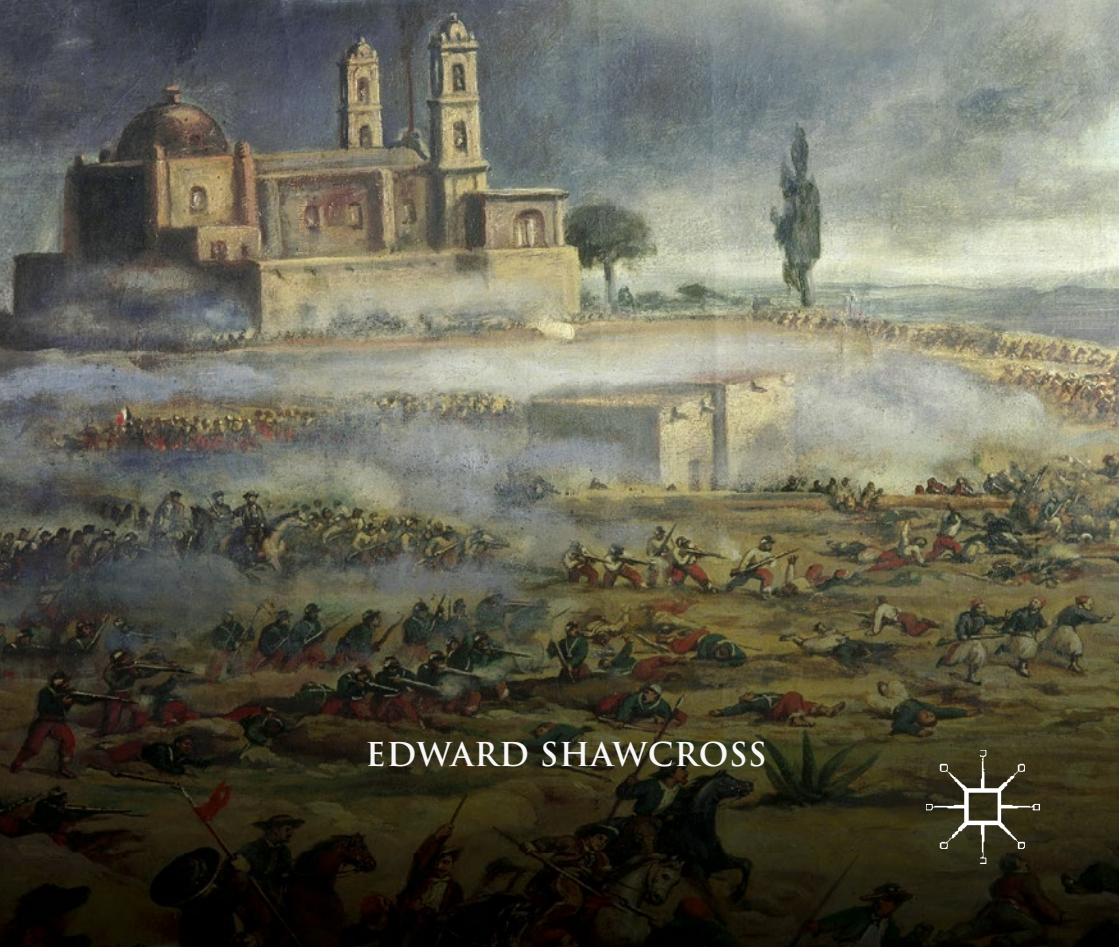


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FRANCE, MEXICO AND INFORMAL EMPIRE IN LATIN AMERICA, 1820–1867

EQUILIBRIUM IN THE NEW WORLD



EDWARD SHAWCROSS



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Informal Empire in
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Equilibrium in the New World

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For my mother

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Introduction

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

Amongst the Spanish uniforms, French flags, and US weapons on display in the museum, one imperial power is conspicuous by its absence: Britain. This is surprising because the standard narrative of imperialism in post-independence Latin America is one of British influence followed by the rise of the United States. Yet, in Mexico, it was France, not Britain, that intervened militarily, first from 1838 to 1839 and then, on a much larger scale, from 1862 to 1867. These expeditions did not aim at territorial

conquest. The objective of the 1838 intervention was to coerce the Mexican government into complying with French demands: payment of compensation to French nationals in Mexico and the negotiation of a Franco-Mexican treaty to regulate future relations. In order to achieve these goals, France sent its navy to blockade the Atlantic coast of Mexico. When the Mexican government refused France's ultimatum, French forces bombarded and then occupied the fortress of San Juan de Ulúa, which guarded the entrance to the port city of Veracruz. To end the intervention, the Mexican government was forced to pay France an indemnity of 600,000 piastres and sign a provisional treaty of commerce, navigation and friendship.²

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

Unhindered by its erstwhile allies, France, from April 1862, began an imperial project on a grand scale. The initial expeditionary force was defeated by Juárez's forces at Puebla on 5 May 1862, but the city was taken the following year and in the face of the advancing French army, the constitutional government of Mexico was forced to flee its capital. In June 1863, Mexico's republican institutions were replaced by a regency which governed Mexico until the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian and his Belgian wife Marie Charlotte (known as Carlota) were crowned as Emperor and Empress of Mexico in June 1864.⁵ Faced with continuing Mexican opposition from Juárez's republican forces, and US diplomatic pressure, Louis-Napoléon announced in January 1866 that French troops would withdraw. Carlota returned to Europe to plead in person to Louis-Napoléon for continued military support, but, unmoved by her appeals, the French emperor ensured that the last French troops evacuated Veracruz

by March 1867. Three months later, on 19 June 1867, Maximilian was executed and republican government in Mexico was restored. The life of the second emperor of Mexico ended as had that of the first, Agustín de Iturbide, by execution.⁶ Three years later, 4 September 1870, the French Second Empire collapsed, its emperor in captivity after defeat at the battle of Sedan during the Franco-Prussian War.

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE 1862–67 FRENCH INTERVENTION

The Mexican and French Second Empires have been judged by their dramatic conclusions, obscuring the ideas that underwrote French intervention in Mexico and the regime which it created. In Mexico, the empire of Maximilian (1864–67) was condemned by those who defeated it. Interpreted through the prism of national history, it was represented as an arcane aberration, like the French Second Empire in France, before the triumph of liberal republicanism. This explanation was embedded into Mexican national discourse by writers of officialist history under the *Porfiriato* (the period from 1876 to 1911 marked by the authoritarian rule of Porfirio Díaz) who had supported Juárez.⁷ The struggle was portrayed as a Manichean one of good versus evil, liberal republicans against foreign invaders supported only by a small number of reactionary and treasonous Mexican Conservatives and monarchists. Juárez's victory in 1867 became one of the foundational moments of Mexican history.⁸ The Mexican Revolution (1910–20) appropriated the legend of Juárez into its own rhetoric of triumphant progress,⁹ and historians repeated the by-now standard narrative of the French intervention and its place in Mexico's past.¹⁰ With few exceptions,¹¹ there was no counter to this interpretation because of the near-complete abandonment of the Mexican Second Empire by its adherents: even those who had been *plus royaliste que le roi*—such as General Leonardo Márquez, who held Mexico City for the empire even after its emperor had been executed, or Francisco de Paula Arrangoiz y Berzábal, one of the earliest proponents of a monarchy in Mexico under Maximilian—distanced themselves from the regime.¹²

Early analysis of the intervention in France was similarly negative for two reasons. First, the intervention never had widespread public or political support.¹³ The expedition to Mexico united conservative legitimists, liberal Orléanists and moderate republicans in opposition to the

government. The criticisms of celebrated orators such as Pierre Antoine Berryer, Adolphe Thiers, and Jules Favre in the *Corps législatif* were widely publicised.¹⁴ Furthermore, returning French officers wrote unfavourable accounts of the Mexican Second Empire which augmented the negative portrayal of French policy.¹⁵ Second, events in France meant that the Mexican intervention was subsumed into a wider vilification of the Second Empire itself. After 1870, French republican historiography, building on earlier attacks,¹⁶ created a black legend around the second Bonapartist regime.¹⁷ Moreover, the abdication of Louis-Napoléon during the Franco-Prussian War encouraged his opponents to portray his Mexican policy as a microcosm for the Emperor's own failings; a stepping stone on the road to Sedan. For French republicans, it was no coincidence that the commander-in-chief of the army in Mexico from 1863 to 1867, Achille Bazaine, was the man who surrendered the fortress of Metz to the Prussians on 27 October 1870, an act which saw him court-martialled for treason and sentenced to death.¹⁸

Contemporary French critics of Louis-Napoléon's policy, such as Thiers, described it as a "chimera", an "illusion", or an "adventure".¹⁹ These epithets have become the conclusions of historians who have studied the intervention, which, in these works, remains condemned by the disjuncture between the Mexican "reality" and Louis-Napoléon's false understanding of it. In this view, Louis-Napoléon was misled into an ill-advised intervention at the behest of a small clique of émigré Mexican Conservatives and by *affairiste* French diplomats.²⁰ A recent French historian concludes: "the intervention, from the beginning, was only a monumental and regrettable misunderstanding."²¹ Moreover, those anglophone historians who have addressed the French foundation of Maximilian's empire have done so from an almost exclusively French, or at best European and/or US, perspective, studying it in isolation with little reference either to wider French imperial policy or Mexican sources. Many have similarly concluded that the intervention was embarked upon because Louis-Napoléon was deluded, either by his own dreams, those of others, or a combination of the two.²²

In studies of the French Second Empire, moreover, the Mexican intervention is generally seen as tangential to the central story of the regime, and relatively unimportant in terms of foreign policy compared to the Crimean War (1854–56), the Italian War of 1859, or the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71). Furthermore, unlike French imperialism in Algeria or Indochina, it did not form part of a longer narrative which continued to

affect France and its colonies. As a consequence, scholars have focussed their attention elsewhere,²³ and Louis-Napoléon's Mexican policy must be one of the last examples of imperialism academics are happy to still describe as an "adventure".²⁴

Mexican historians have recently challenged this dominant interpretation of Maximilian's empire as a *folie de grandeur*. Rather than viewing the empire as a European imposition alien to Mexican politics and history, recent scholarship has analysed the Mexican origins of the empire's political, economic, cultural and intellectual foundations,²⁵ a process Erika Pani describes as recovering "the empire as a Mexican experience".²⁶ Although such an approach is greatly to be welcomed, these investigations, relying on the problematic historiography of French intervention discussed above, frequently take as their starting point the arrival of European forces on the shores of Mexico and treat the intervention as an accomplished fact without interrogating the policy goals of France or exploring what Louis-Napoléon hoped to construct in Mexico. It is necessary not only to "Mexicanise" (Pani's term) the experience of politicians who worked with the French in order to create a Mexican empire, but also to imperialise the French decision to intervene in Mexico.

