 1823 letter to Colonel Charles Caldwell. In this letter Austin stated that his "business is all happily terminated and I shall immediately commence distributing the land."[60] He informed Caldwell that his grant was approved by the Sovereign Congress and the Supreme Executive Power, stating, "The smallest quantity of land which a family that *farms* and *raises stock*, both, will receive is one league square or five thousands yard square-the cost will be 12 1/2 cents per acre."[61] Austin then bolstered Caldwell's desire to secure families for his colony by highlighting its continued exclusivity, owing to the failure of the Federal Colonization Law in April of 1823. He closed the letter by underscoring his personal power within the Mexican government, boasting of his ability to increase the quantity of land as necessary for larger families.[62]

Austin's letter to Caldwell strongly suggests that he understood the 12.5 cents per acre to be a purchase cost rather than an administrative fee. We find additional support of this position in Austin's decision to send his business associate, A.G. Wavell, to London for the purpose of setting up a business venture to sell Texas land in England. When Wavell arrived in England, he wrote that he had been greeted with great enthusiasm for the venture. Although he sent Austin numerous requests for more information on the progress of the colony, the project was frustrated by Austin's failure to send Wavell the necessary documentation of his grant that demonstrated his right to sell the land. Finally, in July of 1824, Austin wrote that he was "heartily sick of the whole business and shall gain nothing by it but losses and fatigue."[63] He advised Wavell to stay far away from the business of colonization, "you blame me for not writing to you in London, I did write often by way

of Orleans, and if I had encouraged you to bring out goods to a large amt. perhaps you would have blamed me more. I have spent more in this dammed affair than it will ever be worth."[64]

Wavell's trip to England not only demonstrated Austin's intent to sell the land that Mexico had granted him, but it also signaled another emerging threat to the Texas territory; the creation of foreign land companies that sold Mexican land for which they held no title. Unencumbered by their lack of a legal right to sell granted land, investor groups purchased all or part of a particular grantee's land. Then they advertised its sale, conveying rights through scrip at a significant profit. The infamous Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company offers us an insight into this scheme.

Depending upon which published primary source one consults, the principal parties involved in the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company varies. In most instances, varying levels of participation by President Andrew Jackson, Lorenzo de Zavala, Antonio Meija, Secretary of War Lewis Cass, William Wharton, Sam Houston, and Branch T. Archer seems assured.[65] The same historical record is less oblique concerning those individuals who purchased the worthless scrip. In one instance, the involved party published his/her dissatisfaction in a work titled *Visit to Texas: Being the Journal of a Traveller through Those Parts Most Interesting to American Settlers* (1834). In this publication, the author recounted the discovery that the scrip he/she held had no value: "On examination of the subject, with the facts now before me, I found such was the situation of things, that I derived no advantage whatever from the payment of money I had made, having not a foot of land, nor any claim to offer superior to that of any other man who might come into Texas from a foreign country."[66] This unknown author then gave a near verbatim articulation of the Mexican Federal laws regarding colonization.

> I might easily obtain a quarter of a league of unappropriated land, on the condition of professing the Roman Catholic religion, becoming a citizen of the Republic of Mexico, and residing on the soil for six years, receiving the title from the government; but not otherwise; and this was a standing offer to any person who might choose to accept of it. In case of marriage, either before or after the contract, the amount was to be quadrupled. The government had never conferred on any

> individual or company the title to any extensive tract of land, or authority to stipulate for anything beyond or contrary to these conditions.[67]

The author of *Visit to Texas* accurately conveyed that under Mexican law, land companies had no power to sell scrip. Specifically, Article XII of the State decree provided that "The new colonists shall not transfer their property in mortmain."[68] Furthermore, Article 15 of the Federal decree stated that no one who received a grant could hold it while living outside of the territorial boundaries of the Mexican Republic.[69] Despite this clarity, the experiences related in *Visit to Texas* mirrored those of countless other individuals who had put their faith and money into the pockets of greedy capitalists.[70]

Tornel's essay forcefully condemned Lorenzo de Zavala's role in the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company. Not only did he highlight de Zavala's betrayal, but he also underscored the convergence of land speculation and the issue of slavery. Addressing the role of the land speculators in creating a human slave market upon the lands of Texas he said, "Mayor es aun el escándalo que dan al mundo civilizado los Estados-Unidos, con la conservación de la esclavitud, con sus fuertes conatos para sostenerla y propagarla cuando otras naciones se han puesto de acuerdo en el filantrópico fin de hacer cesar este azote é ignominia de la especie."[*71]

Over the course of the past 180 years, scholarly and popular works have either praised or criticized de Zavala's actions.[72] Rather than enter into that well-known debate, I have chosen to continue Tornel's effort to unmask the narrative of the benevolent colonist by examining the role of Samuel Houston in the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company. I have done this in response to the lack of scholarship regarding Houston's role in Texas prior to his participation in the Republic of Texas. This is a notable absence, since his actions not only angered Mexico, but also supported

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[*] Greater still is the outrage that the United States gives the world with the conservation of slavery, with its forceful attempts to sustain and propagate it when other nations have agreed to philanthropy in order to stop this disgrace of the human race.

internal criticisms against the actions of the U.S. government. An example of the latter is David Lee Child's *The Taking of Naboth's Vineyard, or, the History of the Texas Conspiracy* (1845). In this essay, Child pointed to a well-coordinated strategy to acquire Texas that combined commercial interests with those inside the U.S. government. According to Child, the leader of this effort was an obsessed President Andrew Jackson who was motivated by his belief that the United States obtained Texas from France via the Louisiana Purchase, and then surrendered it to Spain via the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty.

According to Child, the forced removal of Poinsett as U.S. Minister to Mexico effectively halted attempts to purchase Texas diplomatically. At that point, Jackson began to consider ways to fund a new approach. The idea was simple; foment a rebellion in Texas. One potential source of funds was his upcoming Indian Removal program (1829): "It was and is the general impression at Washington, that Jackson endeavored to give to Houston a contract for supplying rations to all the Indians, whom the government were preparing to migrate, and that this contract would have yielded to this royal favorite a profit of two to three millions of dollars."[73] Accordingly, the profits received through the overinflating of the bids would provide Houston with the necessary cash to fund a rebellion in Texas. The plan might have worked, had Mr. Stansberry of Ohio not exposed it on the floor of the House of Representatives in 1830. It was a revelation that cost Stansberry dearly. On a cold dark night in Washington, Houston gave Mr. Stansberry a beating, avoiding any serious consequences thanks to the intervention of his close friends President Jackson and Congressman James Polk. The bar of the House only gave Houston a reprimand, the President quickly pardoning his conviction in U.S. Circuit Court.[74]

Despite the failure to secure Indian ration contracts, the effort to raise funds continued. Shortly after his reprimand, Houston became involved in Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company. Dr. Robert Mayo spoke to Houston's role in *Political Sketches of Eight Years in Washington* (1839): "in the winter of 1829-'30 during the first session of Congress, under General Jackson's

administration, he repaired hither, as above mentioned, in Indian costume, and hence to New York, to mature plans of a CONSPIRACY against this same 'neighboring republic,' to make his arrangements to that effect, and negotiate for funds on Texas land securities or scrip, for the purpose of making conquest of that province?"[75] Houston's presence in New York, and his participation in fundraising for Texas land scrip, connects him to the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company through his association with James Prentiss. We can sketch the parameters of that relationship by examining Houston's published letters, compiled and edited by Eugene Barker and Amelia Williams in 1938.

The letters in this published collection contradict the mythological narrative of this son of Texas. In that story, mythmakers state that Houston's decision to join the Cherokee Nation was a necessary retreat from a difficult series of events in both his public and private life. However, in a letter to President Jackson, Houston rejected the suggestion that he remain with the Cherokees, telling the President, "that it would not be best for me to adopt the course."[76] Instead, he expressed his desire to serve "in some future political struggle between usurpation, and the rights of the people in wresting power from the hands of a corrupt Userper, and depositing it, where the spirit of the constitution, and will of the people would wish it placed."[77] Contextualized through his own letters, Houston's involvement in the Cherokee Nation seems to represent nothing more than one of many steps in a much larger ambition. The next would involve his relocation to Texas on behalf of James Prentiss.

On June 1, 1832, Houston entered into an agreement with Prentiss to sever as much land as he could from the Leftwich Grant. Since Houston was an original signatory, he was well positioned to successfully complete this task. Additionally, Prentiss instructed him to meet with Austin and any other Empresarios that he thought might be inclined to sell.[78] Regarding the terms of his salary, Prentiss told Houston to expect an amount proportional to the number of overall shares he

was able to obtain. However, Prentiss was clear to point out that the actual value of any portion would only be secured if Texas became part of the United States.[79]

Therefore, once again, we support Tornel's assertion of the façade of the benevolent colonist. Rather than a wayward son who wandered into Texas, found the colonists oppressed by a barbaric Mexican government, and then took the reins of leadership to fight for liberty and freedom, Samuel Houston, a seated member of the U.S. House of Representatives, openly violated the neutrality of the United States when he petitioned the Mexican government for a land grant in 1822. After an unsuccessful attempt to secure ration contracts to fund a rebellion, this former Governor and intimate of President Jackson, arrived in Texas with a clear purpose; to illegally purchase as much land as he could on behalf of a New York land broker. Moreover, his compensation would be directly connected to speculative values that could only be obtained when Texas became part of the United States.

The Footsteps of Tyranny

The final portion of Tornel's essay spoke to the October 9, 1835 attack at Goliad. A few weeks after that event, Anglo colonists met and declared that their rebellion was in defense of the 1824 Constitution. Tornel asserted that this was yet another façade to buy time and establish a governing body that would declare independence.[80] Similar to his previous assertions, this one was not baseless. However, in order to contextualize it, we must turn the clock back two years and engage Austin's own account of his face-to-face encounter with Mexican Vice-President Farías.

In May 1833, López de Santa Anna was elected President of Mexico. He named a fellow Veracruz native, Valentin Gómez Farías, as his Vice President. The following year, on May 25, 1834, Santa Anna sought to repeal liberal reforms through the publication of his Plan of Cuernavaca. In general, scholarly and popular works have stated that this was a turning point in the Texas/Mexican conflict, one that led the colonists to dawn the flag of freedom in defense of the

1824 Constitution. However, such a statement merely reproduces the façade of the benevolent colonist.

What their narrative suppressed was the September of 1833 meeting between Austin and Mexican Vice-President Farías where Austin threatened outright rebellion. The details of that encounter appeared in his October 23, 1833 letter to his brother-in-law, James F. Perry: "I told the vice President the other day that Texas must be made a state by the Govt. or she would make herself one. This he took as a threat and became very much enraged."[81] Therefore, Austin immediately tried to defuse the situation by clarifying his statement, saying it was not intended to be a threat of actual action. He then told Perry that the effort seemed to work, although he maintained that he had said nothing different than what he had repeatedly told other Mexican officials: "The fact is that this govt. ought to make a state of Texas, or transfer her to the United States without delay and there is some probability at this time that one or the other will be done."[82]

A few days after this tense encounter, on October 2, Austin told Perry that he had written a letter to the Ayuntamiento of Bexar. In that letter, he called for the colonists to declare a local government and separate from the Mexican Republic.[83] Although scholarly or popular works do mention Austin's letter to Bexar, they do so in absence of Austin's verbal threat to Farías. Divorcing one from the other significantly diminishes the significance of these threats. For when we combine the October 2 letter with Austin's face to face encounter with the Vice President, we cannot feign surprise that once Bexar sent word of the letter's content to Mexico City, Farías ordered Austin's immediate arrest.

Austin was arrested when he attempted to leave Mexico, and spent the next two years in prison, albeit in relatively comfortable circumstances. He was released in 1835 as part of a larger amnesty policy decision. When he returned to Texas, he took command of a military regiment. A few days after the battle at Goliad, Austin participated in the third Texas consultation. At that November 7, 1835 meeting, the colonists considered declaring Texas independent from Mexico.

However, many individuals continued to have concerns regarding the group's lack of money and troops. Therefore, they postponed the declaration and proclaimed their allegiance to the restoration of the 1824 Mexican Constitution.

The events of the subsequent December 5, 1835 meeting support Tornel's assertion that the colonist's actions were a façade in order to buy them time to secure support for their cause. At that meeting, the rebel colonists elected three commissioners, Stephen Austin, Branch T. Archer, and William H. Wharton to immediately travel to Washington City, stopping along the way to raise support for the Texas cause. Once they reached their destination, they were told to obtain assurances of support if the rebel colonists declared their independence. In particular, they needed to obtain assurances that the U.S. government would recognize them as an independent nation, and immediately move to annex Texas.[84]

The three did not have to travel far in search of money, New Orleans turning out to be a very lucrative stop. On January 12, 1836, the commissioners obtained a $1,000,000 loan. Recalling the professed neutrality of the U.S. government, this loan document stands as clear evidence that capitalists continued to disregard that policy. The document itself named the commissioners as the legal representatives of the Texas government in "the contracting of a Loan in the United States of America of ONE MILLION OF DOLLARS, to be applied and appropriated to the use and benefit of the Government of Texas, a copy of which commission is annexed in the margin hereof for reference."[85] According to Article 3, repayment was expected in the form of land scrip valued at .50 cents per acre.[86] That the scrip the commissioners carried was for land within the expressed sovereign territory of Mexico was of no concern to these bankers.

As Austin, Archer and Wharton worked their way across the United States they made multiple speeches and distributed pamphlets that brought the message of the Texas rebellion to the masses. One such pamphlet was titled *Liberty Triumphing over Tyranny and Preistcraft* published in Nashville in 1836. This particular publication is interesting since its front piece captured the

entirety of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. Comparing the Texas rebellion to a battle between Hercules and the multi-headed Hydra, the picture showed the two locked in battle, flanked on both sides by The Seal of the United States. The contents of the pamphlet provided specific details regarding the terms of service for volunteers wishing to join the Texas armed forces. In section four, volunteers were promised "the same pay, rations, and clothing, which was allowed by the U.S. government during their last war with Great Britain."[87] In section five, they received additional incentives, such as "one mile square, or six hundred and forty acres of land."[88]

The power and pervasiveness of this particular pamphlet, and its pictorial depiction of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican, cannot be underestimated. It was republished throughout various States, each version maintaining the title and illustration while revising the written portion to fit local particulars. However, what is most remarkable is its persistence into the 21st century. During a 2013 trip to Conner Prairie, an interactive historical park located in Fishers, Indiana, I encountered a version of this pamphlet attached to the door of a sundry shop. The title and illustration were unchanged and the narrative was essentially the same with only minor changes to the names of military commanders and locations.

Thus, we pause to consider the weight and nature of the footprints left by Austin, Archer, and Wharton while in the United States. Keeping in mind that the colonists had verbally claimed their defense of the 1824 Constitution, what we have encountered is a series of actions that demonstrated the contrary. In particular, they promised the repayment of a million dollar loan with Mexican land for which they held no title. Additionally, they travelled throughout the United States actively recruiting volunteers in order to build an army for their rebellion. Thus, in the final analysis, we reject the façade of the benevolent colonist and concur with Tornel, that the only footprints of tyranny left upon the soils of Texas were those made by the Anglo colonists and their supporters.

Conclusion

Mythmakers created a story that articulated the abuses of the Mexican government towards the benevolent Texas colonists, forcing them to rise up and fight for freedom against tyranny. The embodiment of that narrative was present in Austin's speech to an audience in Louisville Kentucky the day after the final siege of the Alamo. Stating that the Founding Fathers had only resisted a concept of oppression in their battle with Great Britain, Austin said that the colonists were facing the realities of oppression in a country they had "redeemed from the wilderness, and conquered without any aid or protection whatever from the Mexican government, (for we never received any), and which is clearly ours." [89] He continued that those efforts conveyed the colonist's rights to claim Texas. In this context, he focused on the value of Texas: "We have explored and pioneered it, developed its resources, made it known to the world, and given to it a high and rapidly increasing value. The federal republic of Mexico had a *constitutional* right to participate *generally* in this value, but it had not, and cannot have any other; and this one has evidently been forfeited and destroyed by unconstitutional acts and usurpation, and by the total dissolution of the social compact."[90] Through this narrative, Austin reproduced the immutable deficiencies of Mexico as a nation, articulating its failure to perform in a manner consistent with the expectations of the Texas colonists.

However, this fragment of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican cannot withstand Mexico's response.[91] For as we have seen, a critical examination of Tornel's essay has provided a powerful counter narrative by restoring the complexities obscured by the façade of the benevolent colonist. In doing so, Tornel illuminated the dark and barren desert of Anglo honor, opening the door for us to contemplate how the U.S. government would have reacted if it had been on the receiving end of the same type of actions. For one can only image the sound that would have bellowed from the belly of Washington D.C. had the Confederate States of America sent a group commissioners to Mexico in search of loans to support the confederate cause, securing the repayment of said loans

with the titles to lands within the territorial boundaries of the Northern states. One could only imagine that the echo might have sounded something like this: "El decreto del congreso para la continuacion vigorosa de la guerra á Tejas, no es mas que la espresion de un deber nacional. Los intereses comprometidos, son nada menos que nuestra ecsistencia política, nuestro honor jamas mancillado en viente y siete años de combates, es respeto que solamente ganan y conservan las naciones, cuando sostienen con dignidad y energia sus derechos."[*92]

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[1] William H. Wharton, *Address of the Honorable WM. H. Wharton (4/26/1836 in New York) and the Honorable Stephen F. Austin (3/7/1836 in Louisville Kentucky) Regarding the Current Situation in Texas* (New York: W.H. Colyer, 1836), 40-1.

[2] Will Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna: The Writer and the Caudillo, Mexico 1795-1853* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), accessed September 15, 2012, ProQuest ebrary.

[3] Carlos Bosch García, ed, *Documentos de la relación de México con los Estados Unidos, 31 de diciembre de 1829 - 29 de mayo de 1836: II. Butler en persecución de la provincia de Texas* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1983), 189-190.

[4] José María Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas y los Estados Unidos de América en sus relaciones con la República Mexicana* (Mexico: Impr. Ignacio Cumplido, 1837), PDF e-book. Sabin Americana 1500-1926, 3.

[5] Ibid., 4.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Luis de Onís, *Memoria sobre las negociaciones entre España y Los Estados-Unidos de América que dieron motivo al tratado de 1819* (Madrid: Imprenta de D.M. de Burgos, 1820), PDF e-book, HathiTrust Digital Library.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Luis de Onís, [Verus, pseud.], *Observations on the Existing Differences between the Government of the United States and Spain* (Philadelphia, 1817), 48-50.

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[*] The decree of the [Mexican] congress to vigorously continue the war with Texas is nothing more than the expression of a national obligation. Committed interests are nothing less than our political existence, our honor, never stained in twenty-seven years of combat. It is the respect that nations only gain and conserve when they maintain, with dignity and energy, their rights.

[10] Onis, *Memoria*, 83-86.

[11] Eusebio Gomez de la Puente, ed, *La diplomacia Mexicana* (Mexico: Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, 1913), PDF e-book, HathiTrust Digital Library, 103.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas*, 7.

[14] Thomas Jefferson, *France and Spain - Louisiana. October 21, 1803*, 7th Cong., 2d sess., 1802-1803, For.rel.182.ASP02, accessed October 17, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional.

[15] Madison to Livingston, 1 May 1802, 516.

[16] Peter J. Kastor, *The Louisiana Purchase: Emergence of an America Nation* (Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2002).

[17] Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas*, 7. The topic of the Haitian Revolution is explored in multiple works including Philippe R. Girard, *The Slaves Who Defeated Napoleon Toussaint Louverture and the Haitian War of Independence, 1801-1804* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2011).

[18] Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas*, 8- 9.

[19] Thomas Jefferson, *Message of President Jefferson. State of the Union Address*, October 17, 1803, 8th Cong., 1st sess., 1803-1804, For.rel.21.ASP01, 61, accessed October 17, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional.

[20] "Preliminary and Secret Treaty between the French Republic and His Catholic Majesty the King of Spain, concerning the Aggrandizement of His Royal Highness the Infant Duke of Parma in Italy and the Retrocession of Louisiana," 1 October 1800, Avalon Project, accessed June 1, 2014, avalon.law.yale.edu/19th _century/ildefens.asp.

[21] David Gracy, *Moses Austin: His Life* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1987), 40-65.

[22] Austin to Gallatin, August 1806 (?), in Moses Austin and Stephen Austin, *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1919 Vol II; The Austin Papers Part 1& 2*, edited by Eugene C. Barker (Washington: Government Printing Office,1924), 118-9.

[23] Ibid. The same issues that Moses Austin complained about in this letter were later repeated by landowners in the ceded territory following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

[24] Gracy, *Moses Austin*, 158.

[25] Ibid., 159-72.

[26] Ibid., 172-9.

[27] Ibid.

[28] James Monroe, *Message from the President of the United States at the Commencement of the Second Session of the Fifteenth Congress*, November 16, 1818, 15th Cong., 2d sess., 1818-1819, 14.S.doc.1.Pr5.1/1:818, 4, accessed October 17, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional.

[29] It is important to note that General Andrew Jackson did not initially act based upon direct orders from President Monroe, but rather took action after his letter suggesting a proper course of action went unaddressed. His actions so enraged the Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, the Speaker of the House Henry Clay, and the Secretary of Treasury William Crawford that they demanded Jackson's court martial. See Alexander Saxton, *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic. Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (London, New York: Verso 1990), 39. This is an important notation, in particular with regards to how Jackson, in the role of President, would deal with General Gaines and his expressed desire to invade Mexican sovereign territory in an effort to grab Texas. (See Chapter 2)

[30] Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas*, 10.

[31] Ibid., 17-19.

[32] Ibid., 21.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid., 10-11.

[35] *Memorial que various ciudadanos de los Estados-Unidos de America presentan al gobierno independiented de Mexico* (Mexico: Oficina de D. Alegandro Valdes, impr. De Camara del Imperio, 1822), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926, 4-5.

[36] Ibid., 6.

[37] See Carlos Bosch García, *Documentos de la relación de México con los Estados Unidos, noviembre de 1824-diciembre de 1829: I. El mester político de Poinsett* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1983).

[38] Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas*, 25-6.

[39] Austin to J.E.B. Austin, 13 June 1823, in Austin, *Annual Report 1919*, 671.

[40] Mrs. Emily Perry to J.E.B. Austin, 10 April 1825, 1073.

[41] Austin to Mary Austin Holley, 19 July 1831, in Stephen Austin, *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the year 1922 Vol II; The Austin Papers*, edited by Eugene C. Barker (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1928), 676.

[42] Austin to Mary Austin Holley, 17 November 1831, 705.

[43] Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas*, 25.

[44] Ibid., 27-41.

[45] Ibid., 41.

[46] James A.E. Phelps to Austin, 16 January 1825, in Austin, *Annual Report 1919*, 1020.

[47] Ibid.

[48] "Esclavos-Cuarteronas-Irlandeses," in *Revista científica y literaria de Méjico, Tomo I* (Mexico: Redactores del Museo Mejicano, 1845), 294-5.

[49] Ibid., 295.

[50] Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas*, 45.

[51] Mexico, Legislación Mexicana: *Ó, colección completa de las disposiciones legislativas expedidas desde la independencia de la república* (Mexico: Dublán y Lozano, 1876), PDF e-book, HathiTrust Digital Library, 710.

[52] A variety of letters on this topic appear in Austin, *Annual Report 1919*, 1170-1180.

[53] Petition Concerning Slavery, 827-8. Barker notes that this piece was an original draft and stated that the Spanish translation, in Austin's hand, contained a closing paragraph that was more strongly worded. The citations contained herein are from the opening paragraphs.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Mexico, *Legislación*, 712.

[56] See Austin, *Annual Report 1919.*

[57] Ibid., 869-70.

[58] Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas,* 42-4.

[59] Austin, *Annual Report* 1919, 811.

[60] Austin to Caldwell, 17 July 1823, 673.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Austin to A.G. Wavell, July 1824 (?), 869.

[64] Ibid.

[65] *Address to the Reader of the Documents Relating to the Galveston Bay & Texas Land Company Which Are Contained in the Appendix* (New York: G.F. Hopkins & Son, 1831), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926.

[66] *Visit to Texas: Being the Journal of a Traveller through Those Parts Most Interesting to American Settlers, A* [1837] (New York: Goodrich & Wiley, 1962), 53. It is important to note that by 1834, the April 6, 1830 law prohibiting Anglo immigration had been overturned.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Coahuila and Texas (Mexico), *Ley de colonización* (Saltillo: Imprenta del Gobierno a cargo del C.J.M.P.S., 1825), 3.

[69] Mexico, *Legislación*, 712.

[70] The experiences reflected in *Visit to Texas* were not unique to immigrants from the United States As Wavell's trip to London at Austin's behest demonstrated, London, and by extension Europe, was seen as a prime target for securing land speculation sales. In response to that effort is Richard Hartnel's T*exas and California Correspondence through the "Times" Newspaper of William Kennedy & Nicolas Carte, Esquires and Richard Hartnel, Showing Danger of Emigrating to Texas and Superior Advantages of British Colonies* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co, 1841), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926. In this work, Hartnel presents a series of letters that restore the complexity of Anglo immigration to Texas. Of particular interest is his emphasis on the situation between England, the United States, and the Republic of Texas. Hartnel furthered his criticism in *Texas and Mexico, a Few Hints to the Creditors of Mexico, Who Hold Her Active and Deferred Bonds and Who Consented to the Conversion of 1837, in the Faith of 45,000,000 Acres of Land Pledged by Mexico in Texas* (London: Smith, Elder and Co, 1841), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926. The authorship that appears on the pamphlet is "A Mexican Merchant" bookended by Freemason symbols. In this piece, Hartnel denounced the Texas rebellion as an action incited by land companies who were seeking profit, strongly arguing that the original Anglo colonists had no complaint against Mexico and were content in their arrangements.

[71] Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas*, 47.

[72] An exceptionally balanced and interesting examination of de Zavala appears in Manuel Saldívar, *Gringos a la Vista: Visión sobre Estados Unidos de América en la crónica Mexicana: una análisis ideológico* (Phoenix: Editorial Orbis Press, 2001), 49-78.

[73] David Lee Child, *The Taking of Naboth's Vineyard, or History of the Texas Conspiracy* (New York: S. W. Benedict & Co, 1845), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926, 6. Child's accusations are not singular. See Houston to Van Fossen, 4 April 1830, in Amelia W. Williams and Eugene C. Barker, eds, *The Writings of Sam Houston 1813-1863: Volume I 1813-1836* (Austin: The University of Texas Press 1938), 148. In addition to the letter itself, Barker and Williams provide a significant amount of additional information in a footnote, leaving no doubt as to Houston's active participation. The editors summarize their comments by stating that "All these facts and others relative to these contracts for rations were discussed fully in the Congressional investigation of the charges of fraud and corruption, made against Houston and Eaton." (149).

[74] Ibid.

[75] Robert Mayo, M.D., *Political Sketches of Eight Years in Washington; in Four Parts with Annotations to Each* (Baltimore: Fielding Lucas, Jr., 1839), PDF e-book, HathiTrust Digital Library, 118.

[76] Houston to Andrew Jackson, 19 September, 1829, in Williams and Barker, *The Writings of Sam Houston*, 141-2.

[77] Ibid., 142.

[78] Agreement between Houston and Prentiss, 1 June 1832, 229.

[79] Prentiss to Houston, 4 June 1832, 232.

[80] Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas*, 60-1.

[81] Austin to James F. Perry, 23 October 1833, in Austin, *Annual Report 1922*, 1008.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid.

[84] See George P. Garrison, ed, *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1907: Vol. II; Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908).

[85] "Text of an Agreement for a $200,000 8 Percent Loan Made by Archer, Wharton, Austin, January 11, 1836," Focus on Texas History: Colonization through Annexation, accessed June 1, 2014, www.cah.utexas.edu/texashistory/annex/view.php?wrkid=txu-crra-bs-01111836-1233.

[86] Ibid.

[87] *Liberty Triumphing over Tyranny and* Priestcraft, December 5, 1835, accessed June 1, 2014, library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/broadsides_bdst013039.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Wharton, *Address*, 41.

[90] Ibid.

[91] It is important to keep in mind that I have only addressed a few of the numerous events that Mexico's response addressed. It is hoped that future scholarship will extend this present study to include the Anahuac conflicts, George Fisher's expedition, the 1826 Fredonia Rebellion, the Coahuila Land Scandal involving Austin's secretary Samuel M. Williams, and the numerous filibusters lead by a variety of interested individuals to name but a few.

[92] Tornel y Mendivil, *Tejas*, 89.

CHAPTER 2

The Chromatics of Neutrality: Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza Reveals the Duplicity of U.S. Policy

The narratives that had supported both the façade of the benevolent colonist and the neutrality of the United States began to collapse as events unfolded between October 1835 and October 1836. As a result, mythmakers needed to renovate their stories. Their first step was to emphasize the isolation of the Anglo colonists in the face of Mexican aggression. They accomplished this by focusing on only two events; the declaration of independence of the Republic of Texas on March 2, 1836, and the final siege of the Alamo four days later. In this manner, they rallied support for the colonists by enraging the sensibilities of the public at large. However, this emphasis had a secondary purpose. It functioned to obscure the direct involvement of the U.S. government in the rebellion by distracting the public's attention away from its participation. The resulting story transformed the Anglo colonists into icons of bravery and sacrifice fighting against an evil and savage Mexico. The U.S. government, so the story went, was a neutral and disinterested party that remained on the sidelines while Mexico sought to reclaim its authority over the region.

Not surprisingly, Mexico rejected this renovated myth. In response, writers asserted that the Anglo colonists were far from isolated in their efforts. In particular, they asserted that the U.S. government had manufactured a rebellion in Texas as a means to secure its own territorial ambitions. Furthermore, they contended that officials within that government had used that façade of neutrality to shield their own personal participation. One writer, Mexico's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza, exposed the palimpsest of this deception in his work titled *Correspondencia que ha mediado entre la legación extraordinaria de México y el departamento de estado de los Estados Unidos sobre el paso del Sabina por las tropas que mandaba el General Gaines* (1836).

Gorostiza wrote and compiled *Correspondencia* shortly after he resigned his post in protest to the presence of U.S. troops on Mexican soil. The format he chose was interesting. He began with an essay that chronicled the Texas dispute from de La Salle's voyage through a series of events that I shall refer to as the Gaines Affair. To that, he added a significant number of both published and unpublished governmental documents. In his essay, Gorostiza stated that those documents supported his assertion that the U.S. government was providing direct aid to the Texas rebels. Although he only sent his completed work to a select group of individuals, *Correspondencia* arrived at a publishing house in Philadelphia where it was mass-produced and distributed.

The content of *Correspondencia* represented a serious threat to mythmaker's narratives of neutrality. Moreover, its publication was not contained to the United States. In 1837, a translation appeared in France. Later that same year, José M.F. de Lara republished Gorostiza's original work in Mexico, adding an essay that addressed the diplomatic fallout from both the Gaines Affair and Gorostiza's resignation. Therefore, in order to protect their narrative of neutrality, mythmakers attempted to silence Gorostiza's pamphlet. One such effort was William Augustus Weaver, *An Examination and Review of a Pamphlet Printed and Secretly Circulated by M.E. Gorostiza: Late Envoy Extraordinary from Mexico, Previous to His Departure from the United States, and by Him Entitled "Correspondence between the Legation Extraordinary of Mexico and the Department of State of the United States, Respecting The passage of the Sabine, by the Troops under the Command of General Gaines* (1837). In this work, Weaver discredited Gorostiza's essay by portraying him as a "dupe"[1] and questioning his competence to perform the duties of a foreign Minister.[2] Moreover, he dismissed the claim that Texas was part of Mexico's sovereign territory, calling it "grossly absurd."[3] The passage of time has shown that the effort to silence Gorostiza was largely successful. Not only have scholarly and popular works omitted references to *Correspondencia* and Gorostiza's tenure as Minister, but they have also removed the events that led to his resignation.

Fortunately, *Correspondencia* remains available in the published public record. [4] When we engage its pages, we find that Gorostiza provided documentation of a coordinated effort on the part of the U.S. government to seize Texas. The plan he outlined had three primary steps. First, the U.S. government and its capitalist backers sought to provide financial and moral support to U.S. citizens sent to Texas to incite a rebellion. Secondly, it strategically placed a large military force along the United States/Mexican border. The final step involved recruiting volunteers and state militia to join the Anglo rebels in their armed conflict. By exposing and then unifying the seemingly disparate and isolated parts of this coordinated plan, Gorostiza resisted the façade of neutrality and exposed the duplicity of U.S. policy. Moreover, his disclosure of the events surrounding the Gaines Affair significantly disrupted the primary objective of that plan, the immediate annexation of Texas to the United States.

The eloquence of Gorostiza's writing in *Correspondencia* reflected his life as a dramatist, diplomat, and battlefield soldier. Born in Veracruz in 1789, Gorostiza moved to Spain at the age of four. In 1803, he joined the Spanish Guard where he rose to the rank of Lt. Coronel. However, while defending his adopted country against Napoleon's invasion, he was severely injured. These injuries would force him to depart from the military, ushering in an era of literary pursuits. As a writer, he produced plays such as *Tal para cual* (1820), *Las costumbres de Antafio* (1820), and *Don Dieguito* (1820). His writing, however, would be interrupted when Ferdinand VII regained his power in Spain and banished Gorostiza for his liberal views. As a result, he traveled throughout Europe and made acquaintances that would eventually result in his service within the diplomatic sphere.[5]

Gorostiza's first assignment came in 1824 as Mexico's private agent to Holland. He obtained this post after meeting José Mariano de Michelena, Mexico's Minister to Great Britain. Six years later, he was named Mexico's Minister to London, a role that he would serve in for the next three years. In 1833, he returned to Mexico and was named Mexico's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister

Plenipotentiary to the United States less than two years later. Gorostiza's resignation of that post demonstrated his deep commitment to the sovereignty of the Mexican nacíon, a commitment that led him to once again to stand upon the battlefield. At the age of 59, he fought in defense of Mexico City as the troops of General Winfield Scott advanced towards Churubusco.[6]

A Biased Diplomacy

Reading *Correspondencia* is similar to opening a road map where we find many possible paths to a variety of destinations. Along the way, we can focus on particular aspects of the scenery by engaging other published primary sources. In this manner, Gorostiza's discussion of the unwillingness of the U.S. government to accept the borders as conveyed in the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty is further enriched by considering the published correspondence of the the United States' first Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Mexico, Joel R. Poinsett.

When we engage that record, we learn that Mexico consistently rejected any attempt to alter the language of the 1819 treaty. Despite that resistance, the U.S. government continued to pursue its ambition. In his role as Minister, Poinsett attempted to convince Mexico to acquiesce to the demands of the United States in a unique manner, utilizing the tools of rhetoric to invoke Mexican national pride. He argued that rather than maintain a border that had been satisfactory to the Spanish crown, an entity that had oppressed Mexico for more than 300 years, the newly independent nation should negotiate a more advantageous frontier.[7] It was a clever attempt that failed to convince Mexican officials. Left with no other option, Poinsett verbally agreed to uphold the 1819 treaty; however, he did not abandon his attempts to persuade Mexico to the contrary.

Such persistence was in line with his instructions from Secretary of State Henry Clay. In that directive, Clay had conveyed five primary goals. The first was to obtain Mexico's agreement to move the 1819 border from the Sabine west to the Río Bravo del Norte. The second objective was to secure an accord for the establishment of a trade road between western Missouri and Santa Fe. The third was to prevent Mexico's participation in Simon Bolivar's mission to commercially align

Latin America. In particular, the U.S. government did not want Mexico to establish trade relations with Great Britain. Related to that goal was the fourth objective, to secure favorable terms of commerce between the United States and Mexico without granting Mexico a favored nation status. Finally, Poinsett was instructed to prevent Mexico from establishing a monarchial form of government.

Clay offered Poinsett some tactical advice concerning the first objective: "The government of Mexico may have a motive for such an alteration of the line as is here proposed, in the fact that it would have the effect of placing the city of Mexico nearer the center of its territories."[8] He added that such a shift would place the largest part of the Comanche tribes on the U.S. side of the border to prevent "hostilities and depredations upon the territories and people, whether Indians or otherwise of Mexico."[9]

In this advice, Clay reproduced the immutable deficiencies of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. Specifically, he asserted the superiority of the United States over Mexico concerning territorial management by implying that the U.S. government was more apt in dealing with Indigenous peoples. Moreover, he discredited the ability of Mexico to manage the totality of its national territory. By moving the border west to the Río Bravo del Norte, the distance to Mexico City would decrease. However, the distance to Washington City would correspondingly increase. Therefore, Clay's comments inferred that such an expansion presented no difficulty for the superior government of the United States.

Clay's directive to Poinsett also addressed the ramifications of failing to secure the westward movement of the boundary. Under those circumstances, Poinsett was instructed to secure, at all costs, "the insertion of an article in the treaty, by which each party shall undertake to restrain the Indians residing within his territories from committing hostilities upon the people, Indians, or territories of the other."[10] This clause was a critical factor in executing the larger plan of the U.S. government, since it would convey a legal right to invade Mexico based upon the

movements and actions of Indigenous peoples. In this manner, it could establish a legal foundation for invasion that the U.S. government had lacked when President Monroe invaded Spanish Florida in 1818.

Despite his attempts, Poinsett failed to negotiate the westward movement of Mexico's boundary. Moreover, the clause regulating the movement of Indigenous peoples stalled the treaty's ratification in the Mexican Congress until 1832.[11] In the meantime, Poinsett's interference in Mexico's political elections created additional tension between the two nations and by the time President Andrew Jackson took office in March of 1829, the Mexican government was demanding Poinsett's immediate removal.[12] Although Jackson publically supported the Minister, privately he acknowledged the failure of his mission. Therefore, he selected a fellow veteran of the War of 1812, Colonel Anthony Butler of Russellville Kentucky, to replace him.[13] Although scholarly and popular works do not dispute that Poinsett's actions warranted his dismissal, what they fail to engage is why Jackson chose Butler as his replacement. This is a critical point, since Jackson did not make his decision based on improving relations between the two nations, but rather as a means to fulfill his own personal obsession of regaining Texas.

Jackson's obsession was fueled by his belief that Texas was part of Louisiana at the time the United States purchased the territory from France. As a follower of the de La Salle argument, Jackson believed that France had been in possession of Texas since de La Salle's arrival at Matagorda Bay in 1684. Therefore, in agreeing to the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty, the U.S. government had ceded Texas to Spain. His commitment to recuperating it was unwavering, and he worked tirelessly to build a variety of intimate relationships and alliances that could one day unite into an effective strategy to acquire Texas.[14] The office of President gave him the only thing that he lacked, the power to implement his plan.[15] Configured in this light, the assignment of Butler to the

post of Minister allowed Jackson to effectively harness the power of the Presidency by issuing inflexible instructions concerning the acquisition of Texas.[16]

However, by the time Butler arrived in Mexico, this inflexibility proved problematic. The treaty that Poinsett had previously negotiated, which did not incorporate Texas, was in its final stages of approval in the Mexican Congress. Nonetheless, Butler still tried to convince Mexico to bend to the wishes of the United States. Like Poinsett before him, he failed. He concluded that the U.S. government needed to adopt a different strategy as he told Jackson in a May 25, 1831 letter. Responding to the President's frustration over a lack of progress, Butler said that he felt "convinced that it has become necessary to make these people understand that they are of much less importance to us than they suppose."[17] What that statement ignored was the impact of Mexico's aversion to his appointment in the first place.

Mexican officials had felt that Butler's landholdings in Texas created a conflict of interest that threatened his legitimacy. Although scholarly and popular works obscure Butler's direct and specific involvement in the Texas rebellion, one fact is undisputable; during his tenure as Minister to Mexico, Butler did make numerous trips to Texas. One way that we can trace his involvement is through his contentious relationship with Stephen Austin. At the center of their dispute was a mutual suspicion; Butler believed that Austin was an impediment to his goals in Texas and Austin was convinced that Butler was intentionally interfering in *his* colony.[18]

Butler's opinion concerning Austin was best expressed in a July 13, 1834 letter to the U.S. State Department in which he refused the request to intercede on behalf of an imprisoned Austin. He stated that Austin did "not merit either sympathy or assistance from our Government: He is unquestionably one of the bitterest foes to our Government and people that is to be found in Mexico."[19] Butler then placed the blame for his own failure to successfully negotiate a new boundary squarely on his shoulders: "I am very sure that he was the principal cause of my being

defeated in the last effort made to obtain a *cession of Texas* [cifrado], and of the manner in which he speaks of our people our manners habits and institutions of Government."[20]

Correspondingly, Austin was convinced that Butler sought to interfere with the success of his colony. In a letter to Samuel May Williams in May of 1835, Austin left no doubt as to his opinion: "Toney [Anthony Butler] left for the United States on the 29 ult. and Almonte on the 30th - I have never in all my life known so bad, and base a man as Butler - At the time he wrote the OPQ letters he was my enemy, and yet he wrote them as tho they came from a friend of mine, and consequently they were very well calculated to rouse the people of Texas into rebellion, and also to throw suspicion on me and perpetuate my imprisonment."[21]

From our discussion in the previous chapter we know that Austin's belief that Butler caused his arrest has little credibility when we recall his threat to Vice President Farías and his incendiary letter to Bexar. Nonetheless, his reference to the OPQ letters does enlighten our understanding of Butler's actions in Texas. Appearing in J.M. Winterbotham's collection published in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (1924), the so-called OPQ letters are a series of vile and odious letters written by an anonymous author named "O.P.Q." Both Austin and Juan Nepomuceno Almonte were convinced that their authorship belonged to Butler. The first of these letters is dated January 28, 1834 and is written to Señor Don B.T.A. [Branch T. Archer]. In its 1924 republished form, the editor placed a footnote explaining that it was found in the Archives of Department of Fomento, Mexico accompanied by a letter dated August 4, 1834 that was addressed to Almonte. This second letter was signed G.H.I. or G.H.S and said that the attached OPQ letter was written by Butler, since the "violence of expression" could only belong to him.[22]

The contents of the first letter leave no doubt that it sought to incite the Anglo colonists to rebel. It described Austin's imprisonment in Mexico as more plush confinement than penalty. Furthermore, the author characterized Almonte's trip to Texas as a spy mission, seeking to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of the colonists. In responding to why Mexico would send a

spy to Texas, O.P.Q. stated, "Because it is not the intention of this government, and has never been its intention, that you should be anything but slaves, and at the least appearance of resistance to devastate the country and expel or kill whoever has the hardihood to offer resistance."[23]

Now, if we accept Butler as the author of this passage, what we find is the U.S. Minister to Mexico playing a duplicitous role. On the one hand, he is a diplomatic representative of the U.S. government professing a policy of neutrality. On the other, he is a financially interested individual attempting to affect the trajectory of events in such a way as to enhance the profitability of his own land holdings. Although notable and worthy of further investigation, both the authorship of the OPQ letters and the nature of the contentious relationship between Austin and Butler pale in comparison to the hypocrisy of Butler's so-called diplomacy in the face of his active involvement in Texas.

For example, it does not require a significant effort to imagine what went through the mind of Lucas Alamán as Butler articulated the U.S. position regarding Texas during their July 1832 conference. Especially since Alamán was aware that Butler had just returned from a trip to San Felipe "to settle his private business with Whitesides and others."[24] Published primary sources show that Butler's report of that conference underscored Mexico's insistence that the U.S. government respect the terms of the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty. In an attempt to overcome the impasse, Butler informed Alamán that Mexico's continued refusal to sell Texas placed the United States in a difficult situation. Since the majority of the inhabitants of the Texas territory were not Mexicans, "it would leave entirely disembarrassed a portion of territory now in the occupation of our citizens."[25] He continued that in the face of such circumstances "a novel important and doubtful question would be presented, viz: whether the General government of the United States possessed the power of transferring any portion of the citizens of the United States to a foreign government without their consent."[26] Butler concluded his report by stating that under no circumstances would the inhabitants of Texas agree to give up their property: "unless the Mexican

government consented to make ample compensation for the improvements made and money expended by the settlers on the land they had purchased and occupied."[27]

Alamán must have seen this argument as nothing short of bizarre. Certainly Butler did not expect him to set aside the fact that the colonists came to Texas of their own free will and swore allegiance to the Mexican nation. Ergo, in the eyes of Mexico, they were citizens of that nation, dissolving any question as to the transferring of their rights without their consent. Furthermore, since the colonists were occupying land granted to them under specific conditions, the selling and purchasing of said land specifically prohibited by law, there could be no question as to compensation for improvements. Mired in the same hypocritical discourse of the previous two decades, Alamán knew that Butler's argument perfectly reproduced the previous warnings of both Terán and Tornel. If Mexico continued to resist the wishes of the U.S. government, it would claim the colonists as citizens, file indemnification claims on their behalf, and then force Mexico to sell Texas as payment for those claims.

Threatening Mexican Sovereignty

Despite such audacious attempts to secure Texas, Mexico stood resilient. However, it knew that such resilience would come at a price. Thus, when the U.S. government failed to achieve its ambitions through diplomatic channels, Mexican officials were not surprised that it employed an alternative strategy. With public support for the Anglo rebels at a high, the colonists proclaimed their independence. Although the direct support of citizens of the United States for the rebel cause has been clearly documented in scholarly and popular works, what remains unclear and unaddressed is if the U.S. government materially supported that effort. Despite this lack of scholarship, published primary sources do provide an answer. We proceed, therefore, to consider the letters of Henry Meigs of New York.

The figure of Henry Meigs in relationship to the Anglo rebellion is untouched in scholarly and popular works. Thus, we must utilize Gorostiza's map to connect a variety of different points

that construct the profile of the man and his labors in supporting the Texas rebellion. Through that effort, we find that Meigs possessed a long-standing and intimate connection with the highest levels of the Federal government. Although he served as a U.S. Representative from New York between the years of 1819-1821, his primary connections came through family relationships. One of these relationships was of particular importance. His sister Clara married John Forsyth, the man President Jackson would later name Secretary of State. However, as is often the case, there is more to the story than just these seemingly simplistic facts.[28] When Henry's father Josiah Meigs became Commissioner of the U.S. General Land Office in 1814, he requested that Moses Austin prepare a report on the status of Missouri lead mines. That request would mark the beginning of a long familial relationship between the Meigs and Austin families. Some years later, Henry married Stephen Austin's cousin Julia.[29] Hence, a critical examination of the letters between Henry Meigs and Stephen Austin, buried within the last volume of Eugene Barker's published Austin papers, becomes essential in responding to the question; did the U.S. government provide direct support to the Anglo rebels in Texas?