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

MEXICAN POLITICAL THOUGHT AND THE INTERVENTION: MONARCHISM, CONSERVATISM, AND LIBERALISM

Any attempt to Mexicanise the French intervention must begin with the Mexican historical context in which it took place. The collapse of Spain's rule triggered a prolonged conflict over what should fill the void of empire throughout its former colonies in America. From 1808 until 1867, a struggle for sovereignty and legitimacy, frequently violent, ensued in Mexico between competing political, economic and social visions of the nation. These distinct visions inspired different conceptions of the Mexican state and had multiple origins and multiple outcomes.²⁷ The Second Mexican Empire was one such conception and outcome, which its supporters hoped would provide a solution to the political instability of post-independence Mexico.

Stability was a key question for all Mexico's politicians in the period 1820–67. The crowning of Mexico's first emperor, Iturbide, to the execution of its second, Maximilian, has been described as a period of chaos “unparalleled in Mexican history”.²⁸ Mexico was an empire under Iturbide (1822–23); a federal republic (1824–35); a central republic (1836–46); a restored federal republic (1846–53); and a dictatorship (1853–55).²⁹ This last government was overthrown and two years later the Constitution of 1857 was proclaimed. However, this liberal, federal and republican document resulted in a civil war, with a *de facto* government in Mexico City opposing the new constitution and a *de jure* one at Veracruz, led by Juárez, supporting it. These two sides fought for power during the War of Reform (1858–61). Juárez was victorious, but the French intervention (1862–67), supported by many of those who lost the civil war, replaced his government with a regency (1863) in preparation for the empire of Maximilian (1864–67). Mexican politics was, therefore, characterised by instability.³⁰

That a monarchy under an Austrian Archduke was seen by some as a solution to this problem is a testament to the endurance of the ideas that lay behind it. A centralist regime with a strong government and powerful executive, as opposed to a federal republic with a weak executive and powerful legislature, was one system that had its adherents in Mexico throughout the period 1820–67. For some in Mexico, monarchy remained a viable means of implementing this political vision. Indeed, Mexico achieved independence under these principles with Iturbide as emperor. However, he reigned for only eight months (from coronation to abdication), his rule

was pronounced as anathema after his fall by nearly all sections of Mexico's political elite and he was killed by firing squad in 1824.

The withdrawal of the French army followed by the execution of its second emperor, Maximilian, saw Mexican liberalism become a victorious force with its own "unifying political myth", soon embedded in nationalist discourse.³¹ The liberal historiographical interpretation understood federal republicanism as the endgame of Mexican history and thus obscured alternative political visions for the Mexican nation, such as monarchy. This is a particularly striking example of the tendency towards what Eric van Young has referred to as "outcomism" in Mexican history: simplifications are reinforced by *historia de bronce* (officialist accounts) literature where "political roads not taken are erased from the maps".³² The view that monarchism was something exotic to Mexican history has been challenged. Edmundo O'Gorman argued that the "monarchical idea" was a powerful rival to republicanism and federalism during the period 1820–67,³³ and a number of subsequent works have explored various points in Mexican history when monarchical ideas became particularly prominent.³⁴ An analysis of why monarchism in Mexico persisted, why some actively sought European support in order to implement it and why many in Europe understood it as the best solution for Mexico's problems may elucidate further not only why France tried to found an empire in Mexican, but also why some Mexicans rallied to it.

Within the traditional Mexican liberal historiography the disavowal of monarchy as a form of government suited to Mexico was part of a wider critique of Mexican conservatism. Although Mexican politics belies neat schematic categorisations, in general those who supported centralism, and certainly those who supported monarchy, became associated with the Mexican Conservative Party, founded in 1849 by Lucas Alamán, the leading proponent of conservative thought in Mexico as politician and historian.³⁵ The Conservative Party was defeated twice: first in the War of Reform and then again in 1867. Enrique Krauze writes that in Mexican *historia de bronce* there is a simple deification of liberals as the saviours of the *patria* in contrast to a vilification of conservatives as "traitors", "turn-coats" and "reactionaries".³⁶ The study of Mexican conservatism is, therefore, complicated because its history was written by liberals.

This paradigm continues to play out in the sphere of political thought where, in Mexican and, later, Anglo-American historiography, the enemies of the triumphant liberal vision are calcified as the regressive enemies of progress, modernity and democracy. Work on Mexican conservatism

remains limited when compared to the historiography on Mexican liberalism for the period.³⁷ Furthermore, attempts to identify nineteenth-century Latin American democratic traditions rely upon this caricature of conservative politics in order to construct a progressive view of Latin American republican modernity or civic democracy.³⁸ In this view, conservative politics is inherently traditionalist and tied to a European version of progress, and so a discrete Latin American understanding of modernity is necessarily created in opposition to conservatism.

Recent studies, however, have shone light onto Mexican conservatism and shown that it is a more complex phenomenon than this pastiche suggests.³⁹ Given its importance to Mexican history, the French intervention and the Second Mexican Empire, a brief outline of the movement follows. Conservatives never formed a unified political group, even after the foundation of the Conservative Party in 1849⁴⁰; nonetheless, certain general principles of Mexican conservatism can be identified in the period 1820–67. These were (1) a preference for a strong, centralist state administered by a large bureaucracy and maintained by a professional standing army; (2) the Catholic Church as a base of Mexican identity and morality; (3) a preference for institutions over individuals; (4) a rejection of *laissez-faire* liberal economics in favour of moderate protectionism and state intervention; (5) the preservation of colonial *fueros* (legal privileges accorded to the army and the Church) and indigenous communal landholdings and (6) a restricted franchise.⁴¹ In addition to these national goals, four elements ensured this platform had popular appeal at a local level: (1) political pragmatism, (2) openness to socioeconomic change, (3) support for clerical Catholicism and (4) concern for order and stability.⁴²

These general trends notwithstanding, Mexican political affiliations were complex, fluid and changed over time. The term “Conservative”, with an upper-case “C”, is used in this work to describe individuals who self-identified with the Conservative Party, after its foundation in 1849.⁴³ However, there were currents of thought in Mexico in the decades before the Party’s foundation that can best be described as “conservative”, though their proponents would not often have used this word. The term “conservative”, with a lower-case “c”, will therefore be used throughout to describe politicians, intellectuals and their ideas prior to the foundation of the Conservative Party.

Prior to the appearance of the Conservative Party, what is meant by conservative politicians and intellectuals is best defined through their relationship to liberalism.⁴⁴ Far from being binary opposites, conservatism

and liberalism in Mexico grew out of shared intellectual traditions. The 1789 French Revolution had a profound impact upon Mexican political ideas.⁴⁵ Currents of eighteenth-century French thought, as well as Spanish, British and US ideas, shaped Mexican liberalism,⁴⁶ but individuals of varying political persuasions, including conservatives, appropriated different elements from these to support their views. Furthermore, there was broad agreement across the political spectrum in post-independent Mexico on key principles of the 1789 French Revolution, such as constitutional representative government, right to property, and security. There was disagreement on the best way to implement and safeguard these, but, in the immediate aftermath of independence, the similarities between the majority of Mexican politicians were more apparent than the differences.⁴⁷

Leaders of liberal thought and politics in Mexico, such as José María Luis Mora, Valentín Gómez Farías and Lorenzo de Zavala, were politically and socially conservative.⁴⁸ They advocated restricting the franchise and limiting mass participation in electoral politics and they understood property to be the bulwark upon which liberty (and electoral law) was founded.⁴⁹ More radical liberals, like Zavala, who argued for the introduction of freedom of worship in the years following independence, were in a minority.⁵⁰ The Constitution of 1824, which was the rallying cry for many liberals in the decades after independence, stated in article three: “[t]he religion of the Mexican nation is and will permanently be the Roman, Catholic, Apostolic” to the exclusion of all others.⁵¹

The main political disputes in the 1820s and 1830s, therefore, revolved around issues that do not break down along ideological lines such as federalism and centralism, the relationship between the executive and the legislative, or the expulsion of the Spaniards from Mexico in the 1820s. Nonetheless, politicians, many of whom later became leaders of the Conservative Party, coalesced around these disputes in support of greater centralism, a more powerful executive and the defence of Church and army privileges. Furthermore, conservative politicians disapproved of the anti-corporatist tendencies of liberals, who at times attacked legal privileges left over from Spanish colonialism, or their support for classical liberal economic doctrine, which clashed with conservatives who argued for protectionism and state intervention to develop industry.⁵² Therefore when referring to these individuals and their ideas the term “conservative” is used relatively to indicate a group of politicians who were more inclined to preserve colonial institutions in post-independent Mexico, were suspicious of some of the causes championed by those who identified themselves

as liberals, and who rallied around the national and local conservative principles outlined above.

Within liberalism itself two distinct factions emerged: the *moderados* and the more radical *puro* wing. However, it was not until a new generation of *puro* liberals rose to prominence in the 1850s that an unbridgeable divide arose between those who supported their anti-clerical reforms and the Conservative Party which opposed them.⁵³ Another faction in Mexican politics, *santanistas*, the supporters of the caudillo and many-times president Antonio López de Santa Anna, a military and political leader with his powerbase in the state of Veracruz, is emblematic of the fluid nature of Mexican politics. Santa Anna was initially a supporter of federalism and associated with more radical liberals (especially during his first presidency, 1833–34), but later backed centralism and increasingly tended towards authoritarianism. In 1853, with the support of the Conservative Party, Santa Anna ruled as dictator. His chief ideologue was José María de Tornel, who articulated *santanista* thought as it evolved throughout the period under study.⁵⁴ Once the *puro* wing of Mexican liberalism established the Constitution of 1857, the anti-liberal spectrum of Mexican politics coalesced around the Conservative Party.⁵⁵

One area of divergence in Mexican politics that remained consistent throughout the period 1820–67 had implications on the international stage. Conservative politicians were sympathetic to Europe, and feared the United States not only because of its expansion at Mexico's expense, but also because they believed the political institutions of the neighbouring republic to be inapplicable in Mexico. On the other hand, liberals tended to admire the United States, and attribute its prosperity to federal republicanism, which strengthened their commitment to a similar political organisation in Mexico. And, in spite of the Texan revolt (1835–36) and the US-Mexican War (1846–48), which saw Mexico lose nearly half of its national territory, much liberal opinion on the United States remained uncritical.⁵⁶ For conservatives, however, the United States was identified as the root cause of Mexico's endemic instability, which the US had deliberately fomented in order to weaken Mexico and thus make its conquest and eventual absorption easier.