The letters between Austin and Meigs clearly affirm that support. On May 2, 1835, Meigs wrote Austin stating, "All that you communicate to me is perfectly concealed from all except the Secretary of State (my brother in Law) and the President."[30] On November 15, seven days after the Anglo colonist meeting of November 7, Meigs wrote that "Public Sentiment is aroused for your cause. We know that you are Bone of our Bone! and Flesh of our Flesh! That none but a Republican government can exist over you! But by the Law of Nations, by Treaty with Mexico we cannot yet interfere."[31] Echoing the American Revolution, Meigs then reaffirmed his belief that the insurgents would display the same "justice and courage which led our Fathers in the Revolution to establish the equal rights which we now enjoy - tens of thousands will join you, and with you, lay the firm foundations of your Republic. Goverm[en]t can hardly do for you what private opinion and zeal is

already actively doing. You will respect all *private rights* acquired under your former system and not forfeited by *Hostility*."[32]

Meigs advised Austin that the nature of his close relationship with Forsyth prevented him from publically displaying his support for the Anglo colonist cause: "My intimate connex[t]ion with the Secretary of State forbids (now) my public appearance in your behalf - but I am not idle. The Secretary of State (a few days ago) told me that there was but one result for your affairs - and that was, a natural and inevitable connex[t]ion with the Policy and Interests of *your country the United States*."[33] Despite this complication, he declared his loyalty to their goals: "I admire your whole course of Conduct in relation to Texan affairs. It is generous, brave and above all things else, it is just to Republican principle - it is truly Equitable."[34] Meigs closed with a personal greeting from his wife, Austin's cousin: "My wife Julia begs me to send her Love to you and say that she has never forgotten the time when you at five years of age was her companion in the City of Philadelphia. I have heard her speak of you with affection these 30 years."[35]

On that same date, Meigs wrote Austin another brief note. He assured Austin that the information regarding Indian movements had been forwarded to Washington D.C.[36] Seven days later, under the heading "Confidential", Meigs told Austin he had just received a response from his brother-in-law, U.S. Secretary of State John Forsyth: "His answer reached me this morning and I give you the following Extract from it, relative to that interesting subject. 'Aware however that temptations have been, or will be held out to them, by One or both parties to the struggle, Orders have been issued to warn them (the Indians) not to engage in it *unless they wish to incur the resentment of the United States.*'" [37]

If we examine Meigs' additional letters of November 15 and the 22 through the lens of the façade of U.S. neutrality, we conclude that he spoke of the threat of hostile incursions in Texas, as well as along the United States/Mexican border. However, this interpretation is problematic when

we examine published primary sources. For when we do so, we fail to uncover any specific details of any specific threat(s) coming from Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, only a handful of letters even provide vague references to rumored connections between various Indigenous peoples and Mexican forces.

Conversely, when we combine the content of Meigs' letters to the intimacy of connection between Austin and at least the Office of the Secretary of State, we shine a new light on the orders that Secretary of War Lewis Cass sent to General Edmund P. Gaines on January 23, 1836, just thirty days before the first siege of the Alamo. In those orders, Cass told Gaines to locate a large force of the U.S. Army along the Mexican/United States border. Furthermore, the orders instructed Gaines to ensure that Mexico would uphold its treaty obligations concerning the movement of Indigenous peoples within its boundaries. If necessary, Cass authorized Gaines to cross into the sovereign territory of Mexico to carry out that order.

Thus, our inquiry has brought us to the events of what I have referred to as the Gaines Affair. By engaging the primary source record around this situation, we see the profound depth of U.S. duplicitous policy. In particular, we reveal the façade of U.S. neutrality through Cass' orders to Gaines that establish the direct governmental support of the Anglo rebellion through the Forsyth-Meigs-Austin connection. The fact that this connection receives no mention in scholarly and popular works further validates its explosive threat to the mythological narrative. For when we link that connection to Cass' orders, we not only validate the accusations that led to Gorostiza's resignation, but we also identify with his outrage.

Shades of Deceit

By the time Gorostiza arrived in the United States in March 1836, the Republic of Texas had declared its independence and the battle at the Alamo was over. Propaganda for the Anglo cause rallied public support, and volunteers for local militias signed up daily. The newspapers were full of editorials that reproduced the renovated façade of the benevolent colonist in all its glory. State

and local governments passed legislation that demanded Washington immediately recognize and annex The Republic of Texas.[38] Support for the insurgency was at a peak, and a dissenting voice was hard to find. On those rare occasions when an oppositional voice did appear, it emphasized the question of slavery in Texas. Rarely, if at all, were the imperialist actions of the U.S. government, or the mythological narrative of Mexican savagery, ever questioned.

This absence of any critical engagement of events marked the success that mythmakers had in renovating their stories. In particular, the façade of the benevolent colonist had successfully maintained the public's focus on the isolation of the Anglo colonists during the final siege of the Alamo. So the story went, in defense of freedom and liberty, these brave and courageous souls had faced the brutality and horror of a savage Mexican nation. By enraging the emotions of the public at large, this mythological narrative benefited Anglo colonists who were returning to the United States in search of support for the rebellion.

One such colonist was Sam P. Carson originally from Burke, North Carolina. Interim President of the Republic of Texas, David G. Burnet had sent Carson to the United States to recruit troops, money, and support for recognition. Writing from Nashville on June 1, 1836, Carson told Burnet he found "enthusiastic bursts of feeling every where in this country."[39] The news regarding volunteers was also encouraging. General R.G. Dunlap of the United States Army had already recruited seventy men ready to come to Texas under the command of Captain Grundy. Carson told Burnet that these volunteers had no fear of prosecution for violating the neutrality of the U.S. government since Grundy was the Prosecuting Attorney for the district and had publically declared that although he would prosecute anyone who took up arms for Texas while within the borders of the United States, "if the boys think proper to step over the line as *peaceable Emigrants* his [Grundy] authority in this Govt will cease and he thinks it highly probable that he will take a peep at Texas himself."[40] Carson concluded by telling Burnet that Grundy's comments demonstrated "how the neutrality of this Govt is *preserved* by her civil officers."[41]

This type of willful manipulation of the freedoms afforded to citizens of the United States profoundly disturbed Gorostiza: "¿Que podía inferir de todo esto el Enviado Mexicano? ¿Qué no debía temer?"[*42] On April 20, 1836, Secretary of State John Forsyth left no doubt that such concern was warranted. On this date, Forsyth summoned the Mexican Minister to his office. In that meeting, Forsyth told Gorostiza about Cass' orders to General Gaines, stating that the President had ordered the General to position his troops along the border with Mexico. The purpose of this action was to ensure that Mexico would fulfill its 1832 treaty obligation to regulate the actions and movements of Indigenous peoples residing within its borders. Forsyth then reminded Gorostiza of that obligation. The written memorandum began:

> Mr. Forsyth stated to Mr. Gorostiza that, in consequence of the contest in Texas, the movements of some citizens of the United States on the Red River, and apprehended hostile intentions of the Indians in Mexico against the United States, and of the Indians within the United States against Mexico, orders would be given to General Gaines to take such a position with the troops of the United States as would enable him to preserve the territory of the United States and of Mexico from Indian outrage, and the territory of the United States from any violation by the Mexicans, Texians, or Indians.[43]

Additionally, Forsyth told Gorostiza that while Gaines was located along the border, he was authorized to cross into Mexico if he felt such an action was necessary. If this occurred, Gorostiza was to inform his government not to interpret such movement as "an indication of any hostile feeling, or of a desire to establish a possession or claim not justified by the treaty of limits. The occupation would be precautionary and provisional, and would be abandoned whenever (the line being run and the true limits marked) the disturbances in that region should cease, they being the only motive for it."[44]

Now, it is important to pause and consider the complexities lying behind Forsyth's comments. First, it is interesting how similar his comments were to Monroe's 1818 comments regarding Spanish Florida. Also, we must remember Clay's directive to Poinsett that he obtain, at all

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[*] What could the Mexican Minister infer from this? What could he not fear?

costs, a treaty clause requiring each nation to control the movement of Indigenous peoples within their borders. This clause did appear in the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation that the Mexican Congress ratified in 1832, however, at the time of Forsyth's meeting with Gorostiza, the two nations had not yet officially marked the boundary limits. Until that task was complete, Mexico rightfully maintained its insistence on the boundaries as conveyed in the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty. Finally, we must keep in mind the impact of Jackson's 1829 Indiana Removal Program on the region. In particular the fact that the movement of eastern Indigenous peoples to the western frontier had resulted in a significant increase in movement on both sides of the frontier.

In this context, Forsyth's comments illuminate the parameters of an intentional plan on the part of the U.S. government to first create the circumstances of discord and then legalize an invasion of Mexican sovereign territory based upon said discord. Understandably, Gorostiza's reaction to the April 20 meeting was bewilderment. Describing Forsyth's nonchalant attitude he stated, "conocia demasiado poco el ingles para lisongearme que podia habér comprendido bastante bíen toda la fuerza y valór de sus palabras, y que para evitar toda posible mala inteligencia de mi parte, le suplicaba me repitiese por escrito lo que me acababa de manifestár, para que yo me enterara de ello y pudieras responderle con acierto."[*45] Unfortunately, any hope that he had misunderstood Forsyth due to a language barrier quickly disappeared when Gorostiza received the written version of the meeting.

Gorostiza's response to that document was unreserved. He emphasized Forsyth's hypocrisy in suggesting that the United States sought to help Mexico fulfill its treaty obligations. In particular, he asserted that such a statement conveyed the false pretense that Mexico lacked the ability to execute its international responsibilities. Furthermore, he stated that there was no evidence to

[*] I know too little English to flatter myself that I could have well understood all the force and importance of his words, therefore, to prevent any misunderstanding on my part, I asked him to repeat what he had just said in writing, so that I could study it further and respond with accuracy.

support Mexico's failure to perform it duties, since Forsyth had not referenced any specific occurrence in which Indigenous peoples residing in Mexico had entered into the United States. Thus, Gorostiza rejected any circumstance in which Gaines' orders were warranted: "cualquiér posición que tome el Generál Gaines mas alla de los limites conocidos de los Estados Unidos, no puede sér sobre otro terreno que sobre uno que pertenece al territorio Mexicano."*[46]

Next, Gorostiza affirmed Mexico's jurisdiction over the territory in question: "Entre tanto México tiene á su favór el derecho de una posesión constante, y durante la cual ha ejercido allí todos los actos de la soberania; ha legislado, ha nombrado las autoridades, ha mantenido guarniciones, ha enagenado terrenos &c."†[47] Speaking directly to Forsyth's claim that such actions represented nothing more than the right of the United States to protect its own border, Gorostiza stated that such a right did not allow one nation to violate the expressed sovereign territory of another: "Creé sin embargo deber manifestár al Sr. Forsyth, aprovechandose con gusto de esta ocasión, que el Gobierno Mexicano conoce demasiado bíen lo sagrado que es el territorio de cualquíer nacion vecina para no habér dada á los Comandantes de las tropas nacionales en Tejas las ordenes mas terminantes de respetár y hacér respetár las fronteras del de los Estados-Unidos."‡[48]

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* any position which General Gaines may take beyond the known limits of the United States, cannot be upon ground other than that belonging to the Mexican territory. Translation source: Andrew Jackson, *Message from the President of the United States Transmitting Reports from the Secretaries of State and War, in Compliance with a Resolution of the House of Representatives of the 10th Instant*, May 14, 1836, 24th Cong., 1st sess., 1835-1836, H.doc.256, 20, accessed October 16, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional.

† In the meantime, Mexico has in its favor the right of constant possession, during which it has exercised all the acts of sovereignty, has legislated, has appointed the authorities, has kept garrison, has disposed of lands, &c. Translation source: Ibid., 20.

‡ He however thinks it his duty to observe to Mr. Forsyth, availing himself with pleasure of this opportunity, that the Mexican Government recognises the sacredness of the territory of every neighboring nation too much, not to have given the most particular orders to the commanders of the national troops in Texas, to respect and cause to be respected the frontiers of the territory of the United States. Translation source: Ibid., 19.

Gorostiza also rejected Forsyth's presumption that the presence of U.S. troops on Mexican soil should not be seen as a hostile act: "El hecho de no abandonár el Generál Gaines la posicion tomada, aun cuando estubiera ya incluida dentro de los limites marcados de Mexico y hasta que cesaran los disturbios de Tejas, equivaldria á una verdadera ocupación militar de una parte del territorio de México, y á una intervención indirecta en sus asuntos domesticos. Y nada de esto pueden apetecer ni pretender los Estados-Unidos en su estado actual de relaciones con Mexico."*[49] Simply put, Gorostiza affirmed that any such violation of Mexico's sovereignty would injure its rights as an independent nation.

However, Gorostiza did note that if Gaines remained within the boundaries of the United States he could assist Mexico in preventing the entrance of U.S. citizens into Texas in support of the insurgents: "se lisongea que igualmente y por el mismo principio de equidád y benevolencia hacia Mexico, se le encargará al propio tiempo á esta Generál se oponga á la introducción en Tejas de cualquíer Ciudadano Americano que armado ó con el titulo de colono intente en adelante pasár la frontera para unirse á las filas de los sublebados."†[50]

Forsyth's response provides an excellent example of how he attempted to maintain the illusion of U.S. neutrality in the face of the Minister's frankness. He centered his remarks on Gorostiza's misunderstanding of the original meeting.

> This notice to Mr. Gorostiza was not intended to express the intention to occupy a post within the acknowledged known limits of Mexico, but to apprize Mexico that if General Gaines should occupy a position supposed by each Government to be within

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* That General Gaines should not abandon the position taken, even though it be included within the assigned limits of Mexico, until the disturbances of Texas should cease, would be equal to a real military occupation of a part of the territory of Mexico, and to indirect intervention in its domestic affairs; and the United States can by no means desire this, nor view it with satisfaction, considering the state of their existing relations with Mexico. Translation source: Ibid., 21.

† that in like manner, and in accordance with this principle of equity and good feeling towards Mexico, orders will be given at the same time to that General, to oppose the entrance into Texas of any American citizen, who may attempt to pass the frontiers armed, or as a colonist, for the purpose of joining the ranks of the rebels. Translation source: Ibid., 19.

> its limits, that occupation would not be used either as the foundation of a claim or to strengthen a claim - the sole purpose being to enable this Government to do its duty to itself and to Mexico and the concluding paragraph, with respect to the abandonment of any post thus occupied which might be found within the territory of Mexico was intended to convey the information that that abandonment would take place as soon as the fact was ascertained, unless the disturbed condition of the country at that time should render its continued possession indispensable to the safety of the United States, and under circumstances which would justify the occupation, if not in the judgment of the Mexican Government itself, at least in that of every impartial power.[51]

In these comments, Forsyth used ambiguity as his primary rhetorical tool. First, he excessively repeated words such as "should", "might" and "would." Additionally, he combined two primary fragments to convey the actual intent of the United States. He stated that if Gaines' position was "supposed by each Government to be within its (Mexico's) limits" the United States would leave "unless the disturbed condition of the country at that time should render its continued possession indispensible to the safety of the United States."

The use of such indefinite language attempted to obscure the fact that the U.S. government intended to utilize Gaines' position west of the Sabine as a means to claim territorial jurisdiction. Hiding in plain view was the message: if the Limits Commission determined that Gaines' position on the western side of the Sabine River was inside Mexican territory, the U.S. government would not abandon that location if, in its estimation, the disturbed condition of the country at that time should render its continued possession indispensable to the safety of the United States. The slight-of-hand resided in the phrase *disturbed condition of the country* that once again recalled Poinsett's instructions to obtain, at all costs, a treaty mandating control of Indigenous peoples. Simply put, Forsyth informed Gorostiza that the U.S. government would allow the Commission to do its work, however, once they were done, it would rectify any dissatisfaction by remaining on Mexico soil based upon the pretext of the disturbed condition of the country.

Gorostiza was not fooled by Forsyth's duplicitous narrative and responded to it in proper diplomatic form. First, he sarcastically congratulated the Secretary on the clarification. Then, he

attempted to force Forsyth to guarantee that the United States would not cross into Mexican territory.

> Felizmente, y si el Ynfrascripto no ha comprendido mál la replica del Sr. Forsyth, la opinion de este Sr. Secretario de Estado coincíde esencialmente en este punto capitál con la del Ynfrascripto, en el hecho mismo de asegurarle que las tropas del Generál Gaines no tomarán posicíon en terreno alguno que conocidamente esté fuera de los limites de los Estados-Unidos; y puesto á seguirse naturalmente de este principio que dicha posición no ha de podér estár en ningún caso en terreno poseído por Mexico de antemano, y que haya estado de consiguiente dentro de sus límites conocidos. El Ynfrascripto agradeceria mucho al Sr. Forsyth tubiese á bien informale si en efecto no se ha equivocado; para podér entonces escribir á su Gobierno en este sentido, y darle esta nueva prueva de la equidad y buena fé que caracterizan al Gobierno Americano en todas sus relaciones con Mexico.*[52]

It was Gorostiza's use of the phrase "las tropas del General Gaines no tomarán posición en terrerno alguno que conocidamente este fuera de los limites de los Estados-Unidos de América"† that marked his attempt to force Forsyth's hand. Unfortunately, the attempt failed when Forsyth responded that Gaines would “not occupy ground not indisputably within the limits of the United States."[53] By modifying the noun *ground* with the adjective *indisputable*, Forsyth kept his foot in the door so that Gaines could move into Mexico and claim the territory for the United States.

The Optics of Deception

Gorostiza’s opposition to any U.S. troop movement within the expressed sovereign territory of Mexico remained resolute. Furthermore, he engaged the question of disputed territory by tying

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* Fortunately, if the undersigned has rightly comprehended Mr. Forsyth's reply, the opinion of the Secretary of State coincides essentially on this capital point, with that of the undersigned, so far as regards the assurance that General Gaines's troops will not take a position on any ground known to be beyond the limits of the United States; and as a natural consequence from this principle, that such position can in no case be on ground previously possessed by Mexico, and, of course, within its known limits. The undersigned would thank Mr. Forsyth to have the kindness to let him know whether he has been mistaken on this point, in order that, if not, he may immediately inform his Government accordingly, and communicate to it this new proof of the justice and good faith which characterizes the American Government in all its relations with Mexico. Translation source: Ibid., 22-3.

† General Gaines's troops will not take a position on any ground known to be beyond the limits of the United States. Translation source: Ibid.

it to the overall mythological narrative of neutrality. In this manner, he identified the question as a manufactured one that sought to authorize U.S. aggression. Despite an outward expression of shock to the contents of the April 20 meeting memorandum, Gorostiza had known for some time that there was a real possibility that troops from the United States might become involved in the conflict. In a March 30, 1836 letter to Francisco Xavier Luis Pizarro Martínez, he stated that, "Y en efecto, si es cierto como muchos creen, que el pueblo de los Estados-Unidos aspira con vehemencia a la agregación de Texas ¿qué extraño sería entonces que su gobierno tratara de tener a la mano un cuerpo considerable de tropas con que poder sacar partido de las fortunas de la guerra, o con que poder sostener a tiempo alguna queja artificiosamente preparada?"[*54] These reflections were quite accurate, and saw straight through the illusion of U.S. neutrality.

That U.S. neutrality was nothing more than an illusion was nowhere more evident than in Gaines' orders from Secretary of War Lewis Cass sent on January 23, 1836.

> I am instructed by the President to request that you would repair to some proper position near the western frontier of the State of Louisiana, and there assume the personal command of all the troops the United States who are or may be employed in any part of the region adjoining the Mexican boundary. It is not the object of this order to change at all the relations between yourself and the military departments under your command, but to require your personal presence at a point where public considerations demand the exercise of great discretion and experience.[55]

Cass continued that "The state of affairs in Texas calls for immediate measures on the part of the Government. It is the duty of the United States to remain entirely neutral, and to cause their neutrality to be respected."[56]

Such straightforward orders are not difficult for us to follow. First, the President ordered Gaines to a post along the United States/Mexican boundary. He then ordered him to assume command of all the military troops presently in that area. Secondly, Gaines was not to resign his

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[*] And indeed, if it is true as many believe that the people of the United States vehemently aim to acquire Texas, how strange would it be that its government would have on hand a considerable body of troops with which to take advantage of the fortunes of war, or to sustain for some time any artificially prepared complaint?

current position as the leader of his troops in Memphis Tennessee. Finally, the reason for his new assignment was that the Texas rebellion necessitated immediate measures on the part of the U.S. government. Interestingly, scholarly and popular works do not address the existence of these orders. On the surface, such an omission might seem ordinary, its placement best suited to an endnote. However, that is not the case in this situation. To the contrary, the silencing of these orders marks a deliberate effort to maintain the illusion of U.S. neutrality. Moreover, it masks the stunning results we obtain when we place these orders within the sequence of events both leading up to and immediately following their issuance.

We will recall from the previous chapter that on November 7, 1835 the Texas insurgents met in San Felipe to declare Texas independence from Mexico. However, since the rebels were concerned about a lack of resources, they postponed the declaration and modified their action to demand the reinstatement of the 1824 Mexican Constitution. To this, we add our recent discussion of Meigs' November 15 confidential letter from Austin that contained unspecified (to us) information regarding the movement of Indigenous peoples. In his response, Meigs assured Austin that he had immediately sent the information to Washington City. Seven more days passed before Meigs informed Austin that he had heard back from his brother-in-law and that orders had been issued to prevent Indigenous populations residing in Mexico from joining forces with that army.

Thirteen days later, on December 5, the Texas Consultation met again and appointed Austin, Archer, and Wharton as commissioners to the United States. Their instructions were to secure money, arms, and volunteers. Additionally, they were to obtain assurances from the White House that when the colonists declared independence, the U.S. government would immediately act to recognize Texas, and annexation would soon follow. A little more than thirty days after that meeting, on January 12, the trio secured a loan for $1,000,000.00. They guaranteed repayment of the loan with scrip for land located within the sovereign territory of Mexico. A mere eleven days

later, Gaines received orders from the Secretary of War to immediately relocate to the border where the situation demanded his personal presence.

It seems the lesser accomplishment that this sequence of events obliterates Forsyth's attempt to convey U.S. neutrality, since it also provides a stunning rebuttal to the façade of the benevolent colonist. Clearly, the Anglo colonists were not isolated and innocent victims of Mexico. Moreover, the U.S. government was not idly standing by on the sidelines. On the contrary, Gaines was ordered to the border thirty days before the first siege of the Alamo on February 23. Such an action gives us pause to consider how this sequence of events may have affected Santa Anna's military strategy and consequently the outcome of the battle of the Alamo. For it would be highly naïve to assume that the Mexican government was oblivious to these events, in particular when we consider the overwhelming publicity that surrounded the actions of the Texas Commissioners while in the United States.

Therefore, we cannot feign shock that Gorostiza expressed outrage at these aggressive actions. He stated that Gaines' presence along the boundary represented a credible threat to Mexico's security.[57] The validity of Gorostiza's claim was supported by Gaines' own letter to Cass on March 29, 1836. In that letter, Gaines asserted that force was the only logical course of action: "Upon this point, I take leave to suggest whether it may or may not become necessary, *in our own defence*, to speak to the contending belligerents in a language not to be misunderstood - a language requiring *force* and military supplies that shall be sufficient, if necessary, for the protection of our frontier."[58] Furthermore, he expressed the need "to check the savage operations of each of the contending parties, who may forget to respect the laws of war and our neutral rights."[59] In order to do so, he needed additional arms and volunteers to prevent "scenes of barbarism disgraceful to all who enact or tolerate them."[60] Moreover, Gaines told Cass that in preparing to confront "the Mexicans, or their red allies, to menace our frontier" he felt required to cross into Mexico: "I cannot but deem it to be my duty not only to hold the troops of my command in readiness for action in

defence of our slender frontier, but to anticipate their [Mexicans and their red allies] lawless movements, by crossing our supposed or imaginary national boundary, and meeting the savage marauders wherever to be found in their approach towards our frontier."[61]

Gaines' letter reflected his own indoctrination in the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. First, he assumed the lawlessness of Mexicans. Second, he used the plural possessive pronoun *their* to conflate Mexicans with Indigenous peoples. In this manner, the movement of Mexicans became the movement of Indigenous peoples thereby justifying an incursion into Mexican territory. Finally, Gaines' use of the phrase *imaginary national boundary* reproduced Monroe's 1818 interpretation of the malleability of borders. It was a point not lost to Gorostiza who asserted that from Mexico's point of view, there was nothing supposed or imaginary about a border between the two nations that had been conveyed through a treaty.[62]

Cass' response to Gaines on April 25 is also noteworthy. Along with his letter, Cass sent a copy of the April 20 memorandum of the meeting between Gorostiza and Forsyth. Utilizing the same mired language that Forsyth had previously used in attempting to elude Gorostiza's direct inquires, Cass told Gaines that the President did not want his actions to result in the United States taking "possession of any portion of the Mexican territory."[63] Although the statement seems clear enough, Cass immediately articulated the contrary stating that "the neutral duties, as well as the neutral rights, of the United States, will justify the government in taking all necessary measures to prevent a violation of their territory. Recent events induce the belief that the Mexican forces, as well as the inhabitants of Texas, must be in a high state of excitement."[64] He then reflected his own indoctrination in the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican, pointing to the lawlessness of Mexicans, asserting that "there is too much reason to believe, that efforts have been made to induce these Indians to join the Mexican troops. It may, therefore, well be, as you anticipate, that these various

contending parties may approach our frontiers, and that the lives and property of our citizens may be placed in jeopardy."[65]

Whereas Cass began his letter by stating that the President would not permit Gaines to cross into Mexican territory, he concluded that, "the President approves the suggestion you make, and you are authorized to take such position, on either side of the imaginary boundary line, as maybe best for your defensive operations. You will, however, under no circumstances, advance farther than old Fort Nacogdoches, which is within the limits of the United States, as claimed by this Government."[66] Thus, Cass reproduced the same perception of the malleability of borders as Gaines and Monroe before him. The only caveat in this case was the restriction of Old Fort Nacogdoches; some sixty miles into Mexican territory.

Even before Gaines received Cass' response, he felt confident enough in his aggressive stance to request militia from several states. On April 9, he sent letters to the Governors of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee requesting that they each sent one brigade. To the Governor of Alabama he requested a battalion. With these troops, Gaines felt his troop strength would be large enough to carry out his orders.[67] In order to convince the Governors of the importance of his request, Gaines utilized the façade of the benevolent colonist: "The war in Texas, which has of late assumed a sanguinary and savage aspect, has induced the President of the United States to require a considerable augmentation of the regular force to be concentrated upon this section of the nation frontier, to which my attention has been particularly directed."[68]

The structure of Gaines' narrative demonstrated his skillful manipulation of the mythological narrative. First, he used the word war in conjunction with Texas. This use was notable since a state of war did not exist between Mexico and the Anglo colonists, the latter seen by Mexico as citizens in rebellion. Nor did a state of war exist between the United States and Mexico, the former proclaiming a neutral stance. Gaines then tied his war to a recent bloody and savage shift. Now, if we assume by recent he meant the final siege of the Alamo some thirty-four days

prior, he subsequently predated his war in Texas to that event and in doing so, characterized it as an ongoing one. Finally, Gaines stated that the President, having considered this violent change, decided to significantly increase the number of U.S. troops along the border. Such a narrative was remarkable in the absence of a declaration of war, or a request to Congress for one. In particular, because it so blatantly contradicted what Forsyth had previously told Gorostiza.

However, Gaines' orders were not the only pressing issue for Gorostiza. At this same time, the U.S. Congress began discussing the recognition of the Republic of Texas. Gorostiza voiced Mexico's protest. Citing a proposal by Mr. Walker in the *Intelligencer* on May 24, 1836, he stated that the recognition of the Republic of Texas by the United States would cause the utmost material damage to the rights of Mexico.[69] In response, Forsyth penned an astonishing example of imperialistic rhetoric.

> The undersigned is instructed to assure Mr. Gorostiza that no decision on this question will be made by this Government which will not be founded on those rules and principles which have governed it in the disputes between Spain and the Spanish American States, and in those which have unhappily occurred between constituent members of those States themselves. The Mexican Government well knows what those rules and principles are, having uninterruptedly enjoyed for years the benefits of their practical application.[70]

The closed nature of Forsyth's narrative reflected his reproduction of the superiority of the United States over Mexico: "the Mexican Government well knows what those rules and principles are, having uninterruptedly enjoyed for years the benefits of their practical application." Through this statement, Forsyth marked his indoctrination in the idea that it had been the rules of the United States that conveyed enjoyment to the Mexican nation. From Gorostiza's point of view, this type of statement harkened back to imperial Spain and 300 years of colonial rule. For where did the freedom and sovereignty of the Mexican nación reside if it was only achievable through an adherence to the rules of the United States?

The movements of Gaines' troops along the border continued to mirror this same sense of superiority. In a July 24, 1836 letter to his government, Gorostiza asserted that every time Mexican

troops made a movement towards the Texas rebels, Gaines moved closer to Nacogdoches. Therefore, he concluded that there was a direct line of communication between the Anglo rebels and Gaines: "Está visto, pues, que el general Gaines corresponde abiertamente con el general texano, que recibe sus noticias, que admite y sigue sus consejos."*[71]

Such a conclusion was indeed accurate. In a July 8, 1836 letter, Republic of Texas Interim President David G. Burnet told his U.S. commissioners that, "I sometime ago addressed a letter to General Gaines of the United States Army on the subject of the Indians of our frontier and suggested to him the possibility of a combination of the several tribes west of the Mississippi in which event some bands within the limits of Texas would unquestionably unite with their more northern kindred."[72] He then added that he had authorized Gaines' involvement: "I assured Genl Gaines that should he consider it expedient and likely to secure peace among those Tribes to establish his head quarters at Nacogdoches, such a measure would be perfectly satisfactory to this government."[73]

Burnet's letter utilized the same pretense for U.S. troop presence along the border that Forsyth, Gaines, and the President had used previously. The lack of evidence or proof of any such aggression on the part of Indigenous people living in Mexico marked it as a representation of the renovated mythological narrative. Even on a level of conjecture, the premise of the argument failed as Gorostiza pointed out in his August 4, 1836 letter to Acting Secretary of State Ashbury Dickins.

> Pero como podia el Gobierno del infrascrito por mucha confianza que tenga en las sanas intenciones del Gobierno Americano, y cuando este autorizaba á un general suyo para ocupar militarmente, y á su antojo, una parte del territorio de Mexico, sin anuncia ni consulta previa siquiera de Mexico, sin otra escusa que la de la propia conveniencia, como podiá su Gobierno repite el infrascrito, considerar de otro modo esta autorización que como un amago de invasion que como un permiso *ad libitum*

* It is seen that General Gaines openly corresponds with the Texas general from whom he admits to receive news and follow advice.

> para violar su territorio? En que principio de derecho publico se escudaba, sino, semejante medida? En que tratado? En el de limites por ventura?*[74]

In questioning the malleability of borders among sovereign nations, Gorostiza asserted that one nation could not simple change its borders in order to fit its ambitions. He maintained that there were no formal allegations of attacks taking place within the United States that had originated from Indigenous people living in Mexico. To the contrary, the only evidence came from the expressed concerns of potential attacks coming from Anglo rebels. However, these individuals were Mexican citizens living on Mexican soil. They were not living within the territorial boundaries of the United States. Therefore, even if an attack did occur, there was no treaty violation. Since there had been no substantiated attacks on U.S. soil from Indigenous peoples living in Mexico, there had been no failure on the part of Mexico to perform its treaty obligations. Thus, Gorostiza asserted, that the U.S. government failed to sustain its justification for Gaines' presence on Mexican soil.[75]

Several days passed before Gorostiza received Forsyth's August 31 reply.[76] In this letter, Forsyth ignored Gorostiza's previous letters and stated that he would no longer respond to any inquires or complaints coming from the Minister. Additionally, he instructed Gorostiza to forward an enclosed letter to the Mexican government dated August 5 from President Jackson to the Governor of Tennessee in which the former addressed the Governor's concerns about Gaines'

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* But could the Government of the undersigned, however great may have been its confidence in the sincerity of the intentions of the American Government, when it saw the latter authorizing one of its generals to occupy a part of the Mexican territory with his forces, at his own discretion, without the previous consent of, or any consultation with, Mexico, and without any other excuse than his own consideration of its propriety - could the Government of the undersigned, he repeats, look upon his authorization in any other light than as a menace of invasion - as a permission, *ad libitum*, to violate its territory? By what principle of public law can such a measure be defended? By what treaty? By the treaty of limits? Translation source: Andrew Jackson, *Documents Accompanying the Message of the President of the United States to the Two Houses of Congress at the Commencement of the Second Session of the Twenty-Fourth Congress*, n.d., 24th Cong., 2d sess., 1836-1837, 301.H.doc.2/3, 47, accessed October 16, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional. The final two questions in this translation are misleading. Gorostiza says: "In what treaty? The treaty of limits by fortune? It is a rhetorical question which underscores his interrogation of the rights of sovereignty in a non-monarchial world. In particular, the effort of the U.S. Government to acquire ownership by merely articulating a right to it.

request for militia troops. Utilizing the same mired language of the past four months, in this letter Jackson reaffirmed the importance of respecting the rights of Mexico so long as the latter fulfilled its treaty obligations. Therefore, he told the Governor that General Gaines should not have requested troops: "It is in reference to these obligations that the requisition of General Gaines in the present instance must be considered; and unless there is a stronger necessity for it, it should not be sanctioned."[77] In this context, Jackson acknowledged Mexico's complaint stating that the United States may have "overstep[ped] the lines of the neutrality which it professes to maintain "owing to the feelings of commonality between Texans and citizens of the United States.[78] However, he immediately contradicted himself by reproducing the hypothetical: "Should Mexico insult our national flag, invade our territory, or interrupt our citizens in the lawful pursuits which are guaranteed to them by the treaty, then the Government will promptly repel the insult, and take speedy reparation for the injury. But it does not seem that offences of this character have been committed by Mexico, or were believed to have been by General Gaines."[79]

Gorostiza forwarded Jackson's letter to Mexico. Although he expressed hope that it could represent some movement towards a resolution of the conflict, he remained cautious. In particular, he pointed to its duplicitous language. Such caution was warranted. Less than one month later, on September 9, Gorostiza read about the recent movements of General Dunlap in Tennessee. According to newspaper accounts, Dunlap was once again recruiting volunteers to go to Texas. Recalling our earlier discussion in which Dunlap expressed no reservations about mustering militia against U.S. neutrality policy, it is no wonder that Gorostiza immediately wrote Forsyth. In this letter, he cited the *National Intelligencer* of the previous day, asserting Gaines' breach of the expressed sovereign territory of Mexico.[80]

Despite Forsyth's previous declaration that he would no longer respond to Gorostiza's inquiries, he did send a brief note to say that the "United States officers are vigilant in the discharge of their duty, and that newspaper reports are not in themselves safe grounds for official

interference."[81] Forsyth's retort was clear. However, Gorostiza recognized that a real threat existed for Mexico. In the absence of any genuine diplomacy on the part of the State Department, he had no other option but to take the accounts he read in the papers into consideration.

Therefore, a newspaper article that appeared in New Orleans occasioned his penultimate letter to Forsyth.

> En este momento leo con indignacion en los periodicos de Nueva Orleans que acaban de llegar, una proclama del General Houston, que confirma todos mis recelos, y realiza todas mis predicciones. En ella el General Houston llamándose Presidente de Tejas, y so pretexto que *unos* Indios le han dicho *que otros* Indios en unión con los Mexicanos (que no se habian movido todavia de Matamoros!) ivan á atacar a Nacogdoches, ordena que se pongan sobre las armas algunos milicianos de los condados inmediatos, *para sostener las tropas de los Estados-Unidos que guarnecen aquel punto*, en tanto *que el General Gaines las envia refuerzos:* en ella tambien previene á los oficiales de dichos milicianos que á medida que lleguen á Nacogdoches, *se presenten al comandante de las tropas de los Estados-Unidos y queden á sus ordenes.*[*82]

The response that Gorostiza received twelve days later clearly conveyed that the U.S. government saw the issue of Gaines' troop movement as closed.

On this occasion, Dickins informed Gorostiza that "the President has given the fullest consideration to the request made by the Mexican Government through Mr. Gorostiza, for the recall of the instructions transmitted to General Gaines respecting the temporary occupation of a post within the territory heretofore claimed by Mexico, in case such occupation should be found necessary for the protection of the frontiers of the United States."[83] Furthermore, he reiterated the pretense of Mexico's failure to perform its treaty obligations: "It is well known that, at present,

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[*] At this moment, I read with indignation, in the newspapers of New Orleans just arrived, a proclamation of General Houston's, which confirms all my fears, and realizes all my predictions. In it, General Houston styling himself President of Texas, and under the pretext that some *Indians* had told him that *other* Indians, in conjunction with the Mexicans (who had not then moved from Matamoros) were about to attack Nacogdoches, orders the militia of the adjoining counties to take up arms, *in order to sustain the troops of the United States garrisoning that place until General Gaines should send reinforcement to it;* he moreover, in this proclamation informs the officers of the said militia, that as they arrive at Nacogdoches, they must *report themselves to the commander of the United States troops, and remain subject to his orders.* Translation source: Ibid., 88.

Mexico is unable to fulfill her part of this stipulation. The United States have, therefore, the double duty to perform, of preventing their own Indians from hostile incursions into Texas, and of preventing those of Texas from entering into the United States."[84] Finally, he reaffirmed the intent of the U.S. government to remain within the boundaries of Mexico: "If, by the failure of Mexico to fulfill her part of the obligation, it becomes necessary for the United States to occupy a portion of the contiguous Mexican territory, in order to be able to perform that duty, they have, from the necessity, the right to do so."[85]

Once again, Gorostiza faced the quagmire of a mythological narrative that accused Mexico of a failure to perform a duty whose circumstances had not yet occurred. In his final letter to the State Department he condemned that narrative: "porque equivaldria á reconocer que cada nacion lo tenia para ocupar militarmente el territorio de las demas, sin otro trabajo que el de crearse antes una aparente necesidad para obrar asi, y porque tal derecho seria por otra parte una continuada amenaza á la soberania y á la independencia de todas ellas."[*86] He then moved beyond the application of such a policy to Texas, underscoring the dangerous affects of applying the justification of self-defense to an offensive operation: "Cual seria, sino, la nacion que no querria robustecer su frontera á expensas de la frontera vecina, si veia que su sola calificacion bastaba para justificar la legalidad del hecho?"[†87] Finally, he pointed out that the argument of self-defense was nullified when the action caused injury to another party: "y la que al paso que nos impone la obligacion de conservarnos y de defendernos, no prohibe igualmente el hacerlo con perjuicio

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[*] because it would be equivalent to acknowledging that every nation might occupy with its troops the territory of another, without taking any farther trouble than merely to conceive, beforehand, that there appeared to be a necessity for the measure; and because such a right would be a continued threat held out against the sovereignty and independence of every other nation. Translation source: Ibid., 97.

[†] Otherwise, what nation would not desire to strengthen its frontier at the expense of its neighbor's, if its own conviction were admitted as sufficient to justify the act? Translation source: Ibid., 97.

evidente de tercero, á menos de absoluta necesidad, y porque el peligro sea inminente, inevitable de otra modo, é infinitamente superior al daño que vamos á causar."*[88]

In the face of such hypocrisy, Gorostiza demanded his passports and resigned his post as Mexican Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States. It was a move that severely disrupted the plans of the U.S. government to seize Texas. A line from a Scottish poem best describes the negative turn of events for the U.S. strategy: "The best-laid plans (of mice and men) often go awry."[89] Despite their careful planning, the orchestrators of the plan to seize Texas from Mexico had failed to recognize their own prejudice resulting from a passive absorption of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. In believing that the people of Mexico were inferior, irrational, and savage, the orchestrators had failed to take into account the determination of the Mexican people to defend their nación. Their fortitude would force President Jackson to hesitate in his push to acknowledge Texas independence. That action then set in motion a chain of events that would prevent the U.S. government from successfully achieving its objective of annexation for another ten years.

The Unforeseen Consequences

The Republic of Texas had one immediate goal following its declaration of independence; annexation to the United States. They were not alone in this desire. Heavily leveraged capitalists sought to cash in on their profits from land values that would only come from post-annexation sales. However, in order to put a proper face on the seizing of Mexican land, the U.S. government had to first legitimize Texas as an independent nation. Unfortunately, that recognition was an uphill battle. As we have seen, the relationship between Mexico and the United States was a

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* and which, while it fixes upon us the obligation of preserving and defending ourselves, equally prohibits us from so doing to the evident injury of a third party, unless in case of absolute necessity, when the danger is imminent, when it cannot be avoided by any other means, and when the injury apprehended is infinitely greater than that which we are about to occasion. Translation source: Ibid., 97.

contributing factor. Also, despite their early successes, Austin, Archer, and Wharton had failed to secure sufficient funds between December 1835 and March 1836 to support the Anglo rebellion. As they moved north and east, banks became less and less willing to lend money to the unofficial representatives of an unrecognized State. Moreover, on those rare occasions when they did find a willing party, the only collateral they had was land scrip, that would only obtain value if Texas became part of the United States. Many bankers were unwilling to take such a risk. It was the convergence of all of these circumstances that inhibited the recognition of Texas.

As we discussed in the previous chapter, Austin, Archer, and Wharton had left Texas three months before the Republic of Texas declared its independence from Mexico on March 2, 1836. After news of the declaration reached the United States, the commissioners remained powerless to utilize the event to the benefit of their cause. In particular, they lacked the official documentation of the declaration itself, as well as the official capacity in which to act. In order to conform to international standards, the Republic of Texas needed to appoint a Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States, and send him to Washington City with a copy of the declaration to officially request recognition. Time was of the essence. The close of the congressional season was approaching, and as the days and weeks passed, Wharton grew more and more alarmed. On April 6, 1836, he expressed the urgency of the situation: "Let me urge the vesting of some one with plenipotentiary powers without *One Moments delay*. He must be here before this congress adjourns."[90] Unfortunately, neither the official documentation nor a Minister immediately arrived in Washington.

The absence of a Minster from the Republic of Texas combined with a lack of official documentation to contribute to Jackson's hesitation in recognizing the Republic of Texas. It was a turn of events that shocked the commissioners. Between December of 1835 and March 1836, their letters reflected a high level of confidence that recognition, as well as annexation, would be immediate once Texas declared itself independent. What the commissioners had failed to

anticipate was a far greater threat; Mexico's unwillingness to capitulate to the demands of the U.S. government. In fact, the effort to recognize the Republic of Texas became so paralyzed that the political tide turned in the opposite direction. As a result, the President officially postponed the effort in an address to the Senate on June 24, 1836: "Not having accurate and detailed information of the civil, military, and political condition of Texas, I have deemed it expedient to take the necessary measures, now in progress, to procure it, before deciding upon the course to be pursued in relation to the newly-declared Government."[91] In order to obtain this information, the President sent Henry M. Morfit, Esquire of Washington, as a special agent to Texas. His instructions were to observe the overall conditions and report his findings back to Washington.[92]

It was a move that made the summer of 1836 a long and contentious one. While Morfit wandered about the Republic of Texas, Forsyth and Gorostiza clashed over the presence of Gaines along the Texas eastern boundary. As September marched forward, Morfit's final report confirmed the critical nature of U.S. recognition: "the fate of Texas is thus protracted; and, after all that can be said in regard to her ability to sustain her independence, it resolves itself into the single fact, that, without foreign aid, her future security must depend more upon the weakness and imbecility of her enemy than upon her own strength."[93] The following month, Gorostiza resigned in protest to the aggressive actions of the U.S. government.

The publication of *Correspondencia* in late November further embittered this hyper-aggravated conflict. Moreover, it took the existence of the Republic of Texas to the brink, precariously hanging it over a cliff. By making the April 20, 1836 memorandum public, Gorostiza had forced the U.S. government to justify its actions on the international stage. Forsyth's furious reaction to *Correspondencia* appeared in a letter to U.S. Minister to Mexico Powhatan Ellis. In this letter, Forsyth emphasized the inaccuracy of Gorostiza's conclusions. He contended that the United States had been forced to act preemptively in January 1836, due to the extreme danger that the contesting parties in Texas posed to U.S. citizens along the western boundary. Specifically, he

asserted that Jackson had felt that these heightened tensions would result in hostilities breaking out within the boundaries of the United States, especially if the contesting parties were to cross the border in pursuit of one another. Therefore, he had decided to inform both parties, the Republic of Texas and Mexico, that these types of actions would not be permitted.[94]

Forsyth's emotional response demonstrates the rhetorical dangers of mythological narratives. Specifically, his adjustment to the narrative of a failure to perform treaty obligations is noteworthy. In this instance, Forsyth stated that the President was concerned that Anglo colonists and Mexicans, rather than Indigenous peoples, might cross into the United States causing harm to citizens within its boundaries. This adjustment then combined with Forsyth's assertion that in order to avoid this type of circumstance, the President had to inform both parties that such an occurrence would not be permitted. However, the actions of the U.S. government had demonstrated that rather than send an official correspondence to convey such a message, or perhaps make a public declaration, the President chose to place a large U.S. military force on the eastern Texas boundary. Three months hence, the Mexican government was informed of the movement and told that any incursion across the *imaginary line* between the two nations should not be seen as an invasion of its sovereign territory.

The illusion of U.S. neutrality was once again laid bare in Jackson's refusal to recognize the Republic of Texas. Through this refusal, he demonstrated that the mythological narrative could no longer support the weight of the charges brought against the U.S. government by Gorostiza. In a letter to the House of Representatives on December 22nd Jackson declared, "Prudence, therefore, seems to dictate that we should still stand aloof, and maintain our present attitude, if not until Mexico itself, or one of the great foreign powers, shall recognise the independence of the new Government."[95]

Jackson's statement garnered immediate reaction from Wharton. Unaware that Austin had recently passed away, on December 28, Wharton told Austin that the President's position had

surprised a significant number of people. Although he pointed to a variety of theories to explain them, Wharton emphasized Gorostiza's departure: "Others say that from the dissatisfaction and departure of Gorostiza, on account of the movements of General Gaines that the United States apprehends difficulties with Mexico, and do not wish to give this new cause of offense, Viz. recognition believing that it will be difficult enough to explain to the world the causes of dissatisfaction already existing."[96]

The dawn of 1837 failed to bring any advancement to recognition effort. To the contrary, no time was lost in further complicating the situation. On January 24, 1837, Wharton wrote that Jackson had demanded that the Republic of Texas claim its western boundary to the Pacific. In doing so, he had hoped to temper the opposition of the North and East by adding fishing harbors to the deal.[97] A few weeks later, Wharton told Republic of Texas President Samuel Houston that the only way Jackson might still recognize Texas is if he (Wharton) once again applied significant pressure. Therefore, on February 8, Wharton joined Republic of Texas Minister Memucan Hunt in a forceful appeal. They outlined the impending destruction of the Republic of Texas owing to its unrecognized status. Moreover, they asserted that in making such a request, the Republic of Texas was only seeking that which had been obtained by Mexico and South America in their respective struggles for independence. Thus, the Republic of Texas once again requested that the President push Congress to act.[98] This time their efforts were rewarded and on his penultimate day in office, March 7, 1837, Jackson recognized the Republic of Texas as an independent nation. He named Alcée La Branche as Charge d' Affaires. Two days later, Jackson's Vice President Martin Van Buren was sworn in as the newly elected President of the United States.