Europe, to the contrary, provided solutions, not because it was free from the problems that afflicted Mexico, but because, some Mexicans argued, regimes and thinkers had developed ways to deal with these challenges. For conservative politicians, events in Mexico mirrored the revolutions of 1789 and 1848.⁵⁷ As has been noted, the Conservative

Party has been calcified as a regressive organisation that, in the words of one contemporary Liberal historian, “lacked a positive program; its war cry was simply the negation of liberal ideas and principles”,⁵⁸ or, as one recent historian argues, conservatives throughout Latin America defended a form of “irrationalism and traditionalism”.⁵⁹ However, as a reaction to the Enlightenment conservatism in Europe and the Americas was a fortiori a movement that planted its roots in modernity. Furthermore, nineteenth-century conservatism is a complex heterogeneous phenomenon, and for Mexican conservatives the European, rather than British or US, tradition of conservatism became increasingly more relevant. Edmund Burke may have perfectly described the disease that destroyed the old order, but had little, if anything, relevant to say about the cure.⁶⁰ Not only were the ideas developed by the *philosophes* in the eighteenth century seen as responsible for upheaval throughout the Atlantic world, but post-revolutionary French regimes, such as the July Monarchy and especially the Second Empire, were seen as exemplars to adapt to Mexican circumstances: the apposite examples of how to construct a polity in the face of revolutionary and democratic challenges were not in the Protestant United States, but Catholic France.

Recent work on Mexican conservatism has focussed on the domestic context, but conservatives were concerned with international events, which in turn shaped their political thought. Mexican conservatives saw themselves as part of a movement that had important transnational connections in the Americas and Europe. The Texan revolt; the US-Mexican War; the 1848 European revolutions; and supranational ideas such as pan-Latinism and ultramontanist conservatism saw conservatives across the region identify themselves as part of an international “reaction” against liberalism, socialism and “unlimited” democracy. As Christopher Clark has noted, a renewed intellectual vigour in conservative thought and regimes across Europe and the 1850s saw a profound transformation in political and administrative practices with a transnational exchange of ideas, which mutually reinforced regimes opposed to many of the concepts behind the revolutions of 1848.⁶¹ Mexican Conservatives placed themselves within this political and intellectual reaction, outlined a conservative path to modernity and saw the French Second Empire as the vanguard of the global struggle against revolutionary doctrines. This, in turn, provided opportunities for France to extend its influence as an imperial power.

FRANCE AS AN IMPERIAL POWER

Latin America was an important focus of French foreign policy in the period 1820–67. This is not surprising, despite the mercantilist tendencies of its governments, Spain was unable to mobilise sufficient resources to become the effective metropole of its empire or to prevent other maritime powers from competing for, and engaging in, commerce, legal or otherwise, with these overseas territories.⁶² Within this international rivalry it had been a long-term goal of French foreign policy to develop French commerce with Spain's American colonies and to gain influence over the metropole itself. French initiatives in transatlantic trade after 1700 were part of a wider project for control of the economy of the whole Hispanic world, peninsular as well as American.⁶³ Napoleon's invasion of Spain in 1808 and the imposition of his brother was part of this process; so too was the Bourbon intervention of 1823 to restore Ferdinand VII to absolutist rule. Across the Atlantic, France sent its navy to impose an indemnity on Haiti in return for recognition of Haitian independence (1825); threatened to bombard Cartagena (1834); blockaded Mexico in 1838–39, and Argentina twice (1838–40 and 1845–48); garrisoned Montevideo with French troops (1850–52); and made the first concerted attempt to construct the Panama Canal (1881–94). All this, of course, was in addition to the second French intervention in Mexico which saw the largest deployment of men and resources in Latin America by any power in the nineteenth century, the greatest challenge to the Monroe Doctrine until the Cuban Missile Crisis almost a hundred years later. France, then, did not lack ambition when it came to Latin America, yet there is no general survey of French policy in the region for the nineteenth century.

This lack of scholarly attention to French imperial projects in Latin America is part of a more general tendency in the study of French colonialism, which has suffered from what Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard and Françoise Vergès refer to as a “black hole of memory”.⁶⁴ Colette Zytnicki and Sophie Dulucq argue that, in France, colonial history emerged on the periphery of the historical field and, despite gaining some prominence between 1900 and 1920, was not institutionalised as an academic discipline. In the 1930s, it remained open to non-historians and anchored “in the political and business worlds which gave a dual image of amateurism and political activism.”⁶⁵ France's acutely painful experience of decolonisation in the 1950s and 1960s ensured that colonial history, lacking firm institutional foundations, was marginalised: as Cécile Vidal writes, “France tried to erase the memory of its colonial empire and start from scratch.”⁶⁶

The last 25 years, however, have seen a renewed interest in French imperial history from both French and anglophone historians.⁶⁷ Nonetheless, the period 1815 to 1870 remains relatively underexplored.⁶⁸ In part, this can be explained by the fact that "*l'empire*" in French historiography usually refers to the First and Second Bonapartist Empires. The term "imperialism" is conventionally associated with the Napoleonic model of continental expansion, and French overseas territories are generally referred to as "*l'empire colonial*".⁶⁹ This concentration on French colonialism has largely ignored non-colonial attempts to further French influence.⁷⁰ This preference for research into areas of formal French rule may perhaps explain why there is no general analysis of French imperialism in Latin America,⁷¹ which, aside from the colonies of Guadelupe, Martinique and French Guiana, remained outside France's formal empire.⁷²

In 1815, this empire was at its smallest territorial extent since the early seventeenth century. However, despite defeat in the Napoleonic wars, France remained a "military, economic, scientific, and cultural super-power", which deployed its influence on a global scale throughout the nineteenth century.⁷³ The most prominent example of this assertion of French power in the extra-European world was the conquest of Algeria, begun in 1830.⁷⁴ However, this was an exception because the means (eventually) adopted for the conquest and then administration of Algeria was to bring the region under formal French control.

Elsewhere, French politicians extended the influence of France through indirect means, underpinned by a particular conception of European Christian civilisation, commerce and, particularly from the 1850s, capital. This was backed by hard power, but when force was deployed it was generally through naval expeditions combined with small-scale military interventions. Policymakers wished to avoid what they considered to be costly colonial entanglements; in short, they feared another Algeria. This approach, which privileged economic and cultural factors over conquest, was facilitated by the rise of the French economy: between 1840 and 1880, French commodity exports increased fivefold, while capital exports grew twelvefold.⁷⁵ France was able to protect these interests through a powerful navy, second only to Britain's throughout the period under study.⁷⁶

The most pertinent contemporary French imperial project comparable to Mexico is French policy in Indochina. France, ostensibly to protect Christian missionaries in China, fought with Britain in the Second Opium War (1856–60). This was part of the development of French influence in mainland Asia, where the protection of Catholic rights played a prominent

role as the pretext for military action. It was within this context that troops were diverted from China to Tourane in Annam and then Saigon in Cochinchina, which were occupied in 1858 by French and Spanish troops. As with Mexico, the initial aim of the expedition was not territorial conquest. The 1862 Treaty of Saigon did acknowledge French possession of Saigon and granted France protectorates over three provinces of Cochinchina, but Louis-Napoléon was opposed to further annexations. Under pressure from admirals in the French navy, and politicians, such as Thiers, who argued for a more active policy in the region, as well as French officials who took territory without instructions from Paris, French possessions in the region slowly increased in the 1860s. In addition to Cochinchina, a protectorate was also established over Cambodia in 1863.⁷⁷

French intervention in Mexico thus took place within a general context of the expansion of French influence globally from 1815 onwards, and specifically in the later 1850s and early 1860s at a time when France launched a succession of successful overseas military expeditions. Aside from the Second Opium War and Indochina, France intervened successfully in Syria (1860–61). Within the setting of these interventions, there was nothing exceptional about the 6000 troops in Mexico under General Charles Ferdinand de Latrille, Count of Lorencez, marching on Puebla in 1862 that distinguished it from the 4000 or so troops that Admiral Léonard Charner had at his disposal in the same year to relieve a besieged French garrison at Saigon.⁷⁸ Indeed, Cochinchina and Mexico were always mentioned together in Louis-Napoléon's speeches from the throne. "How," asked the Emperor of the French rhetorically in one of these addresses, "[are we] to develop our foreign trade if, on the one hand, we renounce all influence in America and, on the other, in the presence of the vast territories occupied by the English, the Spanish and the Dutch, France remains the sole [power] without possessions in the seas of Asia?"⁷⁹ It was also a bureaucratic division within the Quai d'Orsay, which, from 1853, bracketed together the political affairs of the Americas with the Orient.⁸⁰ And it was not merely the French government that linked the two expeditions. Contemporary criticisms of French intervention in Cochinchina mirrored those levelled at the Louis-Napoléon's Mexican policy: no discernible national interest; poor preparation, no long-term plan and, as a result, merely responding to events with ever-greater expense of men and resources; and lack of local knowledge.⁸¹ Indochina, however, became one of the most important parts of the French empire, an outcome dramatically different to that of the Mexican intervention.

INFORMAL EMPIRE

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

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

Given that the French intervention aimed at neither formal empire-building or territorial conquest, a potentially illuminating framework for Mexicanising and imperialising the French intervention is the concept of informal empire as developed by Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher in their article “The Imperialism of Free Trade” (1953).⁸⁵ Whereas formal empire relies on direct rule from the metropolis, the theory of informal imperialism posits that a state can employ a variety of means in order to influence another sovereign government. In the classic model of informal

empire, these means are primarily political and economic; however, cultural factors have been added to the repertoire of imperial strategies by later historians who have embraced the concept.⁸⁶

Axiomatic to the theory of informal empire as originally elaborated is the idea that it was the preferred imperial relationship of British Victorian policymakers.⁸⁷ Informal empire provided the benefits of colonial rule without the costs, and therefore it was only when informal rule broke down as a consequence of local crises which threatened imperial interests that a move was made to direct rule. Informal empire was cheaper than direct rule because local actors incurred the burden of administration, what Robinson termed “collaborating elites”, while subordinating local economic interests to the metropole.⁸⁸ The relationship was attractive for local elites because it was mutually beneficial for primary product-exporting economies reliant upon lucrative metropolitan markets. Nonetheless, informal imperialism is predicated upon an asymmetrical exercise of power of one group over another, whereby agents of an “expanding society gain inordinate influence or control over the vitals of weaker societies by ‘dollar’ and ‘gun-boat diplomacy’ [and] ideological suasion”.⁸⁹

As has been noted, the period 1815–70 is something of a *terra incognita* in the study of French imperialism, but by focussing on informal imperialism David Todd argues that the period can be cast as a French imperial meridian.⁹⁰ Latin America, and Mexico in particular, therefore offers a case study through which to test this hypothesis. Indeed, the region attracted the interest of French policymakers and thinkers because, in the early nineteenth century, it was the epicentre of the final crisis of the traditional imperial system. From the 1770s to the 1820s, France, Britain, Spain and Portugal lost most of their colonial possessions in the Atlantic world. In response to this, French thinkers and policymakers articulated new imperial relationships with former European colonies. It is interesting to note that Robinson and Gallagher’s formulation of the idea of informal empire came during the decolonisation of the British Empire, and nineteenth-century French thinkers who discussed similar imperial relationships did so in the aftermath of the loss of France’s first colonial empire. The idea that imperial power was not solely related to possessing a large colonial empire was an attractive proposition to French thinkers precisely because France did not have such an empire.

Moreover, despite the loss of its North American colonies (Canada excepted), Britain was the pre-eminent global power, dominating overseas trade. French observers theorised what they thought were the reasons for

this, and attempted to adopt and adapt them to French policy. Historians have noted the importance of emulation in political economy; the startling rise in British economic and military might in the eighteenth century forced a rethink of traditional views on how to develop and wield power.⁹¹ Less well-explored, however, is the intellectual impact of Britain retaining and then superseding this position despite the loss of its colonies between 1780 and 1830, what Christopher Bayly describes as one of the most dramatic examples of national resurgence in history.⁹² British success combined with the crisis of the Atlantic imperial system led French thinkers to develop new ways of thinking about power, influence and imperialism, which they would apply in Latin America.

Latin America itself has long been a battleground for advocates and detractors of the theory of informal empire,⁹³ but interest in informal imperialism as an analytical tool to view British relations with Latin America was revived by Matthew Brown's edited volume *Informal Empire in Latin America: Culture, Capital and Commerce* (2008). Broadly, the conclusion of the volume is that for the British informal "imperialism in Latin America was less a fact [...] than an aspiration."⁹⁴ Historians have not asked whether other powers harboured similar aspirations. The French government launched the most determined attempt to create an informal-imperial relationship with a Latin American state in the nineteenth century, yet the theory has never been applied to French policy in the region.

This book draws on many of the themes developed in the theory of informal empire and uses them as a prism to analyse French relations with Mexico. The following definitions of "empire" and "imperialism" applies throughout the work: "[e]mpire [...] is a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society [...]. Imperialism is simply the process or policy of establishing or maintaining an empire."⁹⁵ Following Andrew Thompson, it is important to see informal empire as a "continuum" which includes formal empire rather than as a rigidly defined and separate "category".⁹⁶ There were different means by which states could attempt to impose informal rule, and Alan Knight postulates a fluid fourfold typology of formal and informal empire that combines direct and indirect rule with de jure and de facto authority.⁹⁷ And, focussing on these differences within British informal imperial rule, John Darwin suggests a division between "western" (the Americas) and "eastern" (Turkey to Japan) versions of (what he terms) "semi-colonial" relationships, the former relying on private enterprise occasionally backed by diplomats and naval force, while the latter was

much more formal and underwritten by legal and territorial concessions. Darwin concludes, as regards the former, that it was ineffectual and that no British government could have contemplated diverting the military force necessary to occupy or annex a Latin American state.⁹⁸ This conclusion raises the question: why did a French government not merely contemplate, but enact, such a policy of occupation in Mexico?

This work addresses three additional questions related to these categorisations of informal empire: (1) why did some Mexican elites support this project? And (2) where, if at all, can French imperialism be placed within the models outlined above, which were developed to describe British informal imperialism? Or does a different paradigm need to be proposed if French imperialism in Latin America is to be incorporated into the continuum of informal empire?

A third and final question arises from this discussion of informal empire. Robinson argued that the “efficiency [of informal empire] was clearly proportionate to the amount of wealth and power committed to it”.⁹⁹ In order to consolidate the Mexican empire of Maximilian, Louis-Napoléon mobilised immense resources. He sent to Mexico some 30,000 French troops, who fought alongside thousands of Belgian and Austrian volunteers as well as Egyptian soldiers recruited from France’s Cairo ally and local Mexican troops loyal to Maximilian. The cost of the intervention up to April 1864 was estimated by the French government at 270 million francs. In addition to this, two loans totalling 534 million francs were raised on the financial markets of London and Paris to support the Mexican empire. The result: one of the least successful examples of imperialism in the entire nineteenth century.¹⁰⁰ Why France failed to construct a stable polity in Mexico tied to French interests despite the immense “wealth and power” it deployed remains a pertinent question that this book addresses.

PAN-LATINISM: A TRANSNATIONAL AND IMPERIAL IDEA

Central to the theory of informal empire is the concept of collaborating elites, and without Mexican politicians to call for, administer and support the empire of Maximilian France would not have intervened. British informal influence was predicated upon its economic hegemony combined with its naval power. France’s economic and maritime might was, in the period under study, second only to Britain’s, but because France lacked the clear lead in commerce and capital enjoyed by Britain, the rationale that underpinned French involvement in Latin America relied more heav-

ily on discourses that defined the area as a natural French sphere of influence. Although French imperialism in Mexico and Latin America was ultimately unsuccessful, French thinkers played an active role in demarcating the region as “*Amérique latine*”, a categorisation that proved more enduring than, for example, “*Afrique latine*”.¹⁰¹ The points where French ideas intersected with currents of thought in Mexico, which drew some elites towards France as both a political model and an auxiliary in promoting their own vision for the Mexican nation, are a focus for the following chapters in addition to French policy.

Mexican conservatism and monarchism were shaped in dialogue with European, particularly French, models and ideas. Another current of thought that united some French thinkers and conservative Mexican politicians was the discourse of pan-Latinism, and French intervention in order to found the Mexican Empire was depicted in pan-Latinist terms by its proponents.¹⁰² International historians continue to debate what causal role can be attributed to pan-Latinism in the French intervention, tending to play it down in favour of other factors.¹⁰³ In a separate historiographical field, cultural and intellectual historians have focused on the professed goals of pan-Latinists and their implications for the idea of “Latin America”.

An important figure in the development of pan-Latinist thought is the economist and adviser to Louis-Napoléon, Michel Chevalier.¹⁰⁴ Historians have concentrated on Chevalier’s role in the generation of a pan-Latinist discourse not only because of his important position in the French Second Empire, but also due to his classification of the races of the Americas into two categories: “Anglo-Saxon” and “Latin”.¹⁰⁵ However, Reinhart Koselleck warns against falling prey to a “new nominalism”, which would have us believe that the emergence of a category of thought is dependent on the creation of the term designating it.¹⁰⁶ A focus on published texts that explicitly deal with “Latin civilisation” and “Latin races” in the Americas has meant that historians have ignored earlier expressions of the ideas that underpin these terms and the extent of their diffusion. By going beyond the conventional history of ideas to focus on canonical texts, it is possible to identify the extent to which currents of thought, such as pan-Latinism, monarchism and Mexican conservatism, normally considered to be the preserve of well-known intellectuals and politicians, were part of a wider political culture that influenced French policy in Mexico and shaped the contours of Mexican political discourse.

As will be seen, pan-Latinism was far from an exclusively French discourse: one of the earliest pan-Latinist rationalisations of French

intervention in Mexico was not made by Louis-Napoléon or Chevalier, but in 1853 by José Ramón Pacheco, the Mexican minister to France. Many of those who adopted the rhetoric of pan-Latinism in Mexico were conservatives, and this calls into question the argument that initial supporters of the idea of “Latin America” tended to be liberals “who claimed to be waging a pro-democracy crusade against the ‘aristocratic’ conservatives controlling many of the continent’s governments.”¹⁰⁷ This shows the importance of imperialising French intervention in Mexico, and Mexicanising the experience: pan-Latinism influenced French relations with Latin America, Mexican perceptions of Europe and the idea of Latin America itself.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The main chapters are organised thematically. Chapter 2 places Latin America within the context of French imperialism from 1820 to 1860. The focus is on the position the region occupied in the worldview of French policymakers, the long history of French involvement with Spain and its colonies, the economic and strategic importance of Latin America in the nineteenth century and the ideas which underpinned French imperialism more generally. As noted above, France also intervened in the River Plate. French activities in this region are referred to as a comparative to Mexico in order to explore more general trends in French policy towards Latin America, particularly the discourse of civilisation that promoted an active role for France in the extra-European world and the use of local elites to further French goals. Finally, the relationship of Britain to French policy in Latin America is analysed in order to see what effect it had on French imperialism in the region.

Chapter 3 analyses monarchism in Mexico, and its place in French discourse towards Mexico. Latin American independence had an important international dimension as rival nations competed for influence over the new states.¹⁰⁸ Within this struggle, monarchy had strategic significance for France because it was seen, in the 1820s, as a way of countering British power and, from the 1830s onwards, as one potential means of constraining the United States. Long before Louis-Napoléon launched his intervention in 1861, the French Bourbon Restoration had wanted to place Bourbon princes on the thrones of Spain’s former colonies. Because of these European connections, there is a strong case for placing Mexican monarchism in a transnational context. Moreover, the failure of a monarchy

with a Mexican as ruler (the First Mexican Empire under Iturbide) meant that, for those in Mexico who favoured the creation of a new kingdom, a European monarch was a necessity, and without European support this project could not have been realised. The endurance of the idea that monarchy was the form of government best-suited to Mexico amongst French and Mexican observers thus forms the focus of the chapter. This addresses the question of why French policymakers and some Mexican politicians saw an empire under a foreign prince as a legitimate means to save the Mexican nation.

Chapter 4 explores the shared discourse of pan-Latinism in Mexico and France. By analysing French and Mexican reactions to the Texan revolt (1835–36) and the subsequent US annexation of this former Mexican territory (in 1845) through diplomatic correspondence, newspapers and the writings of publicists and journalists as well as the speeches of politicians, this chapter shows that the ideas behind pan-Latinism can be identified earlier than the 1860s: they date back at least to the 1830s. This has important implications for the French intervention because it places Latinity at the centre of France's transnational informal imperialism, and identifies the ideas behind it as an important factor in the decision of some Mexican elites to look towards France to further their own vision for the Mexican nation.

The 1850s saw the consolidation of Mexican conservatism. Chapter 5 explores the worldview of the Mexican Conservative Party, particularly as it was shaped by international events and transnational currents of thought. The period 1848 to 1861, bookended by the US-Mexican War and the French intervention, has seen historians focus on domestic Mexican politics, particularly the struggle between "reactionary" Conservatives and "progressive" liberals culminating in the War of Reform.¹⁰⁹ However, the chapter argues that those associated with the Mexican Conservative Party understood themselves to be part of an international reaction against the doctrines that, they believed, caused the 1848 revolutions in Europe and contributed to instability in Mexico. In searching for a model to inspire their dream of turning a tumultuous democratic republic into an orderly authoritarian state, the newly formed Mexican Conservative Party looked to the French Second Empire. The chapter analyses the response of Mexican Conservatives to the 1848 revolutions in the aftermath of the US-Mexican War (1846–48). It argues that Mexican Conservatives placed themselves within an international struggle of global importance—a Western version of the Crimean War.