With recognition accomplished, Texas annexation took center stage. However, it could not break free from the continuing struggle to defend U.S. aggression. Moreover, the newly inaugurated Van Buren displayed no desire to take on the topic, citing concerns about the world's perception of the subjugation of Texas by the U.S. government. Additionally, he worried about how such a move

might adversely affect the summer Congressional elections, potentially placing his administration in the political minority.

Consequently, there was no movement towards annexation in the weeks following recognition. It was a delay that proved to be catastrophic when New York banks suspended specie payments on May 10, 1837. That move marked the start of the economic downturn later named the Panic of 1837. Similar to previous negative downturns, heavy speculation, and poor fiscal policy brought the U.S. economy to the brink of collapse. Any progress towards Texas annexation came to a halt while Van Buren focused on resolving the immediate economic crisis.

The effects of the Panic of 1837 lasted until 1844. During this time, the annexation movement was significantly hindered. However, the financial problems of the Republic of Texas did not disappear and capitalists holding land scrip grew ever the more anxious. Thus, the newly independent nation could no longer idly sit along the sidelines and wait for the U.S. government to act. In an effort to force the issue, on December 31, 1837, and again on May 18, 1838, the Texas government openly considered withdrawing its request for annexation.

From the point of view of the Republic of Texas, the failure of the U.S. government to annex Texas was a direct result of Mexico's unwillingness to acquiesce to U.S. demands. Focusing on the issue of the subjugation, Hunt wrote Republic of Texas Secretary of State J.P. Henderson on May 30, 1837.

> The Mexican Ministers, in protesting against the recognition of the Independence of Texas by the United States, evince a determination on the part of that government to persist in attempting the subjugation of Texas, which I fear will prevent any action by this government upon the subject of annexation unless England or France should recognize our independence, the Secretary of State of the United States having distinctly declared, that unless Mexico recognizes our independence or ceased all hostile movements against us, he would not listen to any propositions upon the subject.[99]

The situation only worsened with time. By January of 1838, Hunt wrote that Forsyth's insistence that Mexico acknowledge the independence of the Republic of Texas before the United States would recognize it was a direct result of internal battles fueled by party politics, especially differences

between the free and slave States.[100] Moreover, Hunt reported that during a message to Congress, Mr. Adams had accused Van Burn "with desiring to bring about a war with Mexico, not to vindicate the honor of the country and redress the injuries, which she had sustained, but for no other purpose than to secure the acquisition of Texas."[101] For this reason, Hunt felt that the annexation of the Republic of Texas to the United States was a closed topic for the foreseeable future.

With annexation effectively off the table, both the United States and the Republic of Texas sought to formalize various aspects of their relationship. This led to multiple conflicts. Ironically, one area of contention was the attempt to formalize a border between the two nations. The documents that deal with this issue show that the conflicts between the Republic of Texas and the U.S. government mirrored those that had previously occurred between the United States and Mexico. As a matter of fact, the disputes over the boundaries of Texas ran so deep that they would not reach a full resolution until well after the end of the Civil War. Although an in depth treatment of this topic reaches beyond the scope of this dissertation, a brief glimpse into one of its key moments is illuminating.

In June of 1837, R.A. Irion, Secretary of State for the Republic of Texas, sent instructions to Hunt detailing the official position of the Republic of Texas concerning its border with the United States: "In negotiating on this subject you will be governed by the stipulations of the Treaty of limits entered into by Spain and the U. States of North America in the year 1819; and the subsequent ones between the latter Power and Mexico, ratifying the same."[102] The irony of the Republic of Texas claiming the same border that Mexico had previously claimed is not lost in our examination. Not surprisingly, their attempt was no more successful than Mexico's had been, the U.S. government dismissing the claim outright.

However, rather than place the Sabine at the center of the dispute, in this case, the United States claimed a western boundary at the Neches River.[103] Furthermore, as a means to ensure that the Republic of Texas would acquiesce to said boundary, U.S. Charge d' Affaires Alcée La Branche

alleged that the Republic of Texas had invaded U.S. territory, causing injury to U.S. citizens and thereby requiring relief. The event that La Branche referred to was the establishment of a land office in Red River County.[104]

Located south of the Red River and west of Arkansas near present day Bowie County, the dispute over this area dated back to French and Spanish settlements. In 1803, American settlers had claimed it as part of the Louisiana Purchase. Irion responded to La Branche's allegation on February 13, 1838. In that letter, he stated that the Republic of Texas rejected the idea that the establishment of a land office represented an invasion of U.S. territory. In the first place, he noted that the Mexican government had previously conveyed a land grant in the area to A.G. Wavel through his attorney Baron de Bastrop. Secondly, in early 1835, the State of Coahuila had given Benjamin Milam the responsibility to issue titles to the settlers of Wavel's Colony. Additionally, Irion pointed out that these transactions were public and the U.S. government had never lodged a complaint.[105] Finally, he stated that when the Republic of Texas held its convention to declare independence, Red River County elected representatives to attend it. Through this action, they were guaranteed seats in the new Legislature of the Republic and as such, freely chose to become citizens of the Republic of Texas.[106]

La Branche responded with a narrative that reproduced the same hypocrisy the United States had previously used towards Mexico. After attacking each aspect of Irion's argument, La Branche spoke about the citizens of Red River County electing representatives to the Republic of Texas convention: "Is the honorable Secretary in earnest when he advances this argument?"[107] "How could one of their citizens not only transfer his own allegiance, but that of all the other citizens inhabiting the metamorphosed american counties, as well as the soil itself?"[108]

This retort is extraordinary, in particular, because it perfectly reproduces Gorostiza's argument. In his commentary, La Branche ignores that Red River County had become part of the

Republic of Texas in the same manner that the balance of the Texas territory had claimed its independence from Mexico. The seventy colonists that had signed the declaration of independence for Texas had not only transferred their own allegiance, but that of all the inhabitants of Texas; Anglo, Indigenous, and Mexican alike. Since the U.S. government had not only encouraged that rebellion but had also acknowledged the rights of the colonists to carry it out, Irion's interpretation of the election of representations from Red River County to the Texas convention hardly seems astonishing. To the contrary, it seems perfectly logical. Nonetheless, a month later, Irion and the Republic of Texas would learn just how severely they had misjudged the situation. Forsyth summoned Hunt to a meeting and stated that U.S. authorities would begin arresting any citizen of the Republic of Texas found within the limits of Red River County conducting surveys or dispersing land.[109] The Republic of Texas now knew that U.S. avarice had no friend, other than the one willing to blindly submit to its will.

Conclusion

Correspondencia stands as a powerful counter narrative to the aggressive actions of the U.S. government. Its content, and the road map that it provides, allows the reader to connect the seemingly isolated and fragmented efforts of the Anglo colonists and the U.S. government into an orchestrated plan to seize Texas. For example, we see the connection between Poinsett's instructions to secure a clause regulating the movement of Indigenous peoples to Monroe's justification for invading Florida. We then connect these events to Forsyth and Jackson's justification for the movement of Gaines' troops as a means to prevent Mexico's failure to perform its treaty obligations. Additionally, we encounter the connection between the diplomatic efforts of the Jefferson administration to force France to sell the Louisiana territory based on the default of indemnification claims to Jackson's demand that Mexico either sell Texas for its own financial benefit, or sell it to pay for (yet to be identified) indemnification claims. Moreover, we discover a connection between Stephen Austin and the Office of the United States Secretary of State through a

familial relationship. It is that relationship which connects to the movement of a large U.S. military force to the boundary between the United States and Mexico. Whatever doubts may have existed regarding the purpose of this military force are removed when we read about the open communications between General Gaines and Interim Republic of Texas President Burnet.

Finally, *Correspondencia* illuminates an intricate web of anti-Mexican opinion through its exposure of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican that sought to degrade the Mexican people. The utilization of this narrative to force the subjugation of Mexico was yet another battle that Gorostiza knew Mexico would have to fight. In order to hide the aggressive behavior of the U.S. government, mythmakers had to reinforce these anti-Mexican narratives by using inflammatory language such as disputed territory, self-defense, and the savagery of Mexico. However, Gorostiza knew that many people in the United States would reject such propaganda.

> Esto no quiere decir que en los E.U. no haya muchos ciudadanos que de buena fe lamenten lo que ha pasado y pasa en su país con motivo de la rebelión de Tejas, y que no deseen *casi* el triunfo de Mexico por mero respeto á lo que es justo y equitativo, todo lo contrario; apenas hai negociante respetable ni caballero de fortuna independiente, ni verdadero oficial de Exercito ó Marina, ni periodista que se respete, ni empleado *inamovible*, ni Americano en fin de la escuela de Washington y de Madison que no pertenesca á este numero. Pero que puede tan diminuta fracción contra el torrente de una masa necesariamente ignorante, que lo puede todo, y que se deja llebar á ciegas por donde les acomoda á sus aduladores inmorales, avidos, sin ninguna especie de principios, y por consiguiente, sin barrera alguna que los contenga? Nada, por desgracia de Mexico, y también por desgracia de los Estados-Unidos.[*110]

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[*] It is not here intended to be said that there are not in the United States many citizens who honestly lament what had taken place, and is still going on in their country, respecting the rebellion in Texas, and who do not *almost* desire that Mexico should triumph, from mere respect for justice and right quite the contrary; there is scarcely a single respectable merchant or gentleman of independent fortune, or real officer of the army or navy, or editor who respects himself, or office holder who cannot be removed, or, in fine, a single American of the school of Washington and Madison, who does not belong to this class. But what can so minute a fraction do against the overwhelming efforts of a mass necessarily ignorant, which has everything in its power, and which can be blindly led wherever it may please dishonest, greedy, unprincipled, and consequently, unbridled flatterers? Nothing, unfortunately for Mexico, and unfortunately too for the United States. Translation source: William Augustus Weaver, *An Examination and Review of a Pamphlet Printed and Secretly Circulated by M.E. Gorostiza: Late Envoy Extraordinary from Mexico, Previous to His Departure from the United States, and by Him Entitled "Correspondence between the Legation*

The problem that Gorostiza recognized was that the number of people who would embrace justice was small. Even more importantly, they lacked the political and financial power necessary to defeat the ambitions of expansionists. As a result, he feared the end game. Like Tornel, he knew that the people of Mexico would choose to defend their sovereign territory from aggression rather than submit to the avarice of the U.S. government. Since neither side would yield, war was the inevitable outcome.

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[1] William Augustus Weaver, *An Examination and Review of a Pamphlet Printed and Secretly Circulated by M.E. Gorostiza: Late Envoy Extraordinary from Mexico, Previous to His Departure from the United States, and by Him Entitled "Correspondence between the Legation Extraordinary of Mexico and the Department of State of the United States, Respecting The passage of the Sabine, by the Troops under the Command of General Gaines* (Washington: P. Force, 1837), accessed November 12, 2009, Sabin Americana 1500-1926, 19,30.

[2] Ibid., 24

[3] Ibid., 29

[4] Gorostiza's correspondence also appears in a multitude of published sources in both the United States and Mexico. Most of his letters appear in their original Spanish with an English translation in Congressional documents such as Andrew Jackson, *Message from the President of the United States Transmitting Reports from the Secretaries of State and War, in Compliance with a Resolution of the House of Representatives of the 10th Instant*, May 14, 1836, 24th Cong., 1st sess., 1835-1836, H.doc.256, accessed October 16, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional; *Documents Accompanying the Message of the President of the United States to the Two Houses of Congress at the Commencement of the Second Session of the Twenty-Fourth Congress*, n.d. 24th Cong., 2d sess., 1836-1837, H.doc.2/3.301, accessed October 16, 2009. LexisNexis Congressional. Carlos Bosch García publishes all of the letters found in Gorostiza's pamphlet in *Documentos de la relación de México con los Estados Unidos, 31 de diciembre de 1829 - 29 de mayo de 1836: II. Butler en persecución de la provincia de Texas* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1983). Finally, Antonio de la Peña y Reyes, *Don Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza y la cuestión de Texas* (Mexico: Publicaciones de la Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, 1924) contains two additional speeches that Gorostiza gave before the Mexican Congress in the summer of 1840 concerning the continuing conflict over Texas. Therefore, Gorostiza's complaint, and his response to the aggressive actions of the United States, have been in the public record, in both English and Spanish, since 1836, with additional information coming to light in 1924.

Extraordinary of Mexico and the Department of State of the United States, Respecting The passage of the Sabine, by the Troops under the Command of General Gaines (Washington: P. Force, 1837), accessed November 12, 2009, Sabin Americana 1500-1926, 182.

[5] Antonio de la Peña y Reyes, *Don Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza y la cuestión de Texas* (Mexico: Publicaciones de la Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, 1924), i-xxvi.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Poinsett to Clay, 20 September 1825, in *Documentos de la relación de México con los Estados Unidos, noviembre de 1824-diciembre de 1829: I. El mester político de Poinsett* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1983), 106.

[8] Clay to Poinsett, 26 March 1825, 68.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid, 75.

[11] The final version appears in *Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation with Mexico*, February 24, 1832, 22nd Cong., 1st sess., 1831-1832, S.Ex.doc. CIS-NO: 22-1-11, PDF e-book, ProQuest Congressional.

[12] One of many interesting letters that Poinsett wrote concerning his involvement and that of the Masons in Mexican politics appears in Poinsett to Clay, 21 October 1825, in García, *Documentos I*, 194-8.

[13] An interesting question arises around this appointment when we consider the circumstances surrounding the election of John Quincy Adams to the Presidency in 1824. In that election, Jackson won the popular vote, however the House of Representatives selected Adams as President. Henry Clay aligned himself against Jackson in that event. Adams then appointed Clay to the post of Secretary of State. Such political alliances undoubtedly influenced Jackson's ultimate decision to remove Poinsett and replace him with an individual that he felt would be loyal to his ambition. Another interesting topic is Butler's opinion of Poinsett and his involvement in Mexican politics. That opinion can be seen in Butler to his Government, 21 May 1830, in García, *Documentos II*, 214-6.

[14] Richard Rollin Stenberg, "The Texas Schemes of Jackson and Houston, 1829-1836," *Southwestern Social Science Quarterly* 15 (1934/1935): 229, accessed July 14, 2011, ProQuest.

[15] President Monroe asked Andrew Jackson to be the first U.S. Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Mexico in May of 1823. Jackson declined, asserting that Iturbide was a tyrant, and the presence of a Minister in Mexico might strengthen Iturbide's overall power: "To be the instrument to aid tyranny, however innocent on my part, I could not reconcile to my feelings. With these views, and other reasons which I have communicated to Mr. Monroe, I have decline accepting the mission to Mexico." "General Jackson," *Louisville Public Advertiser*, February 19, 2012. Despite this narrative, it is important to keep such comments in context with his expressed ambition to acquire Texas and his announcement to run for President the following year.

[16] Butler's instructions and a variety of documents surrounding his diplomatic interactions appear in García, *Documentos II*, 177-262.

[17] Butler to Jackson, 25 May 1831, 260.

[18] "Some Texas Correspondence," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 11, No. 1 (June, 1924): pp. 99-127, accessed May 6, 2011, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1891929. A lengthy footnote to page 104 provides a brief biography of Butler and this relationship to Austin where the author stated that Butler was an American adventurer, whose appointment as Minister was "probably the most improper diplomatic appointment ever made by an American President." (104) Concerning his relationship with Austin, the author noted that Austin owed Butler money via various promissory notes during 1832. Moreover, that Austin had ordered his secretary, Samuel M. Williams, to secure an accounting of those debts when Butler visited Texas, arranging for the construction of a residence in Brazoria for Butler's use. After Butler was recalled from Mexico, he retired to Texas.

[19] Butler to McLane, 13 July 1834, in García, *Documentos II*, 372.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Austin to Williams, 6 May 1835, in Stephen Austin, *The Austin Papers, October 1834 – January 1837*, edited by Eugene C. Barker (Austin: University of Texas, 1927), 73. Barker includes a footnote that references the source for the O.P.Q. letters.

[22] "O.P.Q." to Señor Don B.T.A. [Branch T. Archer], 28 January, 1834, in "Some Texas Correspondence," 109.

[23] Ibid., 112.

[24] S.F. Austin to S.M. Williams, 12 April 1832, 99.

[25] Butler al ministro, minuta de su primera conversación con el señor Alamán sobre el tema de Texas, 2 julio 1832, in García, *Documentos II*, 290.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Josiah Meigs was the son of the Revolutionary war hero Jonathan Meigs. Henry was Josiah's son, Clara his daughter. Henry married Stephen Austin's cousin Julia Austin. Clara married John Forsyth. Additionally, Josiah's brother, Charles Delucena Meigs, was the father of Civil War Quartermaster Montgomery C. Meigs.

[29] David B. Gracy II, *Moses Austin: His Life* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1987), 161.

[30] Meigs to Austin, 2 May 1835, in Austin, *The Austin Papers,* 69.

[31] Meigs to Austin, 14 November 1835, 254.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., 254-5.

[34] Ibid., 255.

[35] Ibid. As part of this letter, Barker provides two footnotes, one of which confirmed Meigs' status as brother-in-law to Forsyth, the other one indicating that Julia was the daughter of Stephen Austin's uncle.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Meigs to Austin, 22 November 22, 1835, 264.

[38] A general search of the Congressional Record with the keywords Texas and Mexico between March 1836 and December 1836 returns countless proclamations, at the state and local levels, sent to the U.S. government offering to support the Texas rebellion.

[39] Carson to Burnet, 1 June 1836, in George P. Garrison, ed, *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1907: Vol. II; Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908), Google Book, 93.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid. 93.

[42] Mexico, Legación (U.S.), Correspondencia que ha mediado entre la legación extraordinaria de México y el departamento de estado de los Estados Unidos sobre el paso del Sabina por las tropas que mandaba el General Gaines (Philadelphia: [s.n], 1836), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926, xvii. This is Gorostiza's pamphlet, herein referred to as Correspondencia.

[43] Jackson, H.doc.256, 31.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Fragmento de un oficio reservado dirijido a la Secretaria de Relaciones de la República Mexicana, 25 April 1836, in *Correspondencia*, 1.

[46] Gorostiza to Forsyth, 23 April 1836, 5.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid., 4.

[49] Ibid., 6.

[50] Ibid., 4.

[51] Forsyth to Gorostiza, 26 April 1836, in Jackson, H.doc.256, 32. Gorostiza places a translation of this letter in *Correspondencia*, 7.

[52] Gorostiza to Forsyth, 28 April 1836, in *Correspondencia*, 9.

[53] Forsyth to Gorostiza, 3 May, 1836, in Jackson, H.doc.256, 33.

[54] Gorostiza to Martínez, 30 March 1836, in García, *Documentos II*, 545.

[55] Cass to Gaines, 23 January 1836, in Jackson, H.doc.256, 40.

[56] Ibid.

[57] *Correspondencia*, viii

[58] Gaines to Cass, 29 March 1836, in Jackson, H.doc.256, 42.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid., 43.

[62] *Correspondencia*, xviii.

[63] Cass to Gaines, 25 April 1836, in Jackson, H.doc.256, 44.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Gaines to the Governor of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee, 8 April 1836, 47-8.

[68] Ibid., 47.

[69] Gorostiza to Forsyth, 24 May 1836, in Jackson, H.doc.2/3.301 30-2.

[70] Forsyth to Gorostiza, 27 May 1836, 34.

[71] Gorostiza to his Government, 24 July 1836, in Carlos Bosch García, *Documentos de la relación de México con los Estados Unidos, abril de 1836-noviembre de 1843: III. El endeudamiento de México* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1984), 203.

[72] Burnet to Collingsworth and Grayson, 8 July 1836, in Garrison, *Annual Report*, 105.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Gorostiza to Dickins, 4 August 1836, in Jackson, H.doc.2/3.301, 47.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Forsyth to Gorostiza, 31 August 1836, 57. This was the first response Gorostiza had received in over a month, having sent letters of inquiry on July 25, 28 and August 4.

[77] The President of the United States to the Governor of Tennessee, 5 August 1836, Enclosure to the above letter to Gorostiza, 58-9.

[78] Ibid., 58.

[79] Ibid., 59.

[80] Gorostiza to Forsyth, 9 September 1836, 62.

[81] Forsyth to Gorostiza, 16 September 1836, 64. Ironically, Forsyth was willing to accept newspaper reports if the complaint served the goals of the government. One such instance was Poinsett's use of newspaper articles as proof of Indigenous incursions that required the United States to aid the Republic of Texas. Now Secretary of War, Poinsett wrote Forsyth on April 14, 1837 stating that,

> I have attentively examined the papers, referred to me by you on the 11th containing an extract from a note addressed to the Department of State by the Secretary of the Legation of Texas, together with the newspaper and a copy of the documents by which it was accompanied, complaining of murders and depredations being committed by a party of Caddoes and Kickapoos upon the inhabitants of the upper settlements of Texas on the Eastern waters of the Brassos river, and containing further suggestions as to the expediency of again advancing the troops of the United States to Nacogdoches or some other contiguous point. Immediately on receipt of the former communication on this subject by the Hon. Mr. W.H. Wharton and the Hon Mr. Memucan Hunt, measures were taken by this Department to augment the force on the frontier, where a hostile feeling among the Indians has appeared, and orders were dispatched to the officer, commanding there, to use

increased vigilance to restrain all hostile manifestations on the part of the Indians, and to maintain our treaty stipulations. Poinsett to Forsyth, 14 April 1837, in Garrison, *Annual Report*, 206.

[82] Gorostiza to Dickins, 1 October 1836, 87.

[83] Dickins to Gorostiza, 13 October 1836, 89.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Gorostiza to Dickins, 15 October, 1836, 92.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Robert Burns, *To a Mouse, on Turning up in Her Nest with the Plough* [1785], accessed June 11, 2014, www.robertburns.org/works/75.shtml.

[90] Wharton to the Governor of Texas, 9 April 1836, in Garrison, *Annual Report*, 81.

[91] The President of the United States to the Senate, 24 June 1836, in Andrew Jackson, *Message from the President of the United States, in Compliance with a Resolution of the Senate, Relating to the Condition of Texas, &c., June 23, 1836*, 24th Cong., 1st sess., 1835-1836, 284.S.doc.415, accessed October 16, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional, 1.

[92] Morfit's reports dated September 9 and 14 stated that affairs in Texas were chaotic, a situation primarily caused by infighting among opposing factions within the Republic of Texas structure. They are found in Andrew Jackson, *Condition of Texas. Message from the President of the United States, upon the Subject of the Political, Military, and Civil Condition of Texas*, December 21, 1836, 24th Cong., 2d sess., 1835-1836, H.doc.35.302, accessed October 16, 2009, LexisNexis Academic.

[93] Morfit to Forsyth, 10 September 1836, in Jackson, H.doc.35.302, 24.

[94] Forsyth to Ellis, 10 December 1836, in García, *Documentos III*, 295-8.

[95] The President of the United States to the House of Representatives, 22 December 1836, in Jackson, H.doc.35.302, 4.

[96] Wharton to Austin, 28 December 1836, in Garrison, *Annual Report*, 158-9.

[97] Wharton to Rusk, 24 January 1837, 187-92.

[98] Wharton and Hunt to Jackson, 8 February 1837, 196-7.

[99] Hunt to Henderson, 30 May 1837, 222.

[100] Hunt to Irion, 31 January 1838, 285.

[101] Ibid., 286.

[102] Irion to Hunt, 26 June 1837, 232.

[103] Hunt to Irion, 31 January 1838, 287.

[104] Irion to Hunt, 31 December 1837, 281.

[105] Irion to LaBranche, 13 February 1838, 293.

[106] Ibid., 294.

[107] La Branche to Irion, 26 February 1837, 304.

[108] Ibid., 305.

[109] Hunt to Irion, 3 March 1838, 311.

[110] *Correspondencia*, xxi.

CHAPTER 3

From Sea to Shining Sea:
Mexico Responds to U.S. Imperialism

The dissimilar goals of the United States and the Republic of Texas fueled numerous conflicts between the two nations. As time went by, the situation only worsened as Congress failed to pass annexation. Consequently, on November 28, 1838, the Republic of Texas officially withdrew its request to join the United States. For the next seven years, the two nations found themselves locked in a stalemate with Mexico. In order to keep the Texas cause alive, mythmakers needed a new narrative. They accomplished this by merging the ambitions of both nations, thereby igniting the emotions of the public at large. John L. O'Sullivan named this new narrative Manifest Destiny.[1] On May 11, 1846, President James K. Polk articulated one of its key components. In an address to Congress, Polk described the conflict in Texas within a context of the long-standing and continual violence of Mexico towards citizens of the United States. He declared that a state of war existed between the United States and Mexico, and that the appropriate response was to move General Taylor south from Corpus Christi to a location along the northern banks of the Río Bravo del Norte.[2] In making this assertion, Polk reproduced the façade of necessitated action in self-defense.

The creation of this mythological narrative had been more difficult than previous ones. In order to provide a foundation for U.S. aggression, mythmakers needed to establish the inferiority of the Mexican people. Therefore, they took elements from both the Black Legend and anti-Indigenous narratives and combined them with anti-Mexican descriptions. The resulting story conveyed the flawed origins of the Mexican people, stating that their deficiencies were a consequence of an undesirable mixing of Spanish and Indigenous blood. This type of comingling had created a race of people who were ignorant, irrational, and prone to violence. As a result, the people of Mexico were inherently incapable of behaving in a civilized manner, a fact that they proved through their preference for bloodthirsty dictator after another.

Once mythmakers had established the essential inferiority of Mexicans, they were able to justify the aggressive actions of the United States. In the case of Polk's orders to Taylor, they reproduced the façade of U.S. neutrality by asserting that the U.S. government had only intervened in Texas as an arbitrator for peace. However, the dictators of Mexico had refused to cooperate, and the people of Mexico had failed to control them. Therefore, based upon its propensity for war and the essential inferiority of its people, the nation of Mexico was no longer worthy of a place at the table of emerging self-governed nations.[3] This symbolic removal of Mexico from the family of nations opened the door for mythmakers to label it as a threat, thereby justifying the aggressive actions of the U.S. government. Finally, they conveyed the idea of self-defense by emphasizing the U.S. commitment to a peaceful resolution. They asserted that in seeking peace, the United States had mistakenly given Mexico time to increase its military force and fortify its positions. Such a narrative conveyed a simple message; that this immoral, backwards, and uncivilized nation now possessed the ability to invade the United States at will, a threat that had compelled Polk to act in defense of the nation.

Mexico's response to the façade of necesitated action in self-defense was impressive in both its scope and content. Writers, poets, journalists, politicians, and scholars picked up their pens and defended the sovereign rights of Mexico. Through a variety of genres and media, this collective response exposed the blatant hypocrisy of the U.S. government. First, they questioned how a nation claiming to be the standard-bearer for democracy and freedom throughout the world could justify the violent acquisition of its neighbor's sovereign territory. When focusing on the particular, Mexico's collective response declared that Taylor's presence on the northern banks of the Río Bravo del Norte represented an outright invasion of Mexican territory. As proof, they cited the unbroken chain of legislative representation from that region in the Mexican department of Tamaulipas.

Additionally, Mexico's collective response rejected the accusation that their government had refused attempts by the United States to reach a peaceful solution. To the contrary, they

emphasized that the overwhelming desire of the U.S. government to annex Texas was a corrupting factor in those so-called negotiations long before they had ever begun. Finally, these voices of resistance unveiled the duplicity of the façade of necessitated action in self-defense by reasserting that the Anglo colonists had come to Mexico of their own free will. Since they had sworn their allegiance to the Mexican nation, and promised to abide by its laws and customs, these individuals were in fact citizens of Mexico. Therefore, the U.S. claim of injuries to its citizens had no merit.

An Unrelenting March of Deception

As we briefly discussed at the end of chapter 2, a variety of events complicated the immediate annexation of Texas. Between 1837 and 1844, circumstances only worsened. As a result, a three-way impasse between the United States, Mexico, and the Republic of Texas developed. Although scholarly and popular works generally portray a harmonious relationship between the United States and the Republic of Texas, both in opposition to Mexico, published primary sources show that profound differences existed. These differences stemmed from the dissimilar objectives of both nations.

The objective of the Republic of Texas was to solve its financial crisis. From the outset, the Republic was bankrupt. Above all, it owed an enormous debt that it had secured with so-called public lands. However, until its status was settled, these lands had virtually no value. Furthermore, Mexico's continued attempts to regain control over the region demanded that the Republic of Texas maintain a military force. Food, shelter, and armaments all required significant sums of money. Although annexation to the United States did offer one potential solution to this financial crisis, it was by no means the only one.

For the U.S. government, Texas was a means to fulfill its larger ambition of possessing all the land west to the Pacific Ocean. However, it is important to point out that the exact manner in which it would achieve this goal was far less important than its accomplishment. Therefore, when regional politics prevented the acquisition of Texas through annexation, the U.S. government was

just as willing to negotiate a quitclaim deal directly with the Mexican government. That this action negated the very existence of the Republic of Texas as an independent nation was of no concern.

However, such blatant disregard for the independence of Texas angered many of its citizens. Each time annexation failed to come to a vote in the U.S. Congress, tensions between the two nations rose and disputes became commonplace. Eventually, a negative-loop took hold. The failure of annexation in the political climate of the United States worsened the realities of the financial situation of the Republic of Texas. The more dire the financial situation of the Republic of Texas, the more fervently it sought to solve its own problems outside of the rubric of annexation to the United States. The more the Republic of Texas sought to solve its own problems outside of annexation, the more aggressive the U.S. government became with regards to open issues such as boundary limits, indemnification claims, and commerce agreements. As these conflicts grew and eventually merged, the discord that they provoked served to bury the topic of annexation even further into the muck and mire of the political deadlock in Congress.[4]

Mythmakers knew these conflicts did not play well to the public at large. Moreover, they knew that Mexico's unwillingness to quietly capitulate to the demands of either side only served to complicate the issue. Therefore, their narratives omitted the details of most events that occurred between 1837 and Polk's May 11, 1846 speech. However, their effort was only partially effective due to Mexico's public protest. In particular, Mexico pointed to three events where the actions of the U.S. government clearly demonstrated that there would be no price too high in order to achieve its goal of possessing all the land from sea to shining sea.

The first of these events was President Taylor's 1844 *Treaty to Annex Texas*. In attempting to annex Texas by treaty, Mexico asserted that Tyler sought to circumvent its rights as a nation. The second event was the 1845 Texas State Convention. Several months after the U.S. Congress failed to ratify Tyler's treaty, Anglo rebels met to draft a state constitution. This was the final step in annexation to the United States. However, before the convention began, a peace agreement

between the Republic of Texas and Mexico, brokered by Great Britain, was presented to Anson Jones. As President of the Republic, Jones decided to give the delegates a choice between annexation to the United States or the recognition by Mexico. However, when we combine Mexico's response to the correspondence of the U.S. government, we discover that the choice the delegates were given was in fact a fictitious one. Finally, Mexico's collective response rejected the ruse of John Slidell's 1845 mission to Mexico. It asserted that it was nothing more than a way to buy time and give U.S. troops the opportunity to arrive at a variety of strategic locations in preparation for war.

The 1844 Treaty to Annex Texas

Within the United States, public support for annexation remained strong between 1837 and 1844. However, political and economic interests continued to debate the issue along North/South lines. As a result, the annexation of Texas became a referendum on the future of slavery. Eager to distinguish his mired Presidency, John Tyler envisioned the addition of Texas to the United States as a worthy achievement. In particular, he saw the opportunity to accomplish something that both Jackson and Van Buren had failed to do. In Tyler's opinion, a treaty offered the best opportunity for success. Therefore, on April 12, 1844, U.S. Secretary of State John Caldwell Calhoun along with Isaac Van Zandt and John Pinckney Henderson representing the Republic of Texas signed *A Treaty of Annexation, Concluded between the United States of America and the Republic of Texas*.

How this treaty dealt with the debt of Texas through land distribution is instructive. Through Article I, the Republic of Texas "acting in conformity with the wishes of the people and every department of its government, cedes to the United States all its territories, to be held by them in full property and sovereignty, and to be annexed to the said United States as one of their Territories, subject to the same constitutional provisions with their other Territories."[5] Although this article omitted the exact boundaries that would define the territory, Articles IV and V did address the use of public land as a means to resolve the debt of Texas. Utilizing the same principles

that had guided both the 1785 and 1787 Land Ordinances, Article IV assigned revenue to the U.S. government based upon the cession of public land. Article V then utilized the proceeds from these sales to provide the necessary funds to pay the debt of Texas, estimated not to exced $10,000,000.[6]

The problem with these articles, and the lack of boundary language, rests with the treaty's use of the term public land. This is a key point. Long before Mexican independence, the Spanish crown had conveyed large tracts of land to individuals willing to establish their homes along Spain's far eastern boundary.[7] These grants were respected by Mexico when it declared its independence from Spain. Therefore, when you combine these grants to tracts of land granted to Anglos after independence, it is difficult to imagine exactly what land was left for the drafters to deem public. However, that difficulty quickly dissipates when we recall how the concept of public land had already played out for Indigenous peoples in the United States. To that experience we add how the U.S. government had handled non-Anglo grantees in Louisiana. Based on such precedence, we conclude that the treaty drafters considered any non-Anglo land grants as public land.

We can further support such a statement by simply examining the sheer acreage necessary to cover a $10,000,000 debt through the sale of public land. Even more informative is exactly who owned the debt of Texas in the first place. In broad terms, it was the same bankers and capitalists who had secured large quantities of land through grantee severance. Therefore, they held both debt and non-public land. Thus, we reveal the true purpose behind omitting specific language concerning the boundary in the first place. In utilizing such an approach, the drafters of the treaty protected these capitalists, allowing them to sell their non-public land at a profit. Moreover, they could anticipate the repayment of any outstanding debt through the sale of non-Anglo land that the drafters referred to as public.

Unfortunately, the ambiguous language of the treaty and how it handled the debt of Texas through land distribution was of no concern to those who supported annexation. Not surprisingly, former President Andrew Jackson penned his early support even before the treaty was signed. In

his February 12, 1844 essay *Opinions of General Andrew Jackson on the Annexation of Texas,* Jackson reiterated his long held belief that the United States obtained Texas, with a boundary at the Río Bravo del Norte, as part of the Louisiana Purchase. He then contextualized the balance of his argument within the political melee of North/South differences. Jackson asserted that the loss of Texas was the result of Northern jealousies that had changed the outcome of the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty. According to Jackson, Mr. Erwin, U.S. Minister to Spain, had initially obtained Spain's agreement to a western boundary at the Río Bravo del Norte. However, at the last minute, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams halted those negotiations, and concluded the accord with Onís, setting the boundary at the Sabine. Jackson accused Adams of acting in accordance with a northern ideology that rejected western expansionism.[8] A few weeks later, his protégé, James F. Polk of Tennessee, mimicked those same sentiments.[9]

Another supporter of the treaty was Senator Levi Woodbury of New Hampshire. In a May 9, 1844 letter, Woodbury offered his support for the annexation of what he described as the peaceful and well-established Republic of Texas. He stated that annexation was necessary to avoid commercial and territorial disaster. In particular, he cited the current dispute between the United States and Great Britain concerning Oregon. He asserted that if Great Britain successfully brokered a deal with Mexico that recognized the Republic of Texas, it would result in an allegiance between Mexico, the Republic of Texas, and Great Britain that would cut the United States out of trade routes at the Mississippi. If that occurred, the balance of power for Oregon would swing in favor of Great Britain.[10]

Another supporter of Tyler's treaty was Senator Robert Walker of Mississippi. His letter is particularly interesting to our present conversation since he used of a variety of mythological narratives to ignite the emotions of his reader. For instance, Walker reproduced the façade of the benevolent colonist when he stated that, "It was a revolution in Mexico that produced the conflict for independence in Texas. The citizens of Texas had been invited there under the solemn guaranty

of the federal constitution of 1824. This constitution, to which Texas so long and faithfully adhered, was prostrated by the usurper Santa Anna."[11] Calling on the anti-Mexican descriptions of 1836 he continued, "After severe struggle, the people of Mexico were subdued by a mercenary army; the States were annihilated, and a military dictator was placed at the head of a central despotism. In the capitals of Mexico and the state of Coahuila and Texas, the civil authorities were suppressed by the bayonet; the disarming of every citizen was decreed, and the soldiery of the usurper proceeded to enforce his edict."[12] Walker then juxtaposed the bravery of the colonists in the face of Mexican brutality: "The people of Texas resolved to resist, and perish upon the field of battle, rather than submit to the despotic sway of a treacherous and sanguinary military dictator."[13] Finally, he closed this portion of his narrative by leaving his reader with a thought that was tied to the inherent inferiority of the Mexican people: "Short was the conflict, glorious the issue. The American race was successful; the armies of the tyrant were overthrown and dispersed, and the dictator himself was captured."[14]

Whereas Walker utilized a variety of mythological narratives to compose his support of Tyler's treaty, the position of the U.S. government stayed firmly within the confines of the façade of necessitated action in self-defense. We see an example in Secretary of State J.C. Calhoun's April 19, 1844 letter to Benjamin E. Green, the U.S. ad interim representative in Mexico. In this letter, Calhoun instructed Green on how he should inform the Mexican government of the treaty.

> In making the fact known to the Mexican government the president enjoins it on you to give it, in the first place, the strongest assurance, that in adopting this measure, our government is actuated by no feelings of disrespect or indifference to the honor and dignity of Mexico, and that it would be a subject of great regret if it should be otherwise regarded by its government. And in the next place, that the step was forced on the government of the United States in self defence, in consequence of the policy adopted by Great Britain in reference to the abolition of slavery in Texas.[15]

Calhoun's use of the mythological narrative was impressive. After reproducing the rhetoric of self-defense, Calhoun named the threat; the deal brokered by Great Britain. In other words, what would

provoke self-defensive action on the part of the United States was a peaceful resolution to the conflict. In pointing to the brokered deal, Calhoun demonstrated his conflation of the security of the United States and the defense of the institution of slavery. In this manner, he utilized the façade of necessitated action in self-defense to reproduce the same North/South rhetoric that had bogged annexation down in Congress. He then closed his letter by instructing Green to reassure the Mexican government that in composing the treaty, the United States had taken Mexico's best interests into consideration, taking all precaution to make "the terms of the treaty as little objectionable to Mexico as possible."[16] As a suggestion, he told Green to highlight the intentional omission of the boundaries of the treaty as proof of the good will of the United States.

Green failed in his attempt to convey that position to Mexico since it represented the same duplicitous rhetoric of the past two decades, just with a slight variation. Mexican Minister of Exterior Relations, José María de Bocanegra recognized the ploy. Although he knew that the unspecified boundaries of the treaty had nothing to do with the good will of the U.S. government, he had learned well from his predecessors and knew that any protest he might directly lodge would fall on deaf ears. Therefore, he went directly to the world stage, composing a circular on May 29. Addressing himself to the Ministers of France, Spain, England, and Prussia, Bocanegra stated that Mexico "Se han realizado los designios del gobierno de los Estados-Unidos de América que por tanto tiempo había tratado de encubrir, aunque en vano, bajo sus apariencias de una sincera amistad hacia esta república firmando un tratado con los usurpadores de Texas para la incorporación de esa parte del territorio mexicano a los mismos Estados Unidos el cual se ha sometido a la deliberación de aquel senado."*[17] Furthermore, he asserted that the Mexican government "exige el honor nacional sin transigir en nada que menoscabe los justos derechos de

* The plans that the United States unsuccessfully sought to cover up had been carried out under the auspice of a sincere friendship towards this Republic, by signing a Treaty with the usurpers of Texas for the incorporation of that part of Mexican territory to the United States, which has been submitted to the Senate for deliberation.

México al departamento de Tejas; repitiendo y sosteniendo sus antiguas y reiteradas protestas para dejarlos a salvo, y no permitiendo bajo ningún pretexto su desmembración del territorio nacional."[*18]

The following day, Bocanegra repeated those same sentiments to Green, emphasizing the continued duplicity of U.S. diplomacy.

> La simple lectura de la nota que va a contestar el infrascrito basta para conocer la magnitud y gravedad del asunto que contiene; y admira ciertamente que un gobierno ilustrado y regido por instituciones tan liberales y tan cimentadas en el conocido principio universal de no despojar a nadie de lo ajeno y antes sí guardar y respetar en todos conceptos y de todos modos los imprescriptibles derechos del hombre, y del hombre en sociedad, haya procedido a la celebración, aprobación y aun remisión al senado de un tratado que indudablemente y de notoriedad despoja a México de un departamento que en propiedad y en posesión legal le pertenece, y ha pertenecido siempre según se contiene en las claras, terminantes, repetidas y muy antiguas protestas que tiene hechas el gobierno de esta república presentadas no sólo ante el gobierno y república de los Estados-Unidos sino ante las naciones y el mundo.[†19]

Bocanegra then reiterated the position of his country on behalf of the Mexican President: "México ni ha renunciado ni debe renunciar, y por consiguiente no renuncia ni de ningún modo cede la totalidad ni parte de sus derechos: que su resolución firme y constante ha sido y es la de sostener la

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[*] demands the national honor without conceding anything to the detriment of the just rights of Mexico to the department of Texas; repeating and sustaining the old and reiterated protests in order to keep them safe from, and not permitting under any pretext, the dismemberment of national territory.

[†] The simple reading of the note to which the undersigned is replying is sufficient to recognize the magnitude and gravity of the subject which it contains; and it is certainly wonderful that a Government ennobled and governed by institutions so liberal and so well founded in the known admitted principle of committing no aggression, and especially to guard and respect in every sentiment and in every manner the imprescriptable rights of man in society, has proceeded to the negotiation, approval, and even transmission to the Senate, of a treaty which indubitably and notoriously despoils Mexico of a department which, by ownership and by possession, belongs to her, and has always belonged to her, according to the contents of the clear, conclusive, repeated, and very early protests which the Government of the Republic has made, laid not only before the Government and Republic of the United States, but before nations and the world. Translation Source: John Caldwell Calhoun, *Documents, from the Department of State, Accompanying the President's Message at the Opening of the Second Session of the Twenty-Eight Congress, December 2, 1844*, December 2, 1844, 28th Cong., 2d sess., 1845-1846, 499.S.doc.1-2, 54, accessed May 20, 2014, ProQuest Congressional.

integridad y dignidad de la nación."*[20] His closing words were plain: "*México considerará como una declaración de guerra contra la República Mexicana el que haya ese acuerdo de incorporación de Texas al territorio de los Estados Unidos*."†[21] Free of any ambiguity, Bocanegra made it clear that if the United States annexed Texas by treaty, Mexico would interpret it as an act of war.

Green's response was astonishing, most notably for the manner in which it articulated U.S. superiority in contrast to the implied inferiority of Mexico. Green stated that Mexico should equate no rights concerning the Texas territory just because the U.S. government chose to inform Mexico of the treaty. As a matter of fact, Green was astonished that the government would even attempt to revisit such a claim: "The ground assumed by his excellency, that Mexico by futile protests upon paper, could retain her rights over the territory of Texas, notwithstanding the facts which are notorious that Texas has declared and maintained her independence for a long space of years, that during the length of time Mexico has been unable to reconquer her, and has of late cease all efforts to do so, is truly novel and extraordinary."[22] Green then reproduced the removal of Mexico from the table of emerging nations by dismissing its status as a nation. He concluded that if he were to accept Bocanegra's complaint regarding the Texas territory, Mexico might "by similar protests, declare that the world is her empire, and the various nations, who people it her subjects and expect her claim to be recognized."[23]

The arrogance of Green's words gives us pause to conduct a simple experiment. If we substitute the word United States for Mexico in his narrative, we compose the following statements: For twenty years, the United States has protested Mexico's claim to Texas. If Mexico were to accept

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* Mexico has not renounced, and should not renounce, nor in any manner cede, the whole or part of her rights; that the firm and constant resolution has been, and is, to preserve the integrity and dignity of the nation. Translation Source: Ibid., 56-7.

† "That Mexico will consider as a declaration of war against the Mexican Republic the ratification of that agreement for the incorporation of Texas into the territory of the United States." Translation Source: Ibid., 57.

those complaints as valid, they would announce to the world the rise of the empire of the United States. That was the irony of Green's arrogance to which Bocanegra so eloquently responded.

> "El sentido que estas expresiones envuelven y otras que también estampó su señoría en aquella comunicación y en la que va contestando el infrascrito si, es injuriosos y ciertamente desdice de las conocidas conveniencias diplomáticas. Esto sea dicho por el deber que el infrascrito tiene y por las órdenes con que se halla de su gobierno para el sostén de la dignidad de una nación que como la mexicana tiene el gran poder de apoyarle en la justicia y defender lo que es suyo."*[24]

In sustaining Mexico's rights in the face of U.S. aggression, Bocanegra defended the Mexican nación on equal ground with United States.

On June 8, 1844, Congress failed to pass Tyler's treaty by a vote of 16 in favor, 35 opposed. Nonetheless, the significance of the treaty remains intact. In particular, because it exposed the U.S. government's intentional disregard for Mexico's rights as a nation. Undoubtedly, this explains why mythmakers have omitted the treaty, as well as the support it received, from their texts. However, the events surrounding Tyler's treaty would not be the only ones to suffer such a fate. Great Britain's attempt to utilize the stalemate between the United States, the Republic of Texas, and Mexico to its own commercial advantage offers another example. In this instance, Great Britain sought to broker a peace agreement where Mexico recognized the independence of the Republic of Texas. Had the effort succeeded, it would have opened the door to European commerce in Texas, and most certainly cost the United States the opportunity to fulfill its territorial ambitions.

The Fictitious Choice between Annexation and Recognition

The election of James K. Polk to the Presidency of the United States a few short months after Congress failed to ratify Tyler's treaty helped breathe new life into the annexation movement.