Chapter 6 addresses the French intervention in Mexico and the foundation of Maximilian's empire. The chapter also explores the economic and administrative rationale behind the empire. In addition, the chapter details the architecture of informal rule, the means by which France hoped to construct an edifice that would remain within its sphere of influence and promote French economic and political power as well as advance French civilisation. Finally, the chapter looks at the reasons for the collapse of the Second Mexican Empire and the failure of the informal-imperial model. The concluding chapter (7) draws together the arguments of the previous chapters and develops a model of French informal empire in Latin America.

First, however, it is necessary to explore what place Latin America, and Mexico specifically, occupied in the worldview of French policymakers. David Todd argues that French intervention in Mexico was "the hubristic apex of French aspirations to transnational empire."¹⁰ For many contemporary French commentators, the special place Latin America, and Mexico in particular, occupied in French imperial discourse meant the Second Mexican Empire should have been the apotheosis of French informal imperial power. Rather than being the nadir of French informal empire, Mexico should have, to paraphrase Louis-Napoléon, crowned the French imperial edifice. The next chapter discusses the nature of French imperialism from the 1820s to the 1860s, French policy towards Latin America and why Mexico was identified as an area of especial interest for many French policymakers, commentators and diplomats.

NOTES

1. Dan Williams, 'Mexico's Obsession with "Foreign Intervention" Enshrined in Museum', *LA Times* (Los Angeles), 5 June 1986, p. 21.
2. The piastre was the Mexican currency, fixed and equivalent in value to the US dollar. One franc was worth roughly a fifth of one piastre or dollar and therefore the indemnity was equal to circa 3 million francs. \$600,000 was 3.42% of the total tax revenue collected by the Mexican government in 1839. Tax figures taken from Barbara Tenenbaum, *The Politics of Penury: Debts and Taxes in Mexico, 1821–1856* (New Mexico: University of New Mexico, 1986), 'Appendix: Mexican Finances, 1821–56, Table C, Income vs Expenses, 1821–61', 182.
3. The convention is printed in 'The Mexican Convention between England, France, and Spain', *The Times* (London), 18 November 1861, p. 7.

4. For the diplomacy behind this see Carl Bock, *Prelude to Tragedy: The Negotiation and Breakdown of the Tripartite Convention of London, October 31, 1861* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966).
5. The choice of Maximilian was made for a variety of reasons, not least of which was his desire to take the throne. Other candidates had been suggested, but a Spanish Bourbon was considered impractical from a Mexican perspective because of antipathy towards Spain and from a French point of view because Spain as a maritime power would have significant influence over the new monarch. Louis-Napoléon considered a French candidate impolitic. Finally, he harboured vague hopes that supporting a Habsburg would facilitate a rapprochement with Austria after the 1859 Italian War. The most detailed analysis of the diplomacy behind Maximilian's acceptance of the crown remains Egon Caesar Corti, *Maximilian and Charlotte of Mexico*, 2 vols. trans. Catherine Alison (New York; London: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928). See also Mary Margaret McAllen, *Maximilian and Carlota: Europe's Last Empire in Mexico* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2014).
6. Iturbide was elected emperor of the First Mexican Empire on 19 May 1822. He abdicated on 19 March 1823 and went into exile. He was executed a year later when he returned to Mexico without the authorisation of the republican government. See Timothy Anna, *The Mexican Empire of Iturbide* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990).
7. Most notably by José María Vigil, *La Reforma*, vol. 5 of Vicente Riva Palacio (ed.), *México a través de los siglos: Historia general y completa del desenvolvimiento social, político, religioso, militar, artístico, científico y literario de México desde la antigüedad más remota hasta la época actual*, 5 vols. (Barcelona: Espasa y Compañía, 1884–89).
8. See Charles Weeks, *The Juárez Myth in Mexico* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1987) and his earlier article Charles Weeks, 'Uses of a Juárez Myth in Mexican Politics', *Il Politico*, 29 (1974), 210–33.
9. Alan Knight, 'The Peculiarities of Mexican History: Mexico Compared to Latin America (1821–1992)', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 24 (1992), 139–40.
10. See, for example, Jesús Reyes Heróles, *El Liberalismo mexicano*, 3 vols. (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), 1957–61).
11. Although he was not an apologist for the French intervention or the Mexican Second Empire, the *Porfiriato*-era Mexican writer and politician Francisco Bulnes attempted to debunk the hero worship of Juárez in *El verdadero Juárez y la verdad sobre la intervención y el imperio* (Mexico City: Vda. de C. Bouret, 1904), and *Juárez y la revoluciones de Ayutla y de Reforma* (Mexico City: Tip. de la Compañía Editorial Católica, 1906).

- This resulted in numerous articles, pamphlets and books attacking Bulnes as well as public demonstrations denouncing him as a “traitor to the fatherland”. Weeks, ‘Uses of a Juárez Myth’, 220. On Bulnes see David Brading and Lucrecia Orensanz, ‘Francisco Bulnes y la verdad acerca de México en el siglo XIX’, *Historia Mexicana*, 45 (1996), 621–51.
12. Leonardo Márquez, *Manifiestos: El imperio y los imperiales* (Mexico: F. Vazquez, 1904), 23–29; Francisco de Paula Arrangoiz y Berzábal, *Méjico desde 1808 hasta 1867. Relacion de los principales acontecimientos ... desde la prison del Virey Iturrigaray hasta la caída del segundo imperio. Con una noticia preliminar del sistema general de gobierno que regia en 1808, etc.*, 4 vols. (Madrid: A. Pérez Dubrull) III, 219. For an overview of the historiography see Erika Pani, *El Segundo Imperio: pasados de usos multiples* (Mexico: Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004) and ‘Republicans and Monarchists, 1848–1867’, in William Beezley (ed.), *A Companion to Mexican History and Culture* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 273–87.
 13. French public opinion is explored in Lynn M. Case, *French Opinion on the United States and Mexico, 1860–1867. Extracts from the Reports of the procureurs généraux* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1936). See also Frank Lally, *French Opposition to the Mexican Policy of the Second Empire* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, 1931). The French historiography on the Mexican expedition is discussed in Guy Martinière, ‘L’expédition mexicaine de Napoléon III dans l’historiographie française’, *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 21 (1974), 142–73.
 14. Their speeches were reproduced the next day in the official government paper, *Le Moniteur universel* (Paris). The published speeches of Berryer, Favre and Thiers all contain their attacks on the government’s Mexican policy. Pierre Antoine Berryer, *Oeuvres de Berryer: discours parlementaires*, 8 vols. (Paris: Didier, 1872–78); Jules Favre, *Discours parlementaires, publiés par Mme. Vve. J. Favre*, 4 vols. (Paris: E. Plon, 1881); Adolphe Thiers, *Discours parlementaires de M. Thiers*, 16 vols. (Paris: M. Calmon, 1879–89).
 15. One of the earliest and most influential in this genre, with a preface by Lucien-Anatole Prévost-Paradol, was Émile de Kératry’s, *L’élévation et la chute de l’empire Maximilien: intervention française au Mexique, 1861–1867* (Paris: A. Lacroix, Verboeckhoven et Cie, 1867).
 16. Most famously Victor Hugo, *Napoléon le Petit* (London: Jeffs; Bruxelles: A. Mertens, 1852).
 17. On the black legend, see Maurice Agulhon (ed.), *Pourquoi réhabiliter le Second Empire?: actes du colloque organisé par le Souvenir napoléonien* (Paris: Souvenir Napoléonien, 1997); Pierre Guiral and Émile Témime,

- 'L'Historiographie du Second Empire', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 21 (1974), 1–17. In English see Roger Price, *The Second French Empire: An Anatomy of Political Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Stuart Campbell, *The Second Empire Revisited: A Study in French Historiography* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1978).
18. The sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, but Bazaine escaped to Spain, where he lived in obscurity and poverty until his death in 1888. In its obituary for Bazaine, *La Presse* cheerfully announced "[t]he traitor is dead!" 'Bazaine—La mort d'un soldat traître à son pays', *La Presse* (Paris), 26 September 1888, p. 2. As late as 1927 an article in *La Revue de Paris* argued that attempts to rehabilitate "the man of Metz" and his role in Mexico were undeserved: "[Bazaine] was the principle architect of the catastrophe and history should consider him primarily responsible for the death of the unfortunate Maximilian". Louis Sonolet, 'Agonie de l'Empire du Mexique—I', *Revue de Paris*, 34 (1927), 590. All translations are the author's except where otherwise noted.
 19. In a speech made in 1864 criticising the Mexican intervention, Thiers managed to fit the word "illusion" three times into one sentence which concluded with the adjective "chimerical" before pronouncing that he would henceforth refer to the intervention as an "adventure". Thiers, *Discours*, XIX, 468–70. The criticisms of Thiers and Favre were followed by early historians of the French Second Empire. See, for example, Émile Ollivier *L'Empire libéral*, 18 vols. (Paris: Garnier frères, 1895–1915), V and VI, and Taxile Delord, *Histoire du Second Empire*, 6 vols. (Paris: G. Baillière, 1869–75), III, 287–88; 289–90; 366.
 20. A view recently restated by Romain Delmon, 'Les acteurs de la politique impériale lors de l'expédition au Mexique: L'écart entre la vision de Napoléon III et la réalité Mexicaine', in Gabriel Leanca (ed.), *La politique extérieure de Napoléon III* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011), 75–99. See also (and note the titles), Guy-Alain Dugast, *La tentation mexicaine en France au XIXe siècle: L'image du Mexique et l'Intervention française*, 2 vols. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008); Alain Gouttman, *La guerre du Mexique (1862–1867): Le mirage américain de Napoléon III* (Paris: Perrin, 2008); Jean-François Lecaillon, *Napoléon III et le Mexique: les illusions d'un grand dessein* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994); Jean-François Lecaillon, 'Mythes et phantasmes au cœur de l'intervention française au Mexique, 1862–1867', *Cahiers des Amériques latines*, 9 (1990), 69–79; Nancy Nichols Barker, *The French Experience in Mexico 1821–1861: A History of Constant Misunderstanding* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1979); Christian Schefer, *La Grande Pensée de Napoléon III, Les origines de l'Expédition du Mexique* (Paris: M. Rivière, 1939).
 21. Lecaillon, *Napoléon III*, 222.