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* The sense of these expressions, and of others to which that gentleman likewise gave utterance in that communication, and in the one to which the undersigned is now replying, is offensive, and certainly at variance with the acknowledged proprieties of diplomacy. This may be said in virtue of the duty of the undersigned, and the orders which he received from his Government to sustain the dignity of a nation which, like Mexico, has the great advantage of resting on justice, and of being engaged in the defense of that which is its own. Translation Source: Ibid., 69.

Within the public sphere, the rhetoric of his Presidential campaign succeeded in moving the question of annexation from a referendum on slavery to an obligation of the United States to protect the human rights and liberty of the Texas colonists.[25] It was a successful shift in the narrative focus that resulted in a Joint Resolution to Annex Texas only a few weeks after his election. On February 28, 1845, Congress passed that resolution. When Polk assumed office on March 4, there was only one ambition that influenced the tone of his narrative; war with Mexico. Mythmakers followed his lead and called the tools of duplicity, contradiction, double-speak, and misdirection into service and the pace accelerated exponentially.

The passage of the joint resolution led to another rupture in diplomatic relations between Mexico and the United States. Mexican Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary Juan Nepomuceno Almonte immediately demanded his passports. However, when Secretary of State John Buchanan responded on March 10, he made it clear that his resignation was of no real consequence.

> In answer, the undersigned is instructed to say, that the admission of Texas as one of the States of this Union, having received the sanction both of the legislative and executive departments of the government, is now irrevocably decided, so far as the United States are concerned. Nothing but the refusal of Texas to ratify the terms and conditions on which her admission depends, can defeat this object. It is, therefore, too late at present to reopen a discussion which has already been exhausted, and again to prove that Texas has long since achieved her independence of Mexico, and now stands before the world, both *de jure* and *de facto* as a sovereign and independent State amid the family of nations.[26]

Buchanan's words reflected an important aspect in the evolution of the façade of necessitated action in self-defense. In this passage he dismissed Mexico's sovereign right to Texas, thereby reinforcing the unimportance of Almonte's resignation. Moreover, he conveyed this message by reinforcing the rights of the Republic of Texas to a place among the emerging family of nations, deeming them worthy based upon a de jure and de facto sovereignty. This change in the status obligated the U.S. government to protect the sovereign rights of a fellow member. Hence, the aggressive actions of the United States were now a necessitated action in self-defense.

Although Buchanan's letter asserted his confidence that the annexation of Texas was imminent, published primary sources indicate that it was far from a guarantee. Writing from the Republic of Texas on May 6, 1845, United States Charge d' Affaires, Andrew Jackson Donelson spoke about the peace proposal brokered by Great Britain. In his estimation "There may be some increase of opposition, when the project of independence is brought forward by Mexico, aided by the temptation England might offer in the form of commercial advantages; but the opposition will be powerless, compared with the mass of those who, proud of their kindred connexions with the United States, are willing to share a common destiny under the banner of the *stars and stripes*."[27] Although Donelson confidence was high, his comments do point to an erosion of public support for annexation within the Republic of Texas.

This erosion was a direct result of nine years of failed attempts to annex the territory. In particular, a significant number of individuals within the Republic of Texas felt that the U.S. government had thwarted the integrity of their independence by conducting quitclaim negotiations directly with Mexico. Over time, two primary groups emerged. The first was composed of individuals who remained in favor of independence from Mexico. Within this group, there were two primary factions; those who still believed in annexation to the United States and those who had grown weary of the struggle. It was this latter faction that posed the greatest risk to U.S. ambitions since they sought to solidify the Republic of Texas as an independent nation. In order to accomplish this, they looked to Europe as a prime trading partner, hoping to execute trade agreements with various countries on that continent. The second overall group represented a small number of colonists that sought to acknowledge Mexican jurisdiction over Texas. However, they insisted on the condition that the Republic of Texas obtain the status of a State within the framework of the 1824 Constitution.

Such was the factional environment of the Republic of Texas when the U.S. Congress passed the Joint Resolution. Almost simultaneously, Great Britain finalized the proposed negotiation

between the Republic and Mexico. Despite Donelson's belief that opposition to annexation represented a weak minority, Republic of Texas President Anson Jones saw a need to convene a convention to allow the people to vote between the two options. Although he had not yet received either the brokered deal or the joint resolution, he sent out a proclamation on May 5 requesting that all districts elect members to attend a July 4 convention. On June 16, after he received a copy of the brokered deal, Jones announced the cessation of all hostilities with Mexico. One week later, Donelson delivered the official documentation of the joint resolution giving congressional consent to the admission of Texas into the United States of America.[28]

Although scholarly and popular works often omit Great Britain's brokered deal for Mexico to recognize the independence of the Republic of Texas, on those rare occasions when it does receive a line or two, it is inaccurately labeled the Smith-Cuevas Treaty. I refer to it as inaccurate because it was not a treaty, but rather a series of letters written between Republic of Texas Secretary of State Asbel Smith and Mexican representative Luís Gonzaga Cuevas. In these letters, the two men laid out various talking points for peace negotiations. In the final version, they proposed that Mexico acknowledge the independence of Texas so long as the Republic of Texas promised not annex itself to any other country. Furthermore, the proposal called for the Republic of Texas to agree to arbitration concerning disputed territorial claims.[29]

The real possibility that the Republic of Texas might accept this proposal and remain an independent nation caused significant alarm in the United States. The most serious threat came from the involvement of Great Britain and France. This turn of events sent shockwaves through capitalists who had leveraged their profits in land scrip that would only have value when Texas became part of the United States. Once again, they envisioned their financial ruin. For its part, the U.S. government worried that Europe would regain an economic presence on the North American continent. Such an event would negate the fundamental principles of the Monroe Doctrine. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, a well-developed and healthy agricultural Republic of Texas would

create significant competition for the southern states on the world market, in particular the highly profitable crops of tobacco and cotton.

In Mexico, the potential loss of Texas combined with the presence of the two proposals to provoke public debate. Those who addressed the annexation of Texas, interrogated the legal rights of one nation to annex the territory of another. Proponents stated that defining these rights was critical among nations that rejected a monarchial form of government.[30] An example of this position appears in G. Pedraza's essay *Dictamen de las comisiones unidas de relaciones y guerra, del senado, sobre dictar medidas para asegurar la integridad del territorio de la república, atacada por el decreto de agregación de Tejas a los Estados Unidos del norte* (1845). In this essay, Pedraza asserted that the U.S. government lacked the proper legal authority to annex Texas. Therefore, annexation represented a violent usurpation of the expressed sovereign territory of Mexico: "nadie podrá ocurrir que el acto de violencia y usurpacion de una potencia, de cuya naturaleza es el decreto de agregacion, sea bastante para privar a otra nación de sus legítimos derechos y del dominio de lo que le pertenece;"[*31] It was Pedraza's opinion that if Mexico allowed the United States to annex Texas under such circumstances, a grotesque precedence would be set that would pose a serious threat to the world.

Another pamphlet represented the arguments for and against the brokered deal under the title *Reflexiones sobre la memoria del ministerio de relaciones en la parte relativa a Tejas* (1845). The first section of this pamphlet reprinted Cuevas' speech to the Mexican Senate on March 11, 1845. In this speech, Cuevas articulated his support of the proposal within the context of the alternative; the annexation of the Republic of Texas to the United States. In order to prevent this outcome, he felt that national pride must be set aside. Furthermore, he warned that a war with the United States

[*] no one could think that the act of violence and usurpation of one power, whose nature is the decree of annexation, would be enough to deprive another nation of its legitimate rights and dominion over that which belongs to it.

would offer it the opportunity to fulfill its long-held territorial ambitions beyond Texas. The result would be the loss of an even larger portion of the Mexican territory. Therefore, from the perspective of Cuevas, the proposed negotiation with the Republic of Texas prevented further conflict and offered the benefit of a buffer zone between the United States and Mexico, with additional commercial protections coming from Great Britain. He closed his speech by reiterating the urgency of the situation since Mexico received "la noticia de haberse aprobado el proyecto de agregacion en la cámara de diputados de los Estados-Unidos por una mayoría de veintidós votos. Habiendo pasado al senado este negocio, depende de él que se lleve ó no adelante esta usurpacion inicua, sobre la cual va á fallar el mundo con toda la severidad que exigen una justicia clara, una política leal, y un suceso infausto para México y la humanidad."[*32]

The second section of *Reflexiones* argued in opposition to the brokered deal. Its unnamed author asserted that Texas was not just any part of the Mexican nation, but rather an extremely important region due to its fertile land and temperate climate. The author also emphasized the duplicity of the Republic of Texas in previous negotiations. In particular, they reminded the reader that while the Republic of Texas and Mexico discussed a resolution in 1844, the former was also negotiating a treaty for annexation to the United States. Moreover, the author felt that allowing the United States to remain in control of the region would have severe consequences.

> La raza americana, que pomposamente se titula anglo-sajona, asegura que se siente inspirada por la divina Providencia para limpiar á nuestro continente de las razas antiguas, y empujarlas hasta la Tierra del Fuego; y para ella, la realizacion de un proyecto ó designo ambicioso, no es mas que el anuncio de otro nuevo, y aplica desde luego todos sus esfuerzos y toda su constancia para consumarlo. No nos cansemos: la consecuencia inmediata de la pérdida de Tejas, es la de los

[*] the news that the U.S. Congress has approved the annexation project by a majority of 22 votes. Having passed the Senate, it depends on them to pass this business forward or stop this wicked usurpation, over which the world is going to pass judgment with all the severity that clear justice and fair politics demands, and an unfortunate event for Mexico and humanity.

> departamentos de Nuevo-México, Chihuahua y Californias, é inmediatamente despues vendrá la de Coahuila, Nuevo-León y Tamaulipas.*[33]

In the final analysis, the author felt that the insatiable avarice of the U.S. government to expand its territory and power precluded any settlement.[34]

Whereas Mexico openly debated the issue of the joint resolution and the brokered deal, the existence of the latter was silenced within the United States. This seems an odd circumstance if we take the confidence of both Buchanan and Donelson at face value. The obvious question would then become, what harm could come from a public discussion of Mexico's attempt to peacefully resolve the situation through recognition? Rhetorical in nature, we quickly answer our inquiry when we recall the reality of the strong divide among the citizens of the Republic of Texas, the concerns expressed by Woodbury regarding Oregon, and the strong desire of Europe to regain a commercial stronghold on the continent. However, the silencing of this peaceful resolution also interrogates the validity of the supposed choice of the July 4 convention. Donelson's account of the vote is telling.

> There was but one dissenting voice to the acceptance of our proposals by the convention, and that one afterwards affixed his signature to the resolution adopted on the subject; so that the ordinance now forwarded to you has the unanimous support of all the deputies. Thus are dissipated all the schemes of foreign powers to raise a party in Texas adverse to annexation; and thus has this gallant State vindicated her appreciation of the principles of liberty, and of the necessity of union with us in order to preserve those principles.[35]

It is fortunate that Donelson qualified the word *schemes* with *foreign powers*. Otherwise, we might mistakenly think that the scheme he referred to was the convention itself. Taken in isolation, this conclusion might seem frivolous. However, when we combine his recollection of the vote to his

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* The American race, that pompously titles itself Anglo-Saxon, maintains that it feels inspired by Divine Providence to cleanse our continent of ancient races, and drive them to the Tierra del Fuego; and for her, the achievement of such an ambitious plan or project is nothing more than a new announcement of the same, and the application of all its efforts put towards completing it. We will not tire: the immediate consequence of the loss of Texas, is the loss of the departments of New Mexico, Chihuahua, Californias, and immediately afterwards will come the loss of Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas.

previous directions to General Zachary Taylor, we reveal the contours of the fictitious narrative of the Republic of Texas convention.

On July 7, 1845, three days after the convention delegates voted to approve annexation to the United States, convention President Thomas J. Rusk sent Donelson an official request for U.S. troops "to occupy and establish posts, without delay, upon the frontier and exposed positions of this republic; and to introduce for such purpose, and defence of the territory and people of Texas, such forces as may be necessary and advisable for the same."[36] It was a request that repeated previous ones made by Republic of Texas Attorney General Ebenezer Allen. In those May and June requests, Allen had expressed his concerns that an invasion from Mexico was imminent. Therefore, he requested that U.S. troops immediately station themselves along the western boundary of Texas.[37] To each request, Donelson gave assurances that the orders to move U.S. troops into Texas were forthcoming.[38]

Without digressing too much, it is noteworthy to pause for a moment and look at who is talking to whom in these exchanges. Rather than a U.S. Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary speaking to the Secretary of State of the Republic of Texas and then communicating those discussions back to the U.S. Secretary of State for further direction, what we have in this case is a U.S. Charge d' Affaires taking direct action based upon his correspondence with the Attorney General of the Republic of Texas. We can reasonably draw two conclusions from these circumstances. The first is that the U.S. government chose not to send an Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Texas since it intended to annex the territory. Secondly, Donelson's conversations were not taking place with the Secretary of State for the Republic of Texas since that individual, Asbel Smith, was one of the co-authors of the brokered deal with Mexico.

Published primary sources indicate that Donelson had the necessary authority to influence troop movements. In those documents, we find a series of letters in which he directed the

movements of General Zachary Taylor. Encountering these letters gives us pause to contemplate the parameters of his power as a Charge d' Affaires. Furthermore, they run contrary to scholarly and popular works that commonly state that Taylor received orders to locate his force in or around Corpus Christi at some point in July or August of 1845, well after the close of the convention. However, documents show that Taylor received his first orders to leave Fort Jessup, a location twenty-two miles west of Natchitoches, and move into Texas on June 15, 1845. This was more than two weeks before the convention was set to take place. On that date, the War Department instructed Taylor to "select and occupy, on or near the Rio Grande del Norte, such a site as will consist with the health of the troops, and will be best adapted to repel invasion, and to protect what, in the event of annexation, will be our western border."[39] Interestingly, Taylor only went as far as Corpus Christi, maintaining camp north of the Nueces until he received subsequent orders on January 13, 1846. In contemplating his reasons for such an alteration to his directive, we can turn to Donelson's letters.

On June 28, 1845, thirteen days after the issuance of the War Department orders, Donelson wrote Taylor to inform him that the War Department of the Republic of Texas had made an official request for troops on the western border. Referencing the convention that had not yet occurred, Donelson stated that, "He will also bring you other papers, showing that all the branches of this government have given their consent to the annexation of Texas to the United States, and that the consent of the convention, which is to assemble on the 4th July, will certainly be given."[40] Under the auspice that Great Britain and France were advising Mexico to immediately attack, Donelson instructed Taylor to immediately move his troops in a non-offensive manner: "to the western frontier of Texas, in order that you may be ready to give the protection which the President of the United States has felt himself authorized to offer."[41]

Furthermore, Donelson suggested that Taylor "send your dragoons over land, taking the most direct route for San Antonio," also recommending that his soldiers "be furnished with

transportation direct from new Orleans to Corpus Christi, as being the most certain and least expensive route."[42] Finally, he reminded Taylor of the complexity of the border situation stating, "The occupation of the country between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, you are aware, is a disputed question. Texas holds Corpus Christi, Mexico holds Santiago, near the mouth of the Rio Grande."[43] He closed the letter with specific instructions regarding engagement rules: "You can safely hold possession of Corpus Christi, and all other points up the Nueces; and if Mexico attempts to dislodge you, drive her beyond the Rio Grande."[44]

Donelson did not send the U.S. Secretary of State the full content of his letter to Taylor until July 22. However, he did reference it on July 2: "I rise from bed, convalescent from an attack of fever, to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of 15 June. I had anticipated its contents, and requested General Taylor, by a letter of the 28th ult., to remove his troops without delay to the western frontier of Texas."[45] He then provided Buchanan with his military assessment of the situation stating, "My position is, that we can hold Corpus Christi and all other points up the Nueces. If attacked, the right of defence will authorize us to expel the Mexicans to the Rio Grande. It is better for us to await the attack, than incur the risk of embarrassing the question of annexation with the consequences of immediate possession of the territory to the Rio Grande. You will find that I have guarded every point."[46] Five days later, on July 7, Donelson once again wrote Taylor, this time informing him of the official acceptance of the Joint Resolution by the Texas Convention. Referring to his June 28 letter, he expressed his hope that Taylor was already on his way to Texas. He closed with another indication of his empowerment to dictate the military movements of this U.S. General: "Should Mexico declare war against the United States, you will of course receive more particular orders from the Department of War, and the scope of your operations will be enlarged."[47]

These letters confirm that nineteen days before the start of the Republic of Texas convention, the U.S. War Department ordered General Taylor to locate his forces on the Río Bravo del Norte. Moreover, they demonstrate the significant role that Donelson played in adjusting that movement. When we combine those actions to Buchanan's March 10 letter to Almonte declaring the issue of Texas "irrevocably decided", we reveal the fiction of the choice given to the delegates of the July 4 convention. Clearly, the peace proposal brokered by Great Britain was never a viable option. Nonetheless, the appearance of a choice was a critical ruse. Not only did it allow the attendees to safely assemble in order to write a state constitution, but it also afforded Taylor the necessary time to offensively position his troops in anticipation of Polk's next move.

The Ruse of John Slidell's Mission to Mexico

Tensions between Mexico and the United States reached a fever pitch once the delegates voted in favor of annexation. Although he remained at Corpus Christi, Taylor's movements did nothing to calm the situation. Once the citizens of the Republic of Texas voted to approve their state constitution on October 13, 1845, Texas admission into the United States was assured. Clearly aware that such an action would lead to war, Polk anticipated the need to prevent an immediate outbreak of hostilities. Therefore, on September 17, he instructed Buchanan to write to John Black, Esquire, Consul of the United States in Mexico. In that letter, Buchanan told Black that the President wanted to open back door negotiations with Mexico. Polk spoke about his instructions to Buchanan and the events of Slidell's mission in his May 11 speech to Congress.

In this speech, Polk told Congress that he had made the decision to attempt yet another diplomatic solution because of "The strong desire to establish peace with Mexico on liberal and honorable terms, and the readiness of this government to regulate and adjust our boundary, and other causes of difference with that power, on such fair and equitable principles as would lead to permanent relations of the most friendly nature."[48] He stated that the Mexican government agreed to receive a Minister. The man Polk selected for the job was John Slidell, a private lawyer from

Louisiana. Under the title of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Polk ordered Slidell to immediately depart for Mexico. With this title, Polk stated that he had empowered Slidell to "adjust both the questions of the Texas boundary and of indemnification to our citizens."[49] However, when Slidell arrived in Veracruz, the Mexican government refused his credentials. Polk blamed this outrage on the recent military coup d'état that had removed President Herrera from office. His replacement was General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga.

Since the intention of Polk's speech was to convince Congress to vote in favor of a declaration of war against Mexico, it is not surprising that his account of Slidell's mission took advantage of the façade of necessitated action in self-defense. Nor is it surprising that Mexico's collective response recounted a very different event. In particular, that response emphasized the ploy of Slidell's mission by contextualizing it within the events that preceded it. In doing so, these voices of resistance demonstrated that Polk did not intend to seek an equitable solution in the first place. As proof, they pointed to the issue of Slidell's title as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary. If the Mexican government accepted Slidell under such a title, they would have effectively restored full diplomatic between the two countries. Since the United States was about to seize part of its sovereign territory, the government of Mexico understandably rejected such a blatant display of arrogance.

Scholarly and popular works have omitted the specifics of Mexico's objection to Slidell's credentials. However, Paredes y Arrillaga clearly outlined the heart of the issue in his July 26 speech to the Mexican Congress.

> El gobierno de los Estados-Unidos no envió un comisionado *ad hoc*, como se habia ofrecido recibirle, sino un ministro ordinario; como si estuviesen ambos paises en relaciones y amistad, estándo ya interrumpidas. El designio de tal proceder era bien notorio; la admision de un ministro, en estos términos acreditada, era de hecho el restablecimiento de la amistad, sin que precediese la reparacion de la ofensa que la habia turbado; y la no admision del ministro, debia prestar un motivo á aquel gobierno para llamarse ofendido, y consumar bajo este pretexto la que ya se habia comenzado sin él. Comprendiendo esa conducta insidiosa el gobierno mexicano, no vaciló en seguir la que indicaba el honor, sin temor de las amenazas. Una nacion

> más grande que la nuestra, podrá tal vez ocupar nuestro territorio, hacernos inmensos males y destruirnos, si se quiere; pero jamas humillarnos y envilecernos impunemente. Esto no será dado á ninguna del mundo.*[50]

The reference to an ad hoc Minister pointed to the type of negotiation that Mexico had originally agreed to. However, the issue is not as simple as a difference of meaning. In intentionally ignoring Mexico's conditions for accepting a Minister, the U.S. government unveiled the truth of the Slidell's mission to Mexico.

On October 13, 1845, Black wrote to Mexican Minister of Foreign Affairs, Manuel de la Peña y Peña. In this letter, he conveyed the wishes of the President to find an amicable resolution to the problems between the two nations, asking if Mexico would be willing to "*receive an envoy from the United States, entrusted with full power to adjust all the questions in dispute, between the two governments.*"[51] Despite the gravity of the aggressive actions of the United States, Peña y Peña responded in the affirmative.

> mi gobierno está dispuesto a recibir al comisionado que de los Estados-Unidos venga a esta capital con plenos poderes de su gobierno para arreglar de un modo pacífico, razonable y decoroso la contienda presente, dando con esto una nueva prueba de que aun en medio de sus agravios y de su firme decisión para exigir la reparación competente, no repele ni desprecia el partido de la razón y de la paz a que le invita su contrario."†[52]

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* the Government of the United States did not send an *ad hoc* Minister, as we agreed to receive him, but rather an ordinary Minister; as if both countries were in uninterrupted and friendly relations. The plan of such an attempt was well-known; the admission of a Minister, in such credentialed circumstances, would have reestablished friendly relations, without proceeding to address reparations of the offense that had disrupted them; and to not admit the Minister, offered that Government the motive to claim it was offended, and carry out, under this auspice, the plan it had already begun. The Mexican Government, understanding this malicious act, did not waver in following that which honor indicated, without fear of threats. A nation much larger than ours, can perhaps occupy our territory, do great harm and destroy us, if it wants; but never can it humiliate us and degrade us with impunity. We will never allow any nation in the world to do that to us.

† my government is disposed to receive the commissioner of the United States who may come to this capital with full powers from his government to settle the present dispute in a peaceful, reasonable, and honorable manner; thus giving a new proof, that even in the midst of its injuries, and of its firm decision to exact adequate reparation for them, it does not repel with contumely the measure of reason and peace, to which it is invited by its adversary. Translation

The source of the conflict regarding Slidell's credentials resides in the subtle, although important, difference between what Black requested and what Peña y Peña agreed to. Black's request was for a Minister to adjust *all questions* in the dispute. Peña y Peña agreed to a Minister to adjust *the present conflict*. In Spanish, the key phrase is *la contienda presente*, the definite article *la* fixing the reference to a singular and specific dispute. From Peña y Peña's point of view, that dispute was first and foremost, the annexation of Texas to the United States. For the U.S. government, as Calhoun stated to Almonte, the issue of Texas had already been irrevocably resolved. The only pending dispute was the settlement of indemnification claims. Polk addressed this distinction in his May 11 speech: "I could not, for a moment, entertain the idea that the claims of our much injured and long suffering citizens, many of which had existed for more than twenty years, should be postponed or separated from the settlement of the boundary question."[53]

The attempt by the executive branch to entrap Mexico in the web of its mythological narrative was complex. If Mexico were to agree that indemnification claims were inseparable from Texas annexation, they would also have to agree that the Anglo colonists were citizens of the United States. As a matter of fact, since most of these so-called claims of injury had been backdated up to twenty years, Mexico's agreement would also signify that the Anglo colonists had been citizens of the United States during that entire time. Such an acknowledgment would then give credence to the argument that Texas had not been part of Mexico's sovereign territory since its independence. Thus, if Mexico agreed to separate the issue of annexation from the issue of indemnification claims, it would effectively nullify its own protest.[54]

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source: James Knox Polk, *Message of the President of the United States, Communicating Information of the Existing Relations between the United States and Mexico, and Recommending the Adoption of Measures for Repelling the Invasion Committed by the Mexican Forces upon the Territory of the United States*, May 11, 1845, 29th Cong., 1st sess., 1845-1847, 476.S.doc.337, 12, accessed October 17, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional.

Peña y Peña emphasized these points in a letter to Slidell on December 20. First, he acknowledged "las intenciones pacíficas y conciliadoras que el infrascrito manifestó al señor cónsul de los Estados Unidos en su nota confidencial de 14 de octubre último."[*55] Nevertheless, he asserted that he could not accept Slidell's credentials "con el carácter de que viene investido de enviado extraordinario y ministro plenipotenciario residente en la república."[†56] This was related to the reasons for which Mexico had severed relations in the first place; the passage of the Joint Resolution to annex Texas in February. Since that time, events had not lent themselves to a peaceful resolution, but rather the actions of the U.S. government had sought to stoke the flames even further. Thus, unless the United States was willing to adjust the issue of Texas annexation, the government of Mexico would not accept a restoration of normalized diplomatic relations.

In closing, Peña y Peña declared the willingness of the Mexican government to find a peaceful resolution and conduct a conversation with Slidell "tan luego como presentara la credencial que lo autorizara expresa y únicamente para arreglar las cuestiones que han turbado la armonía y buena inteligencia de los dos repúblicas, y que las conducirán a la guerra, si no se arreglan satisfactoriamente a lo cual se dirigió la propuesta del gobierno de los Estados Unidos, y fue la calidad expresa del gobierno mexicano al admitirla."[‡57] The message was clear; Mexico would not address the issue of indemnification until the topic of Texas annexation was settled.

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[*] the pacific and conciliatory intentions which the undersigned manifested to the consul of the United States in his confidential note of the 14th of October last. Translation source: Ibid., 30-1.

[†] in the character with which he is vested, of envoy extraordinary y minister plenipotentiary residing in the republic. Translation source: Ibid., 31.

[‡] so soon as he shall have presented credentials authorizing him expressly and exclusively to settle the questions which have disturbed the harmony and good understanding between the two republics, and which will bring on war between them unless such settlement be effected in a satisfactory manner, to which the proposition from the government of the United States related, and under the express understanding of which that proposition was accepted by the Mexican government. Translation source: Ibid., 32.

Slidell was not surprised by this response. To the contrary, he had anticipated such an outcome as he told Buchanan in a December 17 letter: "A refusal to treat with, or even receive me at all, in the only capacity in which I am authorized to act, under pretexts more or less plausible is a possible (I ought, perhaps, to say a probable) event." [58] Since he had not received direction on how to proceed if he were rejected, he said that he would "endeavor so to conduct myself as to throw the whole odium of the failure of the negotiation upon this government; point out, in the most temperate manner, the inevitable consequences of so unheard of a violation of all the usages which govern the intercourse between civilized nations; and declare my intention to remain here until I can receive instructions adapted to the exigencies of the case."[59]

More than a month passed before Buchanan penned a response on January 20, 1846. Coincidently, that date was only seven days after the War Department issued Taylor's January 13 orders to break camp at Corpus Christi and move south to a position along the northern banks of the Río Bravo del Norte.[60] In it, Buchanan agreed with Slidell's assessment, citing Mexico's unwillingness to let go of its "imaginary rights over Texas."[61] He then repeated Slidell's December 17 language almost verbatim, adding, "This sojourn will afford you an honorable opportunity to watch the course of events, and avail yourself of any favorable circumstances which, in the meantime, may occur."[62] Thus, he authorized Slidell's continued presence in Mexico in the event Mexico rejected his credentials.

The continued presence of Slidell on Mexican soil prompted various individuals to speak out in opposition. For example, Mexican Minister of Foreign Relations J.M. de Castillo y Lanzas expressed his frustration with the behavior of the U.S. government in a letter he wrote directly to Slidell on March 12.

> Las naciones civilizadas han observado con asombro que, en esta época de ilustración, y cultura, una potencia fuerte y consolidada, aprovechándose de la disensiones interiores de una nación vecina, adormeciendo su vigilancia con protestas de amistad, poniendo en juego todo género de resortes y artificios,

> apelando alternativamente a la intriga y a la de su territorio, desatendiendo los incontrovertibles derechos de la más incuestionable propiedad y de la más constante posesión. He aquí, pues, la verdadera posición de la República Mexicana: despojada, ultrajada, desatendida, aún se pretende someterla a una humillante degradación. Los sentimientos de su propia dignidad no le permitirán consentir en semejante ignominia."*[63]

In this passage, Castillo y Lanzas rejected narratives of inferiority through his expression of Mexican dignity in the face of the deceitful and aggressive actions of the U.S. government.

Such protests were not confined to the diplomatic sphere. El Nigromante (Ignacio Ramírez) expressed his outrage over Slidell's continued presence in Mexico in his poem *El Ministro Mr. Juan Sleidell* that appeared in *Don Simplicio* on April 8, 1846.

Véte al Diablo, Mister Juan,	Go to hell, Mister Juan,
Mister Juan, adiós, adiós;	Mister Juan, goodbye, goodbye;
Véte, porque no te dan;	Get out, because you are not welcome;
Véte, que no hay venga a nos,	Get out, because nobody comes to you,
Mister Juan	Mister Juan
¿Cómo te recibirán?	What will be your reception?
¿Qué tal viste a los salvages?	How do you see the savages?
Dícelos, Juan por tu vida;	Tell them, Juan for your life;
Tu misión aplaudirán	They will applaud your mission
Que fue misión divertida,	That was an enjoyable mission
Mister Juan.	Mister Juan.
Entraste en la diligencia	You entered the stagecoach
Y después pediste papa;	And afterwards asked for food;
Y debiste la existencia	And you owed your existence
A la purga de Jalapa.	To the purge of Jalapa.
Es cierto, el pueblo es patán;	It's true, the nation is rustic
Pero los conoce mucho	But you know it very much
Mister Juan.	Mister Juan.

* Civilized nations have beheld with amazement, at this enlightened and refined epoch, a powerful and well-consolidated State, availing itself of the internal dissensions of a neighboring nation, putting its vigilance to sleep by protestations of friendship, setting in action all manner of springs and artifices, alternately plying intrigue and violence, and seizing a moment to despoil her of a precious part of her territory, regardless of the incontrovertible rights of the most unquestionable ownership, and the most uninterrupted possession. Here, then, is the true position of the Mexican republic: despoiled, outraged, condemned, it is now attempted to subject her to a humiliating degradation. The sentiment of her own dignity will not allow her to consent to such ignominy. Translation source: Ibid., 58-9.

Ese pabellón de estrellas
Desplegó toda su gala;
Pero tu estrella fue mala,
¡Por Satán!
Véte por donde veniste,
Y diviértete; vas triste Mister Juan.

Vuelve a mascar tu tabaco;
Vuelve al buey y a la cerveza,
Porque te vimos el flaco,
Y perdiste la cabeza
A lo bausán:
Ve, y encomiéndate a Baco
Para olvidar tu simpleza,
Mister Juan.

A estrangeros como hermanos;
Mas no somos tan ilusos
Que toleremos intrusos
Que con aire de tiranos,
Desprecio solo nos dan.
--¡Vive Dios! si así pensaste,
--Confiesa que te clavaste,
Mister Juan.

Vuelve, chico a tus patatas,
Y hablarnos del Oregon,
Y a tus lides de piratas:
Vuelve a tu grande nación
De esclavos y cuarteronas,
Aragan:
Deja de ser diplomático,
Porque con eso ocasionas
Que te tenga por lunático,
Mister Juan.

Adiós, adiós, y cuán pocos
De nuestra tierra se van.
¡Con tu misión te luciste!
No este triste;
Adiós; no fue tan salvage
El pueblo a que echaste el viage,
Mister Juan!![64]

That flag of stars
Revealed all its pride
But your star was evil
By Satan!
Go back from where you came,
enjoy yourself; you are going sad, Mister Juan.

Go back to chew your tobacco;
Go back to the meat and the beer,
Because we see you look thin,
And you lost your temper
To the simpleton:
Go home, and get drunk
In order to forget your simplicity,
Mister Juan.

To foreigners who are like brothers
But we are not so deluded
That we tolerate intruders
That with airs of tyrants,
Contempt only gives us.
God lives! If like that you thought,
You confessed that you drove in the nail
Mister Juan.

Go back boy, to your potatoes
And talk to us about Oregon,
And your pirate stories;
Go back to your grand nation
Of slaves and quadroons,
Loafer:
Stop being diplomatic,
Because with that you will cause
That I think you are a lunatic,
Mister Juan.

Goodbye, goodbye, what a little people
Of our land are going
With your fake missin!
Don't be sad;
Goodbye, they were not as savage
The country that you traveled
Mister Juan!![*]

[*] I received significant help with this translation from Dr. Gilberto López y Rivas, Profesor-Investigador, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico.

In this poem, Ramírez utilized the imagery of the simpleton to paint a caricature of Slidell, and by extension the government that he represented, utilizing all of the characteristics of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. This unique approach accomplished two things. Not only did it effectively reject the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican, in particular narratives of Mexican inferiority, but in doing so, it also satirized the concepts of Anglo superiority that created such a mythological narrative in the first place.

Interestingly, while Slidell was in Mexico, the public in the United States remained largely unaware of his mission. When Polk addressed it in his May 11 speech, he utilized the façade of necessitated action in self-defense to recast Mexico's refusal to accept Slidell. Moreover, he asserted that this incident was yet one more piece of evidence that Mexico was unwilling to peacefully resolve the Texas issue. However, as we have seen, published primary sources reveal the details of Slidell's mission and support Mexico's collective response, pointing out the corrupt nature of these so-called peace attempts to begin with. Clearly, Polk knew that Mexico would not accept Slidell under the title Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary for the same reasons that Polk would have rejected him had the roles been reversed. Thus, Slidell's mission to Mexico was nothing more than a tactic to buy the necessary time to offensively position a variety of U.S. military troops. For it was not only Taylor who was on the move, but also Captain Robert F. Stockton and Colonel Stephen W. Kearney. The unrelenting march of deception was about to arrive at its final destination.

Unveiling the Façade of Necessitated Action

While Slidell was in Mexico attempting to convince the government to restore normalized diplomatic relations with the United States, Taylor was busy reinforcing his troops in Corpus Christi. At the same time, Kearney was in Leavenworth Missouri preparing to march his troops west and Stockton was sailing from Galveston to the California coast. Then, on January 13, 1846, Polk ordered Taylor to the northern banks of the Río Bravo del Norte. He arrived in early April and

set up camp. On April 11, Mexican General Mariano Arista, commander of the Mexican forces in the department of Tamaulipas, demanded that Taylor return north, claiming that his presence was an invasion into Mexican territory. Under orders from Polk, Taylor ignored Arista's demand and continued regular patrols on both sides of the river. On April 24, the two forces engaged, shots were fired, and sixteen U.S. soldiers were killed. This event became Polk's impetus for moving the rest of his plan forward. The next step was to ask Congress for an official declaration of war against Mexico.

When Polk recounted the events of April 24 in his May 11 speech to Congress, he stated that Mexican forces had crossed the boundary into the United States. To support his claim that Taylor was in fact within the boundaries of the United States, he stated that the region had been part of the Louisiana Purchase. Furthermore, he asserted that the Republic of Texas had always claimed the Río Bravo del Norte as its southern limit, maintaining that boundary in a variety of official papers, including a treaty between the Republic of Texas and Santa Anna. Finally, Polk added that the Republic of Texas had exercised civil jurisdiction in that region since its independence, and therefore Congress had considered the Río Bravo del Norte as the southern boundary when it annexed Texas to the United States.

If we only consulted scholarly and popular works, we could easily arrive at the conclusion that Mexico did not respond to these accusations. However, published primary sources indicate that such a conclusion would be erroneous. President Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga directly responded to Polk's May 11 speech in a July 26 address to the Mexican Congress later published under the title *Manifiesto del Exmo. Sr. Presidente interino de la República Mexicana*. In this speech, Paredes contextualized the actions of the United States through a lens that interrogated the contours of territorial power in the newly emerging non-monarchial world order. Utilizing Texas as a case study, he questioned the legality of one nation annexing the sovereign territory of another without the consent of the latter. He concluded that the dimensions of such a world would not

accurately reflect the principles of Enlightenment or democracy, but rather mimic the actions of monarchial rule. With that basic principal in hand, Paredes responded one by one to Polk's accusations.

He began by asserting that the United States had no claim to Texas, referring to the terms of the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty with Spain. Furthermore, he stated that the U.S. government had sustained the validity of that treaty when it concluded two subsequent ones with the Mexican government, one on January 11, 1828, the other on April 5, 1831. Despite those accords, Paredes underscored that the United States had repeatedly manifested its ambition to acquire Texas: "Sin embargo, los Estados-Unidos tenian desde entonces el designio de apropiarse aquel territorio, segun lo ha declarado terminantemente un representante autorizado de aquel gobierno cerca de este, en una nota oficial que no ha sido desmentida, y á este fin protejieron la insurrección de los colonos que México admitió en aquel territorio."[*65] Moreover, he pointed out the influence of private capitalists who had both morally and financially supported the Anglo rebellion. According to Paredes, their involvement had been critical: "los auxiliaron para resistir á las tropas que fueron a reducirlos á la obediencia; apoyaron su independencia absoluta, y aceptaron por último su agregación á la Unión, no obstante la protesta que el representante de México hizo, de que tal agregacion seria considerada como una declaratoria de guerra."[†66]

[*] Nonetheless, the United States had long ago planned to appropriate that territory, according to the categorical declaration of an authorized representative of that Government near this one, in an official note that has not been contradicted, and to that end, they protected the insurrection of the colonists that Mexico admitted into that territory.

[†] they helped them to resist the troops that were sent to bring them to obedience; they supported their absolute independence, and finally accepted their annexation to the Union, in spite of the protest that the Mexican representative made, that such annexation would be considered an act of war.

Paredes then highlighted the fact that the government of the Republic of Texas had never legislated south and southwest of the Nueces River. On the contrary, inhabitants in this area continued to be represented in the Mexican Congress.[67]

> Los decretos del congreso de Tejas, se quiere que sirvan de título de adquisicion de aquello que no poseian los tejanos, ni han poseido jamas, ni aun por una ocupacion de hecho; y que corroboren este título los decretos del congreso de los Estados-Unidos, dictando reglas de administracion sobre los puntos que se iban á ocupar para que así unos actos de usurpacion, ejercidos en forma legislativa, justifiquen la usurpacion hecha por medio de las armas.*[68]

U.S. published primary sources support Paredes' position. The only document that the Republic of Texas could point to as evidence of Polk's claim was an Act issued by the Congress of the Republic of Texas on December 19, 1836 titled *Act to Define the Boundaries of the Republic of Texas*.[69]

Although this act did reference the Rio Grande (Río Bravo del Norte) as the western and southern boundary of the Republic of Texas, Paredes was correct to point out that such a document did not establish the *de facto* administration of the region. In particular, since there had been an unbroken chain of representation of the region in the Mexican Congress as well as the departmental Congresses of both Tamaulipas and Coahuila. Furthermore, documents indicate that Texas submitted a state constitution to the U.S. Congress that omitted specific boundary language.[70] The intentional omission of this language was, in part, meant to ensure its final passage in that political body. Finally, as the Mexican government had repeatedly stated, the Anglo colonists were citizens of Mexico, therefore, any *de jure* right that the Republic of Texas might attempt to convey was nullified by that status. The Mexican government only recognized these individuals as citizens in rebellion. They had never recognized the independence of the Republic of Texas.

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* The decrees of the Texan Congress wish to serve as the title of acquisition for that which the Tejanos do not possess, nor have ever possessed, nor even legitimately occupied; and that the decrees of the U.S. Congress corroborate this title, dictating administrative regulations concerning points that they were going to occupy so that some acts of usurpation, exercised in legislative form, would justify an armed usurpation.

Paredes' speech incorporated these positions to negate the claims of the United States to the territory of Texas, describing Taylor's presence along the Río Bravo del Norte as an overt and outright act of violence against Mexico.

> Si Tejas decretando sus límites en el Rio Bravo era una nacion independiente, comprendiendo en ellos poblaciones actualmente bajo la obediencia de México, Tejas ejecutaba un acto de hostilidad, y un acto que no podia lleva a efecto sin una agresion sobre las poblaciones que pretendia dominar. Los Estados-Unidos obrando en nombre de los pretendidos derechos de Tejas, han cometido esa hostilidad, tomando sobre sí la responsabilidad de la invasion á mano armada, sin que de ella pueda excusarlos la hipocresia de las palabras con que pretenden haber sido invadido el que llaman su territorio, cuando al entrar en el pais la primera vez sus tropas de *ocupacion*, han encontrado humeando los escombros de las casas de los mexicanos que no quisieron sufrir la ignominia de ser conquistados; han establecido que una nación puede con las armas, ir á poner sus límites mas allá de las poblaciones que reconocen, y han reconocido de tiempo inmemorial y sin contestacion, al gobierno de la nacion vecina.*[71]

Moreover, he interpreted Polk's claim that Mexican troops had shed the blood of U.S. troops on U.S. soil as erroneous. To the contrary, he asserted that the incident was the result of the invasion of U.S. troops into Mexican territory.

In his address, Paredes also confronted U.S. violence towards the citizens of Mexico. Specifically, he pointed to the content of a proclamation that Taylor had published while in occupation of Matamoros.[72] Sent to Taylor from Washington, the opening paragraph of this document spoke about the savagery and brutality of the dictators of Mexico, instructing the citizens

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* If Texas, with its boundary claim in the Rio Bravo were an independent nation, incorporating in it populations actually under the obedience of Mexico, Tejas would have executed an act of hostility, and an act that it could not carry out without an aggression towards the populations it was trying to dominate. The United States, acting on behalf of the pretended rights of Texas, has committed that hostility, taking on the responsibility of the armed invasion, but it can excuse them the hypocrisy of the words with which it pretended to be invaded that which it calls its territory, when upon entering into the country the first time, its troops of *occupation* found the wet fireplaces of the homes of Mexicans that did not want to suffer the disgrace of being conquered; [in committing this act of hostility] the United States has established that a nation can succeed with force, impose its boundaries beyond the populations that recognize it, and have recognized it since immemorial time, and without replying to the Government of the neighboring nation. I received help on this translation from Dr. Gilberto López y Rivas, Profesor-Investigador, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico.

of Mexico to fear their own government. Moreover, it implored them to remain neutral in the upcoming battles, instructing them to avoid giving aid to the despots of Mexico. However, the most arrogant phrase of this document was its declaration that "With pride and pleasure we enrolled your name on the list of independent republics, and sincerely desired that you might in peace and prosperity enjoy all the blessings of free government."[73]

When we consider this passage, it is easy to understand why Paredes saw this pamphlet as a violent act against the Mexican people. Not only did it call for Mexicans to rise up against their government, but Taylor was also placing the inhabitants of Matamoros onto a list to which they had neither the control to create nor the ability to maintain. Through this action, the U.S. government communicated its vision of the pre-defined and subservient role for these individuals. However, the proclamation did not stop there. It continued by communicating the manner in which an individual could maintain their so-called privileged status upon the list: "Mexicans, we must treat as enemies and overthrow the tyrants, who, whilst they have wronged and insulted us, have deprived you of your liberty, but the Mexican people who remain neutral during the contest shall be protected against their military despots by the republican army of the Union."[74]

Paredes did not ignore the hypocrisy of this statement, in particular because Taylor made it while standing upon Mexican soil.

> Su territorio ha sido ocupado, sus tropas y poblaciones hostilizadas, sus puertos atacados, su comercio obstruido por bloqueos, sus rentas marítimas anuladas, y las amenazas de invasion repetidas. Pero no es precisamente en el poder material en el que confia un enemigo, que hace consistir en la seduccion su principal fuerza. El general Taylor en sus proclamas, en las publicaciones que dirige en Matamoros y en su correspondencia, no tiene mas objeto que desacreditar vil é indignamente al gobierno mexicano: excitar á la desobediencia, fomentando todas las semillas de sedición, para que reducida la nacion mexicana á un estado de completa anarquía, caiga fácil presa de las miras ambiciosas de los Estados-Unidos.*[75]

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* Its [Mexico's] territory has been occupied, its troops and people harassed, its ports attacked, its commerce obstructed by blockades, its maritime income annulled, and repeated threats of invasion. However, the enemy does not depend solely on material threats, they prioritize the seductive power of force. General Taylor, in his proclamations, in his publications addressed to

Despite the eloquence of this part of the speech, Paredes wanted to ensure that his message was clear, elaborating that Taylor not only make such a statement while standing on Mexican soil, but did so while professing to represent a nation that claimed to be the standard-bearer for freedom and democracy throughout the world: "Ofrecen los norte-americanos dar en cámbio de su dominación la libertad y la democracia, la paz y la abundancia. Sí, la libertad, la paz y la abundancia que han llevado á las tribus indígenas, precisándolas a vivir errantes: la democracia de que goza la gente de color en los Estados-Unidos, privada de todo derecho civil y político y excluida de todos los actos públicos y aun de los religiosos.*[76]

However, it was the proclamation's accusations towards the seated government of Mexico that most offended Paredes, provoking him to contemplate the impact of U.S. actions on the larger issues of peace and justice in a newly emerging democratic world.

> ¿Qué sería de la justicia internacional, si las naciones pudiesen alegar como títulos á los territorios vecinos, sus propias declaraciones de pertenecerles? ¿Qué de la paz del mundo, si ántes de toda discusión se procediese á las ocupaciones, y si la resistencia y la guerra contra ellas se llamasen ultraje, agresion é invasión cometida por los gobiernos poseedores de los pueblos y territorios ensangrentados por ambiciosos conquistadores?†[77]

Matamoros and in his correspondence, has no other object than to discredit the Mexican Government in a vile and unworthy manner: to excite disobedience, foment the seeds of sedition, in order to reduce the Mexican nation to a state of complete anarchy, to easily fall prey within the ambitions sites of the United States.

* In exchange for their domination, the North Americans offer to give us liberty, democracy, peace, and abundance. Yes, the liberty, the peace and the abundance that they have brought to the indigenous tribes, forcing them into a wandering life: the [same] democracy that people of color in the United States enjoy, deprived of all civil and political rights and excluded from all public acts, including religious ones.

† If nations could use their own claims to neighboring territories as their own right to title, where would justice exist? What of world peace, if occupation preceded all discussion, if resistance and war against such actions was called an insult, aggression, or invasion committed by the governments who were in possession of the pueblos and territories bloodied by ambitious conquerors?

That Paredes recast Polk's actions within the context of these questions was immensely powerful. Moreover, in doing so, he revealed Polk as a belligerent leader with only one ambition; to expand the borders of the United States of America no matter what the cost.

A Premeditated Military Conquest

U.S. published primary sources confirm that Taylor's orders to the northern banks of the Río Bravo del Norte represented only one of several actions meant to subjugate Mexico. Less than six weeks after the April 25 encounter between Taylor and Arista at the Río Bravo del Norte, General Kearney received orders to proceed over land to California. His instructions were to follow a route that would take him through Santa Fe where he would leave a military commander in charge before continuing west to take possession of Upper California.[78] The opening lines of those confidential orders issued on June 3 were telling: "I herewith send you a copy of my letter to the governor of Missouri for an additional force of one thousand mounted men. The object of thus adding to the force under your command is not, as you will perceive, fully set forth in that letter, for the reason that it is deemed prudent that it should not, at this time, become a matter of public notoriety."[79]

The wish to keep this offensive action out of the public eye was logical considering the immense threat it represented to the integrity of the façade of necessitated action in self-defense. If Kearney's orders became public, it would be difficult to convince the public that Mexico was the aggressor. The exact nature of those orders is manifested in the proclamations that Kearney made during his campaign, the first made in Santa Fe on July 31.

> The undersigned enters New Mexico with a large military force, for the purpose of seeking union with and ameliorating the condition of its inhabitants. This he does under instructions from his government, and with the assurance that he will be amply sustained in the accomplishment of this object. It is enjoined on the citizens of New Mexico to remain quietly in their homes, and to pursue their peaceful avocations.[80]

Through this proclamation, Kearney sought to prepare the inhabitants for what was coming less than one month later. On that day, August 22, he stripped all New Mexicans of their rights as citizens of Mexico: "hereby absolves all persons residing within the boundaries of New Mexico from any further allegiance to the republic of Mexico, and hereby claims them as citizens of the United States."[81] No longer satisfied with land, the United States, through Kearney, now claimed to possess the citizenship of the inhabitants. One month after that, on September 22, Kearney presented these now compulsory citizens of the United States with his forty-five pages of Organic Laws under which he obligated them to live. In doing so, he declared that New Mexico was now a Territory of the United States of America.

While Kearney was moving over land, Stockton sailed to California from Galveston Texas. His mission was to take control as Commander-in-Chief and Governor of the U.S. Territory of California. On August 17, he declared martial law stating that "The Territory of California now belongs to the United States, and will be governed, as soon as circumstances will permit, by officers and laws similar to those by which the other Territories of the United States are regulated and protected."[82] Furthermore, he made it clear that he would have no tolerance for those opposing his command: “No persons will be permitted to remain in the Territory who do not agree to support the existing government; and all military men who desire to remain are required to take an oath that they will not take up arms against it, or do or say anything to disturb its peace."[83]

To truly grasp the immensity of these two additional offensive movements, we must pause briefly to recall that, according to Polk, these actions were self-defensive, in response to the aggression of April 24. The absurdity of this claim is manifested in the immensity of the logistics that surrounded each of these massive troop movements. Moreover, to these movements we must add the process of writing a forty-five page Organic Law for the Territory of New Mexico. If we presume Polk’s self-defensive claim to be true, then we must also agree that all of the logistical

planning, law writing, and troop movements occurred within a time span of one hundred and fifty days.

Such a logistical feat would be impressive even in modern times. Thus, we concur with Mexico's collective response and state that the orders to and actions of Taylor, Kearney, and Stockton revealed a premeditated plan for the military conquest of Mexico. Furthermore, they reflected an effort that had been under way for a significant amount of time, most likely since Polk's election in late 1844, most certainly since the passage of the Joint Resolution on February 28, 1845. However, it is noteworthy that this conclusion was not isolated to Mexico's collective response. During the first week of January 1848, Massachusetts Congressman George Ashum introduced a resolution on the floor of Congress "which stated that the war with Mexico was 'unnecessarily and unconstitutionally' initiated by the president."[84]

On January 12, 1848, Abraham Lincoln, a freshman Congressman from Illinois, addressed his support of Ashum's resolution. In that speech, he outlined the same arguments against Polk's actions that had been central to Paredes' response. For example, he rejected the validity of Polk's premise that the Republic of Texas had a valid claim to a southern boundary of the Río Bravo del Norte. He stated that the state constitution of Texas made no such claim and that even if it had, "Has not Mexico always claimed to the contrary?"[85] Lincoln then addressed the long-held opinion that the so-called Treaty of Velasco officially marked the boundary of Texas.

> By the way, I believe I should not err, if I were to declare, that during the first ten years of the existence of that document, it was never, by any body, called a treaty--that it was never so called, till the President, in his extremity, attempted, by so calling it, to wring something from it in justification of himself in connection with the Mexican war. It has none of the distinguishing features of a treaty. It does not call itself a treaty. Santa Anna does not therein, assume to bind Mexico; he assumes only to act as the President-Commander-in-chief of the Mexican Army and Navy; stipulates that the then present hostilities should cease, and that he would not himself take up arms, nor influence the Mexican people to take up arms, against Texas during the existence of the war of independence[.] He did not recognise the independence of Texas; he did not assume to put an end to the war; but clearly indicated his expectation of its continuance; he did not say one word about boundary, and, most probably, never thought of it.[86]

In this same methodical manner, Lincoln countered each of Polk's claims, and in doing so, attacked the heart of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. He concluded that Polk had become lost in the mire of his own invention, leaving him "confused at being able to think of nothing new, he snatches up the old one again, which he has some time before cast off. His mind, tasked beyond its power, is running hither and thither, like some tortured creature, on a burning surface, finding no position, on which it can settle down, and be at ease." [87] It was a powerful statement that cost him his seat in the next election.[88]

Conclusion

The façade of necessitated action in self-defense played a critical role in justifying the actions of the United States between 1844 and 1846. It accomplished this by reiterating the inferiority of Mexicans within the context of their propensity for violence. Therefore, it was the savagery of Mexico that had forced the United States to act. It was in this manner that the mythological narrative continued to represent the principles of democracy and freedom in the face of actions that had no other interpretation than premeditated aggression. In response, Mexico forcefully rejected this mythological narrative. In its place, it revealed a complex series of events that had been executed with the expressed intention to forcibly seize its sovereign territory, no matter what the cost. In particular, it pointed to the events surrounding the 1844 Treaty to Annex Texas, the fictitious choice of the 1845 Texas State Convention, and John Slidell's mission to Mexico.

Mexico's rejection of the façade of necessitated action in self-defense continued throughout the war. Shortly after the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, fifteen Mexican intellectuals; Ramon Alcaraz, Alejo Barreiro, José María Castillo, Félix María Escalante, José María Iglesias, Manuel Muñoz, Ramon Ortiz, Manuel Payno, Guillermo Prieto, Ignancio Ramirez, Napoleon Saborío, Francisco Schiafino, Francisco Segura, Pablo María Torrescano, and Francisco Urquidi collaborated to write a critical history of the conflict from its origins through the treaty negotiations titled *Apuntes para la historia de la guerra entre México y los Estados Unidos* (1848). Their response to the

various narratives of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican focused on the professed intentions of the U.S. government to dominate the entire continent from the very inception of the Republic.

> Esa república anunció desde su nacimiento que estaba llamada á representar un papel importante en el mundo de Colon; y sus rápidos adelantos, y el aumento progresivo y asombroso de su territorio, y la multiplicacion no interrumpida de sus habitantes, y el poder formidable que ha ido adquiriendo por grados, son otras tantas pruebas de que ha de llegar á ser un coloso, no solo para las naciones débiles de la America Española, sino aun para los viejos pueblos del antiguo continente.[*89]

Thus, the authors recognized the early ambitions of the United States to control the whole of the North American continent south to the Isthmus of Panama. However, they made a point of highlighting the significant price to the integrity of a nation that came with such insatiable ambitions.[90]

For the hypocrisy of the events of 1845, in particular, those in which the United States feigned peaceful intentions while simultaneously moving troops into Texas, New Mexico, and California, had provided the authors with a useful example.

> De los hechos referidos resulta demostrado hasta la evidencia, que la causa real y efectiva de la guerra que nos ha afligido, ha sido el espiritú de engrandecimiento de los Estados-Unidos del Norte, que se han valido de su poder para dominarnos. La historia imparcial calificará algun dia para siempre la conducta observada por esa república contra todas las leyes divinas y humanas, es un siglo que se llama de las luces, y que no es sin embargo sino lo que los anteriores, el de LA FUERZA Y LA VIOLENCIA.[†91]

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[*] The Republic announced at its birth, that it was called upon to represent an important part in the world of Columbus. Its rapid advancement, its progressive increase, its wonderful territory, the uninterrupted augmentation of its inhabitants, and the formidable power it had gradually acquired, were many proofs of its becoming a colossus, not only for the feeble nations of Spanish America, but even for the old populations of the ancient continent. Translation source: Albert Ramsey, *The Other Side or Notes for the History of the War between Mexico and the United States* (New York: Wiley, 1850), 2.

[†] From the acts referred to, it has been demonstrated to the very senses, that the real and effective cause of this war that afflicted us was the spirit of aggrandizement of the United States of the North, availing itself of its power to conquer us. Impartial history will someday illustrate forever the conduct observed by this Republic against all laws, divine and human, in an age that is called one of light, and which is notwithstanding, the same as the former- one of *force and violence*. Translation source: Ibid., 32.

[1] John L. O'Sullivan, "Annexation," *The United States Democratic Review* 17, no 85 (July-August 1845), 5-10.

[2] The orders from Secretary of War William L. Marcy were specific. Taylor was to establish a camp along the river and begin defensive maneuvers. However, Marcy told Taylor that, "you will not act merely on the defensive, if your relative means enable you to do otherwise." Marcy to Taylor, 23 August 1845, in James Knox Polk, *Hostilities by Mexico. Message from the President of the United States, Relative to an Invasion and Commencement of Hostilities by Mexico*, May 11, 1846, 29th Cong., 1st sess., 1845-1847,485.H.doc.196, 78, accessed October 17, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional.

[3] Rational liberty is a phrase used by Austin in his March 3, 1836 speech in Louisville. See William H. Wharton, *Address of the Honorable WM. H. Wharton (4/26/1836 in New York) and the Honorable Stephen F. Austin (3/7/1836 in Louisville Kentucky) Regarding the Current Situation in Texas* (New York: W.H. Colyer), 1836.

[4] Numerous letters regarding these conflicts can be found in George Garrison, ed., *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1907: Vol. II; Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908), Google Book.

[5] "A Treaty of Annexation, Concluded between the United States of America and the Republic of Texas," April 12, 1844, The Avalon Project, accessed June 1, 2014, avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/texan05.asp.

[6] Ibid.

[7] See Andrés Tijerina, *Tejano Empire: Life on the South Texas Ranchos* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998) and *Tejanos and Texas under the Mexican Flag, 1821-1836* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1994)

[8] Andrew Jackson, *Opinions of General Andrew Jackson on the Annexation of Texas (*[n.p.], 1844), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926.

[9] Ibid. Polk's letter appears in this same PDF e-book.

[10] Levi Woodbury, *Letter of Hon. Levi Woodbury on the Annexation of Texas* (Washington, D.C.: 1844), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926.

[11] Robert Walker, *Letter of Mr. Walker, of Mississippi, Relative to the Annexation of Texas in Reply to the Call of the People of Carroll County, Kentucky to Communicate His Views on That Subject* (Washington, 1844), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926, 3.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Calhoun to Green, 19 April 1844, in Carlos Bosch García, *Documentos de la relación de México con Los Estados Unidos, 1 de diciembre de 1843-22 de diciembre de 1848: IV. De las reclamaciones, la guerra y la paz* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1985), 260.

[16] Ibid., 261.

[17] Bocanegra a los agentes comerciales mexicanos de Londres, París, España, Roma, La Habana, Ciudades Hanseáticas, Burdeos, Liverpool, Havre, Barcelona, Cáidz, 29 May 1844, 272.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Bocanegra to Green, 30 May 1844, 275.

[20] Ibid., 279.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Green to Bocanegra, 31 May 1844, 281.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Bocanegra to Green, 12 June 1844, 304.

[25] Donelson to Allen, 14 August 1845, in John Tyler, *Correspondence with Texas, on the Subject of Annexation¸* March 20, 1845, 29th Cong., 1st sess., 1845-1846, 480.H.doc.2/2, 102, accessed October 17, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional.

[26] Buchanan to Almonte, 10 March 1845, 131.

[27] Donelson to Buchanan, 6 May 1845, 43-4.

[28] Donelson to Allen, 23 June 1845, in Tyler, H.doc.2/2.480, 77.

[29] Tyler, 480.H.doc.2/2, 72. It is noteworthy that this letter was never referred to as a Treaty, nor did it have a format common to such a document. It is more akin to a letter of intent, expressing specific conditions under which negotiations might proceed.

[30] For a further discussion on the history of international law see Anthony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty, and the Making of International Law (*Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[31] Mexico, *Comisiones Unidas de Relaciones y Guerra, Dictamen de las comisiones unidas de relaciones y guerra, del senado, sobre dictar medidas para asegurar la integridad del territorio de la*

república: atacada por el decreto de agregación de Tejas a los Estados-Unidos del norte (Mexico: Impresa del Aguila, 1845), PDF e-book, Sabine Americana 1500-1926, 5.

[32] *Reflexiones sobre la memoria del ministerio de relaciones en la parte relativa a Tejas* (Mexico, 1845), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926, 10.

[33] Ibid., 26-7.

[34] Ibid, 38-40.

[35] Donelson to Buchanan, 6 July 1845, in Tyler, 480.H.doc.2/2, 84.

[36] Rusk to Donelson, 7 July 1845, 88.

[37] Allen to Donelson, 19 May 1845, 48.

[38] Donelson to Allen, 24 May 1845, 50.

[39] Bancroft to Taylor, 15 June 1845, in James Knox Polk, *Message of the President of the United States, Communicating Information of the Existing Relations between the United States and Mexico, and Recommending the Adoption of Measures for Repelling the Invasion Committed by the Mexican Forces upon the Territory of the United States, May 11, 1845*, 29th Cong., 1st sess., 1845-1847, 476.S.doc.337, 75, accessed October 17, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional.

[40] Donelson to Taylor, 28 June 1845, 93.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid., 94.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Donelson to Buchanan, 2 July 1845, 78. Buchanan sent Donelson a copy of Taylor's June 15th orders, to which Donelson replies he had already taken action.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Donelson to Taylor, 7 July 1845, 95.

[48] Polk, 476.S.doc.337, 1.

[49] Ibid., 2.

[50] Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga, *Manifesto del exmo. Sr. Presidente interino de la republica Mexicana* (Mexico: Impr. B. Conejo, 1846), 6-7.

[51] Black to Peña y Peña, 13 October 1845, in Carlos Bosch García, *Documentos de la relación de México con Los Estados Unidos, 1 de diciembre de 1843-22 de diciembre de 1848: IV. De las reclamaciones, la guerra y la paz* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1985), 598.

[52] Peña y Peña to Black, 15 October 1845, 599.

[53] Polk, 476.S.doc.337, 2.

[54] The issue of indemnification claims is a topic present within most of the correspondence noted in this dissertation. Therefore addressing it with any detail would be a significant digression. Nonetheless, it is useful to point out a few important points. First, in 1840, the King of Prussia acted as an arbitrator between the United States and Mexico to arrange a settlement for a large number of older claims. Although Mexico did make some of the required payments, they failed to make others. Polk did not directly address those missed payments in his speech, speaking instead about claims against U.S. citizens in an abstract sense. This is attributable to the fact that by 1846, most outstanding claims came from two particular sources. The largest portion came from citizens of the Republic of Texas who were seeking indemnification for losses they sustained as a direct result of their participation in the Texas rebellion. However, another important source was from U.S. citizens who had violated the neutrality of the United States and crossed into Texas to aid the rebels. As a hypothetical example, we can imagine one of Dunlap's troops crossing the border and fighting alongside the Anglo rebels. When he returns home to the United States, he files a claim with that government for the loss of two horses on the battlefield. The U.S. government would then file an indemnification claim for that loss with the Mexican government.

This type of situation underscores the hypocrisy of the U.S. government that claimed it could not control the free will of its citizens that chose to go to Texas and fight with the rebels against Mexico, but at the same time parlayed for their claims. Furthermore, although pressuring Mexico through a demand for payment of countless claims may seem like a strategic move on the surface, the problem quickly becomes how these claims are eventually paid. A response to that question runs central to the topic of the debt of Texas that remained unresolved until a decade after the Civil War.

[55] Peña y Peña to Slidell, 20 December 1845, in García, *Documentos IV*, 640.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid., 641.

[58] Slidell to Buchanan, 17 December 1845, in James Knox Polk, *Hostilities by Mexico. Message from the President of the United States, Relative to an Invasion and Commencement of Hostilities by Mexico, May 11, 1846*, 29th Cong., 1st sess., 1845-1847,485.H.doc.196, 20-1, accessed October 17, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Marcy to Taylor, 13 January 1846, 77-8.

[61] Buchanan to Slidell, 20 January 1846, 45.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Castillo y Lanzas to Slidell, 12 March 1846, in García, *Documentos IV*, 673.

[64] "El Ministro Mr. Juan Sleidell," *Don Simplicio*, April 8, 1846.

[65] Paredes y Arrillaga, *Manifesto*, 4-5.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid., 9.

[68] Ibid., 11.

[69] Texas, *Laws of the Republic of Texas Vol 1* (Houston: Telegraph Office, 1837), 133-4, accessed April 17, 2013, http://galenet.galegroup.com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/servlet/Sabin?af =RN&ae= CY3806285235&srchtp=a&ste=14. It is noteworthy that it took me three years to find this document since it was never referenced or mentioned with a date or specific reference. I finally found a December 1836 date attached to a reference of this document and took a chance I might find it in the only published congressional record of the Republic of Texas.

[70] "Constitution of the Republic of Texas," Tarlton Law Library, accessed November 10, 2009, http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/constitutions/text/1836cindex.html.

[71] Paredes y Arrillaga, *Manifesto*, 11-2.

[72] Proclamación a la nación Mejicana, in James Knox Polk, *Message from the President of the United States, Transmitting the Correspondence with General Taylor Since the Commencement of Hostilities with Mexico, Not Already Published, February 27, 1847*, 29th Cong., 2d sess., 1846-1847, 500.H.doc.119, 14-7, accessed October 16, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional. Although the proclamation itself has no date, Secretary of War W.L. Marcy writes to Taylor on 4 June 1846 that he is to sign and distribute the Spanish language document (13). In the published record, an English translation appears.

[73] Ibid., 16-7.

[74] Ibid., 17.

[75] Paredes y Arrillaga, *Manifesto*, 14.

[76] Ibid., 16.

[77] Ibid., 12.

[78] Marcy to Kearny, 3 June 1846, in James Knox Polk, *Occupation of Mexican Territory. Message from the President of the United States, in Answer to a Resolution of the House of Representatives of the 15th Instant, Relative to the Occupation of the Mexican Territory, December 22, 1846*, 29th Cong., 2d sess., 1846-1847, 499.H.doc.19, 5, accessed October 17, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Proclamation of General Kearny, 31 July 1846, 19.

[81] Proclamation of General Kearny, 22 August 1846, 21.

[82] Stockton to the people of California, 17 August 1846, 107.

[83] Ibid., 108.

[84] Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005), Kindle edition, 121.

[85] Abraham Lincoln, "The War with Mexico. Speech of Mr. A. Lincoln of Illinois, in the House of Representatives, January 12, 4848, on the Resolutions referring the President's Message to Various Standing Committees" in *Congressional Globe*, January 12, 1848. Cong., 30th, 1st sess., 1847-1848, accessed June 1, 2014, ProQuest Congressional.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Goodwin, *Team of Rivals*, 121-2.

[89] Ramón Alcaraz, Barreiro, Alejo, José M. Castillo, Félix M. Escalante, José M. Iglesias, Manuel Muñoz, Ramón Ortiz, Manuel Payno, Guillermo Prieto, Ignatio Ramírez, Napoleon Saborío, Francisco Schiafino, Francisco Segura, Pablo M. Torrescano, and Francisco Urquidi, *Apuntes para la historia de la guerra entre México y los Estados Unidos* (Mexico: M. Payno, 1848), 2.

[90] Ibid., 2-3.

[91] Ibid., 28.

CHAPTER 4

The Silencing of Atrocities:
The Anglo-centric Myth of the Mexican Justifies the Carnages of War

The death and destruction of the United States war against Mexico revealed the stark contrast between the message of Manifest Destiny and the realities of war. After thirty years with no significant warfront, those realities were a new experience for the vast majority of U.S. citizens. The loss of loved ones, the melancholic return of injured fathers, husbands, sons, and brothers, soon shifted public support away from the cause. Once again, mythmakers needed a new approach. However, this time it would not be enough to create stories with generalized characterizations that would emphasize target messages. In order to withstand the real life impacts of war, mythmakers needed to fuse their most powerful characterizations into one united story that could indoctrinate the public in the proper comprehension of the events that were affecting their lives. The result was a story that reinvigorated the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican with one universal and irrefutable truth about the war; that the United States effort was a glorified struggle against evil, an obligation befitted to the Providence and Destiny of the superior Anglo-Saxon race.

Once mythmakers had this new story in hand, they needed to disseminate it to the widest possible audience. The emerging genre of the dime novel offered a unique platform. Rising out of the newspaper empire, this highly popular form of entertainment offered mythmakers a space in which to create romantic stories of Anglo heroism and bravery that conveyed their one truth about the war. However, despite the rigidity of this principal message, their stories also displayed an impressive internal flexibility. That flexibility allowed authors to interrogate the parameters of acceptability into the Anglo self-conceptualization. Moreover, they transformed the inferiority of Mexicans into an immutable state of being that in turn, rendered their stories resistant to any contradiction.

However, resistance to contradiction and long-term survival were two very different things. In order for the one universal and irrefutable truth about the war to survive the ensuing decades,

mythmakers depended on the public to mimic their principal message through their own context manipulation. We see an example of this process in Helen Chapman's description of the July 4, 1849 festivities at Fort Brown, Texas.[1]

> It was the first anniversary of real American Freedom on this soil and to hear that great paper with its firm, calm temperate statement of wrongs, read in territory just wrested from the grasp of Mexico, seeing around me a crowd of men brought up under the daily influence of such principles, seeing them on the very verge of the Union and feeling how such notions of human rights must of necessity spread through the other so-called republic (Mexico), seemed to give me a feeling of Destiny, a kind of pre-vision that was overwhelming. At the close, "That as free independent States, we have," etc., my blood seemed to rush to my brain. I realized for the first time how good might come out of evil. Through blood, misery and moral desolation, this former part of Mexico is fairly launched into the great confederacy of States and the children´s children will see only the blessing.
>
> Besides there is something in seeing barbarism and civilization side by side, that affects you strangely. You feel the irresistible necessity that one race must subdue the other and where the moral precepts are not keen and delicate, they, of the superior race, can easily learn to look upon themselves as men of Destiny, impelled to conquer and subdue by the great design of Providence.[2]

Chapman's account of that day showed her indoctrination in the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. In this portion of her letter, she united phrases such as: "real American Freedom", "this soil", "statement of wrongs", "grasp of Mexico", "human rights must of necessity", "feeling of Destiny", "good might come out of evil", "children will see only the blessing", "barbarism and civilization side by side", "irresistible necessity that one race must subdue another", and "men of Destiny, impelled to conquer and subdue" into the proper context to recast the horrors of war into a glorified Anglo struggle against evil.

The process of creating and disseminating stories that could indoctrinate the public in the proper understanding of war was a critical wartime effort. Therefore, in this chapter I examine three dime novels that conveyed such instruction: George Lippard's *Legends of Mexico* (1847), Ned Buntline's *Magdalena, The Beautiful Mexican Maid. A Story of Buena Vista* (1846) and Charles Averill's *The Mexican Ranchero: or, The Maid of the Chapparal* (1847). Then I observe a unique example of how this process was used to silence one of Mexico's most eloquent responses to the

United States War against Mexico in General Albert C. Ramsey's English translation of *Apuntes para la historia de la guerra entre México y los Estados Unidos* (1848) titled *The Other Side: Or Notes For the History of the War Between Mexico and the United States* (1849).

A Living, Breathing, Mythological Narrative

As a literary genre, the dime novel sits outside the standard 19th century canon of American Literature. This status has meant that few scholars have analyzed it, and even fewer within the context of the United States War against Mexico.[3] This is an unfortunate circumstance since its association with the powerful medium of the newspaper, as well as its ability to reach a wide audience, endowed it with an immense amount of power. Whereas works by literary giants such as Poe, Melville, Hawthorne, and Cooper were out of reach for the average farmer living far from the population centers of the east, the newspaper, and therefore the dime novel, reached into even the smallest corners of the country. Moreover, the stories were simple, understood by those with even a limited education. In the case of *Legends, Magdalena, and The Mexican Ranchero*, the analysis that follows shows how each author disseminated the one truth about the war through the careful construction of their characters. Additionally, the space in which they allowed these characters to act was equally important. It was this agency to act, or not to act, within the environment of literary themes easily recognizable to the general reader, that interrogated the boundaries of assimilation into the Anglo family.

We begin our examination with George Lippard's *Legends of Mexico* (1847). In this work, Lippard's primary message was the righteousness of the war. He conveyed that message through the format of a sermon, preached to the reader by an omniscient narrator. The didactic setting of the sermon was a useful tool that allowed Lippard to indoctrinate his reader through a series of questions that provoked an emotional response. Each series represented a different façade of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican.

The opening line set the stage: "'Ho! for the New Crusade!' It was in the spring of 1846, that this cry, thundering from twenty-nine states, aroused a People into arms, and startled Europe, its Kings and Slaves, into shuddering awe."[4] Then, the narrator addressed the savagery of Mexicans against the backdrop of the façade of the benevolent colonist by asking why simple folk were so willing to march south to join the U.S. troops in battle: "Why was this? Because the infant Texas had felt the rude grip of Mexican Massacre? Because the homes of that virgin soil, had been desolated, the men butchered and the women dishonored, by the hordes of military chieftains, trained to kill from childhood, and eager to kill, for so much per day?"[5]

The narrator then reminded the reader that such savagery knew no bounds as the innocent Texas colonists learned when they rose up in defense of their land and freedom: "Why this Crusade? Was it because the Alamo, still cried out for vengeance? That gory Alamo which one day, dripped on its stones and flowers and grass with the blood of five hundred mangled bodies - the bodies of brave Texians cut down by Mexican bayonets and pierced by Mexican balls, and hacked by Mexican knives?"[6]

Finally, it reproduced the façade of necessitated action in self-defense to justify the actions of the U.S. government in the persecution of the war: "Why this Crusade? Was it because the American people, having borne for a series of years, the insults and outrages of Mexican Military despots, and seen their brothers in Texas butchered like dogs, at last resolved, to bear insult and outrage no longer, at last, determined to take from the Tomb of Washington the Banner of the Stars, and swore by his Ghost, never to stay their efforts, until it floated over the City of Mexico!"[7]

Through these questions and answers, Lippard fixed the parameters of the story that his eyewitness narrator was about to present. The introduction of that narrator was another important step in his construction of the text, since it had to be knowledgeable and trustworthy in order to be credible. Lippard handled the situation in a unique manner.

> Let me tell you a Legend of the war, a legend of the new crusade. What mean you by Legend? One of those heart-warm stories, which, quivering in rude earnest language from the lips of a spectator of a battle, or the survivor of some event of the olden time, fill up the cold outlines of history, and clothe the skeleton with flesh and blood, give it eyes and tongue, force it at once to look into our eyes and talk with us! Something like this, I mean by the word Legend.[8]

In this passage, Lippard authorized his narrator as the one true voice of the one universal truth about the war. Moreover, he stated that its story was a Legend, and since Legends were stories told in the language of the spectator, the narrator was an eyewitness to the events. Thus, Lippard transformed his narrator into a living, breathing representation of the mythological narrative. Finally, he gave it credibility by contrasting the Legend to History.

> A legend is a history in its details and delicate tints, with the bloom and dew yet fresh upon it, history told to us, in the language of passion, of poetry, of home! It must be confessed that the thing which generally passes for History, is the most impudent, swaggering bully, the most graceless braggart, the most reckless equivocator that ever staggered forth upon the great stage of the world.[9]

The distinction between the capitalization of the terms Legend and History as differentiated from the non-capitalized history in his work is notable. Accordingly, Lippard asserted that reader was about to experience a recounting of events "in the language of passion, of poetry, of home!" rather than the "swaggering bully" of History. Moreover, unlike the Legend, “History, deals like a neophyte in the artist's life, in immense dashes and vague scrawls, and splashy colors: it does not go to work like the master painter, adding one delicate line to another, crowding one almost imperceptible beauty on another, until the dumb thing speaks and lives!"[10]

Once the narrator was authorized as a credible witness, it described the scenery that surrounded the events it was about to recount. Here, like before, it utilized mythological attributes to describe the region. For instance, the narrator described the Río Bravo del Norte like a serpent. Although this depiction demonized the topography of the region, the narrator was quick to point out that the land itself was a paradise. Through this affirmation, it once again reproduced the glorified Anglo struggle against evil. Moreover, it furthered this representation by characterizing

the infiltration of the Mexican into the region as an evil act that has kept good Christians from fulfilling their Destiny.[11] This contrast between good and evil reaffirmed Lippard's earlier depiction of the conflict in Texas within the context of a Crusade.

Lippard repeated the theme of good battling evil throughout the text. For example, it appeared in the narrator's description of U.S. military camps in simple, rustic, and dull tones as compared to Mexican military camps that it characterized as places of oriental opulence, covered in gold, silk, and champagne. Lippard also contrasted the soldiers of both camps. On the one hand, there were the U.S. troops who were citizen-soldiers, fighting under the banner of light and heaven in order to defend liberty and freedom. This description was in direct opposition to the most vile creatures of the narrative; the Mexican Ranchero. Taught since birth to kill for a price, the narrator described the ranchero as barbaric, savage, an assassin for hire. Finally, Lippard attacked both Catholicism and the Aztec religion, describing them as the passive and mindless mechanisms that lead the dull and blind Mexicans to fight in an uncivilized manner. In the end, these contrastive descriptions instructed the reader that Mexican soldiers were assassins for hire, fighting under the banner of superstition, ignorance, and crime, whose central figure, the eagle, was reimagined as the lazy and passive vulture.

This type of imagery continued throughout the descriptions of a variety of battles. For example, towards the end of the description of the battle of Palo Alto, the narrator gives an account of the glory with which Taylor saw his valiant two thousand men fight in the face of an army three times their size: "Taylor, viewing the scene from the saddle of his steed, turned to an officer and cooly said, 'the day is won.'"[12] It then contrasts that glory to its portrayal of Mexican brutality: "Arista beheld it with an expression of overwhelming chagrin, and looked for Ampudia to head another charge, but that brave man, who had boiled a human head from mere vivacity, was gone. Perchance, the visage of Captain Walker, that unassuming young man, who always received the Mexicans with Kentuckian warmth, scared the hero of the boiling cauldron from the field?"[13] The

use, once again, of an emotional provoking question instructed the reader to opt for sentiment over fact, reinforcing the truth of the glorified Anglo struggle. Furthermore, it distracted the reader from any substantive interrogation of those facts, thereby demonstrating how context could be manipulated. For as we know today, the number of Mexican troops that fought at Palo Alto was less than double that of U.S. troops, the number killed, more than three times that of U.S. soldiers.[14]

In addition to the rhetorical tool of the sermon, Lippard also employed sensationalism. For instance, when the narrator described the retreat of Mexican forces to the west side of the Río Bravo del Norte after the Battle of Resaca de la Palma, it recounted the chaos that ensued, describing hordes of frightened and irrational Mexicans overfilling a makeshift raft. As a consequence of their irrationality, the boat sank. Lippard took advantage of the moment to have his narrator attack the blind obedience of the Mexican: "As it sinks, you see that solitary Priest, standing amid the crowd, in the centre of the raft, his uplifted hand, holding into light, the Cross of God. For a moment, it glitters, and then the raft is gone, a horrible yell rushes into heaven, and where a moment ago, was a mass of human faces, lancers' flags and war-horse forms, now is only the boiling river, heaving with the dying and the dead."[15] Furthermore, in sensationalizing the event, he utilized fear and horrific imagery to engrain the image of Mexican inferiority: “Four days afterward, those bodies, festering in corruption, floated blackened and hideous, upon the waters of the Rio Grande."[16]

A Siren of War

In *Magdalena, The Beautiful Mexican Maid. A Story of Buena Vista* (1846) Ned Buntline, (E.Z.C. Judson), told the story of the battle of Buena Vista through the romantic relationship between Magdalena Valdez and Charley (Charles) Brackett. One of its many dimensions included instructing the reader in the one universal and irrefutable truth about the war by emphasizing the battle between good and evil. However, in this case, that was only part of the lesson. Embedded within that theme was an interrogation of the parameters of the Anglo self-conceptualization.

Specifically, Buntline conveyed the parameters of the exotic, underscoring the acceptable boundaries of assimilation into the Anglo family. He communicated this lesson through Magdalena, the Mexican heroine of the story. In endowing Magdalena with the power to instruct the reader in the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican, he not only authorized her as a reliable eyewitness, but he also made her a potential archetype for assimilation.

In general, the pattern consisted of two parts; the perceived whiteness of Magdalena, and her agency to act. Buntline conveyed Magdalena's physical attributes to the reader by stating that she was Castilian. This was an important distinction, since it carried the connotation of European nobleness, rather than the mixed heritage of Moorish Spaniards. Although the narrator did not describe the actual color of Magdalena's skin, it did imply its whiteness. In classical terms, the narrator said that Magdalena was perfectly proportioned, with sculpted shoulders, and cheeks the color of pomegranates. Her hands were so fragile that they could hold no more than a delicate flower. For the reader, this description provoked a Grecian or Romanesque image. The narrator then contrasted that image with foreign traits, stating that she had full lips, jet black eyes, and curled hair.[17] This contrast instructed the reader in which physical traits sat outside the Anglo center, yet remained within the boundaries of potential acceptability.

However, physical appearance was only part of the formula, Magdalena's agency to act also played a critical role. Buntline confined that agency through her interactions with three men. How she responded to that confinement instructed the reader in her worthiness to be included within the Anglo self-conceptualization. The first of these male characters was her love interest, Charley Brackett. As a representation of the American hero, Brackett did not forcibly confine Magdalena's actions, since doing so would contradict the symbols of freedom and liberty that were central to his image. Nonetheless, her love for him did passively bind her ability to act.

The reader first meets Brackett when he arrives at General Taylor's camp to begin an assignment as a spy within Mexico. The reader learns that he is uniquely suited for this job, since

his mother was Castilian and his father, an original Texan colonist. This mixed heritage influences his description in the work, reflecting both Anglo and mythological characterizations. For instance, the narrator says that Brackett is well built, his muscles making up for any deficiency in his overall stature. Due to his Spanish bloodline, his skin color is darker than the Anglo. However, this coloring is less yellow than the cowardly Mexican.[18] Despite this oscillation in his physical features, Brackett's loyalty to the American cause is unquestionable because of the rape and murder of his mother at the hands of Mexicans. His father, grief stricken, died shortly thereafter. Thus, the bodies of Brackett's parents rest beneath the soil of San Jacinto, creating a connection to Texas that has fueled his hatred of Mexicans and has authorized his right to revenge.

Magdalena's father, Don Ignatio Valdez, confines Magdalena's actions within the boundaries of traditionalism. In particular, their old Castilian heritage demands her obedience to his rule. The narrator describes Don Ignatio in classical Roman terms: "The hair of Don Ignatio was white as the snows which cap Orizaba's mighty peak; his features were of a Roman cast, and his face wore that look of habitual dignity which seems so natural to a Castilian."[19] Moreover, the narrator praises his youthful vigor in the face of his sixty years of age, able and ready to use the sword that he always wore at his side. However, as a male inhabitant of Mexico, the narrator calls his mental capacity into question: "He was open-hearted, liberal to an extreme, and though once blessed with a considerable fortune, so careless of it had he been, that he was now involved in embarrassments; and even Buena Vista, his beautiful estate, was only held under a mortgage, the interest of which he scarce could meet."[20] The holder of this mortgage is the villain of the story, the third man who confines Magdalena's agency, Mexican Colonel Alfrede.

Colonel Gustave Alfrede is Mexican by birth. Therefore, the narrator casts him within the shadows of treachery. It is that evil which confines Magdalena. However, Magdalena fights back, attacking Alfrede every chance she gets. These attacks appear in her narrative, such as the time she describes Alfrede as a "crop-eared, shaggy pack mule!" [21] Regularly, Magdalena utilizes adjectives

that convey the mythological characteristics of Mexicans as dirty, small, inferior, slow, and dim-witted. In this manner, she instructs the reader in the inferiority of Mexicans. Moreover, the narrator reinforces her descriptions by utilizing adjectives such as demon, wild, deficient, dark, restless, cowards, bloodthirsty, fierce, vindictive, lazy, impatient, and yellow-skinned coward to recount events in which Alfrede was the actor. Finally, Alfrede's actions in the novel display his deceptive and shrewd nature, seeking only to secure his social improvement. In payment for Magdalena's hand in marriage, Alfrede has promised to save the Valdez name by paying Don Ignatio's debt.

The first encounter between Magdalena and Brackett takes place during a spy mission to Buena Vista. One day, while sitting in her room with her sister, Magdalena hears a commotion. She goes to the window and sees Alfrede and his soldiers in pursuit of a man. She tells her sister of the stranger's amazing ability to fend off his pursuers, saying that he is outnumbered more than four to one. However, his luck does not hold out and when the soldiers shoot his horse, the stranger falls into the clutches of Alfrede. Magdalena fears for his life, and she rushes to the scene. As she gets closer, the narrator says that she is taken aback by Brackett's nobleness. When she sees Alfrede raise his sword to strike, she cries out "Cowards! Would you strike a fallen foe?"[22] The sound of her voice startles Alfrede who tells Magdalena that the man is a Texan and she must immediately return to the house.

Alfrede asks Don Ignatio's permission to imprison the stranger within the Valdez compound. In Magdalena's opinion, the stranger does not look like a Texan, and therefore she feels he deserves Christian mercy. She decides to take him food and water. The narrator describes how she uses her seductive power to gain access to his cell.

> the lady smiled very sweetly - and then she put out her small white hand, and laying it upon his rude shoulder, pushed him very gently toward the bench where lay the food and wine. Her touch was so light that it would not have crushed a flower, yet, strange to say, it moved the stalwart guard from the door. She led him to the bench,

> and when she seated him, smiled sweetly and said - "Now don't look around - I will give him the refreshments and soon return!"[23]

Once inside, Magdalena sees the stranger sleeping. She bends over to awaken him with a kiss to his brow. Brackett is startled, but immediately enamored by her beauty. When she warns Brackett that Alfrede intends to kill him, he does not seem surprised. This is when Brackett tells her that he has recognized Alfrede as his sworn enemy, the Mexican who raped and murdered his mother. Although this revelation reveals that Brackett is a Texan, Magdalena also learns of the treachery of Alfrede, the man that her father has said she must marry. Therefore, she makes the decision to help Brackett, telling him of her plan to drug the guard the following evening. Brackett thanks her for showing him such kindness and tells her that when war arrives in Buena Vista, he will spare the life of any person that might one day fall under his sword.[24]

The next day, Magdalena once again employs her power of seduction to distract Alfrede away from his prisoner. When she sees the opportunity to act, she sneaks off and drugs the prison guard. She then frees Brackett, giving him one of her father's best horses with which to make his escape. When Alfrede discovers that his prisoner is gone, he is outraged. The narrator's description of Alfrede's reaction reinforces his Mexican barbarism, saying that his rage was so severe that he "ground his teeth together through his lips, till the blood streamed down upon his jetty beard; his eyes seemed like burning coals of rage."[25] Since Alfrede suspects that Magdalena has helped Brackett, he decides to interrogate her. In that setting, Magdalena admits her guilt and declares that she "assisted a wounded and helpless man, whom, at your cost, you know to be brave, to escape from the hands of a man devoid of honor, truth, or any of the qualities which make a man a soldier and a cavalier!"[26] She then tells Alfrede that she knows the truth of his crimes; the rape and murder of Brackett's mother.[27]

A short time later, Taylor's army arrives at Buena Vista. The narrator says that Don Ignatio has acknowledged that the Americans "never harmed the peaceably disposed inhabitants of the

soil, who did not join in the war."[28] When Magdalena and Brackett meet for the second time, Brackett reaffirms Don Ignatio's statement. In this encounter, Brackett assures Magdalena that he has upheld his promise to release all who come under his sword, telling her, "Americans are never foes to such as you. We oppose men like men; we meet the helpless with kindness."[29] Although Magdalena is grateful, her sadness is notable. When Brackett inquires, she tells him that her father has demanded that she marry Alfrede within two weeks. This provokes his admission of love, promising to rescue her from such a horrible fate. When Magdalena returns to her room, she declares that, "This war will not last forever; when it is over, he will come to honorably claim me; and for Alfrede, I would sooner die by my own hand than give that hand to him who I detest."[30]

It was unfortunate that during this encounter, Alfrede was lurking in the shadows, seething with jealousy. As soon as he sees Magdalena leave, he once again captures Brackett. When Don Ignatio learns that Brackett is again a prisoner in his home, he decides to go speak with him. It is during this conversation that the two men learn that Brackett's mother was actually Don Ignatio's long-lost sister who married a Texan colonist from Austin's colony. This revelation reveals the treachery, fiendish, and demonic behavior of Alfrede. Moreover, it opens the door for the assimilation of the Valdez family into the Anglo self-conceptualization. Due to Brackett's love for his daughter, and his maternal blood worthiness, Don Ignatio decides to sacrifice the family fortune in favor of his daughter's happiness. On the night of her marriage to Alfrede, while the two are standing before the priest, Don Ignatio releases Magdalena from her obligation, giving his consent if she wishes to marry Brackett: "Wilt thou wed him? My consent is given, for he is thine equal in birth, he is thy cousin!"[31] When Magdalena says yes, Don Ignatio insists that they marry at that very moment.

The battle of Buena Vista immediately follows the marriage of Magdalena to Brackett. Magdalena and her father witness the scene from her bedroom window, and she is overcome with fear for the safety of her husband. Don Ignatio is taken aback stating, "A strange transformation has

love worked in your heart, my daughter! A few days since and on bended knees you would have prayed for the success of the Mexican arms, now you seem only to fear for the defeat of the Americans!"[32] Magdalena's responds: "It is true my father, but when I wedded him, I became an American. We are not Mexicans. Spain alone has a right to our allegiance. Why should we hope for the Mexicans to conquer in this battle? That this now quiet city should be filled with troops of rude and licentious men, who respect no law and are governed by no principles?"[33] Through this passage, Buntline instructs the reader in the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican's narrative of assimilation; if a Mexican has white enough skin, comes from a European lineage, and is willing to reject their country and their people, it is possible that they might be welcomed into the Anglo family.

However, the dubious nature of that message is demonstrated in the final pages of the novel. The battle is over, and the Americans have won the day. The scene opens with Magdalena walking upon the battlefield in search of her new husband. The narrator describes the horror that she sees: "Her soul sickened, as she saw strewed here and there, everywhere the bodies of men, some disfigured by ghastly wounds; others with scarce a mark upon them. Horses and men - arms and accoutrements were every where strewed."[34] Once she finds the body of her husband, the narration shifts to a wounded soldier who has followed Magdalena in her search. As he approaches, he tells the reader that Colonel Alfrede lies dead upon the ground and Magdalena is embracing her lifeless husband. When the soldier reaches out to comfort Magdalena, he is shocked to see that she too has died. At that moment, Don Ignatio appears on horseback exclaiming, "Oh God! Give me strength to bear this loss! My Magdalena, the image of my lost Seberina is dead - the virgin bride sleeps by the side of her husband!"[35]

Magdalena's death while still a virgin has a significant impact on Buntline's overall interrogation of the parameters of assimilation. He began by presenting Magdalena and Don Ignatio as possible candidates for assimilation into the family of the Anglo self-conceptualization.

Then, he interrogated the parameters of acceptability through their actions and in particular, Magdalena's agency to act and the choices that she made. Although it appeared that Magdalena was worthy enough to pass, through her physical appearance, her vocalized distaste for all things Mexican, and her actions, Buntline's ending conveys that in the final analysis, her marriage to Brackett did not signal her acceptance. To the contrary, her death as a virgin ensures that this brief admission through marriage will in no way affect the future contours of Anglo identity. However, this ending should not come as a surprise, when we recall that it was not Brackett's acceptance of her as an assimilated Anglo that permitted their marriage to occur, but rather Don Ignatio's acceptance of Brackett's blood worthiness related to his maternal Castilian heritage.

Contrition and Restoration

The battle between good and evil and the boundaries of assimilation joined the theme of social restoration in Charles E. Averill's sensationalized mystery *The Mexican Ranchero or, The Maid of the Chapparal* (1847). Averill's work was significant on a variety of levels. The circumstances of its publication demonstrated the improvements in mass publishing during the war. The principal event of Averill's text, the hanging of the Battalion of Saint Patricks, took place in September 1847. Nonetheless, the date of the publication indicates that the publisher, Flag of our Union, managed to distribute the work prior to the end of that same year. Therefore, Averill learned of the event, wrote his text, sent it the publisher who then printed it, all within the space of three and a half months. In 1847, this represented a very short window, reinforcing the work's journalistic undertones.

In *Rejon*, the hanging of the Battalion of Saint Patricks symbolized the triumph of good over evil. However, this basic theme contained many layers of interrogation. For example, Averill marked this event as the end of the war thereby giving his reader a vision of the post-war era. This is notable since the end of his work focuses on the institution of marriage as a path towards the restoration of social order. Within that theme, Averill defined the boundaries of assimilation. As

Shelley Streeby stated in *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture* (2002), Averill's novel went to "great lengths to distinguish a white Mexican elite from the nation as a whole, which was often represented as disturbingly nonwhite."[36] However, it is important to point out that Averill's lesson on this topic differed significantly from Buntline. In particular, because the marriages that occur in *Rejon* took place after the primary battles of the war, and as such, would continue to impact Anglo identity well into the future.

Averill used tightly woven layers gave his reader a thorough indoctrination in the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. Each time he reproduced the mythological narrative, he built upon a previous use that shaped the dimensions of his instruction. Averill utilized this palimpsest, in conjunction with the simplicity of his narrative, to distract his reader away from any sort of critical contemplation of events, thereby ensuring maximum impact. Since such a complex structure affects our brief analysis, we will approach his text by focusing on what he conveyed to the reader via his character development throughout the entire work. In particular, we will look at how he used labels to fix the identity of his characters, subsequently interrogating their placement within, or outside, of the boundaries of the Anglo self-conceptualization. We begin with the American hero of the story, Captain Herbert Harold.