22. Michelle Cunningham explores the intervention through the prism of Louis-Napoléon's approach to nationalities and his European system of diplomacy, *Mexico and the Foreign Policy of Napoleon III* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001). Nancy Nichols Barker addresses interventionist diplomats and the Jecker bonds in 'The Duke of Morny and the Affair of the Jecker Bonds', *French Historical Studies*, 6 (1970), 556–61; 'The French Legation in Mexico: Nexus of Interventionists', *French Historical Studies*, 8 (1974), 409–26. Shirley Black offers an alternative interpretation: the intervention was undertaken to guarantee France's supply of precious metals in order to maintain its monetary system of bimetallism, Shirley Black, *Napoleon III and Mexican Silver* (Colorado: Ferrell, 2000). A conclusion that Marc Flandreau considers unlikely, *The Glitter of Gold: France, Bimetallism, and the Emergence of the International Gold Standard*, trans. Owen Leeming (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 179, fn 9. See also Jack Autrey Dabbs, *The French Army in Mexico 1861–1867: A Study in Military Government* (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1963), for a good narrative account of the intervention following French sources, especially the archive of Marshall Bazaine. Alfred Jackson Hanna and Kathryn Abbey Hanna, *Napoleon III and Mexico. American Triumph over Monarchy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971), is, as the title suggests, a partisan narrative, but remains a frequently cited work, as does Thomas David Schoonover, *Dollars over Dominion: The Triumph of Liberalism in Mexican-United States Relations* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).
23. Modern analyses of the French Second Empire or Louis-Napoléon give the expedition little space. For example, Éric Anceau, *Napoléon III: Un Saint-Simon à cheval* (Paris: Tallandier, 2008), 391–93 and 429–31; Jean-Claude Yon, *Le Second Empire: politique, société, culture* (Paris: A. Colin, 2004), 97–100; Price, *Anatomy of Power*, 57, 71, 305 and 401; Sylvie Aprile, *La IIe République et le Second Empire, 1848–1870: du prince président à Napoléon III* (Paris: Pygmalion, 2000), 321–25; James McMillan, *Napoleon III* (London: Longman, 1991), 149–52; Alain Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire, 1852–1871*, trans. Jonathan Mandelbaum (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 149–50; Louis Girard, *Napoléon III* (Paris: Fayard, 1986), 315–20.
24. The word "adventure" is used seven times in the three-page preface to Lecaillon, *Napoléon III*, v–vii. The intervention is described as an "adventure" in the introduction of José Moya (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 5.
25. Patricia Galeana (ed.), *El Imperio napoleónico y la monarquía en México* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 2012); Patricia Galeana (ed.), *Impacto de la intervención francesa en México* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 2011); Kristine

- Ibsen, *Maximilian, Mexico and the Invention of Empire* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2010); Claudia Ceja Andrade, *Al amparo del imperio: ideas y creencias sobre la justicia y el buen gobierno durante el Segundo Imperio mexicano* (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez, 2007); Erika Pani, 'Dreaming of a Mexican Empire: The Political Projects of the "Imperialistas"', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 82 (2002), 1–31; Brian Hamnett, 'Mexican Conservatives, Clericals, and Soldiers: The "Traitor" Tomás Mejía through Reform and Empire, 1855–1867', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 20 (2001), 187–201; Erika Pani, *Para mexicanizar el Segundo Imperio: el imaginario político de los imperialistas* (Mexico City: Colegio de México, Centro de Estudios Históricos, 2001); Berta Flores Salinas, *Segundo Imperio mexicano* (Mexico City: Editorial Praxis, 1998); Robert Duncan, 'Political Legitimation and Maximilian's Second Empire in Mexico, 1864–1867', *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 12 (1996), 27–66. Recent work has focussed on the Second Empire's impact on a regional level. See Douglas Richmond, *Conflict and Carnage in Yucatán: Liberals, the Second Empire, and Maya Revolutionaries, 1855–1876* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 2015); Angela Moyano Pahissa, *Veinte años de la historia de Querétaro (1853–1873): Reforma, Intervención francesa, Segundo Imperio y Restauración de la República* (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro; Editorial Universitaria, 2013); Roberto Lara, *La intervención francesa en Nuevo León (1864–1866): estudio de la resistencia a las autoridades y fuerzas armadas del Segundo Imperio Mexicano* (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, 2011); Carlos Armando Preciado de Alba, *Guanajuato en tiempos de la intervención francesa y el Segundo Imperio* (Mexico: Universidad de Guanajuato, Centro de Investigaciones Humanísticas, 2007).
26. Pani, *Para mexicanizar*, 20.
 27. An argument made for South America by Jeremy Adelman, 'Iberian Passages: Continuity and Change in the South Atlantic', in David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (eds.), *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context c.1760–1840* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 82.
 28. Timothy Anna, 'Demystifying Early Nineteenth-Century Mexico', *Mexican Studies*, 9 (1993), 120.
 29. For an overview of the period, see William Fowler, *Independent Mexico: The Pronunciamento in the Age of Santa Anna, 1821–1858* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016). For the Federal Republic, see Timothy Anna, *Forging Mexico: 1821–1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998). The Central Republic is covered in depth by Michael Costeloe, *The Central Republic, 1835–1846: Hombres de Bien in the Age of Santa Anna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

- On Santa Anna's last dictatorship, see Carmen Vázquez Mantecón, *Santa Anna y la encrucijada del estado: La Dictadura, 1853–55* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1986). Works on Juárez and the *Reforma* era are numerous; Brian Hamnett provides an introduction in *Juárez* (London: Longman, 1993).
30. On the causes of Mexico's instability, see Donald Stevens, *The Origins of Instability in Early Republican Mexico* (London: Duke University Press, 1991).
 31. Charles Hale, *The Transformation of Liberalism in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 3.
 32. Eric Van Young, *Writing Mexican History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 160–61.
 33. Edmundo O'Gorman, *La supervivencia política novo-hispana: Reflexiones sobre el monarquismo mexicano* (Mexico City: Fundación cultural de Condumex, S.A., Centro de estudios de historia de México, 1969), 5.
 34. Marco Antonio Landavazo, 'Orígenes políticos y culturales del monarquismo mexicano', *Araucaria: Revista Iberoamericana de filosofía, política y humanidades*, 25 (2011), 62–85; Erika Pani, 'La innombrable: monarquismo y cultura política en el México decimonónico', in Brian Connaughton (ed.), *Prácticas populares, cultura política y poder en México* (Mexico: Casa Juan Pablos, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Unidad Iztapalapa, 2008), 369–94; Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'Centralistas, conservadores y monarquistas, 1830–1853', in William Fowler and Humberto Morales, *El conservadurismo mexicano en el siglo XIX, 1810–1910* (Puebla: Benemerita Universidad Autónoma, 1999); Luis Medina Peña, *Invenición del sistema político mexicano: Forma de gobierno y gobernabilidad en México en el siglo XIX* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2005); Elias José Palti (ed.), *La política del disenso: la "polémica en torno al monarquismo" (México, 1848–1850) ... y las aporías del liberalismo* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1998); Jaime Delgado, *La monarquía en México: 1845–1847* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1990); Miguel Soto, *La conspiración monárquica en México, 1845–1846* (Tepepan: EOSA, 1988). See also Pani, 'Republicans and Monarchists'; Frank Joseph Sanders, 'Proposals for monarchy in Mexico: 1823–1860' (University of Arizona, D.Phil thesis, 1967), and Carlos Villanueva, *La Monarquía en América*, 4 vols. (Paris: P. Ollendorff, 1911–13).
 35. His ideas were most famously articulated through his history of Mexico, Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Méjico*, 5 vols. (Mexico: Impr. de J. M. Lara, 1849–53). The edition consulted throughout this work is *Historia de México*, 5 vols. (Mexico: Impr. de V. Agüeros y Cía, 1883–85).
 36. Enrique Krauze, *Siglo de caudillos: Biografía de política de México, 1810–1910* (Barcelona: Tusquets, 1994), 20–21.

37. For example, Karen Caplan, *Indigenous Citizens Local Liberalism in Early National Oaxaca and Yucatán* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Patrick McNamara, *Sons of the Sierra: Juárez, Díaz, and the People of Ixtlán, Oaxaca, 1855–1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Peter Guardino, *Peasants, Politics and the Formation of the Mexico's Nation State* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002); Florencia Mallon, *Peasant and Nation: The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru* (California: University of California Press, 1995); Alan Knight, 'Peasants into Patriots: Thoughts on the Making of the Mexican Nation', *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 10 (1994), 135–61. Brian Hamnett argues that anglophone historians have shown a preference for progressive liberal republicans rather than authoritarian or clerical Catholics in 'El Partido Conservador en México, 1858–1867: La lucha por el poder', in Fowler and Humberto Morales, *El conservadurismo*, 213–14.
38. James Sanders, *The Vanguard of the Atlantic World: Creating Modernity, Nation and Democracy in Nineteenth-Century Latin America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); Carlos Forment, *Democracy in Latin America, 1760–1900. Volume I, Civic Selfhood and Public Life in Mexico and Peru*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).
39. Zachary Brittsan, *Popular Politics and Rebellion in Mexico Manuel Lozada and La Reforma, 1855–1876* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2015); Keith Aaron Van Oosterhout, 'Confraternities and Popular Conservatism on the Frontier: Mexico's Sierra del Nayarit in the Nineteenth Century', *The Americas*, 71 (2014), 101–30; Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'Liberales y conservadores en México: diferencias y similitudes', *Estudios interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe*, 8 (2014); Benjamin Smith, *The Roots of Conservatism in Mexico: Catholicism, Society, and Politics in the Mixteca Baja, 1750–1962* (New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2012); Erika Pani (ed.), *Conservadurismo y derechas en la historia de México*, 2 vols. (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica; Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 2009); Renée de la Torre, Marta Eugenia García Ugarte and Juan Manuel Ramírez Sáiz (eds.), *Los Rostros del conservadurismo Mexicano* (Mexico City: CIESAS, 2005); Hamnett, 'Mexican Conservatives'; Javier Rodríguez Piña, 'Conservatives Debate the Meaning of Independence', in William Beezley and David Lorey (eds.), *Viva Mexico! Viva Independencia! Celebrations of September 16* (Delaware: SR Books, 2001); Fowler and Morales (eds.), *El conservadurismo mexicano*; Alfonso Noriega, *El pensamiento conservador y el conservadurismo mexicano*, 2 vols. (Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, 1972); François Chevalier, 'Conservateurs et libéraux au Mexique: Essai de sociologie et géographie politiques de l'indépendance à l'intervention française', *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale*, 8 (1964), 457–74.