Averill constructed Herbert Harold as a representation of the ideal Anglo from the United States. As a Captain in the U.S. army, Harold regularly appears alongside Generals Taylor and Scott. The adjectives that the narrator most commonly uses are: handsome, gallant, brave, industrious, loyal, and trustworthy. This description is enhanced by his role as the head of the Harold family. Born in Virginia on an estate that had belonged to his family since the American Revolution, Herbert has a sister, Alfredine, and a younger brother William. One day, a relative, who Averill reveals near the end of the work, dispossessed Herbert's father of that estate. Consequently, the Harold family moved west to Mississippi in search of an uncle who had left years earlier, never to

be heard from again. Sadly, the trip overwhelmed his mother and she died. His father passed away soon afterwards.

Despite the tragedy of losing his parents, and the failure to find his uncle, Herbert's Anglo traits, in particular his industrious nature, allowed him to make a living for his sister and little brother. Alfredine thrived in that environment, quickly becoming a belle of local society. All was well for the three Harold children until one day a man attacked them while they were taking a carriage ride. Although Alfredine and Herbert survived, young William was kidnapped. In the midst of the ensuing melee, Herbert managed to get a look at the assailant who he immediately recognized as the relative who had dispossessed his family of their Virginia estate. Although they searched endlessly for their little brother, it was to no avail. When war broke out, Herbert received orders to report to the front. He did not hesitate to immediately answer the call.

Although Averill did not offer many details concerning Herbert's sister Alfredine, her role in the work is significant in the final scenes of the story. Up to that point, Averill portrayed her as the ideal Anglo female. The narrator tells the reader that she possesses the features of fine northern women, while also being sturdy and highly esteemed among the fearless women of the West. Although unmarried, Alfredine is secretly in love with a mature man who was once the Mexican Minister to the United States. His name is Señor Almora, and the two were deeply in love. Sadly, when war broke out, his government called him home and she has not heard from him since.

Contrasting the ideal Anglo male and female represented in Herbert and Alfredine, are the brother and sister "twin avengers of Mexico", Rejon, the Ranchero, and Buena, the Maid of the Chapparal. Although Averill often used the word hero to refer to Rejon, the assignment of the label Ranchero contradicted the hero image by representing the stereotypical description of a bloodthirsty assassin. This internal confusion of Rejon represented the chaos within Mexican society that Averill sought to reaffirm for his Anglo reader. However, the reader's first encounter with Rejon left no doubt as to his dishonor. In that encounter, the reader finds Rejon located within

U.S. occupied territory, in direct violation of the current ceasefire. Additionally, the reader only hears an "animal shrill of his fierce defiance" against the Americans presence in Mexico.[37]

Physically, the narrator describes Rejon as impressive in his manner of dress, opulent, possessing feminine sensibilities, and Indigenous physical traits. This narration is accompanied by a drawing that reinforces the description. In that image the reader sees Rejon atop an unsaddled horse, wearing a dark Moorish turban, the Aztec eagle upon his shoulder, an Arab scimitar, moccasins, and buckskins of buffalo hide.[38] It is through Rejon's discourse that the reader learns he has two goals; to defeat the American forces that are on the soil of Mexico, and to kill the American that burned his family home and kidnapped his cousin.

Averill enhanced the reader's instruction in the inferiority of the Mexican male through the character of Buena, the Maid of the Chapparal. Buena is a very complex character, playing two roles in the novel. She is Buena, the sister of Rejon, however, she also cross dresses and plays the role of Capitan Miguel Moreno, a confidant within Rejon's ranks.[39] Through her discourse, the reader learns that she took on the role of defender against the invaders of the Mexican nation because of the inadequacy of Mexican males, in particular, those who were in power. When in the role of Buena, her mission is to comb the land in search of opportunities to disrupt the enemy forces. While playing Moreno, she holds the confidence of Rejon, who assigns him (her) the task of ensuring the capture of his second most hated enemy, Montano, the Monster. However, it is important to note that the reader does not learn of Buena's role as Moreno until the closing scenes. Thus, the complexity of her dual role continues the chaos that Averill was seeking to create. The result is a complex description of Buena that utilizes oscillating adjectives such as noble, dark, war-like, Grecian, fearful, and beautiful.[40]

Although Averill initially characterized Rejon and Buena as undesirable Mexicans, he immediately interrogated that status using the theme of friend and foe. The first encounter between Herbert and Rejon occurs when Rejon attacks an American soldier in defiance of the

cease-fire agreement. Harold intervenes and the two begin to duel. While dueling, Rejon and Herbert learn about their similar life experiences. Rejon states that he hates the vile American because it was a group of Americans who killed his parents and burned down the home of his ancestors. That same evening, these same vile creatures kidnapped his young cousin, and drove Rejon and Buena off their land. Herbert is amazed at the similarities between their life experiences, telling Rejon the details of the kidnapping of William. This sharing of stories sparks a fellowship that provokes Rejon to set aside his hatred and cease the duel. He gives Herbert a silver star and tells him that all who see it will know that he is a friend of the Lion of Mexico.[41]

Rejon's gift serves Herbert well during his first encounter with Buena, the Maid of the Chapparal. While in route to Monterrey, a fierce group of rancheros begin leaping from behind the thicket yelling in a high shrill, "Hurrah for the maid of the chapparal!"[42] The narrator describes the scene as a "War declared among the fiends of hell, were not fiercer, deadlier, bloodier, than that demoniac combat of Mexican with American, volunteer with ranchero, guerrilla with dragoon."[43] Then, a lasso drops around Herbert, and Buena pulls him off his horse. However, he avoids certain death when she sees the silver star, discovering that his is a friend of her brother. Consequently, she allows Herbert and his troops to leave uninjured.[44]

In contrast to Herbert and Rejon are the two villains of the story, Montano, the Monster and Raleigh, the Renegade. Averill utilized Montano to give the reader a clear definition of the traits associated with a complete opposition to the idyllic of the Anglo self-conceptualization. This irreversible opposition was the consequence of racial intermixing that left Montano physically deformed and distorted. The label of Monster was also instructive. Averill used it to convey the horror with which the reader should view the indigenity of Mexico. He enhanced that message by occasionally alternating the label for Montano between Monster and Mexican.[45] Moreover, Montano functions to place Rejon within the possible boundaries of assimilation. Although it is an

issue of degrees of difference, Montano's activities as a spy and traitor combine with his unchangeable interracial impurity to place him so far outside the boundaries of acceptance that by contrast, Rejon may have some redeeming factors. The narrator underscores these degrees of difference when he uses adjectives such as fiend, imp, demonic, half-breed, wild, fearful, and terrible to describe Montano.

The reader's first encounter with Montano comes when Herbert finds him attempting to kill a young girl, Josefa, who is swimming out into a river to save a young boy from drowning. Herbert and his companion Colonel Wright, manage to rescue Josefa, but Montano escapes with the young boy. Returning to camp, Josefa tells the story of her mysterious childhood. She says that when the war began, her father, Raleigh, the Renegade, sold her and the young boy as slaves to a French family. Raleigh then joined the American army, but deserted shortly thereafter. When General Scott recaptured him, Montano appeared with a letter that said he was her uncle and that she and the boy should submit themselves to his will. Unwilling to do so, she remained a slave to the French family. Since then, Montano has tried to capture both of them.[46]

Thus, through Josefa's story, the reader discovers that Montano is the minion of the primary villain of the story, Raleigh the Renegade. In the closing scenes of the work, the reader learns that it is Raleigh, out of spite and jealousy, who stole the Harold Estates in Virginia. Moreover, he was the villain who attacked Harold and Alfredine and kidnapped young William. It was through such actions that he prevented any future claim to the land that he had wrongfully obtained. This behavior was in line with Raleigh's position as the leader of a band of traitors: "'By Heaven, it must be Raleigh, the renegade!' exclaimed Wright and Harold in a breath, and with the deepest surprise. 'The traitor, who, with his infamous band of seventy deserters, is now a prisoner and under trail by General Scott,' added the latter."[47] Streeby explored this clear reference to the Battalion of San Patricks in *American Sensations*. She stated that Averill's inclusion of the Irish Raleigh was an example of wartime sensationalism seeking to construct the boundaries of the Anglo identity. In

that light, she asserted that Raleigh represented the Irish who "are weak links in the chain of whiteness, who may have greater affinities for the mixed-race Mexican masses than the white inter-American family that Averill tries to construct."[48]

The careful placement of each character within the structure that Streeby refers to plays itself out by the time the reader nears the end of the work. In the center of the Anglo self-conceptualization is Herbert and Alfredine, representative of the Anglo ideal. As far from that center as possible are both the Irish Raleigh and the Monster Montano. Drifting in between these two oppositional poles are Rejon and Buena. With these placements in hand, Averill began his interrogation of the ability of Rejon and Buena to assimilate into the Anglo identity. For example, while accompanying Josefa from Monterey to Mexico City, Alfredine encounters Rejon when he rescues her and Josefa from Montano's attempt to kill them. Upon seeing one another, the two instantly recognize one another. Rejon is Alfredine's long lost love, Señor Almora. Thrilled at being reunited, Rejon exclaims "Can I now but avenge my murdered parents and my fair young cousin, then peace and happiness may once more dawn for me, and Rafael Rejon, at last cease to wage the dread warfare of Vengeance on the Invader, which has made the Lion of Mexico a terror and scourge to the race which murdered his kindred, but now gives him a bride."[49]

Rejon's name confuses Alfredine, and he explains that while he was in the United States he had used his mother's family name since it was her status as the niece of President Herrera that had secured him the job of Minister to the United States. Moreover, Rejon tells Alfredine that his father was an American, who had come to Texas in the early years of colonization. When tensions began to rise between the colonists and the Mexican government, he had thought it was wise to take on a name that clearly identified him as Mexican. To this day, his father's true family name remained a mystery.[50] The trio move on, and when Alfredine, Josefa, and Rejon arrive in Mexico City, they find that Herbert has rescued the young boy from the clutches of Montano. Alfredine is overwhelmed

with joy to learn that this boy is their long lost brother William.[51] Averill soon reveals how Raleigh, and then Montano, came to be in possession of both Josefa and William.

Another site of interrogation was Herbert and Buena's expressed love for one another. The two confess their feelings in a scene that follows U.S. Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary Nicolas Trist's capture by the Maid of the Chapparal. When Herbert's patrol comes upon the scene, a battle breaks out and both Buena and Harold find themselves in a compromising position. Unable to find a way to allow the other to save face, they were forced to do battle. However, Herbert maintains his status as her defender when he steps between her and a bullet shot at her by one of her comrades. Lying on the ground, wounded, Herbert declares his love for Buena. Although she reciprocates, she says that she cannot marry him because he is an American. When she tells him the story of their family tragedy, Herbert discovers that the American who burned their home, killed their parents, and kidnapped their cousin was none other than Raleigh, the Renegade. Seeing a ray of hope, Herbert tells Buena that Raleigh is not an American, but rather Irish, and that he is a prisoner of General Scott. He promises her that Scott will ensure that Raleigh pays for all of his crimes. After a gentle kiss, Buena gives in and allows Trist to enter Mexico City in fulfillment of his mission.[52]

In keeping his promise to Buena, Herbert presides over the trail of Raleigh, the Renegade. The court finds Raleigh guilty of desertion and sentences him to hang. The location of that execution is the Plaza de Arma, where the narrator describes the scene: "In a blaze of blood-red glare up rose the sun, as if dressed out in mimic mockery of the ensanguined scene it was soon to witness; and its crimsoned beams shone in fearful imagery upon the seventy and one gibbets erected upon the field of death."[53] Although Herbert, Alfredine, Rejon, William, and Josefa are present, Buena and Captain Moreno are oddly missing. Therefore, Captain Harold respectfully requests that General Scott delay Raleigh's hanging until the end, thereby forcing him to witness the suffering of his followers.[54]

Although Scott agrees to the delay, neither Buena nor Moreno arrive in time. Raleigh's final words reveal that the father of Rejon and Buena was the long-lost uncle of Herbert, Alfredine, and William who had moved to Texas and married the niece of President Herrera. Furthermore, Raleigh admits that in fulfilling his vengeance against the descendents of the Harold estate, he committed all the acts of horror against both Herbert and Rejon's families.[55] Captain Moreno interrupts the shock of the moment when he appears on stage holding the bloody head of Montano, the Monster: "Thus dies Montano the monster! Raleigh, the master-spirit of this fiend's villainy, hung upon the gibbet by my hands, Miguel Moreno's mission is accomplished! General Scott, I claim the privilege of being the deserter chief's executioner! It shall settle our long account!"[56] Scott grants the request, and the narrator describes the scene: "From each summit of the seventy gibbets a human form now dangles; the deserter band had perished, and one scaffold, the funeral pyre of the chief now hung, along remained without its lifeless prey. Thrusting quickly aside the headsman that stood ready at the rope, Moreno swiftly as he had uttered the words himself stood prepared to perform the functions of the executioner."[57] Moreno pulls the lever. Then, he moves towards both Herbert and Rejon and with a flash of the hand removes his turban. From that confinement, fall the long jet-black tresses of Buena, the Maid of the Chapparal, the heroine of Mexico.

Thus, it is through this act of contrition that Buena illuminates the path towards assimilation into the Anglo-American family. The worthiness of their bloodline resides with Rejon and Buena's Anglo father. The execution of the deformed Montano and the Irish traitor Raleigh has cleansed the sins of the past injuries that both Rejon and Buena have committed. [58] This cleansing allows the marriages between Herbert and Buena and Rejon and Alfredine to restore social order. From within Rejon's palace, the reader bears witness to these institutional functions, along with Josefa's father, Don Perez Herrera, "Ex-President of Mexico, the best and mildest ruler our misgoverned country ever saw."[59] For her part, Josefa represents the stability of this new social

order through her romantic interests in William. Moreover, Averill's placement of the figure of Herrera in this restorative scene was also significant. Through that appearance, Averill tied his work directly to Polk's declaration to Congress that Herrera's removal by General Paredes had been the impetus for Mexico's rejection of John Slidell, the final outrage that Mexico would commit against the powerful United States of America.

Silencing the Carnages of War

The lessons contained within the previously discussed dime novels ensured the long-term survival of the one universal and irrefutable truth about the war. We see the effectiveness of their methodology in General Albert C. Ramsey's English translation of *Apuntes para la historia de la guerra entre México y los Estados Unidos* (1848) titled *The Other Side: Or Notes For the History of the War Between Mexico and the United States* (1849). As a matter of fact, we do not have to go any further than his addition of "The Other Side" to the title in order to see that Ramsey intended to marginalize the original work by casting it outside the parameters of the dominate (Anglo) narrative of the war.

When the reader first engages Ramsey's work, they discover a Preface that does not appear in the original. Ramsey used this section to set the foundation of his rejection of *Apuntes.* In particular, he discredited the original authors by stating that, "It is seldom that a work is presented to the public possessing the double attraction of a literary curiosity, and also one side of a great question entirely original. This book is believed to be the first Mexican historical production which has been deemed worthy of translation into the English language; and its excellence will insure for its authors a high celebrity as men of taste, learning, and practical discrimination."[60] Alongside Ramsey's words of praise was an unambiguous attack of the author's credibility that he conveyed through the phrase "literary curiosity." In selecting the word curiosity, he conveyed the idea of strangeness that not only discredited the authors themselves, but by extension, their recounting of events.

Ramsey furthered this idea of strangeness through his method of translation. When we examine his effort, we discover a very uneven result. In particular, we see that his translation is so literal that it maintains a Spanish syntax structure. Since that structure differs significantly from English syntax, the resulting writing style appears awkward, and therefore difficult to understand. However, this awkwardness is only an illusion through which Ramsey has sought to reaffirm the general mythological description of Mexicans as ignorant and irrational, thereby reinforcing his characterization of the authors as strange. On other occasions, most commonly when Ramsey encounters a contradiction to the one universal and irrefutable truth about the war, his translation becomes interpretative.

For example, we can consider his translation of the second paragraph of the Introduction in which the original authors spoke about the nature and progress of their collaborative work.

> Las conversaciones recaian frecuentemente sobre las desgracias del pais; lamentábamos el comun infortunio; discurriamos segun nuestros caracteres y opiniones sobre su origen; y divagándonos en la relacion de las batallas de que algunos habíamos sido testigos, de los secretos en que nos hallábamos otros iniciados, sin compromiso de guardarlos, citando algunos, como comprobación de sus asertos.[61]

Ramsey translated the passage as follows.

> Conversation fell frequently upon the misfortunes of the country, we regretted the common evil, we discoursed according to our peculiarities and opinions upon its origin, and we differed in the relation of the battles in which some of us had participated. Secrets were alluded to in which we found others initiated without the injunction of silence upon them. Some of these were mentioned, and authenticated by those who told them.[62]

Although this translation appears to render the meaning of the original, that illusion only applies if we passively accept its content.

In the original extract, the authors are speaking about a collaborative process that was logical, reasoned, informed, and unemotional. However, since all of these traits run contradictory to the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican, Ramsey needed to silence their description. He accomplished this task at various points. For instance, he chose to translate "lamentábamos el

común infortunio" as "we regretted the common evil" rather than "we lamented the common misfortune" (my translation). This was a significant change, since the original work in no way conveyed the idea of evil. However, Ramsey's choice to employ the word evil underscored his reproduction of that facet of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican that has taught him that the deeds and thoughts of Mexicans are evil. Furthermore, Ramsey's use of "regret" rather than "lament" marked the internal fluidity of that mythological narrative. Unlike lament, which carries meanings of sorrow and mourning, the word regret carries the additional meaning of fault, in which one feels sorrow or remorse for an action they have committed. Thus, Ramsey's substitution was highly notable, discrediting the collaborative process discussed in the original text by combining a conveyance of the idea of fault to that of the evil of Mexican deeds. Moreover, since he obscured this message within his translation, the message his reader received is that the authors, as Mexicans, were at fault for the misfortunes of the war. In this manner, Ramsey alleviated his reader's anxieties as they read about the death and destruction of the war.

Another point in which Ramsey's instruction in the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican imposed itself on the above example is when he translated "discurríamos según nuestros caracteres y opiniones sobre su origen" to "we discoursed according to our peculiarities and opinions upon its origin rather than "we discoursed according to our characters and opinions about its origin." In this fragment the change from “character” to “peculiarities” once again represented his indoctrination in the fused mythological narrative. In the original work, the authors were merely pointing out differences between their individual personalities. Although Ramsey's choice of the word peculiar does convey a distinguishing aspect or quality, it also has the more common meaning of an oddity, something unusual or eccentric. Therefore, Ramsey's translation functioned to preserve the mythological narrative by informing his reader that the authors described themselves as odd and eccentric individuals.

Finally, Ramsey's translated "divagándonos en la relación de las batallas de que algunos habíamos sido testigos, de los secretos en que nos hallábamos otros iniciados, sin compromiso de guardarlos, citando algunos, como comprobación de sus asertos" to "we differed in the relation of the battles in which some of us had participated. Secrets were alluded to in which we found others initiated without the injunction of silence upon them. Some of these were mentioned, and authenticated by those who told them." This example is far more complex. In particular, because Ramsey translated “divagándonos” with “we differed” rather than “we digressed.” Since the origin of the war was the topic that preceded this fragment, and the authors used a semi colon to convey that connection, the authors were telling the reader that that they digressed from the topic of the origins of the war, to discuss the battles they had witnessed. Ramsey's use of the phrase “we differed” changed that meaning, in particular when combined with his other alteration of "algunos habíamos sido testigos" to "some of us had particiapted in" rather than "some of us had been witness to." This alteration connects to the previous one, demonstrating the internal fluidity of the mythological narrative. Rather than the original statement, that the authors digressed in their discussion of the origins of the war to talk about battles that some had witnessed, Ramsey told his reader that the authors, like all Mexicans, lacked the rationality to even agree on events that they had experienced. Therefore, in order to reach an agreement on what to write about, they had to rely on secrets they heard from others.

Therefore, in actively engaging just one brief paragraph from Ramsey's translation, we have seen that even before his reader reaches the first chapter of the work, he has conveyed the message that what they are about to read is a literary oddity, originating from a foreign point of view. Moreover, they should not to take the work too seriously, since the authors are odd and eccentric Mexicans whose defects have rendered them incapable of agreeing on descriptions of events that they have participated in. It was an all too familiar message for Ramsey's reader, one that fell well within the parameters of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican.

The Hanging of the Battalion of Saint Patricks

Ramsey did not always confine his effort to discredit the authors of *Apuntes* to a direct imposition of the mythological narrative on his translation. On several occasions, he used footnotes that he claimed were "purely for illustration, and without which many passages would be only imperfectly understood, that were intended for Mexican readers."[63] However, as we will see, these footnotes were a highly efficient method of silencing the authors. We can see this process in the chapters that recount the execution of members of the Battalion of Saint Patricks.

In general, Mexicans saw, and continue to see, the hanging of the Battalion of Saint Patricks as a particularly brutal and violent act. In contrast, in the United States at that time, it was hyper-mythologized through its immediate sensationalism as we saw in Averill's *Rejon the Ranchero*.[64] In this instance, the authors of *Apuntes* begin their narration of the events in the small village of Churubusco. Chapter Eighteen opens on the morning of August 20, 1847 with Santa Ana marching out of San Angel in order to take position in the hills of Toro. As his unit progressed, he met a fleeing group of cavalry and infantry from the battle of Padierna. Lacking any doubts as to the disaster that had passed, Santa Anna immediately ordered his Generals to take up a second line of defense, sending General Perez to the bridge of Churubusco. His instructions were to protect and defend the location, no matter what the cost.[65]

During these troop movements, a large quantity of ammunition was lost. This made the situation even more difficult, and after five hours of battle, many Mexican troops retreated into the city for the evening. The authors closed the chapter with the following description.

> Oscurécese el horizonte por nubarrones inmensos, que arrojan torrentes de agua sobre nuestros tercios vencidos: la noche envuelve como una gaza negra, en señal de duelo, á la desgraciada capital de la República mas desgraciada. Se escucha en medio del turbion el compasado andar de silenciosos soldados, que desalentados por el vencimiento, y rendidos por la fatiga, se retiran á sus cuarteles por disposición del general Santa-Anna, dejando en la garita solamente una pequeña guarnicion. A las nueve de la noche reina ya en las calles de México el silencio de la

> muerte, interrumpido solo por el galope del caballo de algun ayudante que trasmitía órdenes, ó por la voz de algun centinela que gritaba "¡Alerta!"*[66]

Through this narrative, we hear about the discouraged and tired garrison soldier whose silent presence marked the trice defeat of the Mexican troops.

In the translated version, Ramsey attached a footnote to the word Alerta. In that footnote he fixated on the figure of the garrison soldier, describing him squarely within the confines of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. In a previous footnote, he had told his reader that the garrison soldier possessed "all the cowardice which their constant defeats by the Indians have created, all the laziness contracted in an idle, monotonous existence, and very little military skill."[67] In this instance, he reminded his reader of that image.

> The call of the Mexican sentries is "Centinel Alterte" - a corruption of "Centinela Alerta." This custom is not used in the American army, and possibly is retained with them because something is wanting to constantly assure the officer of the guard that each link in the chain of sentinels is at all times occupied. The Mexican cry is faint, weak and really feminine, and by no means pleasant to the ear. The American hurra was on a lower key, but so deep and full-toned that the Mexicans could with difficulty believe it was earthly.[68]

Recalling that his stated purpose for footnotes was to convey an understanding of unknown information to his reader, it is interesting that he felt that the word Alerta would require such an explanation. In particular, since his literal translation had sufficiently conveyed the scene as originally wrote, the notion of Alerta invoking images of a town crier, or a sentry on post. However, when we closely examine his footnote we find that it reveals his attempt to once again convey the

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* The horizon was obscured by immense showers of rain, which fell in torrents upon our thrice conquered people. The night enveloped as a black pall indicative of sorrow the unfortunate capital of the most unfortunate Republic. The measured tread of the most silent soldiers was heard in the midst of the storm, who, overcome with being conquered and yielding to fatigue, retired to their quarters by the direction of General Santa Anna, leaving in the garita only a small garrison. At nine in the night there reigned already in the streets of Mexico, the silence of death, interrupted only by the galloping of the horse of some adjutant who carried orders, or the voice of some sentinel who cried "Alerta"†. Translation source: Albert C. Ramsey, *The Other Side or Notes for the History of the War between Mexico and the United States* (New York: Wiley, 1850), 287-88.

Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. In this instance, it works in conjunction with the previous description of the garrison soldier to reaffirm the image of a feminized Mexican, thereby resembling Averill's descriptions of the shrill of the Mexican Ranchero, demonic and bestial in opposition to the heavenly American hurra.

Chapter Nineteen relates the defense of the Convent of Churubusco. Since by the end of the war this particular battle had become controversial, the authors stated that their intention was to impartially describe the events allowing their reader to arrive at their own conclusion. In describing the battle, the authors reaffirmed the resolve of the Mexican troops to fulfill their orders and maintain the bridge of Churubusco. Their numbers counted some 650 poorly trained soldiers. It was not long before word arrived that a U.S. force was fast approaching. Twigg's division made the first attack, and the Mexican troops pushed him back. However, by the time Worth's division began their assault, their ammunition had begun to fail. When news of the situation reached Santa Anna, he attempted to provide assistance by sending a company of Saint Patricks with a wagon of park. However, the effort failed when the troops discovered that the wagon contained ammunition that was a caliber size different from what they needed.[69] The Saint Patricks were the only troops with muskets that fit the caliber of the ammunition, and the authors praised their efforts under such dire circumstances.

> A los únicos que sirvió aquel parque, fué a los soldados de San Patricio, cuyos fusiles tenian el calibre correspondiente. Su comportamiento merece los mayores elogios, pues todo el tiempo que duró aun el ataque, sostuvieron el fuego con un valor estraordinario. Gran parte de ellos sucumbió en el combate: los que sobrevivieron, mas desgraciados que sus compañeros, sufrieron luego una muerte cruel, o tormentos horrorosos, impropios de un siglo civilizado, y de un pueblo que aspira al título de ilustrado y humano.*[70]

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* The only men who used this park were the soldiers of the Saint Patricks, whose muskets were of the corresponding caliber. Their deportment deserves the greatest eulogies, since all the time the attack lasted they sustained the fire with extraordinary courage. A great number of them fell in the action; while those who survived, more unfortunate than their companions, suffered soon after a cruel death or horrible torments, improper in a civilized age, and from a people who aspire to the title of illustrious and humane. Translation source: Ibid.,295.

Although Ramsey's translation of this passage was clear, leaving no ambiguity to illuminate, he elected to insert the following footnote.

> These San Patricios were deserters from the American army, as has already been mentioned in a former note. In a general court martial 29 of them were tried and found guilty; 16 of them were hung at San Angel on the 10th of September. Some were branded on the cheek with the letter D, who had deserted before the actual commencement of hostilities, and received in addition the lash well laid on. Others were recommended to mercy, and some had mitigating circumstances in their favor; all of whom of course were pardoned by General Scott. This American general is one of the last men in the world against whom the charge of cruelty with any justice can be brought. His humanity on all occasions, his kindness as evinced to every individual, and his sympathy and attention to the sick and wounded, endeared him to the whole army, officers and soldiers. In fact, the very generosity and excellence of his heart led him sometimes too far, and he has since reaped in ingratitude the good seed sown in the fullness of his noble sensibilities. But it does not become the Mexicans to criticize this proper treatment of the deserters, since they have meted out the same punishment of death to their deserters.[71]

Taking up nearly half the page, this passage reads more like a sermon in defense of General Scott than an effort to clarify an unintelligible passage for his reader. Furthermore, it deflects attention away from the actions of these soldiers, who were taking up the defense of Mexico in the face of overwhelming odds and undoubtedly without the promise of any great reward. Nonetheless, Ramsey has learned that such a portrayal cannot exist within the confines of the one universal and irrefutable truth about the war. Therefore, he must silence the contradiction. The only way he can do this is by diverting the reader's attention away from the event and discrediting the authors through an open attack of their criticism of Scott. By emphasizing their reaction as unbecoming in the face of Mexico's treatment of its deserting soldiers, Ramsey succeeded in obscuring the actions of the United States.

However, the eloquence of the author's passage warrants our active engagement. In order to access the experiences that have influenced their narrative, we must briefly digress and consider a handful of additional documents. The first of these is General Scott's May 11, 1847 proclamation from Jalapa. Addressed as an open letter to the Mexican people, in this writing Scott conveyed a desire to correct Mexicans ignorance regarding recent events of the war.[72] Although he did not

provide a list of the specific events to which he was referring, we can reasonably point to the March 1847 siege of Veracruz. During this twenty-day battle, local Mexican authorities pleaded with Scott for a cease-fire that would permit women and children to leave the city. Interpreting their request as a delay tactic, he refused and continued his bombardment. Once he secured the city, he marched from Veracruz to Jalapa. Along the way, he encountered a large number of troops in Cerro Gordo. The ensuing battle resulted in the death of more than 1,000 Mexican troops. More than 3,000 were taken prisoner.[73]

A few weeks after that battle, Scott'as address proclaimed that it was his "duty to address you, in order to lay before you truths of which you are ignorant, because they have been criminally concealed from you."[74] Reiterating that the origins of the war were unimportant, since Mexico had left the United States with no choice but to undertake hostilities, Scott professed a desire for peace, placing blame for the continuation of the war on the Mexican government. He then called on the Mexican people to rise up against their ruling despots.

> Abandon, then, state prejudices; cease to be the sport of private ambition; and conduct yourselves like a great American nation. Abandon at once those old colonial habits, and learn to be truly free - truly republican. You may then soon attain prosperity and happiness, of which you possess all the elements; but *remember that you are Americans,* and that your happiness is not to come from Europe.
>
> I desire, in conclusion, to say to you, with equal frankness, that were it necessary, an army of one hundred thousand Americans would soon be among you; and that the United States, if forced to terminate, by arms, their differences with you, would not do it in an uncertain or precarious, or still less in a dishonorable manner. It would be an insult to the intelligent people of this country to doubt their knowledge of our power. [75]

Scott's comments are remarkable when juxtaposed with the events of Veracruz and Cerro Gordo. The imperialistic tone of his message was unmistakable, in particular his indirect reference to the obliteration of the Mexican race if the people continued to resist the wishes of the United States. Furthermore, Scott's proclamation reflected the position of his superiors in Washington as we see in his September 1, 1847 orders from Acting Secretary of War J.Y. Mason. Mason's letter reflected

the U.S. government's frustration with Mexico's refusal to submit to their demands: "The obstinate persistence of the Mexicans in refusing to treat, their utter disregard of the rules of civilized warfare, and the large expenditures which we are compelled to make, have impressed on the President the firm conviction that those rights of exacting contribution from the enemy, which are conferred on a belligerent by the acknowledged law of nations should be exercised."[76] He continued by telling Scott that Mexican property holders "must be made to feel its [wars] evils."[77]

They must be made to feel its evils. It is a phrase that bears repeating. Mason felt that the only way the Mexican government would submit to the will of the U.S. government was to inflict evil upon the Mexican people. This was the reality to which the authors of *Apuntes* responded. Their criticism of the hanging of the Saint Patricks was informed, in part, by the violence that Scott had recently advocated. For when we combine the siege of Veracruz, the battle of Cerro Gordo, Scott's Jalapa proclamation, Mason's orders, and the hanging of the Saint Patricks, we more fully comprehend the level of violence to which they spoke. Moreover, we reveal that Ramsey's footnote did not seek to enlighten his reader, but rather sought to silence these carnages of war.

Not surprisingly, Ramsey did not contain his imposition of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican to this one instance. To the contrary, he inserted another footnote in the closing paragraph of the chapter. In that section, the authors had described the scene as various U.S. forces and their auxiliaries arrived at the convent. In particular, they highlighted General Anaya's reaction to a small band of Mexicans who had fought on the behalf of the United States.

> El patriotismo y la sociedad se horrorizan, al contar entre los vencedores que hacian su entrada triunfal en Churubusco, una cuadrilla de bandidos, que con el nombre de *contra-guerrilleros*, capitaneaba el famoso Dominguez, y que como auxiliares del ejército americano hacian la guerra a su patria, con mas encarnizamiento que los mismos enemigos. El general Anaya, ya prisionero, impelido de un sentimiento de execracion y horror, apostrofó al insolente cabecilla, llamándole traidor, con riesgo de su propia vida.[*78]

[*] Patriotism and society were horrified in meeting among the conquerors, who made their triumphal entry into Churubusco, a little squadron of bandits, who, under the name of *contra*

Although the identity of Dominguez would most likely be unknown to his reader and therefore fall within his parameters of a clarification footnote, Ramsey began his passage with a reprisal of his previous diatribe.

> It can reasonably be supposed by the charitable reader, that, if Dominguez and his company had fallen into Mexican hands, they would have received a welcome not "improper in a civilized age." The coincidence was rather remarkable of the "Spy Company," as Dominguez's party was called by the Americans, meeting with the San Patricios; and while Anaya was apostrophixing the "cabecilla" in, no doubt, the most refined Castilian, Twiggs and Worth were ventilating their vocabulary of Saxon expletives, not very "courteously" on Riley and his beautiful disciples of St. Patrick.[79]

Once he returned to the topic of Dominquez, he still failed to provide his reader with any enlightening information beyond a description of the man that reproduction of the fused Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican.

> Dominguez is called a "little chief", which is a diminutive only, and does not apply to his stature. He was a large, muscular, powerful, and courageous Mexican. His company, about 150 in number, resembled him. They all fought well and faithfully for the Americans, and contributed considerably to a proper knowledge of the ground and enemy's positions. They were called *contra guerrilleros*, from the fact that, in their Mexican innocence, they alleged the guerrillas on the Vera Cruz road had broken up, or rather monopolized, their trade, which was highway robbing. To make, therefore, another honest living, in another honest way, they changed from robbers to traitors. This information is not derived from a third person, but from Dominguez himself and his men. If all the Mexicans had fought as they did, some chapters of this war would not have been written. [80]

Therefore, after two very long paragraphs, the only thing that his reader learned was that Dominquez and his men fought alongside U.S. forces. The authors of *Apuntes* had given that information to the reader in the first place. Therefore, we are left to inquire, what unknown information did Ramsey's footnote provide?

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guerrilleros, whom the famous Dominguez led as Captain, and as auxiliaries of the American army, made war on their country, more sanguinary than the very enemy. General Anaya, now prisoner, impelled by a feeling of execration and horror, apostrophized the insolent little chief, calling him traitor, at the risk of his own life. Translation source: Ibid., 298-99.

The question is not as rhetorical as it might seem. For within Ramsey's footnote we find an interrogation of the parameters of assimilation into the Anglo family. This would be the unknown information that he believed warranted a footnote. In this instance, Ramsey clarified that Dominquez came to assist the U.S. Army as part of his journey from robber to traitor. The descriptions of robber and traitor reproduced the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican's characterization of Mexicans as untrustworthy. This type of characterization would have been familiar to the reader who was also familiar with the character of Rejon in Averill's *Rejon the Ranchero*. Therefore, much like Rejon, Dominquez and his men might possess attributes that hold out the possibility of improvement, so long as they (continue to) associate with the proper sort of people. Thus, Ramsey's footnote informs the reader that Dominquez and his men sought out an honest living by associating the United States and as such, represented the ideal as conveyed in Taylor's proclamation in Matamoros as well as Scott's in Jalapa.

It is in these examples that we find a clear connection between the mythmaker's instruction and Ramsey's manipulation of context in order to preserve and protect the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican and the one universal and irrefutable truth about the war. Ramsey's translation of *Apuntes* demonstrates that he was an able student, manipulating the original work to convey a message that said our side (the United States) acted no differently than your side (Mexico). In doing so, he relieved his reader's anxieties as they were confronted with the brutality of the hanging of the Battalion of Saint Patricks.

Conclusion

Mythmakers successfully adopted new cultural forms such as the dime novel, popular histories, and translated works to disseminate the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican and the one universal and irrefutable truth about the war; that the United States War against Mexico was a glorified struggle against evil, an obligation befitted to the Providence and Destiny of the superior Anglo-Saxon race. The successful longevity of this one truth about the war is marked by the fact

that more than one hundred and seventy-five years after the events, the basic aspects of the mythological narrative have remained largely intact. This is due to more than a century of passively accepting works that have glorified Anglo-Saxon pioneer in his benevolent and valiant march to the Pacific. However, as we have seen, the silence of Mexico has been an illusion. To the contrary, Mexico not only responded to the events leading up to and including the war, but also to their portrayal within the confines of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican.

That voice of resistance continues today, as Mexicans denounce the imperialism of the United States and the premise that they are inferior to the Anglo.[81] Their efforts have been important ones. In particular, because they have confronted social, political, and economic discourses that have tried to reshape Mexico's own memory. It is a battle that Genaro M. Padilla spoke to *My History, Not Yours. The Formation of Mexican American Autobiography* (1993).

> My attention to the voices of my *antepasados* speaking to me from another time made me listen to the various ways in which my people struggled to represent themselves narratively against social, political, and discursive forces that would just as soon have erased their memory and history in the American social economy that was built over the map of northern Mexico. I found myself absorbed in, or perhaps it was that I was absorbed by, a world characterized by displacement and by the manifold destabilizations that we continue to experience today s inhabitants of the same landscape.[82]

Here, the voices of Padilla's *antepasados* connect Chicanos to Mexico's struggle, both then and now. However, his examination of History adds another dimension to our discussion. How do we, as individuals, form our memory of events that occurred before we existed?

For Padilla, oral histories played a predominate role in that process. It was through the stories of our ancestors, and who they were *then*, that we could come to understand who we are *today*. In short, their stories shaped our memory. At the dawn of the 21st century, the role of oral histories would take center stage in a Mexican counter narrative that rewound the clock, and created a new memory of the United States War against Mexico.

[1] Helen Chapman was born in Westfield Massachusetts in 1817. A month after the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, at the age of 31, she left New York to join her husband stationed in Matamoros. She recorded her impressions through a series of letters written during her time in Matamoros and Brownsville.

[2] Helen Chapman, *The News from Brownsville: Helen Chapman's Letters from the Texas Military Frontier, 1848-1852*, ed. Caleb Coker (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1992), 134.

[3] Notable works include Shelley Streeby, *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) and Michael Denning, *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America* (London: Verso, 1987).

[4] George Lippard, *Legends of Mexico* (Philadelphia: T.B. Peterson, 1847), PDF e-book, Sabin Americana 1500-1926, 11.

[5] Ibid., 14.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid., 26.

[9] Ibid., 26-7.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., 20.

[12] Ibid., 73.

[13] Ibid.

[14] For a Mexican perspective on the events at Palo Alto see Ramón Alcaraz, Barreiro, Alejo, José M. Castillo, Félix M. Escalante, José M. Iglesias, Manuel Muñoz, Ramón Ortiz, Manuel Payno, Guillermo Prieto, Ignatio Ramírez, Napoleon Saborío, Francisco Schiafino, Francisco Segura, Pablo M. Torrescano, and Francisco Urquidi, *Apuntes para la historia de la guerra entre México y los Estados Unidos* (México: M. Payno, 1848).

[15] Ibid., 100.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ned Buntline, *Magdalena, the Beautiful Mexican Maid a Story of Buena Vista* (New York: Williams Brothers, 1846), 30.

[18] Buntline, *Magdalena*, 26.

[19] Ibid., 31.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., 34.

[22] Ibid., 36.

[23] Ibid., 39-40.

[24] Ibid., 40-1.

[25] Ibid., 50.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., 50-1.

[28] Ibid., 52.

[29] Ibid., 55.

[30] Ibid., 57.

[31] Ibid., 71.

[32] Ibid., 95.

[33] Ibid., 95-6.

[34] Ibid., 104.

[35] Streeby tells us that Buntline met Seberina Marin in Cuba and that they married shortly thereafter. She died sometime during the mid 1840s. Although Streeby does not discuss Seberina in direct relationship to *Magdalena,* she first mentions her when discussing Buntline's interest in Cuban filibustering and his representation of Alvorado as a villain in *The B'hoys of New York* (1850) stating that: "The fact that Seberina was a Spanish creole from Florida or Cuba may well have encouraged Buntline to indulge in “Spanish fantasy” about international romance between U.S. men and Cuban women." *American Sensations*, 153.

[36] Streeby, *American Sensations*, 111.

[37] Charles Averill, *The Mexican Ranchero or, The Maid of the Chapparal. A Romance of the Mexican War* (Boston: F. Gleason. 1847), 1. This is not a direct citation, but rather my combination of several adjective phrases used in the opening description.

[38] Ibid., 13.

[39] For a further discussion of the topic of cross-dressing in Averill's work see Streeby, *American Sensations*, 118-21.

[40] Averill, *The Mexican Ranchero*, 16-7.

[41] Ibid., 10.

[42] Ibid., 16.

[43] Ibid., 17.

[44] Ibid., 18-9.

[45] Ibid., 69.

[46] Ibid., 35-7.

[47] Ibid., 36.

[48] Streeby, *American Sensations*, 111. Although I agree with this analysis, within the context of the present discussion, I feel it is important to address three additional issues. First, the majority of San Patricks were not from Ireland. See Robert Ryal Miller, *Shamrock and Sword. The Saint Patrick's Battalion in the U.S.-Mexican War* (Norman and London: Oklahoma University Press, 1989), 108. Second, although the real-life leader of the San Patricks, John Riley, did receive the death penalty, General Scott commuted that sentence since Riley had defected to the Mexican army before the United States War against Mexico began. Ibid 102. Lastly, and by far the most important, Averill divorced Raleigh's treachery in the novel from his membership in the San Patrick battalion. Rather than represent the so-called evils of this group, Averill chose to construct Raleigh's villainy as a singular intention; to extinguish all members of the Harold family. However, what makes these three points important to the present analysis is that none of them directly affect Averill's simplistic message. They are simply homogenized out in favor of the principal message; that the untrustworthy Irish have proven that they are not deserving of a place at the table of Anglo identity, and, in this case in particular, they are in league with the treacherous and hideous mixed-blood Mexicans.

[49] Averill, *The Mexican Ranchero*, 78.

[50] Ibid., 82.

[51] Ibid., 87.

[52] Ibid., 45-52.

[53] Ibid., 89.

[54] Ibid., 90.

[55] Ibid., 91-2.

[56] Ibid., 92.

[57] Ibid., 92.

[58] Streeby states that Raleigh's execution is necessary "because he threatens the boundaries of nation and race that Averill's novel tries to stabilize." (111). The emphasis of her argument focuses on the Irish as undesirable within the Anglo self-conceptualization. Although I agree with that interpretation, I do not feel it gives enough emphasis on who actually pulled the lever. By focusing on Buena's action, and her declared interest in being the executioner, I seek to underscore the action as a pathway, a ritual if you will, that opens the door for the cleansing of past sins and admittance into Anglo society.

[59] Averill, *The Mexican Ranchero*, 99.

[60] Albert Ramsey, *The Other Side or, Notes for the History of the War between Mexico and the United States* (New York: Wiley, 1850), iii.

[61] Alcaraz, *Apuntes*, iii.

[62] Ramsey, *The Other Side*, iii.

[63] Ramsey, *The Other Side*, vi.

[64] The Battalion of Saint Patricks is a highly mythologized topic in both the United States and Mexico. Interestingly, scholarship on the topic is somewhat limited. Of particular note is Robert Ryal Miller, *Shamrock and Sword. The Saint Patrick's Battalion in the U.S.-Mexican War* (Norman and London: Oklahoma University Press, 1989) that provides a retrospective exploration of the origins and development of the Saint Patrick's Battalion. Paul W. Foos, *A Short, Offhand, Killing Affair: Soldiers and Social Conflict during the Mexican-American War (*Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002) introduces the complexities surrounding this battalion, including military social structures, public consensus for the war, issues of race, class, military rank and rewards. Although these works attempt to "correct" the factual record, it is my contention that to do so, although important, misses the point. The most relevant issue is how people in both countries perceived, and continue to perceive, the Battalion and their role during the war. In general, in the United States, people saw them as a group of European, primarily Irish, immigrant soldiers who were traitors to the United States cause. In Mexico, people saw them as a group of Irish Catholics who defected as a result of the brutality of the U.S. Army against their Catholic brethren. This dichotomy will take center stage in chapter 5 of this dissertation.

[65] Alcaraz, *Apuntes*, 243-44.

[66] Ibid., 247-48.

[67] Ramsey, *The Other Side*, 37.

[68] Ibid., 287-88.

[69] Alcaraz, *Apuntes*, 250-51.

[70] Ibid., 254-55.

[71] Ramsey, *The Other Side*, 295.

[72] James Knox Polk, *Messages of the President of the United States, with the Correspondence, Therewith Communicated, between the Secretary of War and other Officers of the Government, on the Subject of the Mexican War, May 11, 1846*, 30th Cong., 1st sess., 1847-1848, H.exdoc 520.60.7, 971, accessed October 17, 2009, LexisNexis Congressional. The document date is what is listed in the serial set record, however, the publication date on the cover page of the release is 1848.

[73] For a Mexican perspective on the events at Veracruz see Alcarez, *Apuntes*, 151-67.

[74] Polk, *Messages,* H.exdoc 520, 971.

[75] Ibid., 973-4.

[76]Mason to Scott, 1 September 1847, 195.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Alcaraz, *Apuntes*, 257-8.

[79] Ramsey, *The Other Side*, 299.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Contemporary works include: Mario Gill, *Nuestros buenos vecinos (*Mexico: Editorial Azteca, 1972); Gilberto López y Rivas, *Conquest and Resistance: the Origins of the Chicano National Minority* (Palo Alto, CA: R&E Research Associates, 1979); Gasón García Cantú, *Las invasiones norteamericanas en México* (Mexico: Fondo cultura económica, 1996); Enrique Berruga, *Propiedad Ajena* (Mexico: Editorial Planeta Mexicana, 2000); Paco Ignacio Taibo II, *El Alamo: Una historia no apata para Hollywood* (Mexico: Editorial Planeta Mexicana, 2011).

[82] Genaro M. Padilla, *My History, Not Yours: The Formation of Mexican American Autobiography* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), ix.