40. William Fowler, *Mexico in the Age of Proposals, 1821–1853* (London: Greenwood Press, 1998), 42. The Conservative Party was a loose affiliation of like-minded politicians rather than a clearly defined organisation. Vicente Fuentes Díaz, *Los partidos políticos en México*, 2nd ed. (Mexico City: Editorial Altiplano, 1969), 57.
41. Fowler, *Mexico in the Age of Proposals*, 46; Stevens, *Origins of Instability*, 28–36.
42. Smith, *Roots of Conservatism*, 80.
43. Fowler argues that “there was no conservative political project until the 1840s. To claim that there was one before then is not only an anachronism; it simply cannot be sustained with the available historical data”. Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 44. Fowler prefers the term “traditionalist”. However, the currents of thought influencing the politicians who expressed what Fowler terms “traditionalist” ideas from the 1820s to 1840s were eclectic, ranging—to name but a few—from Burke to Constant and Chateaubriand to Guizot. Given this intellectual genealogy, and the fact that they wished to reform Mexican political institutions along French or British parliamentary lines (see Chap. 3), the term “traditionalist” can obscure because it is not clear in what sense these factors were “traditional” to Mexican or even Spanish political culture. Catherine Andrews engages in this debate in ‘Sobre conservadurismo e ideas conservadores en la primera república federal (1824–1835)’, in Pani (ed.), *Conservadurismo y derechas*, 88–92.
44. On Mexican liberalism see Charles Hale, *Liberalism in the Age of Mora, 1821–53* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968). See also Hale, *The Transformation of Liberalism* and Heroles, *El Liberalismo mexicano*. The ideas of liberals are outlined in Stevens, *Origins of Instability*, 29–31, and Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, chs. 4 and 5.
45. María del Carmen Borrego Plá, ‘La influencia de la francia revolucionaria en México: el texto constitucional de Apatzingán’, in Borrego Plá and Leopoldo Zea (eds.), *América Latina ante la Revolución Francesa* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1993), 9–30. See also Solange Alberro, Alicia Hernández Chávez, and Elías Trabulse (eds.), *La Revolución francesa en México* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1992) and Oscar Martí, ‘Le Mexique et la Révolution française: Antécédents et conséquences (1746–1838)’, in Christian Hermann (ed.), *Les Révolutions dans le monde Ibérique*, 2 vols. (Bordeaux: Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 1991).
46. Hale, *Liberalism*, 61.
47. See Vázquez, ‘Liberales y conservadores’.
48. Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 43; Hale, *Liberalism*, 124.
49. Hale, *Liberalism*, 95–98.
50. *Ibid.*, 164–65; Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 43–44.

51. 'Acta Constitutiva de la Federación Mexicana', 31 January 1824 printed in Miguel Ángel Porrúa (ed.), *Documentos para la historia del México independiente, 1808–1938* (Mexico City: Miguel Ángel Porrúa; H. Cámara de Diputados, LXI Legislatura, 2010), 246–55.
52. Hale, *Liberalism*, 248–89.
53. *Ibid.*, 296–97.
54. The evolution of *santanista* ideas is charted in William Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna: The Writer and the Caudillo, 1795–1853* (London: Greenwood Press, 2000). See also Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, ch. 6.
55. Fowler gives a good summary of the groups in this varied alliance, *Independent Mexico*, 234.
56. Hale, *Liberalism*, 202–09; 214.
57. On the impact of 1848 in Latin America, see Guy Thomson (ed.), *The European Revolutions of 1848 and the Americas* (London: University of London; Institute of Latin American Studies, 2002).
58. Vigil, *México a través*, 281; 367.
59. Roberto Gargarella, *The Legal Foundations of Inequality: Constitutionalism in the Americas, 1776–1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 98.
60. Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* had been translated into Spanish and published in Mexico City in 1826. On the importance of Burke and other British political thinkers to early Mexican conservative thought, see Catherine Andrews, 'In the Pursuit of Balance. Lucas Alamán's Proposals for Constitutional Reform (1830–1835)', *Historia constitucional*, 8 (2007), 13–37.
61. Christopher Clark, 'After 1848: The European Revolution in Government', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 22 (2012), 171–97.
62. A point made in Brian Hamnett, *The End of Iberian Rule on the American Continent, 1770–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 24.
63. John Lynch, *Bourbon Spain, 1700–1808* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 58–59.
64. 'L'héritage colonial, un trou de mémoire', *Hommes et Migrations*, 1228 (2000).
65. Sophie Dulucq and Colette Zytnicki, 'Penser le passé colonial français, entre perspectives historiographiques et résurgence des mémoires', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, 86 (2005), 60. See also Alice Bennington, 'Writing Empire? The Reception of Post-Colonial Studies in France', *The Historical Journal*, 59 (2016), 1157–86.
66. Cécile Vidal, 'The Reluctance of French Historians to Address Atlantic History', *Southern Quarterly*, 43 (2006), 59.
67. See Robert Tombs and Maurice Vaisse (eds.), *L'histoire coloniale en débat en France et en Grande-Bretagne* (Brussels: A. Versaille, 2010); Catherine Coquio (ed.), *Retours du colonial?: disculpation et réhabilitation de*

- l'histoire coloniale française* (Nantes: Atlanté, 2008); Pascal Blanchard, Sandrine Lemaire and Nicolas Bancel (eds.), *Culture coloniale en France: de la Révolution française à nos jours* (Paris: CNRS éditions, Autrement, 2008); Hubert Bonin, Catherine Hodeir and Jean-François Klein (eds.), *L'esprit économique impérial (1830–1970): groupes de pression et réseaux du patronat colonial en France et dans l'empire* (Paris: SFHOM, 2008). In English see Alice Conklin, 'Histories of Colonialism: Recent Studies of the Modern French Empire', *French Historical Studies*, 30 (2007), 305–32; Martin Evans (ed.), *Empire and Culture: The French Experience, 1830–1940* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Robert Aldrich, 'Imperial mise en valeur and mise en scène: Recent Works on French Colonialism', *Historical Journal*, 45 (2002), 917–36; Robert Aldrich, *Greater France: A History of French Overseas Expansion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996).
68. The special issue, 'The Politics of Empire in Post-Revolutionary France', *French Politics, Culture & Society*, 33 (2015) addresses French colonialism in the period 1815–70 and its impact on the metropole.
 69. David Todd, 'A French Imperial Meridian', *Past and Present*, 210 (2011), 158–59.
 70. A point made by James Daughton, who does explore French informal French influence in 'When Argentina Was "French": Rethinking Cultural Politics and European Imperialism in Belle-Epoque Buenos Aires', *The Journal of Modern History*, 80 (2008), 831–64. See also Edward Shawcross, '"When Montevideo Was French": European Civilization and French Imperial Ambitions in the River Plate, 1838–52', *European History Quarterly*, 45:4 (2015), 638–61.
 71. Michael Powelson gives a brief account of British, French, Spanish and US imperialism in '19th Century Latin America Imperialism from a Global Perspective', *History Compass* 9 (2011), 827–43.
 72. Cayenne was first settled by the French in 1604; Guadalupe and Martinique were first settled in 1635. Philippe Haudrère, *L'Empire des rois, 1500–1789* (Paris: Denoël, 1997), 'Tableau synoptique', 387–96.
 73. Todd, 'A French Imperial Meridian', 155; 173.
 74. On the conquest of Algeria see *La conquête et les débuts de la colonisation (1827–1871)*, vol. 1 of Charles-Robert Ageron and Charles-André Julien, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, 2 vols., 3rd ed. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1979–86).
 75. David Todd, 'Transnational Projects of Empire in France, c. 1815–70', *Modern Intellectual History*, 12 (2015), 293.
 76. See Charles Iain Hamilton, *Anglo-French Naval Rivalry, 1840–1870* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), and Ernest Harold Jenkins, *A History of the French Navy, from its Beginnings to the Present Day* (London: Macdonald and Jane's (1979), chs. 13 and 14.

77. Pierre Brocheux and Daniel Hémery, *Indochina: An Ambiguous Colonization, 1858–1954*, trans. Ly Lan Dill-Klein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), ch. 1; John Frank Cady, *The Roots of French Imperialism in Eastern Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1954), chs. 12 and 16.
78. French troop numbers in Cochinchina taken from Cady, *Roots of French Imperialism*, 269.
79. ‘Ouverture de la session législative. Discours de l’Empereur’, *Journal des débats* (Paris), 6 November 1863, front page.
80. In the “Sous-direction de l’Amérique et de Indo-Chine”, Yves Bruley, *Le Quai d’Orsay Impérial* (Paris: Editions A. Pedone, 2012), 64.
81. See, for example, Henri Galos, ‘L’Expédition de Cochinchine et la politique française dans l’extrême Orient’, *Revue des deux mondes*, 1 May 1864, 173–207.
82. Peter Cain and Anthony Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion, 1688–1914* (London: Longman, 2002), 54.
83. Knight, ‘The Peculiarities of Mexican History’, 125. Knight also refers to it as colonialism in Alan Knight, ‘Rethinking British Informal Empire in Latin America (Especially Argentina)’, in Matthew Brown, *Informal Empire in Latin America: Culture, Commerce and Capital* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 38. Pascal Blanchard, Sandrine Lemaire, Nicolas Bancel and Dominic Thomas (eds.), *Colonial Culture in France since the Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), cite Mexico as an example of colonialism, which marks “the end of setback-free colonial expansion for France”, 76–78.
84. Lecaillon, *Napoléon III*, 69.
85. Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, ‘The Imperialism of Free Trade’, *Economic History Review*, 6 (1953), 1–15.
86. For example, Gregory Barton, *Informal Empire and the Rise of One World Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Robert Aguirre, *Informal Empire: Mexico and Central America in Victorian Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Ricardo Salvatore, ‘The Enterprise of Knowledge: Representational Machines of Informal Empire’, in Gilbert Joseph, Catherine LeGrand and Ricardo Salvatore (eds.), *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Durham, NC; London: Duke University Press, 1998). John Darwin, ‘Imperialism and the Victorians: The Dynamics of Territorial Expansion’, *English Historical Review*, 112 (1997) 614–42.
87. A thesis outlined in Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher (with Alice Denny), *Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1961).