CHAPTER 5

Érase una vez:
Responding to the Memories of the United States War against Mexico

On February 2, 1848, Mexico and the United States signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Hostilities came to an end as the Mexican government agreed to cede approximately one-third of its sovereign territory. The U.S. government gave Mexicans living in the newly acquired territory two choices; they could either become citizens of the United States or relocate within the new boundaries of the Mexican nation. If they chose to remain, the government promised that the treaty would guarantee their rights under the U.S. Constitution. It was a victory that reaffirmed mythmaker's narratives of Anglo superiority. In celebration, they created stories about the glories of the war, singing the praises of the Anglo-Saxon race that had won the day and fulfilled its Manifest Destiny. They wrote ballads, stories, poems, and songs that recounted the many heroes of the war including Crockett, Travis, Houston, Austin, Bowie, Taylor, Fremont, and Scott. To some of these esteemed men, they gave nicknames such as The King of the Wild Frontier, Buck, Old Rough and Ready, and The Pathfinder. In this manner, mythmakers utilized oral storytelling to convey a positive historical memory of the war. However, a generation removed, that memory was complicated as the children of war reached adulthood and reflected on the stories of their youth.

This reflection altered various aspects of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. For example, these new mythmakers questioned the façade of necessitated action in self-defense. Although their narratives continued to reproduce the past by faulting an irrational and ignorant mestizo population for Mexico's many failures, their critical reflection changed the way in which they portrayed the aggression of the United States. For instance, rather than portraying it as a response to Mexican savagery, this generation pointed to the U.S. government, and its numerous acts of violence against an inferior nation. Moreover, they accused land speculators and slaveholders of having provoked such action in an effort to secure their own power.[1] In this

manner, this generation of mythmakers challenged their predecessor's use of Manifest Destiny as a means to cast the war within the boundaries of Divine Providence.

These changes also impacted discussions on contemporary topics of the day. For example, when speaking about the disposition of Indigenous peoples living within the newly acquired western territory, mythmakers stated that governmental programs of extermination ran contrary to the founding principles of the United States as an emerging nation. In its place, they professed an American morality that centered itself on the obligations of the Anglo-Saxon race to nurture and protect those populations it considered inferior.

Thus, the process of reflecting on the war created new mythological narratives that in turn entered into contemporary discussions on relevant topics. Furthermore, these stories slightly altered the next generation's memory of the war, who then reflected on the stories of their youth, subsequently making their own changes to the mythological narrative. In this manner, the act of oral storytelling played a fundamental role in the journey of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican throughout the 19th century. However, it is important to point out that mythmakers did not confine their stories to modes of oral tradition, but rather sought out new ways to communicate their narratives. The advent of television in the early 20th century was a particularly useful platform. Through this visual medium, mythmakers combined images, music, dialogue, camera angle, and action to imagine their stories in a variety of different ways, further expanding the scope of their audience.[2] The cartoon was a particularly effective genre.

In 1953, one hundred and five years after the conclusion of the war, *Speedy Gonzales* aired for the first time in the United States.[3] Through this cartoon, mythmakers indoctrinated the youngest members of society in the foundations of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican by representing lazy, drunk, dirty, ignorant, and hypersexual Mexican mice.[4] However, they did not confine their instruction to this genre. Advertisers also reproduced the mythological narrative through the careful placement of products within those settings. For instance, as a child, I recall

seeing an episode of *Scooby Doo* where Scooby accidently mistakes Mexican jumping beans for jellybeans and swallows a pawful. The results were hilarious as Scooby jumped around uncontrollably. Eager to have my own fun with these little bouncing beans, I begged my parents to buy some. As I recall, they came two or three to a colorful red and white striped plastic box and my friends and I had great fun watching them bounce around. However, what I find the most striking today about that memory is that once the beans stopped jumping, my friends and I would simply throw them out and go to the dime store and buy more. The moral of that memory from the early 1970s was that Mexican jumping beans provided a cheap and disposable form of entertainment. The connection to the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican that persists in the 21st century has a slight, yet significant, alteration; that Mexicans are a cheap and disposable source of labor.

Since its inception, the power of television to indoctrinate the viewer in the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican has been impressive. However, it is important to note that this medium, like those of the past, was not an uncontested space. Therefore, in this final chapter, I examine a 21st century Mexican counter narrative that came out of the immensely popular genre of the telenovela.[5] Based on Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 serialized novel of the same name, the famous Mexican screenwriter Francisco Sánchez reimagined Jackson's work and wrote a telenovela titled *Ramona*. Several years later, Lucy Orozco invited Humberto Robles to collaborate and bring Sánchez's work to the screen.[6] Together they wrote and produced *Ramona* (2000).

The power of this telenovela to disrupt the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican cannot be understated. Through its sixty-seven episodes, it eloquently defied mythological characterization, revealing the distortions and duplicity of the various layers of the mythological narrative. Moreover, it empowered mestizaje by rejecting characterizations of Mexican and Indigenous inferiority. Finally, in its most powerful act of resistance, *Ramona* (2000) responded to the mythological memory of the war by rewinding the clock and reimagining both the events of the war and their real-life ramifications.

The genre of the telenovela was a particularly useful venue for Orozco and Robles' counter mythological production. In its most simplistic terms, the telenovela is a romantic story that unfolds over the course of daily episodes, each one representing a new chapter in the story. Therefore, it has the same basic features as a novel; characters, setting, plot, conflict, and resolution. However, the televised aspect of this genre also has important melodramatic elements. For instance, from the perspective of the viewer, the action that they witness occurs in the present, even if it represents past events.[7] This aspect is particularly important in historically based telenovelas, where the viewer can either create, or reconcile, their memory of a particular historical event. Ernesto Alonso's four telenovela series, chronicling Mexican history from Benito Juarez through the Mexican revolution, stands as an example.[8]

It is this unique combination of elements from both the novel and the melodrama, brought together in a daily broadcast, which contributes to the telenovela's overall success. Although it has been an immensely popular genre in Latin America for more than five decades, it has only been in the past five years that its popularity has exploded in the United States. Most notably, episodes of *Sortilego* (2009), *Eva Luna* (2009), and *Soy tu dueña* (2010) have beaten out mainstream programming to rank in the top three in the Nelson ratings.[9] However, it is important to note that this success has not been confined to Latin America and the United States. For instance, channels such as Televisa's TLNovelas broadcast translated versions of these stories to various countries throughout Europe. Satellite TV has also expanded the reach of the telenovela; Univision recently launching a new channel that shows telenovela episodes 24 hours a day. Another important platform is the internet, where many previous broadcasts are available on YouTube. Additionally, websites such as Hulu and Netflix regularly rerun past episodes to their subscribers. Finally, the arrival of smart phones and tablets has generated a new platform for original broadcasts, networks such as Univision and Telemundo producing telenovela shorts that are exclusively shown through these device applications.

Thus, the flexibility, scope, and reach of the telenovela made it an ideal venue for Orozco and Robles' production. *Ramona* (2000) premiered in Mexico on April 3, 2000. Several months later, in January 2001, it began its run in the United States on Univision. Viewership was so high, that the network rebroadcast it three additional times in 2002, 2005, and 2006. Besides these markets, *Ramona* (2000) also ran in various countries in Latin America and Europe. Moreover, the entire production is posted on YouTube, where I watched it in 2010 and again in 2011. It continues to be available on that platform in 2014. Thus, through the genre of the telenovela, Orozco and Robles reached out to a worldwide stage to convey their response to the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. In doing so, they reflected the efforts of Tornel, Gorostiza, Bocanegra, Paredes, and all fifteen authors of *Apuntes* almost two hundred years earlier.

The *Ramona* Myth

In its largest scope, Orozco and Robles responded to the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican by revealing the various layers of the *Ramona* myth.[10] Therefore, before discussing their reimagining of Jackson's original work, it is necessary to briefly examine how that mythological narrative developed. It was a process that began as soon as *The Christian Union* published the first chapter of *Ramona* on May 15, 1884. Each week, as the story unfolded, the newspaper recognized its commercial value, eventually announcing its intention to republish the story in book format. The advertisements that preceded that book, labeled it the "Great American Novel of Indian Reform."[11] However, a critical examination of its content reveals that Jackson envisioned that reform through the lens of Anglo superiority. It is from this dichotomy that the *Ramona* myth was born.

Focusing on the proper treatment of an inferior race by a superior one, *Ramona* (1884) did not advocate the inclusion of Indigenous peoples as equal within the mainstream of the American culture. Quite to the contrary, as Jackson revealed the developing romance between the Spanish/Anglo Ramona and the Indigenous Alessandro, she instructed the reader in the value of

protecting, nurturing, and teaching Indians how to be self-sufficient subordinates within that social structure. Thus, The Great American Novel of Indian Reform possessed a dual mythology. It was counter narrative in relationship to the coined phrase of the day that said the only good Indian was a dead Indian, but it also represented the mythological narrative of Anglo superiority. This duality was further complicated as the story of Ramona moved forward through time.

Almost immediately, it gained worldwide attention, translated into German in less than two years. More translations would follow, each one impacting the developing mythological narrative. For instance, in 1888, the great Cuban writer Jose Martí, translated Jackson's work, recasting the character of Ramona into a new archetype, *la mestiza arrogante*. He then utilized this figure to convey his message of a unified Latin America that that could defend itself against the imperialistic actions of the United States. The story of Ramona has also appeared in early film work, such as D.W. Griffith's seventeen-minute silent film in 1910. Other films include Chickasaw filmmaker, Edwin Carewe's 1928 film starring Dolores del Río as Ramona, Loretta Young's portrayal of Ramona in Henry King's 1936 production, and Francisco Outon's French version in 1987. [12] The theater was another genre that reproduced the story of Ramona, Clune's 1915 production of particular note.

Historical writers also discussed *Ramona* (1884), contributing to the growth of the *Ramona* mythology. For example, in 1914, Carlyle Channing Davis and William A. Alderson wrote *The True Story of "Ramona." Its Facts and Fictions, Inspiration and Purpose* (1914). In this work, the authors sought to validate the historicity of the original work by conveying detailed accounts of its characterizations and events. One interesting topic that they discussed was Jackson's selection of the name Padre Salvadierra.

> Mrs. Jackson was an intense admirer of Father Sanchez. He and Father Junipero Serra were to her almost Christ-like. She extolled their virtues, recounted with tearful sympathy their struggles and sufferings and proclaimed their lives to have been divinely perfect. She knew that the prototype of the priestly character of her proposed novel was teaching and giving salvation to his fellow-beings. She sought a

> name bearing significance. She had only to take the Spanish verbs salvar, to save, and dar, to give, and create the name she desired. Dropping the "r" from salvar, and combining the root with the subjunctive imperfect of the irregular verb dar, which is diera, produces Salvadiera, signifying giving salvation.[13]

In this extract, we see how Davis and Alderson romanticized Jackson's creative process in order to obscure the content of the original work as a means to transform their discussion into a reproduction of the *Ramona* myth.[14] For although it may be true that true that Jackson admired Father Sanchez and Father Junipero Serra, weaved within the narrative of her work is a clear anti-Catholic rhetoric.

For instance, the opening scene of the fourth chapter introduces the reader to Padre Salvierderra as he is walking to the home of Señora Moreno. When he hears a voice in the distance he follows it. Peering through the tall thicket, he sees the young Ramona gathering plants. Jackson's omniscient narrator tells the reader that when Padre Salvierderra sees Ramona he calls out her name "his thin cheeks flushing with pleasure. 'The blessed child!' And as he spoke, her face came into sight, set in a swaying frame of the blossoms, as she parted them lightly to right and left with her hands, and half crept, half danced through the loop hole openings thus made. Father Salvierderra was past eighty, but his blood was not too old to move quicker at the sight of this picture. A man must be dead not to be thrilled at it."[15] This portrayal of Padre Salvierderra's reaction to seeing Ramona contradicts Davis and Alderson's romantic vision. In particular, it shows Jackson's use of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican to characterize a representative of the Church in same manner as all Mexican men, depicting him as predatory and hypersexual.

The sixth chapter widens the scope of this mythological representation. In this instance, the narrator tells the reader that Juan Canito, the head of Señora Moreno's ranch, has suffered a serious fall that has affected the start of sheep shearing season. The narrator describes how this circumstance has affected Juan Canito's spirit.

> He lost faith in his saints, and privately indulged in blasphemous beratings and reproaches of them, which would have filled the Señora with terror, had she known

> that such blasphemies were being committed under her roof!. 'As many times as I have crossed that plank, in my day!' cried Juan; 'only the fiends themselves could have made me trip; and there was the whole box of candles I paid for with my own money last month, and burned to Saint Francis in the chapel for this very sheep shearing! He may sit in the dark, for all me, to the end of time! He is no saint at all! What are they for, if not to keep us from harm when we pray to them? I'll pray no more. I believe the Americans are right, who laugh at us.[16]

In this extract, Jackson used a series of connections to communicate her anti-Catholic message. First, she linked the phrase blasphemous beratings to the Saints of the Church through Juan Canito's rebuke. Then, she associated that representation to his expression of frustration concerning the purchase of candles and that purchase's failure to prevent the accident. In this manner, Jackson conveyed the irrationality of a religion that requires its followers to purchase favors. Finally, with that imagery in hand, she relayed the totality of her message through Juan Canito's agreement with the Americans who see Catholicism as a farce.

Davis and Alderson's romanticized vision of *Ramona* (1884) was not unique. Moreover, mythmakers did not confine the dissemination of the *Ramona* myth to books, plays, and movies. For instance, its immediate commoditization illustrates this mythological narrative's immense reach. Although a detailed discussion of that topic exceeds the scope of this dissertation, Dydia DeLyser's article "Ramona Memories: Fiction, Tourist Practices, and Placing the Past in Southern California" (2003) offers substantial insight.

> In southern California between 1885 and the 1950s, you could visit Ramona's home(s), her marriage place, her birthplace and her grave; you could take the Ramona Freeway to Ramona Boulevard; you could bring your business to the Ramona Pharmacy, Ramona Jewelry, or the Ramona Beauty Shoppe; you could play with a Ramona doll or go to the arcade to play Ramona pinball; you could see Ramona on the silver screen, on the legitimate stage, or in a outdoor amphitheater; you could listen to Ramona at 78 or 45 rpm, with Paul Whiteman and Bix Beiderbeck or The Gaylords; you could play Ramona yourself -- on the piano or the ukulele; you could refresh yourself with Ramona drinking water, Ramona beer, Ramona brandy, or Ramona wine tonic; you could eat Ramona brand lemons, tomatoes, or pineapples -- and eat them with Ramona cutlery (or a Ramona souvenir teaspoon) from a Ramona bowl; you could have Ramona roof tiles on your home on Ramona Terrace, or in the Ramona tract, or in the town of Ramona; you could cook like Ramona, dress like Ramona, and even smell like Ramona.[17]

DeLyser's list is highly significant in that it points to a staggering asymmetry between the narrative of reform and the realities of the Indigenous experience at that time. For all we have to do is imagine a group of holiday travelers listening to Ramona records while on their way to the site of Ramona's home on December 29, 1890. Along the way, they stop for lunch and enjoy some sandwiches made with Ramona tomatoes neatly placed on Ramona plates. Perhaps a few of these travelers decide to treat themselves to a Ramona beer. Their children entertain themselves with Ramona dolls. Meanwhile, in South Dakota, the U.S. 7th Cavalry Regiment arrives at the Lakota Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Under the command of Colonel James W. Forsyth, their orders are to disarm the inhabitants of the reservation. By the end of the day, as the travelers conclude their tour of this symbol of the Great American Novel of Indian Reform, the army is also concluding their work; burying the bodies of thousands of slaughtered Lakota in a mass grave on the frozen grounds of Wounded Knee.

The asymmetry that this example displays persists into the 21st century. Nowhere is that more evident than the annual Ramona Bowl held in Southern California. In existence for more than 90 years, this event receives significant yearly sponsorship, including nationally recognized corporations such as Chevron, Hampton Inn & Suites, Kiwanis, Marie Callender, Quality Inn, Service Master, Super 8 Hotel, Target, Time Warner Cable, UPS, and Walmart.[18] Its website boasts family 4-pack tickets, inviting visitors to bring the whole family to the nation's longest running outdoor drama, where they can enjoy the experience of this classic story of struggle in early California history.[19] It is this connection between corporate sponsorship and the story of Ramona that connects the past to the present. In the same manner that traveler's to Ramona's home in 1890 enjoyed Ramona products while thousands of bodies laid upon the frozen grounds of Wounded Knee, families in the 21st century can bring their young children to an event that purports to represent a love for land and family. However, what the *Ramona* myth continues to effectively obscure is that it was precisely those two things, land and family, that Anglos were brutally and

violently disrupting; not only for Indigenous peoples, but also for Mexicans who now lived as foreigners on their own land.

Ramona (2000): Recreating the Memories of War

Orozco and Robles responded directly to the asymmetry of the *Ramona* myth as they reimagined Jackson's original work. In order to effectively engage their counter narrative, we will prioritize two critical aspects. First, we will discuss the role of various story differentials between *Ramona* (1884) and *Ramona* (2000). In conducting that examination, we will peel away the layers of the *Ramona* myth. Moreover, by emphasizing the appearance of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican within that mythological narrative, we can discuss how they used these alterations to respond to both mythological narratives. Secondly, we will discuss the different agency and voice that Orozco and Robles gave three primary characters; Alejandro de Asís (Alessandro), Señora Moreno, and Ramona. Through an exploration of their narratives and actions, we can engage the manner in which they waged their own struggle against Anglo aggression. However, it will not be until the closing scenes of the telenovela that we will encounter how these writers brought those struggles together to form the telenovela's most powerful act of resistance. An act that turned back the clock and recreated a new memory of the war.

Story Differentials

The opening scene of the telenovela contests the passive pastoral description of the original text by showing a burning map of the Southwest as the voice of the narrator introduces the story.

> Después de la guerra entre México y Estados-Unidos, California paso a ser parte a la unión Americana. Veinte años después, aún celebraban sangrientas batallas por la posesión de las tierras. Esta es la historia de mi familia, los Moreno-Gonzaga, que como muchos mexicanos decidieron quedarse en California y defender el suelo que los vio nacer. Fue en esta época que los conventos empezaron a cerrarse, y gracias a ello, que Dios me perdone, yo pude salir de un claustro en el que nunca quiso estar.[*20]

[*] After the war between Mexico and the United States, California became part of the United States of America. Twenty years later, they were still celebrating their bloody conquest of those

Through this introduction, the viewer learns that Ramona is going to tell them the story of her family, Los Moreno Gonzaga, who have decided to remain in California and fight for their land. The visuals then transition, moving from the burning map to the sound of sheep, the image of a large tree, and then a blue sky. A caption appears at the bottom of the screen that says California 1867. As the camera pans out, the viewer witnesses the peace and tranquility of a pasture, immediately replaced with burning homes and the dead bodies of many Yahi. A wagon wheel appears in the frame, and the camera pans out so the viewer can see the Moreno hacienda. This is immediately followed by a shot of the town and a sign bearing the name El Pueblo de Todos Los Santos. This name, however, will soon disappear when immigrating Anglos change it to Spurtown.

The character of Angus O'Phail (Phail) and his relationship to both Señora Moreno and Ramona is another significant story differential.[21] In the original text, the reader knows nothing of Angus Phail other than he is Scottish, owns a line of profitable ships, and meets the Spanish Ramona Gonzaga, Señora Moreno's older sister. The two fall in love, and although they are engaged, they cannot marry right away since Angus must make one last shipping trip that will provide them long-term financial stability. When he returns to the port of Santa Barbara eight months later, he learns that on the previous day, Ramona married a young member of the Monterey Presidio. This betrayal leads Angus into a drunken stupor and Ramona eventually learns that he has married an Indian women. Twenty-five years later, Angus appears on her doorstep with a baby in his arms and begs her to take the child in and raise it as her own. He tells her that the child's name is Ramona, in memory of his love for her. Although she agrees to the arrangement, she soon falls ill and must ask her sister, Señora Moreno, to take the child and raise her. She agrees, but expresses her displeasure that the child is a half-breed.[22]

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lands. This is the story of my family, Los Moreno-Gonzaga, who like many Mexicans, decided to stay in California and defend the ground upon which they were born. During this time, the convents began to close, and thanks to that, God forgive me, I could leave the cloister in which I never wished to be.

In the telenovela, Orozco and Robles merged Señora Moreno and Ramona Gonzaga into the same person. Moreover, they clearly communicated a Mexican rather than Spanish heritage.[23] There are changes in Angus' character as well. Rather than a ship owner, Angus O'Phail is an Irish soldier in the U.S. Army. According to Humberto Robles, these changes were intended to address the theme of the Battalion of Saint Patricks.

> Era un tema muy delicado (y sigue siéndolo) el de las relaciones México-Estados Unidos. Lo que se trató de hacer con la versión de Sánchez y la nuestra (Orozco y Robles) fue matizar los odios raciales, representar las tres razas (norteamericanos, mexicanos e indígenas) de una manera digna, done había personajes "buenos" y "malos" en cualquiera de las razas. Fue una forma de conciliar un poco los terribles sucesos de la guerra México-Estados Unidos, la pérdida de casi la mitad del territorio y racismo imperantes en aquella época. Fue así que también se decidió incluir el personaje de Angus para hablar del tema de Batallón de San Patricio.*[24]

Through the creative use of flashbacks shown at various times throughout the entire telenovela, the viewer learns that the young Ramona Gonzaga (Señora Moreno) meets the handsome Angus O'Phail when she falls from her horse and down a small ravine. When she awakes, she finds herself in his arms. It is love at first sight. Despite the challenges that their love presents, the two continue to see one another in secret, at the home of Marta and Juan Canito, employees of her parent's hacienda.

Although Ramona wants to marry Angus, Padre Salvatierra counsels her against it, saying that her parents would be devastated if she were to marry the enemy. Nonetheless, Angus does not give up hope. When he is called into service and has to leave for the war in Mexico, he begs Ramona to wait for him. She agrees. However, a short time later, she learns that Angus, along with many of his compatriots, have defected from the U.S. Army in protest to the horrible acts of violence they were ordered to perpetrate against their fellow Catholic brethren. As punishment, the U.S. Army

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* United States-Mexican relations was a very delicate theme (and still is). What we tried to do with Sánchez's version was refine racial hatred, representing the three races (North American, Mexican and Indigenous) in a dignified manner, where there were "good" and "bad" people in whichever race. It was a manner of reconciling some of the terrible events of the Mexican-United States war, the loss of almost half of [Mexico's] land and the racial domination of the era. This was also why it was decided to include the character of Angus, in order to speak about the Saint Patrick's Battalion.

hung these soldiers as traitors at Chapultepec. Thinking Angus dead, Ramona agreed to an arranged marriage with General Alonso Moreno.

Many months later, Angus returns to the hacienda and discovers that Ramona is now married. Nonetheless, he seeks her out to tell her that he cannot live without her. When the two meet, he begs her to run away with him. However, Señora Moreno reveals that she is pregnant and cannot leave her husband. Despite this rejection, Angus continues to return to their special meeting place, under a large tree on the grounds of the hacienda, hoping for an opportunity to see his beloved Ramona. Señora Moreno, for her part, keeps her ears open for news of Angus. In this manner, she learns that he has become involved with a Yahi woman named Teghua. When she learns that Teghua is pregnant, she is devastated.

Then, one night while in the town saloon, a handful of Americans attack Don Pedro, the father of Alejandro. In attempting to defend Don Pedro, Angus and Teghua are shot by the Americans. Teghua is killed instantly. Although Angus has mortal wounds, his only thought is to save his small baby. Therefore, he takes her from the clutched arms of Teghua and struggles to arrive at the Moreno hacienda before he dies. He pleads for Señora Moreno to take the child and raise her as if she were their own. He tells her that the baby's name is Ramona, named after the only woman he has ever loved. Señora Moreno agrees, and Angus dies in her arms.[25]

This story alteration serves multiple purposes. First, it highlights the role of the Battalion of Saint Patricks in the Mexican-centric memory. We see the importance of this role directly referred to in episode forty-one, when Señora Moreno tells her dinner guests why she despises the Americans: "A los atrocidades que cometieron contra los irlandeses. Ellos, por ser católicos, en un momento dado, se cambiaron al bando de los mexicanos y fueron castigados de una manera despiadada por los gringos. La mayoría de esos valientes irlandeses fueron aprehendidos, torturados, ahogados. A los que no más, es marcaron el rostro con un hierro candente para

señalarlos como desertores. Muy pocos lograron huir."[*26] However, the hanging of that battalion also plays an important role in the dynamics between Señora Moreno and Ramona, which in turn attacks at the heart of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican.

In the original work, Ramona knows that Señora Moreno adopted her and that she despises her because of her Indigenous heritage. In the telenovela, Ramona does not know that she is adopted, and therefore her mother's hatred towards her is very painful. However, when Señora Moreno confesses the truth about her history, Ramona learns that it is not her Indigenous heritage that Señora Moreno so despises, but her constant reminder of Angus' betrayal. Moreover, Ramona represents the life that Señora Moreno and Angus could have had if the American army had not been so barbaric in their actions.[27] Thus, Señora Moreno's confession rejects the mythological narrative that has veiled the violence of the U.S. military during the war. In its place, it prioritizes that violence as the source of chaos in her life, and by extension, in the lives of all Mexicans living in California.

This violence plays another important role in Orozco and Robles counter narrative. As a structured genre, the telenovela has a specific repeating pattern that opens with a sense of order that some factor disrupts. The disruption leads to chaos, which in turn, opens the door for Evil to enter the character's lives. In *Ramona* (2000), the violence of the U.S. army on Mexican soil has set off a chain reaction: Angus' departure to the main theater of war, the brutal treatment of Irish soldiers, Angus' defection, his presumed execution, Señora Moreno's marriage to General Moreno, Angus' sense of betrayal, his involvement with Teghua, the birth of Ramona, and her subsequent placement in Señora Moreno's home. Furthermore, the ensuing chaos has allowed hatred to run

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[*] For the atrocities that they committed against the Irish. They, by being Catholic, in a given moment, came to the Mexican side and were punished in a merciless way by the Gringos. The majority of those valiant Irish were apprehended, tortured, and hung. To those that did not suffer such a fate, their face was marked with a red hot branding iron in order to label them as deserters. Very few escaped.

free, destroying everything in its path. Ramona's search for love in the telenovela is an attempt to defeat that hatred, and in doing so, restore order.

Orozco and Robles personified that hatred through the character of Jack Green, the new Anglo sheriff of Spurtown. Although the character of Green does not appear in *Ramona* (1884), he is critical to the counter narrative of the telenovela. Simply put, Green displays every negative aspect contained within the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. Therefore, he is filthy, lazy, mean, cold-blooded, culturally uneducated (he eats with his hands and picks his teeth), drunk, conniving, shrewd, and dishonest. However, the writers do not stop there. As the story unfolds, Green's actions collectively transform his racial identity as an Anglo into the personification of Evil. Throughout the telenovela, it is the Evil that resides in Jack Green that powers the oppressive actions of the Americans against both the Yahi and the Mexicans.

In direct opposition to this personification of Evil is Felipe Moreno. In Jackson's work, Felipe is represented within the framework of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. However, since he comes from a respectable Spanish family, that depiction is somewhat muted. As a result, he is weak, disinterested, sickly, bumbling, and unimpressive. Equally important, however, is the manner in which Jackson feminized Felipe through his role as a façade to obscure Señora Moreno's power. Jackson announced this portrayal, acknowledging the need for such an illusion in the face of societal expectations.[28] However, the telenovela directly contests that depiction by empowering Felipe to act, characterizing him as hardworking, intelligent, honest, brave, educated, and the patron of the Moreno household. Thus, as we will soon discover, he is capable of wielding the necessary power to protect his land and family by defeating the chaos of Evil.

The last significant story differential relates to another character not in the original text, Beatriz de Echagüe. Although Humberto Robles states that the character of Beatrice does not represent the presence of Helen Hunt Jackson in the telenovela, the similarities are impressive.[29] Specifically, Beatriz belongs to a socially elite class whose interactions with the Indigenous

community is somewhat distanced. Moreover, through the course of the telenovela, the viewer learns that Beatriz has tuberculosis. As her condition worsens, she must leave the Moreno home and seek treatment in Colorado. While there, she meets and eventually marries her physician, Dr. Brown.

Beatriz's departure from the Moreno home is a sad turn of events since during her entire time at the ranch she has sought to win the affections of Felipe. Although Felipe is aware of Beatriz's feelings, he cannot respond to her advances since his heart belongs to his true love, Ramona. However, Beatrice does not initially realize that this is the case, and regularly seeks opportunistic encounters. On one occasion she enters Felipe's study and finds him speaking with Alejandro. The two welcome her into the room, Alejandro excusing himself. As he leaves, Beatriz tells Felipe that her aunt Perpetua said the oddest thing to her the previous day; that she found Alejandro attractive. When Felipe asks her if she agrees with her aunt, she shrugs her shoulders and says that he is good looking for an Indian, in the same way a particular horse or bull might stand out from the others. This comment surprises Felipe, who tells Beatriz how much he values Alejandro, stating that in a different time, the two would be best of friends. Beatriz realizes that her comment has offended Felipe, and she apologizes.[30]

This dialogue between Felipe and Beatriz reflects the asymmetry of the *Ramona* myth. In particular, Beatriz represents narratives of Anglo superiority when she states that Indigenous peoples are no more significant than beasts of burden. Felipe contests that opinion by valuing Alejandro and recognizing the injustice of that narrative. However, this representation of the duality of the *Ramona* myth does not stop here, but rather continues throughout the entire telenovela. As the story unfolds, Beatriz eventually learns that Felipe is in love with Ramona. Recognizing the obstacle to her happiness, she attempts to resolve the problem by helping Ramona in her efforts to be with Alejandro. On the surface, this assistance would appear to represent a change in Beatriz's opinion, one that has come to accept and value the Yahi. However, rather than

any true reform in her outlook, the viewer knows that her motivation is linked to her desire to win Felipe's affections. This is further confirmed when Beatriz is absent from the trial of Ramona, where the message of equality is articulated. Thus, Orozco and Robles used Beatriz's self-interested actions to respond directly to the true nature of Jackson's message of reform, one that she articulated through the lens of Anglo superiority.

The Voice of Alejandro de Asís

In Jackson's original work, the character of Alessandro conveys her message concerning the value of the benevolent treatment of Indigenous peoples. His misfortunes, and ultimately his death, are a result of the violence directed towards him by narratives of extermination. The potential of his value to Anglo society is represented in the following extract: "If he [Alessandro] had been what the world calls a civilized man, he would have known instantly, and would have been capable of weighing, analyzing, and reflecting on his sensations at leisure. But he was not a civilized man; he had to bring to bear on his present situation only simple, primitive, uneducated instincts and impulses."[31]

Incapable of reasoned thought, the reader learns that Alessandro has an animalistic instinct that must be civilized in order to be useful. The original work repeats this message when Señora Moreno discovers Ramona and Alessandro by the willows.

> Why did she look at him with such loathing scorn? Since she knew that the Señorita was half Indian, why should she think it so dreadful a thing for her to marry an Indian man? It did not once enter into Alessandro's mind that the Señora could have any other thought, seeing him as she did, in each other's arms. And again, what had he to give to Ramona? Could she live in a house such as he must live in – live as the Temecula women live? No! for her sake he must leave his people; must go to some town, must do – he knew not what- something to earn more money.[32]

Thus, Jackson called for Alessandro to conform to Anglo expectations. It is only through this assimilation that he can hope to obtain his wish to be with Ramona. However, this citation also points to another important aspect of Alessandro in the original work, a man incapable of independent and unfiltered thought. This is marked by the absence of his actual voice in the

original work, a voice that is replaced by an omniscient narrator. Frequently employed with regard to Alessandro, the voice of the narrator filters, interprets, and represents him. In other words, it renders his thoughts more civilized and understandable to the reader.

Another example of Alejandro's silence appears in the nineteenth chapter when Ramona is first introduced to the Indians of the San Pasquale valley.

> There was something scarcely human in the shriveled arm and hand outstretched in greeting; but Ramona took it in hers with tender reverence. "Say to her for me, Alessandro," she said, "that I bow down to her great age with reverence, and that I hope, if it is the will of God that I live on the earth so long as she has. I may be worthy of such reverence as these people all feel for her." Alessandro turned a grateful look on Ramona as he translated this speech, so in unison with Indian modes of thought and feeling.[33]

Once again, the narrator silences Alessandro's voice. Moreover, when it speaks of his gratefulness, the reader cannot help but ponder what knowledge it possesses of Alessandro's modes of thought and feeling that cannot be related to the reader by way of his own voice. It is this lack of agency that oppresses Alessandro throughout the entire story.

Nowhere is that oppression more evident than the scene of his death. Reflecting mythological narratives of Indigenous inferiority, the narrator portrays Alessandro's death as a direct result of his mental instability. Moreover, it accomplishes this task by recounting the thoughts of a third character, Judge Wells.

> Alessandro also had worked for him [Judge Wells]; and no one knew better than Judge Wells that Alessandro in his senses was as incapable of stealing a horse as any white man in the valley. Farrar knew it; everybody knew it. Everybody knew, also, about his [Alessandro] strange fits of wandering mind; and that when these half-crazed fits came on him, he was wholly irresponsible.[34]

Although the narrator never tells the reader exactly why Alessandro loses his mind, the narrator does state that Judge Wells believes that if he would have been in his right mind, he would have never stolen a horse. Therefore, the reader is left to hypothesize that Alessandro's madness was related to the loss of his young child at the hands of uncaring Indian agents in the previous chapter.

Orozco and Robles strongly contest Jackson's passive characterization of Alessandro. In response, they gave him the family name of Asís that marked his place as the son of Don Pedro de Asís, the leader of the Yahi. Furthermore, they portrayed him as a complex character who has accepted Catholicism, and to an extent, his subordinate role in the Moreno hacienda, but is driven to preserve his Yahi identity and culture. His agency to act within that complexity, and the nature of his actions, convey the heart of the telenovela's counter narrative. Although there are many examples I can point to, Alejandro's defense of his love for Ramona, and his willingness to sacrifice himself for that love, is the most illustrative.

It is during a confrontation with Felipe that the viewer first sees Alejandro defend his love for Ramona. In this scene, Felipe demands that Alejandro stop meeting with Ramona. At this moment in the story, neither man knows that Ramona is not Felipe's sister. Nonetheless, he is secretly in love with her, his guilt weighing heavily on his soul.[35] Therefore, he is jealous, and projects that frustration onto Alejandro who rejects it. Alejandro tells Felipe that although he is the patron, he cannot rule his sentiments. He loves Ramona, and nothing that he does or says will change that fact. Felipe becomes angry, saying that it is only the strength of their friendship that prevents him from killing Alejandro. Alejandro is taken aback, but only for a moment. He stands firm and challenges Felipe to kill him, asserting that only in death will he be prevented from loving Ramona.[36]

Thus, the viewer encounters Alejandro's willingness to die in defense of his love for Ramona. However, as the story unfolds, this willingness transforms Alejandro, casting him in the role of a savior. For example, Alejandro saves Ramona from drowning in the river when she accidently falls in. Although Felipe has the opportunity to be the hero in this scene, his fear of water holds him back, and Alejandro dives in to rescue her.[37] In many ways, the relationship between Alejandro and Ramona saves her from a life without love. For it is Alejandro's love for her that acts as a catalyst for Ramona to discover her true heritage. However, Alejandro's most powerful act as a

savior comes during his trial. The scenes that compose that trial combine to prepare the main characters for the narrative of equality that Ramona's subsequent trial will convey. Since these scenes cannot be discussed out of context, we must make a brief digression.

The characters of Sheriff Jack Green, Dr. Thomas, and Douglas are three Anglos who are working clandestinely to acquire land along the coming path of the railroad. In order to obtain more information regarding the location of the rails, Green employs Nepomuceno, the town drunk as a spy. Through this process, the trio learns that the railroad will be coming through the land of the Yahi. Therefore, they decide to acquire it and make a profit selling it back to the railroad company. Moreover, Dr. Thomas is smitten with the finest ranch in the region, the home of Los Moreno. Thus, the men agree to find a way to obtain that land as well.[38]

Green is the leader of the group. He devises a plan that will disrupt the lives of the Yahi as much as possible. It is in this manner that he hopes to provoke a violent reaction, one that will, in turn, justify killing the entire village. Douglas, however, is concerned, warning Green that they must proceed carefully. If officials in Sacramento learn of their involvement, they could end up in prison. Green tells Douglas not to worry and seeks out ways to set up advantageous situations. For example, he pays his partners Merryl and Davis to steal a horse from town and then accuse Alejandro's brother of the theft. The men follow the plan and Alejandro's brother is sentenced to hang. However, when Green and his men show up at the Yahi village to carry out the punishment, Alejandro kills Merryl and Green arrests him. Although he soon escapes, Green becomes obsessed with finding him. The situation becomes urgent when Douglas informs Green of a new California law that requires all property owners to personally present their land titles for registration. If Los Moreno and the Yahi register their titles, it will be impossible for the trio to acquire the land. Since Alejandro's father was the head of the tribe, they assume he is in possession of those papers.

Shortly after his escape, Ramona leaves town with Alejandro and Padre Sarria marries them soon afterwards. However, once Ramona is living among the Yahi, she discovers that they do not

readily accept her. When she asks Padre Sarria if he thinks that they will every welcome her, he tells her the story of Teghua, a Yahi woman who left the tribe to live with an Irishman, Angus O'Phail. Sadly, the two met their death when Anglos shot them in a saloon fight. Padre Sarria recalled that they had a young daughter, but he does not know what happened to her. Although Ramona does not know that she is that child, the story of Angus and Teghua touches her in a very profound way. In particular, she reflects on the words of Matea, the medicine woman of the village, who had recently told her that she was not Mexican, but rather Yahi.[39]

As soon as Alejandro and Ramona learn of the new law requiring the Yahi to register their lands, they know they must act immediately. Since Alejandro is wanted by Green, and must remain in hiding, Ramona offers to take the papers and register the lands. Alejandro tells her that the papers are buried under a tree at the Moreno hacienda. While that conversation is taking place, Felipe learns of the new law. His also knows that the Yahi papers are buried at the hacienda, and he digs them up so that he can register them at the same time that he does his own land. On the way, he meets Memphis and Nepomuceno who warn him of Green, Thomas and Douglas' plans and they suggest that Felipe keep a set of false papers in his trunk, just in case the trio tries to steal them. As it turns out, Green not only steals the false Yahi papers, but also finds the real ones. He burns both, thinking he has ensured his victory.[40]

When Ramona and Alejandro secretly arrive at the hacienda they discover the papers are gone. Ramona visits Beatriz who tells her that Felipe took them to Spurtown so he could register both lands at the same time. Ramona takes this opportunity to confront Señora Moreno about her origins. Señora Moreno confesses all, telling Ramona the story of her father and their love for one another. She then tells Ramona that she is a constant reminder of Angus' betrayal and that this is the reason she has always treated her so harshly. Moreover, she blames Ramona for taking Angus away from her in the same way she holds Alejandro responsible for taking Ramona away. However, the admission provokes Señora Moreno to realize that she has been unfair. In reality, her anger

over Ramona leaving with Alejandro is tied to her jealousy of Ramona, and her courage to be with the man she loves. If Señora Moreno had been more courageous and stood up to her family to be with Angus, she could have avoided her unhappiness. It is in that moment that Señora Moreno realizes the incredible toll that hatred, based upon race, has created in both of their lives. As such, a new bond is forged between the two women that will be critical to the deliverance of the message of equality.[41]

Señora Moreno's revelation provokes Ramona to search for her baptismal records. While looking through the church records, she finds another set of Yahi land papers. Unaware that Green has burned the set Felipe has, she brings these papers to Alejandro. In reviewing them he sees that the Mexican government signed them, whereas the Spanish crown signed the ones buried under the tree. Therefore, Ramona goes to Spurtown and registers the papers. Douglas, who is in charge of the registration and knows that Green burned the papers Felipe had, attempts to refuse to register them, telling her that they were reported stolen. However, the papers are in order, and since she represents the Yahi nation through her marriage to Alejandro, he has no option but to register them.[42]

Green and Dr. Thomas are furious at this turn of events. Since both the Yahi and the Moreno land is properly registered, Green decides to attack the Yahi village, wiping out the whole tribe. He rallies the people of Spurtown to assist him, telling them that the only way they can ensure their safety is to kill the savages.[43] A large group of men leave with Green and together they completely decimate the village. When Alejandro learns of the attack, he returns home and is devastated by the countless bodies of dead women and children, many severely burned. He drops to his knees "Por qué tanto odio. ¿Qué les hemos hecho?"[*44] While walking through the burned out homes, he encounters one of Green's men who holds him at gunpoint. Alejandro breaks free and kills him.

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[*] Why so much hate. What have we done?

While all of this happening, Ramona is away from the village, awaiting Alejandro's return. She seeks shelter in a nearby cave where she finds Matea who is shaken by what she has witnessed. She tells Ramona of the attack on the village and although she escaped, she is sure everyone else was killed. At that moment, the two hear a sound, and Colorado enters the cave, pointing a gun at them. In order to save Matea's life, Ramona shoots Colorado. Nearby, Dr. Thomas and Tom are out looking for survivors, who Green has ordered them to kill. When the two arrive at the cave and find Colorado dead, Dr. Thomas accuses Ramona of murder and orders Tom to kill Matea. Matea looks Tom directly in the eye and says, "Dispare blanco. Solo soy un sueño que vuelva la niebla. Quédense con la tierra, que al fin y al cabo, ella también se quedara con Uds. ¡Raza de buitres! Los maldigo a Uds. y a todo su descendencia."[*45] Tom shoots Matea and Dr. Thomas grabs Ramona. He says she will make good bait for Alejandro. However, neither is aware that Alejandro has left the village in search of Green, who he finds hiding in the church with Padre Sarria as a hostage. Green succeeds in capturing Alejandro, and Dr. Thomas shows up with Ramona as his prisoner. Thus, Green and Thomas take Ramona and Alejandro back to Spurtown in a cage to stand trial for murder.

Upon their arrival in Spurtown, Green reiterates his justification for the extermination of the Yahi. However, in this version he adds that when they arrived at the village, they were attacked and forced to defend themselves. He accuses Ramona and Alejandro of killing many Anglos, including his friend Colorado. Ramona challenges Green's assertion, stating that he and his men killed the Yahi in cold blood. Unfortunately, her words do not sway the townspeople and they begin to stone both Ramona and Alejandro. This action forces Green to fire his gun in the air. He demands that the two must first stand trial and then the people can hang them for their crimes. It is in this moment that Ramona understands why the Yahi have distrusted the Americans; she never imagined that anyone could hate another so much, without even knowing who they were.[46]

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[*] Shoot white man. I am only a dream that returns to a cloud. Remain on the land, which in the end will be your undoing. Race of vultures! I curse you and all your descendents.

Now, it is important to note that Orozco and Robles did not depict all Anglos in a negative light. One of the townspeople, Billy Duboid, runs to the house of Señor Coronado to tell him about the capture of Ramona. Billy knows that the Coronado family has a close relationship with the Moreno family, and as an attorney, Señor Coronado can help Ramona. Upon hearing the news, Señor Coronado rushes to the jail and tells Alejandro that as an Indian, he is not entitled to any representation. As he turns to Ramona, she starts to tell him the truth of her origins, but Alejandro stops her. He knows that if anyone learns she is half Yahi, she will be denied a defense and condemned to death. On the other hand, as a member of a once powerful Mexican family, she might have a chance. His only thought is to save Ramona, and the child that she carries.[47]

None of these events or the trail of Alejandro are present within the original text, but in the telenovela they serve to replace the mythological narrative of Anglo superiority with a message of equality.[48] On orders from Green, Alejandro's jury is fixed by Douglas to include only the most hate-filled residents of Spurtown. After Douglas tells the jury of Alejandro's savagery, regularly referring to him as a beast, the judge allows Alejandro to speak in his defense. Alejandro's first words address his belief that all men are equal under the eyes of the supreme judge. He states that it is by God's will that he was born Yahi while others were born white. He then rises, stares directly at Ramona, and with tears in his eyes, admits that he killed Davis, stating that he did so in defense of his people. He then accuses Green of killing his father, and the Yahi in cold blood. When the judge presses him to declare himself either innocent or guilty, he says, innocent. The jury, however, finds him guilty. The judge sentences him to hang in the public square.

Orozco and Robles melodramatically portray the execution of Alejandro within the framework of the Messiah; God gave his only Son so that the world would come to recognize their own sins. The viewer sees Alejandro in his cell, on one knee in front of Padre Sarria, both arms extended outward while Ramona watches him receive absolution. During this scene, Alejandro's last words are not for himself, but rather a plea that Padre Sarria keep Ramona from telling the

court she is part Yahi. Alejandro then stands and walks to his execution. Throughout this scene, the connection between Ramona and Alejandro is maintained, a connection that Jackson in the original through Alessandro's mental illness.

In the original text, after their arrival in their new mountain home, the reader is given no descriptive or active sense of the connection between Ramona and Alessandro. Alessandro simply arrives home on a horse that is not his. He then goes to bed. At this point, the reader discovers Alessandro's madness from the omniscient narrator. This revelation is followed by Ramona hearing the shots of Jim Farrar's gun killing Alessandro. By contrast in the telenovela, Alejandro's last request is to ensure Ramona's survival, and by extension, the survival of the Yahi, present in the child that she carries. Thus, through this final action, Alejandro demonstrates a desire to bring meaning to his death, for it is during the trial of Ramona that her love for him will serve to enlighten the rest of the characters to their own sins, committed through acts of racial violence.

The Voice of Señora Moreno

In the original text, Señora Moreno is portrayed as an exotic Spanish woman through the narrator's vivid and contradictory description.

> An exceedingly clever woman for her day and generation was Señora Gonzaga Moreno… sixty years of the best of old Spain and the wildest of New Spain; Bay of Biscay, Gulf of Mexico, Pacific Ocean – the waves of them all had tossed destinies for the Señora. The Holy Catholic Church had had its arms round her from first to last; and that was what had brought her safe through, she would have said, if she had ever said anything about herself, which she never did – one of her many wisdoms. So quiet, so reserved, so gentle an exterior never was known to veil such an imperious and passionate nature, brimful of storm, always passing through stress; never thwarted, except at peril of those who did it; adored and hated by turns, and each at the hottest. She looked simple like a sad, spiritual-minded old lady, amiable and indolent, like her race, but sweeter and more thoughtful than their wont.[49]

What we note about this description is the way in which Señora Moreno is simultaneously portrayed as both passive and active. In a sense, this duality points to a far more complex question that is directly linked to the duality of the *Ramona* myth, the depth of Señora Moreno's racism.

The reader learns about Señora Moreno's hatred of Indigenous peoples when the narrator tells them of her promise to her sister to raise Ramona: "This promise came hard from Señora Moreno. Except for Father Salvierderra's influence, she had not given it. She did not wish any dealings with such alien and mongrel blood. "If the child were pure Indian, I would like it better, " she said. 'I like not these crosses. It is the worst, and not the best of each, that remains."[50] On the surface, the most obvious explanation for Señora Moreno's racism is that it reflects an elite Spanish position common in the 19th century. However, another explanation does exist, the possibility that in portraying Señora Moreno, Jackson reflected her own racial prejudices onto the character. If that is the case, then Señora Moreno's racism reflects that of a white Eastern elite woman who has been indoctrinated in the narratives of Mexican and Indigenous inferiority. Another interesting aspect of Señora Moreno's racism is that it does not waver. At no time in the text does she soften her position, or acknowledge any emotion whatsoever towards Ramona beyond sheer disgust. Moreover, Señora Moreno does not question her position, or see a need to justify it beyond its articulation.

The brutality of its power is evident when Felipe attempts to defend Ramona from his mother's wrath. At this point in the story, Señora Moreno has learned of Alessandro and Ramona's love for one another. She is enraged and has threatened to send Ramona to a convent. Felipe intercedes on her behalf, attempting to stand up to his mother. Her retort is forceful.

> Would you be willing that your own sister should marry Alessandro?" Felipe was embarrassed. He saw whither he was being led. He could give but one answer to this question. "No, mother," he said, "I should not; but -" "Never mind buts," interrupted his mother; "we have not got to those yet;" and she smiled on Felipe- an affectionate smile, but it somehow gave him a feeling of dread. "Of course I knew you could make but on answer to my question. If you had a sister, you would rather see her dead than married to any one of these Indians.[51]

Thus, Señora Moreno's hatred transcends all sentiment. Even while on her deathbed, it remains intact. By this time in the story, Alessandro and Ramona have been gone for a significant amount of time. Neither Felipe nor his mother have heard anything from her. As Señora Moreno lay dying in

her bed, her only preoccupation is to find the strength to tell Felipe of the jewels she has hidden behind a statue. They were the jewels her sister gave her to pass on to Ramona as her dowry. The Señora, however, has no intention of ever letting her receive them. With her last breath, she attempts to tell Felipe of her secret jewels so that he will keep them for his own family. However, she dies before she can tell him her false version, her final action merely pointing in the direction of the statue and uttering an unrecognizable sound as she dies.[52]

Perhaps the most compelling evidence that Señora Moreno's racism was a reflection of Jackson's, comes when examine the many ways in which Orozco and Robles responded to that racism in their reimagination of the character. For example, as we have noted, in the telenovela, it is not Ramona's Indigenous heritage that drives Señora Moreno's hatred, but rather that Ramona reminds her of Angus' betrayal. Additionally, by merging the characters of Señora Moreno and her sister into one and then connecting that character to Angus, Orozco and Robles used that love as a catalyst to reform Señora Moreno's views. We see the result of this transformation when Señora Moreno speaks at Ramona's trial, in an attempt to defend her daughter from the evils of racial hatred.[53]

The night before the trial, Señora Moreno arrives in Spurtown to visit Ramona in prison. She promises, on her word to Angus, to protect her from harm. Ramona is distraught over Alejandro's execution earlier that day, but Señora Moreno convinces her to hide her Indigenous origins and to fight for her life, and for the life of her child. During the first day of Ramona's trial, Nepomuceno comes forward as a witness for the defense and accuses Green of setting Alejandro and Ramona up in an attempt to secure both the Yahi land and the Moreno hacienda. In order to stop Nepomuceno from saying anything more, Green pulls his gun and the judge recesses the proceedings until the following day.

That evening Señora Moreno visits with her old friend, Ramona's lawyer, Señor Colorado. In an effort to obtain his help to ensure that Ramona does not reveal to the court that she is half

Yahi, she tells him Ramona's story. Moreover, she leaves Ramona's baptismal record in his care. Unfortunately, Green finds out about this revelation and steals the records from his home. When the trial begins the following day, Douglas accuses Ramona of perjury, stating that she is not entitled to legal representation because she is Yahi. In an effort to salvage the situation, Señor Coronado responds that Ramona's paternal roots are white Irish, and therefore she is entitled to legal representation. Moreover, he states that Señora Moreno can clarify the circumstances of Ramona's origins to the court. Douglas becomes enraged and states that all Mexicans are liars and cannot be trusted and therefore anything that Señora Moreno might have to say is not worth hearing. The judge disagrees and allows Señora Moreno to speak.

Señora Moreno takes the stand and tells the story of Ramona to the court. She then tells them that she admires Ramona's courage, and does not want to see her executed because if racial hatred. The judge rules that that Ramona is entitled to representation based on her paternal Irish origins. Thus, the trail resumes and Ramona takes the stand. She adds her voice to the chorus that have testified against Green, accusing him of doing, or provoking, all of the violence that has occurred. She then tells the court that the previous night, after hanging Alejandro, Green offered to free her if she would be intimate with him. She then accuses him and his lackeys of raping two young Yahi girls. Padre Sarria rises to confirm her accusation. Green is furious and calls them both liars.

Nepomuceno then rises and adds his voice to Green's accusers, stating that Green intended to kill all the Yahi. He returns to the stand and reveals all of Green's plans. As he is telling his story, Ramona rises and with a look of complete disbelief simply saying, "Tanta muerte, tanta sangre, tan solo por un puñado de tierra?"[*54] Felipe takes the stand next and accuses Green of murdering both Padre Salvatierra and Juan Canito. Additionally, he accuses Green of stealing the land papers of the

[*] So much death, so much blood, for only a handful of land?

Yahi. He asserts that if this is the manner that Green and Americans who support him want to act, then the land of California will flow with rivers of blood since "nosotros estamos dispuestos a todo para defender nuestras tierras."[*55]

It is at this point that Señor Coronado rises and tells the court that Ramona is the victim of Green's actions. Douglas strongly protests, asking if has any witnesses that can corroborate any of Nepomuceno testimony. He responds that he does, and calls Green's deputy, Tom, to the stand. Tom testifies that he was present when Green exterminated the Yahi people. Furthermore, he supports the claim that Green's only purpose in doing so was to flush out Alejandro and ensure the success of his plans to claim all the Yahi land. Douglas rises in fury and states that the Moreno family is very wealthy and has obviously paid Tom for his testimony. Turning to the jury, he states that Ramona has the blood of traitors in her veins, pointing out the betrayal of the Irish soldiers during the war. Moreover, she must be executed since all Indians must be killed in order protect Anglo families and tame California.

$E=MC^2$: Love is Stronger than Hate[56]

Ramona returns to the stand and in a simple, yet poignant discourse, responds directly to Douglas' statements. Ramona admits that she killed Colorado; however, she did so to protect her own life. She tells the court that she grew up in a convent, and understands that she has committed a sin by taking the life of another human being. However, she swears that she never intended to hurt anyone. She then asserts her right to defend her life, which is protected under the law. Therefore, she is innocent and should not be condemned to death for killing Colorado. Ramona continues by stating that racial hatred is the reason she is on trial, because the man she killed was white and that the jury does not equally value her life. This acknowledgement brings her to tears.

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[*] ...we are ready and willing to do whatever it takes to defend our land.

She composes herself and then tells the court that if they find her guilty and execute her, it will not hurt her to die, because in reality, she died when they hung her husband. The only reason that she is fighting for her life is so her unborn child can live. Ramona then pleads with the court for the life of her child. She says it is guilty of nothing, and even though she knows that there are those who will hate her child before it is even born, he or she still has the right to live. By confronting the jury and courtroom with their own racial prejudice towards an unborn child, Ramona articulates the profound depths of racial inequality. It is a powerful moment that has a palatable affect on the proceedings. The judge asks her if she has finished her testimony, to which she responds in the affirmative. After a short deliberation, the jury returns and declares Ramona innocent.

Thus, Ramona's discourse combines with Alejandro's sacrifice, and the narratives of Señora Moreno and Felipe, to illuminate a potential path away from hate. In finding Ramona innocent, the jury took the first step, expressing the right of her child to be born. Moreover, in responding to Ramona's love for her child, and perhaps a level of identification with that love, the actions of the jury expressed the possibility that the community can transform the hatred of the past into love for the future. From the viewer's perspective, this message was the cumulative result of multiple episodes that have been broadcasted across more than fifty days. In this manner, Orozco and Robles gave the viewer an opportunity to reflect upon the consequences of racial hatred, as well as the value of love. This approach stood in stark contrast to the presentation and content of Jackson's message of reform, conveyed to the reader by the character of Aunt Ri.

In the original text, Aunt Ri plays the role of a substitute mother for Ramona. Unlike Señora Moreno's unwavering hatred of Ramona, Aunt Ri comes from Eastern Tennessee and says that she does not think much of either Indians or Mexicans. However, through time, she comes to love both Ramona and Alessandro. It is that transformation that conveys Jackson's message of reform.[57] However, the message itself is far less notable than the fact that Jackson chose to convey it through

a phonetically correct dialect that reflected Aunt Ri's Eastern Tennessee origins. From the perspective of white Easterners, this decision marginalized Aunt Ri's narrative, and in doing so, marginalized the work as a whole. One possible reason for taking such an approach could have been to shift the rejection of programs of extermination to a place outside the center of the Anglo self-conceptualization, thereby increasing its receptive possibilities. However, in doing so, the message of Indian reform became one that was only sustainable outside of the dominate center, and subsequently of very little consequence within the locus of political agendas and policy decisions in 1884.

Orozoco and Robles powerfully responded to this act of marginalization by placing the voice of their counter narrative directly in the mouths of Alejandro, Ramona, Felipe, and Señora Moreno. Moreover, they reinforced those narratives with actions. A short time after the close of the trial, a crowd has gathered outside the Moreno home in anticipation of the birth of Ramona and Alejandro's child. Señora Moreno emerges with a small baby in her arms, and in an act of resistance against the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican, she embraces mestizaje by acknowledging this baby boy, Alejandro, as her grandson: "Tenemos otro heredero. Los Yahí y los Mexicanos ya somos hermanos."[*58] She continues by saying that through his birth, they have all been freed from the violence and oppression of racial hatred. Now is a time to celebrate and come together as one community.

The groundwork for the positive reception of that message was laid in the courtroom, immediately following Ramona's acquittal. There, the judge demanded that Green turn in his badge and be tried for his crimes. Green refused, and pulled his gun. Immediately, Tom and Billy Duboid surrounded him. Billy told the judge that Jack Green was really Rex Green, the infamous child-killer from Texas who had come to California with the rush of Anglos after the war. He then introduced

[*] We have another heir. Now the Yahi and Mexicans are brothers.

the father of his most recent victim who confirmed Billy's accusations. The judge ordered Green's arrest and he was later tried and found guilty of his crimes against the Yahi and Mexicans. His sentence was death. However, he escaped his imprisonment and swore to get revenge against Los Moreno.

Although Alejandro's birth brings Ramona great joy, it is also brings bittersweet memories of his father. Moreover, not everyone in Spurtown and the surrounding areas has been receptive of the message of racial unity. While preparing for Alejandro's baptism, Señora Moreno tells Padre Sarria that there will not be many guests, many of their friends abandoning the family because of Ramona's heritage. He reminds her that hearts full of hate cannot make good friends. Not long thereafter, Manuela, the daughter of Matea, steals baby Alejandro from the Moreno home. She had once loved Alejandro and was very jealous of Ramona, even trying to poison her while she was still pregnant. Both Felipe and Ramona set off to find Manuela. In an attempt to escape from their pursuit, Manuela tries to cross the river with the baby in her arms. Felipe sees this scene and defeats his fear of water in order to rescue Alejandro. Alongside the banks, he returns Alejandro to Ramona's arms.[59]

With Ramona and the baby safely back home, Señora Moreno walks out to the tree where Angus is buried. She sits on a nearby rock and begins to speak to him. Suddenly, Green appears and tells her that he has come to kill her family in order to fulfill his oath of vengeance. Señora Moreno responds that although he might succeed in his task, her land and her home will never truly belong to him. He retorts that no matter how hard Mexicans try to fight, one day the Americans will possess all of their land. As Green raises his gun to her face, she approaches him and looks him squarely in the eyes: "No soy ciega. Sé que en un futuro cercano los mexicanos perderemos nuestras tierras y nuestros derechos en California. Pero yo no estoy dispuesta colaborar con este

destino. ¡Así que dispare! ¡Dispare una vez cobarde!"*[60] Green does nothing but stare at her. He then makes a comment at how beautiful she is. Without showing any emotion, Señora Moreno moves closer and spits in Green's face. She turns around, and walks away. As she does so, he pulls the trigger, shooting her in the back.

This is the event that fuels the final showdown between Good (Felipe) and Evil (Green), that will in turn begin to restore order. Felipe pursues Green and the resulting fight leads to a fire that leaves Green burnt beyond recognition.[61] Thus, the defeat of Evil restores Harmony and the message of racial unification is reinforced through the marriages of Fernando Coronado with Doris, and Anna Lupe Coronado with Billy. Having now reached the final scenes of the telenovela, Orozco and Robles respond to the original text's attempt to restore order by romanticizing the physical removal and displacement of the Yahi and Mexicans from California.

In the telenovela, the viewer watches Felipe and Ramona prepare to leave the hacienda. Before her death, the two promised to abandon California and return to Mexico. Señora Moreno tells them they are no longer safe on the land, and that in order to protect themselves, and the life of Alejandro, they must leave. The only thing she asks is that before they leave, they bury her next to Angus, under the tree, so that two can finally be together. The viewer then sees the two standing before the tree, Ramona holding Alejandro. They turn to enter the carriage and as they do so, Ramona's narration returns: "Tal como se lo prometimos a nuestra madre, Felipe y yo, contigo en brazos, abandonamos la hacienda. De las entrañas de California dejamos a nuestros más queridos. Ramona Gonzaga, tu abuela, Angus O'Phail, tu abuelo, y Alejandro de Asís, tu padre."†[62] The next

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* I am not blind. I know that in the near future, Mexicans will lose our land and our rights in California. But, I am not willing to collaborate in that destiny. So, shoot! Shoot, once and for all coward!

† As we promised our mother, Felipe and I, with you in our arms, abandoned the hacienda. In the heart of California, we left our loved ones. Ramona Gonzaga, your grandmother, Angus O'Phail, your grandfather, and Alejandro de Asís, your father.

image shows Ramona speaking this narrative, several years later, to Alejandro, and his younger sister, Ramona.

It is through this final narration that Ramona strongly marks the open wound that continues to persist in the 21st century. Moreover, the viewer realizes that they are not passive receivers of images, dialogue, and movement, but rather active witnesses to Ramona's storytelling to her children.[63] However, rather than feel like an outsider looking in, the viewer instantly senses that their presence in the scene has been a welcomed one. It is in this manner that Orozco and Robles invite the viewer to participate in their restorative act, one which responds to the memory of the United States War against Mexico by uniting the viewer's history with that of Ramona's family. In doing so, the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican is destroyed, and the multifarious layers of racism's growth over the course of the past century and a half are illuminated. As Felipe enters the scene, the viewer learns that Ramona and Felipe are now married, the young Ramona a product of that union. Music accompanies images of the past that begin transitioning across the screen. It is a time of reflection, in which all embrace a new memory of the war.

Conclusion

The venue of the television brought Orozco and Robles' response to life and showed the viewer a reimagined memory of the war and its real life ramifications. Through Ramona's act of oral storytelling, she dealt a devastating blow to the *Ramona* myth. However, it is important to note that rather than an act of violence, this was an act of love, a story that defeated narratives of inferiority that would seek to degrade her children's self-esteem, and that of the generations to come. Humberto Robles spoke about the message of the telenovela: "De alguna manera lo que la telenovela quiso decir (el mensaje) es que seamos de la raza que seamos, todos somos iguales y mercemos los mismos derechos. A fin de cuentas el discurso general de la telenovela es una

exaltación en contra del espíritu racista de aquella época y de esta."*[64] Thus, *Ramona* (2000) rewound time and created a restorative story whose influence would profoudly affect Ramona's children. Like the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican that is so aptly contested, this new memory of the war would be carried down through the ensuing generations arriving in the 21st century viewer's livingroom in a split second. However, Orozco and Robles' counter narrative was not confined only to this outcome, but rather expanded well beyond the confines of a response to Helen Hunt Jackson's original work, joining nearly two centuries of Mexico's collective response.

For instance, the character of Jack Green reflected Tornel's belief that Anglo immigration into Texas was one component of a larger U.S. project of expansion, fueled by a desire to acquire territory that rightfully belonged to Mexico. Rather than benevolent colonists seeking to live peacefully as Mexican citizens, the Anglo colonists sought to foment rebellion in an aggressive attempt to acquire the territory. In short, their actions reflected nothing more than greed, for greed's sake. The character of Douglas represented Gorostiza's accusation that the U.S. government secretly supported those efforts by attempting to pervert agreements and treaties in an effort to defend and support their actions. The testimony of Nepomuceno, Billy Duboid, Padre Sarria, Felipe, and Señora Moreno combined to support that accusation. Orozco and Robles also represented Paredes' response to Polk's accusation that the United States War against Mexico was a necessitated action in self-defense. This was reflected in the attempt of Green and Douglas to use Alejandro's reaction to the covert raid of the Yahi village as proof of the barbarity of Indigenous peoples. Finally, Señora Moreno reproduced all fifteen authors of *Apuntes* when she conveyed a narrative of religious unity in defense of the actions of the Battalion of Saint Patricks.

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* In some ways, what the telenovela wanted to say (the message) is that we are the race that we are, we are all equal, and we deserve the same rights. In the end, the general conversation of the telenovela is an exaltation against the racist spirit of that time, and of this one.

On a larger scale, *Ramona* (2000) responded to the many layers of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican, whose development reaches back across the centuries. In particular, the telenovela attacked narratives of inferiority that sought to degrade the pride and dignity of Mexico as a nación, asserting that its inadequacy resulted from its Indigenous past. Here, Orozco and Robles reflected narratives of Indigenous empowerment that were portrayed through the character of Alejandro de Asís. The eloquence of his voice, and his determination to execute his right to agency, combined to create a powerful message that turned the idea of Mexican inferiority upside down. Moreover, through his son, and the mestizaje that he embraced, that message contained a strength that could not only battle against narratives of extermination, but also the contemporary misconceptions of a young boy named Howard.

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[1] See Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft Vol XVI: History of the North Mexican States and Texas. 1531-1889* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1889), PDF e-book, HathiTrust Digital Library; Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft Vol XIII. History of Mexico: Vol V. 1824-1861* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1885), PDF e-book, HathiTrust Digital Library; Horatio O. Ladd, *History of the War with Mexico* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1883) Kindle edition.

[2] See Yuri Lotman, *Semiotics of Cinema* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1976); Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc, 1968; New York: Schocken Books, 2007).

[3] See William Anthony Nericcio, "Autopsy of a Rat," in *Tex[t] Mex: Seductive Hallucinations of the "Mexican" in America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007), 111-52.

[4] In 1962, Pat Boone covered Buddy Kaye, Ethel Lee, and David Hess' catchy song about Speedy Gonzales. It peaked at #6 on the Billboard charts. This is an important event, when we consider that a 14 year old teenager in 1962, was 5 years old when the cartoon first appeared. In this light, the song itself becomes a means of continued reinforcement as receivers grow up. The lyrics are as follows:

> "SPOKEN: It was a moonlit night in old Mexico/I walked alone between some old adobe haciendas/Suddenly, I heard the plaintive cry of a young Mexican girl:/La la la, la la la la la la la la, la la la la la la la la, la la la la. You better come home Speedy Gonzales/Away from tannery row/Stop all of your drinking/With that floozy named Flo!/Come on home to your adobe/And slap some mud on the wall!/The roof is leaking like a strainer/There's loads of roaches in the Hall. Speedy Gonzales (Speedy Gonzales)/Why don't you come home?/Speedy Gonzales (Speedy Gonzales)/How come you leave me all alone? "He, Rosita, I have to go shopping

downtown for my mother/She needs some Tortillias and Chilli Pepper!" Your doggie's gonna have a puppy/And we're running out of Coke/No enchiladas in the icebox/And the television's broke/I saw some lipstick on your sweatshirt/I smell some perfume in your ear/Well, if you're gonna keep on messin'/Don't bring your business back a-here. Mmm, Speedy Gonzales/Why don't you come home?/Speedy Gonzales/How come you leave me all alone? "He, Rosita, come quick!/Down at the cantina/They're giving green stamps with Tequila!"

Lyrics obtained through http://rock.rapgenius.com/Pat-boone-speedy-gonzales-lyrics, accessed May 15, 2014.

[5] In the same year, Enrique Berruga Filloy, a Mexican diplomat, wrote *Propiedad Ajena* that José Antonio Olvera and Luis Vélez adopted into a movie in 2007. In this work, Berruga presents the story of the Sámano family. As long-standing inhabitants of San Antonio, los Sámano had regular encounters with soldiers during the United States war against Mexico. They befriended one in particular, Robert Crossman. However, after the war, the family fell victim to Crossman's ambition when he arrived at their home the day after the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo with eviction papers. Unknown to Lorenzo Sámano is the fact that these papers are false, an attempt by Crossman to acquire his land. Believing his family in danger, Lorenzo and his family abandon the hacienda, relocating within the new boundaries of Mexico. To Crossman, they entrust the care of their home. However, Lorenzo's wife Amalia is devastated by the turn of events and spends the balance of her life trying to return to Texas. It is not until 150 years later, when the descendants of both families confront one another, that the Sámano family regains their land.

In late 2011, Paco Ignatio Taibo II published *El Alamo. Una historia no apta para Hollywood* in which he provides a detailed analysis of the myth of the Alamo. One of the questions he investigates is why this battle, one in which U.S. troops did not even participate, plays such a large role in the foundational myth of the United States. When providing the rational for his work, Taibo II points to the destructive effects of this mythological narrative and its function in obscuring the truth about the Texas conflict. The scope of his work is sweeping, looking across a wide time and genre field, including the internet, movies, fictions, non-fictions, and published historical accounts.

[6] In speaking with Humberto Robles (August 7, 2014 - September 2, 2014) he shared with me the history of the telenovela *Ramona*. In the early 1990s, Francisco Sánchez wrote a telenovela completely based upon Helen Hunt Jackson's work. He made many changes to the original work, and added additional locations and characters. Due to the number of actors and locations that his version required, it was seen as cost prohibitive to produce. A short time later, Lucy Orozoco invited him to work with her on adapting Sánchez's version for production. During that process, additional story changes were made.

[7] For a detailed explanation of the structure of the telenovela see José Ignacio Cabrujas, *y latinoamérica inventó la telenovela* (Mexico: Alfo Grupo Editorial, 2002).

[8] The titles and years of original broadcast are: *El carruaje* (1972) that centered on the conflict between Benito Juarez and Maximiliano, *Senda de gloria* (1987) that dealt with the Mexican Revolution, *El vuelo de aguila* (1994) that presented the life of Porforio Díaz, and *La antorcha encendida* (1996) that represented the insurgency against Spanish rule and Mexico's independence.

[9] The finale of *Sortilegio* beat ABC and CBS drawing 6.6 million viewers, giving Univision the number 3 spot for the evening. Source accessed June 4, 2014, Tvbythenumbers.zap2it.com/2010/02/18/univision-beats-abc-and-cbs-wednesday-night-sortilegio-finale-draws-6-6-million/43286/. The finale of *Eva Luna* repeated that success, drawing 9.7 million viewers. Source accessed June 4, 2014, corporate.univision.com/2011/04/exciting-ieva-lunai-finale-reaches-9-7-million-viewers-ranks-as-one-of-top-10-novela-finales-of-all-time-and-the-highest-rated-domestically-produced-novela-in-history-univision-3-broadcast-network/. The finale of *Soy tu dueña* was seen by 9.4 million viewers and was the top rated program of the evening across all demographic and language parameters. Source accessed June 4, 2014, www.reuters.com/article/201012/28/idUS152820+28-Dec-2010+BW20101228.

[10] I italicize *Ramona* to highlight the difference between the entire work and the specific character of Ramona.

[11] *Christian Union*, January 29, 1885. For this dissertation, I read the original serialized version from 1884.

[12] When I asked Humberto Robles why they had selected *Ramona* to adapt to their central theme rather than María Ruíz de Burton's *The Squatter and the Don* (1885), he stated that they were, and continue to be, unaware of Burton's work. Moreover, they had seen Dolores del Río's 1928 portrayal of *Ramona*. He said that it was a story that could be converted into a telenovela since it already contained many melodramatic elements. Furthermore, although Jackson's work was relatively unknown in Mexico, there were many who knew of del Ríos performance, owing to her stature as an iconic movie star.

Finally, he referenced the popularity of del Ríos' performance of L. Wolfe Gilbert's 1927 song *Ramona* the lyrics of which are: "I wander out yonder o'er the hills/Where the mountains high/Seem to kiss the sky/Someone is out yonder, o'er the hills/Waiting patiently, Waiting just for me/Ramona, I hear the mission bells above/Ramona, they're ringing out our song of love/I press you, caress you, and bless the day you taught me to care/To always remember the rambling rose you wear in your hair/Ramona, when day is done you'll hear my call/Ramona, we'll meet beside the water fall/I dread the dawn when I awake to find you gone/Ramona I need you my own/Let's wander out yonder o'er the hills/By a babbling brook/Where we'll find a nook/To build our own love nest, o'er the hills/Darling of my heart, Never more to part/Ramona, I hear the mission bells above/Ramona, they're ringing out our song of love/I press you, caress you, and bless the day you taught me to care/To always remember the rambling rose you wear in your hair/Ramona, when day is done you'll hear my call/Ramona, we'll meet beside the water fall/I dread the dawn when I awake to find you gone/Ramona I need you my own. "Dolores del Río - "Ramona" Vals (1928)," https://www. youtube.com/watch?v=7WXASMlUvV8. Humberto Robles to Rochelle Trotter, September 2, 2014.

[13] Carlyle Channing and William A. Alderson, *The True Story of "Ramona." Its Facts and Fictions, Inspiration and Purpose* (New York: Dodge Publishing Company, 1914), 145.

[14] Although Davis and Alderson do offer a grammatically correct explanation concerning Padre Salvadiera's name, it is interesting to note that Jose Martí, as well as Orozoco, Sánchez and Robles, change Padre Salvadiera's name to Padre Salvatierra; a combination of salvar (to save) and tierra (land).

[15] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, June 5, 1884.

[16] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, June 19, 1884.

[17] Dydia DeLyser, "Ramona Memories: Fiction, Tourist Practices, and Placing the Past in Southern California" *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* Vol. 93, No.4 (December 2003): 890.

[18] "2011 Donors & Sponsors," The Ramona Bowl, accessed May 19, 2012, ramonabowl.com/donors-2011.htm.

[19] The Ramona Bowl, accessed May 19, 2012, ramonabowl.com.

[20] "Ramona, Capitúlo 1," YouTube, accessed June 4, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9NkmtGw-g0. In order to update URL's, I accessed all references for *Ramona* (2000) through YouTube on June 4, 2014. All remaining references refer to that date and platform.

[21] In Helen Hunt Jackson's work the spelling of Angus' last name is Phail, in the telenovela it is O'Phail.

[22] Ramona," *Christian Union*, May 29, 1884.

[23] This scene appears in the following episode: "Ramona, Capitúlo 1," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9NkmtGw-g0.

[24] Humberto Robles to Rochelle Trotter, 2 September 2014.

[25] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 14 (parte 4) final," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RzArq 3MytHA.

[26] This scene appears in the following episode: "Ramona Cap 41 (part 2)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udtTNyhHNqQ. Señora Moreno's speech is a critical moment in the telenovela in which she communicates the action that has brought chaos into their lives, and by extension, what must be defeated in order to restore order. See the structure of a telenovela in Cabrujas, *y latinoamérica invento la telenovela*, 78.

[27] This scene appears in the following episodes: "Telenovela Ramona cap 45 (part 1)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfDFJJxYBkU; "Telenovela Ramona cap 45 (part 2)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkr69NWu8a8.

[28] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, May 22, 1884.

[29] Humberto Robles to Rochelle Trotter September 2, 2014.

[30] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 21 (parte 3)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pryz6Yh HKDE.

[31] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, 12 June 1884.

[32] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, 17 July 1884.

[33] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, 18 September 1884.

[34] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, 23 October 1884.

[35] This is a significant difference from the original work, where Felipe has always known that Ramona is not his sister. However, for a large portion of the telenovela, he is unaware of that fact and therefore feels tremendous guilt for his romantic sentiments. Humberto Robles states that Francisco Sánchez made this change for melodramatic purposes. In this manner, Felipe would be tortured by a love that was unobtainable. Humberto Robles to Rochelle Trotter, September 2, 2014.

[36] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 21 (parte 3)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pryz6YhH KDE.

[37] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 4 (parte 4) final," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Sno CQb_LXo.

[38] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 4 (parte 2)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20ldLjGAcaM.

[39] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 41 (parte 1)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v+AYQJzSv nkt8.

[40] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 46 (parte 3)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=punr Wc4l31E.

[41] This scene occurs over multiple episodes: "Telenovela Ramona cap 44 (parte 3)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bu7eDQ3tWj8; "Telenovela Ramona cap 44 (parte 4)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= zLGFHoHW2D4; "Telenovela Ramona cap 45 (parte 1)," https://www.youtube.com /watch?v=nfDFJJxYBKU; "Telenovela Ramona cap 45 (parte 2)," https:// www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkr69NWu8a8.

[42] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 50 (parte 1)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZdR7Uz DHc.

[43] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 49 (parte 3)," https://www.youtube.com/watch=?v=wg0xWwl 1hbI.

[44] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 50 (parte 4) Final," https://www.you tube.comwatch?v=flcF9_ YDytc.

[45] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona 51 (parte 2)," https://www.youtube.com /watch?=9fWduR0nrBc.

[46] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 51 (parte 4) final," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AATy EovRUXk.

[47] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 52 (parte 2)," https://www.youtube.com /watch?v=SJ-B-VOrRVE.

[48] The trial and execution of Alejandro occurs over the course of several episodes:
"Telenovela Ramona cap 53 (parte 1)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v =80Pzj71R4Qc;
"Telenovela Ramona cap 53 (parte 2)," https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=bWFGyCa1Hjg;
"Telenovela Ramona cap 53 (parte 3)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= tPM7P9thgf4;
"Telenovela Ramona cap 53 (parte 4)," https://www.youtube. com/watch?v=GvwwqJ227bY;
"Telenovela Ramona cap 53 (parte 5)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= oqRtfNqId9Q;
"Telenovela Ramona cap 54 (parte 1)," https:// www.youtube.com/watch?v= 9LuUybC0myg;
"Telenovela Ramona cap 54 (parte 2)," https://www.you tube.com/watch?v=sAsTWfh6ps;
"Telenovela Ramona cap 54 (parte 3)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= 3K U3SS6u40A.

[49] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, 22 May 1884.

[50] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, 29 May 1884.

[51] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, July 31 1884.

[52] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, Oct 2 1884.

[53] The trial of Ramona occurs over the course of several episodes. My recounting of that story emphasizes 57-3 (Señora Moreno's testimony); 57-4 and 58-1 (Nepomuceno's testimony); 58-1 (Felipe's testimony); and 58-3 (Ramona's final testimony).
"Telenovela Ramona cap 54 (parte 4) final," https://www.youtube. com/watch?v=jg7QE3xrNTA.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 55 (parte 1)," https://www.youube.com/watch?v=_Gc8IbfY4X0.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 55 (parte 2)," https:// www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXZ7LmVQxqI.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 55 (parte 3)," https//www.youtube.com/watch?v=I1XzEgi4byo.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 55 (parte 4)final," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v =ixLvT55pnfs.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 56 (parte 1), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkHNKIV09eo.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 56 (parte 2)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyXyd_FnceY.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 56 (parte 3)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBy3AgTOYTs.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 56 (parte 4) final," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbMiKdzqN3c.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 57 (parte 1)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0umM0P110Z4.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 57 (parte 2)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_t8h8waxND4.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 57 (parte 3)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yifmeugwk6Q.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 57 (parte 4) Final," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zJgxUsSAhs.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 58 (parte 1), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xuR8JgeeRzY.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 58 (parte 2)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v =nSl73vAmSj4.
"Telenovela Ramona cap 58 (parte 3)," https:// www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAcSfNIOtmw.

"Telenovela Ramona cap 58 (parte 4) Final," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= OnVRR1FQVUs. "Telenovela Ramona cap 59 (parte 1)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRPVusFZ4YE.

[54] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 57 (parte 4) Final," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v-5zJgxUsSAhs.

[55] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 58 (parte 1), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xuR8J geeRzY.

[56] I created this subtitle from two lines in Luis Valdez's 1971 poem "Pensamiento Serpentino" in Luis Valdez, *Early Works: Actos, Bernabé and Pensamiento Serpentino* (1990 repr., Houston: Arte Público Press, 1994). The passage reads: MEEX-KIN-CO/(co means serpiente also)/ Eventually gives us/ MEXICO/ which means/ serpiente emplumada/and according to the/mathematical interpretation/ of the Mayas/ refers to the/ espiritual-material duality/ of all things/Matter and Energy/ Which in European terms/ thanks to Einstein/ is the theory of relativity/and his formula/ E=MC2/ And you know what?/It simply means/that LOVE is stronger than HATE.

[57] "Ramona," *Christian Union*, October 30, 1884.

[58] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 65 (parte 4)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zkb7PWQ Wr7A.

[59] The rescue of Alejandro appears in the following episodes: "Telenovela Ramona cap 67 (parte 1)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eStPz6DQqoc; "Telenovela Ramona cap 67 (parte 2)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= WKrIgOpO-Mg.

[60] This scene appears in the following episode: "Ramona cap 67 (parte 2B) NUEVO!," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9toIm08 GWGA.

[61] This scene appears in the following episode: "Ramona cap 67 (parte 2D) NUEVO!," https://www.you tube.com/watch?v=Jj3qLpmoTU.

[62] This scene appears in the following episode: "Telenovela Ramona cap 67 (parte 3)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWab4iG EWsI.

[63] For a discussion on the importance of oral story telling see Genaro M Padilla, *My History, Not Yours: The Formation of Mexican American Autobiography* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994); Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 2001); Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, *The Latino/a Condition: A Critical Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

[64] Humberto Robles to Rochelle Trotter, September 2, 2014.

CONCLUSION

Oppression comes in many forms. In our daily lives, we rarely associate our unwillingness to embrace a different perspective as a violent act. Nor do we acknowledge that our insistence on a monolingual culture further empowers the destructive force of that action. However, in this dissertation, I have demonstrated that both statements are true. In turning to Mexico's response to the events surrounding the Texas conflict and the United States War against Mexico, we have seen how mythmakers utilized the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican to silence Mexico's voice and impose *their* one universal and irrefutable truth about that conflict and the ensuing war. It has been our willingness to passively accept that narrative that has maintained this violent act of oppression for more than one hundred and eighty years.

Breaking this oppression requires a willingness to critically engage the mythological narratives that compose our understanding. Moreover, we must expand our horizons and listen to other points of view. In seeking out and listening to Mexico's response, we have revealed a very different story. For instance, José María de Tornel y Mendivil's essay *Tejas* countered the mythmaker's idyllic imagining of the Texas colonists showing that it was their alliance with the U.S. government that left the footprints of tyranny on the Texas landscape. Rather than a group of benevolent colonists seeking a tranquil life of farming, Tornel outlined their coordinated efforts to seize Texas, no matter what the cost. Of particular note were the personal letters of both Moses and Stephen Austin that underscored the true reasons behind their efforts in Texas. Moreover, Sam Houston's business relationship with James Prentiss to sever land rights demonstrated a willful disregard for Mexican law. In particular, it showed that U.S. capitalists were willing to intentionally thwart that law in pursuit of their larger ambitions.

The story that Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza's pamphlet *Correspondencia* told spoke directly to the duplicity of U.S. neutrality. In his essay, Gorostiza pointed to the efforts of Joel R. Poinsett and Anthony Butler, during their respective tenures as U.S. Envoy Extraordinary and Minister

Plenipotentiary to Mexico, to coerce Mexico into relinquishing the Texas territory. Not surprisingly, when we examined the letters of both Ministers, we found ample proof of Gorostiza's opinion. Moreover, our examination of Butler's letters revealed a very contentious relationship with Stephen Austin that significantly affected events. However, it was Gorostiza's denouncement of General Edmund P. Gaines' 1836 orders that drew our attention the most. Through that directive, U.S. troops were ordered to a position within Mexican territory. In that discussion, Gorostiza asserted that the pretense of this action, ensuring that Mexico fulfilled its treaty obligations, was baseless. Moreover, he stated that such an action was proof of the U.S. government's role in directing and supporting the Anglo rebellion. It was a claim that we sustained through the published correspondence of Stephen Austin with Henry Meigs Jr., brother-in-law to Secretary of State John Forsyth.

By the spring of 1846, war had broken out between the United States and Mexico. Although the U.S. government claimed it had acted in response to Mexico's violent aggression, Mexico's collective response rejected such an assertion. The individuals that composed this voice stated that the 1844 Treaty to Annex Texas, the 1845 Texas Convention, and John Slidell's mission to Mexico were all representative of efforts by the U.S. government to forcibly seize Mexico's sovereign territory. President Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga spoke directly to the conflict, contextualizing it on a global scale. First, he looked back at the course of events for the previous forty years, emphasizing the actions of the U.S. government in relationship to the handling of the inhabitants of Louisiana after the 1803 purchase, the negotiations with Spain that had resulted in the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty, and the unwillingness of the U.S. government to abide by the terms of that treaty. In the face of such actions, Paredes asked how the U.S. government could reconcile such violent acts of imperialism with its narratives of democracy and freedom. However, his most important interrogation came when he questioned the impact of such a situation on the emerging parameters of international law in a non-monarchial world.

Silencing reality with myth required mythmakers to indoctrinate the public in the one universal and irrefutable truth about the war; that it was a glorified Anglo struggle against evil. Therefore, they created romantic stories that reimagined that struggle, availing themselves of the highly popular dime novel. Through these romances, mythmakers instructed the public on how to reproduce the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican. It was a highly effective tool as we saw in General Albert C. Ramsey's translation of *Apuntes*. In that work, Ramsey replaced an insightful and intellectual retrospective of the war with uneven translations and the interposition of footnotes that portrayed the authors in the specific, and Mexicans as a whole, as inferior, feminine, cowardly, and irrational. Thus, through a detailed examination of his translation, we were able to witness the actual process by which the pubic reproduced the mythmaker's narratives, thereby silencing Mexico's voice both then and now.

As the decades passed, and each new generation grew up, the public's memory of the United States War against Mexico became just as important as their understanding of it had been in its time. Lucy Orozco and Humberto Robles' attacked that mythological memory in their telenovela *Ramona* (2000). Through our discussion of this work we revealed the palimpsest of the Anglo-centric myth of the Mexican, underscoring its duplicity and distortions. Moreover, we discovered that throughout its sixty-seven episodes, *Ramona* reproduced images and actions that nullified the narratives of inferiority that had sought to degrade Mexican identity. In its place, it reproduced images and actions that reflected mestizo empowerment. However, its most powerful act of resistance was its contestation of the memory of the war, a task that Orozco and Robles gave to Ramona. Through a mother's love for her children, Ramona's simple act of oral story telling turned back the clock and conveyed a restorative story that not only empowered her children, but also the many generations that would follow.

As we can easily imagine, the vast amount of information that came from such a wide-scope critical engagement of Mexico's response has resulted in countless opportunities for future

research. One such opportunity is a discussion on how the project of creating a Mexican self-conceptualization between 1821 and 1848 connects, relates, and differs from efforts of the Chicano Movement to utilize the narrative of Aztlán to create a unified Chican@ self-conceptualization. Another opportunity is an exploration of how the world's emerging democracies defined the incipient parameters of international law during this era. Particularly, how the various democratic nations perceived the rights of sovereignty in a non-monarchial world. Finally, a very interesting question is what was the response from Indigenous peoples in both the United States and Mexico to the Texas conflict and the ensuing war? These three opportunities represent only a small portion of the types of studies that will continue to provide a space to hear Mexico's collective response to U.S. imperialism between 1821 and 1848.

Retrospectives

One Saturday afternoon in June of 1995, I walked into a local bookstore, across the street from Michigan State University. I asked the clerk to point me in the direction of the Mexican-American or Chicano literature section. The only response I received was a blank stare. My only remaining option was to ask for the fiction section. As I scanned the shelves, I looked for authors with Spanish sounding surnames. I found only one, *Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena María Viramontes. Chronicling the story of Estrella, a young girl who traveled the migrant circuit with her family, there is one scene from that book which I have never forgotten. Estrella is talking to her mother about her fear of being picked up by immigration officials. In response to her concerns, her mother says, "Don't run scared. You stay there and look them in the eye. Don't let them make you feel you did a crime for picking the vegetables they'll be eating for dinner. If they stop you, if they try to pull you into the green vans, you tell them the birth certificates are under the feet of Jesus, just tell them."[1] This was the genesis moment of the journey that has brought me to this moment.

The following spring, I tried once again to find more books to read. The next store I went to served Michigan State University. That trip also resulted in only one book, *Bless Me, Última* by

Rudolfo Anaya. Finally, I went to a specialty bookstore in a nearby town where I found *By the Lake of Sleeping Children. The Secret Life of the Mexican Border* by Luis Albert Urrea. Frustrated with finding so few titles, I asked a store clerk for help. This time I got lucky, and met someone who was willing to help. Now, it is important to keep in mind that in 1996, there was no internet, no Amazon, no Google books. However, the clerk did have several catalogs that she used to order books. Working together, we scanned through their pages, looking for any Spanish surnames. The only author we came across was Victor Villaseñor. The catalog showed a few entries, but *Rain of Gold* (1991) caught my eye. I told her to order it.

As each new book arrived, I scanned the jacket cover and any reviews to see if I could find new "leads." The clerk, whose name I have sadly forgotten, called me anytime she saw something interesting appear in a catalog. Over the course of the following years, my efforts slowly grew my library to include books written by Oscar Acosta, Kathleen Alcalá, Ron Arias, Raymond Barrio, Diane Gonzales Bertrand, Elena Díaz Bjorkquist, José Antonio Burciaga, Nellie Campobello, Nash Candelaria, Daniel Cano, Ana Castillo, Denise Chavez, Sandra Cisneros, Lucha Corpi, Tony Díaz, Debra Díaz, Brianda Domecq, Miguel Encinias, María Escandón, Laura Esquivel, Roberta Fernández, Ernesto Galarza, Lionel G. García, Beatriz de la Garza, Alicia Gaspar de Alba, Dagoberto Glib, Genaro González, Jovita González, Alejandro Grattan-Domínguez, Elva Treviño Hart, Irene Beltrán Hernández, Rolando Hinojosa, Francisco Jiménez, Ofelia Dumas Lachtman, Graciela Limón, Patricia Preciado Martinez, Miguel Méndez, Alejandro Morales, Américo Paredes, Luis Pérez, Manuel Luis Ramos, Juan Ramirez, John Rechy, Daniel Reveles, David Rice, Alberto Alvaro Ríos, Rick P. Rivera, Tomás Rivera, Luis J. Rodriguez, Arturo Rosales, Mona Ruíz, Jesús Salvador, and Sabine R. Ulibarrí. Each one of these individuals had a story to tell, one that expanded my understanding of the complexities of the human experience.

However, it is important to emphasize that between 1995 and the final months of 1999, I never found any of these author's books on a shelf in a bookstore. When I moved to Phoenix, I

hoped that the situation might change. Relative to no selection in Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana, I did find small enclaves of titles in the Phoenix area. Moreover, living in Arizona gave me the opportunity to attend books signings and readings often hosted by small specialty bookstores. Through these events I encountered and spoke to amazing people such as Victor Villaseñor and Alberto Alvaro Ríos. One such event occurred while I was in San Antonio on business in 1999. While driving through town and listening to the radio heard about a book signing that evening featuring Edward James Olmos. The event coincided with the release of *Americanos* (1999), a work he co-authored with Lea Ybarra and Manuel Monterrey. Although I arrived quite early, the event brought in so many people that it was nearly midnight before my number was called and I had the opportunity to meet him. His remarks at the beginning of the event and our personal conversation joined the sum of my experiences to engrain my resolve to continue learning.

During times that I had no luck finding new works from Chican@ authors, I expanded my reading parameters to include translated works from Latin American authors such as Carlos Fuentes, Juan Rulfo, Eduardo Galeano, and Jorge Luis Borges. By 2000, I decided I no longer wanted to read translations, but rather wished to engage these works for myself and draw my own conclusions. Ironically, learning to read Spanish didn't resolve the issues I had previously faced, since I had similar difficulties finding works in their original Spanish. That is how I met my good friend, Dr. Manuel Manuel Murrieta Saldívar. I was desperately seeking a copy of Eduardo Galeano's *Las venas abiertas de América Latina* (1971). Although I had no problems finding an English translation, the original Spanish eluded me. When I read about a book fair in Phoenix, I attended and asked Manuel, in my very broken 2nd year Spanish, if he knew where I could get a copy. I will never forget the look of surprise on his face. However, as I explained my reasons, he recognized my passion and offered to find me a copy. The results of my effort paid double rewards in this case; an amazing book and a terrific friend.

The intention of this reflection has been to highlight yet another example of how silencing oppresses voice. Even now, as the internet continues to expand the horizons of accessibility, as recently as 2012, many of the books I worked so hard to find are now banned from Arizona classrooms. Other States are rapidly following suit. The only way to defeat this oppression is for us, as a society, to put away our prejudice, our fears, our insecurities, whatever it is that prevents us from embracing diversity, and recognize that the only path forward is together.

The effort holds great reward. For instance, in listening to Mexico's response to United States imperialism between 1821 and 1848 we have not only expanded our understanding of that era, and the events that compose it, but we have also reached a deeper understanding of the world in which we participate. Mythmakers have constructed thick walls to imprison us. However, with each action that embraces a willingness to listen, we break down those walls, reject the imposition of *their* vision, and embrace the diversity that reveals the multifarious nature of the human experience. If I was able to travel back in time, my choice would have been to bring Tornel, Gorostiza, Paredes, Bocanegra, Ramirez, and all fifteen authors of *Apuntes* into the present so that they could speak for themselves and tell you their story first hand. Nonetheless, in this dissertation, I have endeavored to be faithful to their writings and to allow them to speak **¡EN VOZ ALTA!**

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[1] Helena María Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus* (New York: Penguin Group, 1995), 63.

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