88. Ronald Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations of Imperialism: A Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration', in Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe (eds.), *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism* (London: Longman, 1972), 117–42.
89. Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations', 119.
90. Todd, 'Imperial Meridian', 155–56.
91. See Sophus Reinert 'The Empire of Emulation: A Quantitative Analysis of Economic Translations in the European World, 1500–1849', in Sophus Reinert and Pernille Røge (eds.), *The Political Economy of Empire in the Early Modern World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 105–28.
92. Christopher Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780–1830* (London: Longman, 1989), 2.
93. Robinson and Gallagher discuss Latin America in 'Imperialism of Free Trade', 6, 8–10, 13 and 15. Robinson cites the River Plate as an area where British influence initially failed, 'Non-European Foundations', 125–26. See also Peter Winn, 'British Informal Empire in Uruguay in the Nineteenth Century', *Past and Present*, 73 (1976), 100–26, and David McLean, *War, Diplomacy and Informal Empire: Britain and the Republics of La Plata, 1836–1853* (London: British Academic Press, 1995). DCM Platt argued against the concept of informal empire in 'The Imperialism of Free Trade: Some Reservations', *Economic History Review*, 21 (1968), 296–306 and 'Further Objections to an "Imperialism of Free Trade"', *Economic History Review*, 26 (1973), 77–91. See also DCM Platt, *Latin America and British Trade 1806–1914* (London: Black, 1972). The debate was revived by Andrew Thompson in 'Informal Empire? An Exploration in the History of Anglo-Argentine Relations, 1895–1914', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 24 (1992), 147–77, and the response from Anthony Hopkins, 'Informal Empire in Argentina: An Alternative View', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 26 (1994), 469–84. See also Rory Miller, 'Informal Empire in Latin America', in Robin Winks and Roger Louis (eds.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume V: Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) and Rory Miller, *Britain and Latin American in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London: Longman, 1993). Barton gives a review of debates over informal empire and Latin America, Barton, *Informal Empire*, 95–104.
94. Andrew Thompson, 'Afterward: Informal Empire: Past, Present and Future', in Brown, *Informal Empire*, 233.
95. Michael Doyle, *Empires* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 45.
96. Thompson, 'Afterward', 231–32.
97. Alan Knight, 'Rethinking British Informal Empire', in Brown, *Informal Empire*, 28–31.
98. Darwin, 'Imperialism and the Victorians', 617–18.
99. Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations', 122.

100. Niall Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Volume 2: The World's Banker: 1849–1999* (London: Penguin, 2000), 118–19.
101. For a discussion of pan-Latinism in relation to Algeria, see Patricia Lorcin, 'Rome and France in Africa: Recovering Colonial Algeria's Latin Past', *French Historical Studies*, 25 (2002), 295–329.
102. 'Lettre de l'Empereur à General Forey', 8 July 1862, [A]rchives des [A]ffaires [E]trangères, [M]émoires et [D]ocuments 31/10; Michel Chevalier, *Le Mexique ancien et moderne* (Paris: L. Hachette et Cie, 1863), 478–79.
103. The most influential work both in the English and French historiography is Schefer, *La Grande pensée de Napoléon III*, which downplays the importance of pan-Latinist ideas. They have been variously revived, for example, in Hanna and Hanna, *American Triumph*. The three most recent works mention them only in passing. Gouttman, *La Guerre du Mexique*; Cunningham, *Mexico*; Lecaillon, *Napoléon III*.
104. For Chevalier's career and his economic theory, see Michael Drolet, 'Nature, Science and the Environment in Nineteenth-Century French Political Economy: The Case of Michel Chevalier (1805–1879)', *Modern Intellectual History* (2017), 1–35, and 'Industry, Class and Society: A Historiographic Reinterpretation of Michel Chevalier', *English Historical Review*, 123 (2008), 1229–71, and Jean Walch, *Michel Chevalier, économiste saint-simonien* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1975). For his views on America, see Jeremy Jennings, 'Democracy before Tocqueville: Michel Chevalier's America', *The Review of Politics*, 68 (2006), 398–427.
105. Michel Chevalier, *Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord*, 2 vols. (Paris: Ch. Gosselin, 1836), I, x.
106. Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985), 88.
107. Michael Gobat, 'The Invention of Latin America: A Transnational History of Anti-Imperialism, Democracy, and Race', *American Historical Review*, 118 (2013), 1361.
108. Rafe Blaufarb, 'The Western Question: The Geopolitics of Latin American Independence', *American Historical Review*, 112 (2007), 742–63; Piero Gleijeses, 'The Limits of Sympathy: The United States and the Independence of Spanish America', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 24 (1992), 481–505.
109. The diplomatic relationship between Washington and reformist liberals is explored in Donathon Olliff, *Reforma Mexico and the United States: A Search for Alternatives to Annexation, 1854–61* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1981).
110. Todd, 'Transnational Projects', 284.

French Policy towards Latin America, 1820–60

“Why”, Thiers demanded of the French National Assembly in 1850, “do we spend 120 million francs a year on a navy?” Thiers answered his own question: “[i]t is so that we can take action far away, so that the influence of France is not confined by the Rhine and the Pyrenees, but extends 2000 to 3000 leagues overseas, to do what the English do, to make ourselves respected”.¹ Thiers identified the River Plate, and Latin American more generally, as one region where French influence and power could be developed. In order to achieve this, French commerce needed to be backed by hard power and “there is no commerce in the world that has more need of protection than that with South America”.² In this debate, Thiers, one of the great critics of Louis-Napoléon’s Mexican intervention, argued for a large-scale military expedition to be sent to the River Plate in order to protect French nationals and develop French influence.³ This apparent contradiction highlights one of the main continuities in French policy towards Latin America: all France’s leading politicians agreed that French power and trade should be developed and extended, and by force if necessary; the differences between them were over how and where this should be done.

This consensus helps explain the readiness of French regimes in the period 1815–70 to intervene militarily in Latin America. This attitude

shaped US policy towards Latin America: James Monroe's 1823 message to Congress was partly prompted by fears that France's 1823 invasion of Spain was a prelude to the forcible restoration of Bourbon rule in the New World.⁴ Indeed, it should also be remembered that the declaration of British Foreign Secretary George Canning where he justified recognising the independence of some Latin American republics as calling "the New World into existence, to redress the balance of the Old" should be placed in its context: the British foreign secretary resolved that "if France had Spain, it should not be Spain with the Indies".⁵ The French threat did not end with the Bourbon Restoration. In December 1845, President James Polk's first annual message to Congress attacked the "[p]owers of Europe", who wished to see a "balance of power" in North America. This was a direct response to a speech of 10 June 1845 in the French Chamber of Deputies by the then foreign minister, François Guizot, who had advocated that there should be a check on US expansion.⁶ In response to Polk's address, Guizot maintained that France had the right to intervene in the affairs of the Americas.⁷ Guizot thus publicly disavowed the Monroe Doctrine, but it was some 30,000 French troops supporting a monarchy under an Austrian Archduke that posed the greatest challenge to the doctrine in the nineteenth century.

France, then, played an active role which not only impacted upon the new states of Latin America in which it intervened, but also affected the policy of the United States and Britain towards the region. Furthermore, French trade with the region vied with that of the United States during the period 1820–67 to occupy second place behind Britain⁸; French nationals settled in relatively large numbers, particularly in Mexico and the River Plate, and local elites looked to French political culture for inspiration. In short, France wielded considerable political, economic, cultural and military power. The key question for this chapter is: why did France commit more resources to Latin America, and Mexico specifically, than any other extra-European region, Algeria excepted, in the period under study?

In order to answer this question, the transnational nature of French imperial thought will be analysed: French intellectuals and politicians developed an idea of European civilisation which encouraged informal expansion in the extra-European world, and theorised non-colonial but imperial relationships with former Spanish colonies on mainland America. In part, arriving at this conclusion was a process of emulation of the most successful maritime power at the time, Britain: Thiers explicitly stated in

his argument for intervention that France must “be like the English”.⁹ That Latin America was a testing ground for these new imperial strategies can be explained by its place within the French worldview. The chapter identifies four factors which saw French policymakers mark it out as an area of significant focus for French imperialism: (1) the long history of French involvement in the Spanish Atlantic system and the economic wealth, real and imagined, of independent Latin America, (2) the perceived state of civilisation there, (3) local elites and (4) the British attitude towards French policy in Latin America.

ENLIGHTENMENT FOR INFORMAL EMPIRE

Studies of French imperialism, colonialism or empire—the categorisation is rarely clear—if they cover 1815–70 at all, normally view this period as one of incoherent foreign policy subordinated to domestic concerns. Imperial policy during these years is variously seen as reactive to events, commercially of dubious value, elitist and lacking popular support, yet somehow connected to an ill-defined desire to restore French prestige in the world after the defeat in the Napoleonic Wars. In this view, there was little continuity and no long-term strategic vision, although the period culminates in a “burst of imperialism at the century’s end” under the Third Republic.¹⁰ Thus the years from the Bourbon Restoration to the fall of Second French Empire have been defined as “an intermediate period”,¹¹ within which it would be vain to look for “an overall doctrine” or “a coherent idea”.¹²

As has been noted in the introduction, this is partially a result of the focus on formal imperialism which, with the exception of Algeria, was generally absent from French policy from 1815 to 1870. Furthermore, intellectual historians have provided a rationale for the dominant historiographical interpretation that French imperialism was incoherent and limited, especially when compared to the Third Republic, by arguing that French political thought was itself anti-imperial. Jennifer Pitts identifies a shift in French (and British) liberal thought from anti-imperialism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to pro-empire liberalism by the mid-nineteenth century, a so-called “turn to empire”.¹³ In this interpretation, limited overseas expansion in the first half of the nineteenth century can in part be explained by a hostility towards empire, or at least a lack of interest in it, until the development of pro-colonial arguments which gained prominence under the Third Republic.

However, just as a focus on formal empire has ignored informal attempts to extend French influence, a focus on imperial thought only insofar as it relates to territorial expansion has meant that ideas which supported informal or transnational models of domination have been overlooked. Liberal intellectuals under the Bourbon Restoration or the July Monarchy believed that the expansion of French influence was inherently valuable, but the means to achieve this should not be annexation or conquest. It is therefore possible to recast the so-called “liberal turn to empire” in the mid-nineteenth century, “as a more modest tactical shift from informal to formal dominance.”¹⁴

A particular vision of European civilisation tied to Christianity and progress underpinned the ideas which supported informal imperial expansion. As will be seen, this was most coherently articulated by Guizot. However, the continuities in French liberal thought on empire are perhaps more striking than the changes, and the relationship of intellectuals to imperialism more ambivalent or, at least more ambiguous, than generally supposed. For example, Nicolas de Condorcet and Benjamin Constant are considered to be the exemplars of French thinkers opposed to empire,¹⁵ but it is often overlooked that they were reacting to specific forms of imperial relationship. It does not follow that Condorcet’s criticisms of mercantilist colonies predicated on slave labour or, in Constant’s case, Napoleonic European empire based on the subjugation of other Europeans, were outright rejections of all forms of imperialism.

To argue that they were relies on the assumption that imperialism entails colonialism, rather than seeing the latter merely as subset of the former. But the word “colony” had a specific meaning for eighteenth-century writers: “the movement of people, or a portion of people, from one country to another”, and a positive view of colonisation had been inherited from ancient history, particularly Greece.¹⁶ No eighteenth-century thinker, no matter how critical of empire, was in principle opposed to the peaceable settlement of foreign land and the creation of colonies. As one of the most vociferous opponents of mercantile colonialism, Denis Diderot, wrote, “both reason and equity permit the founding of colonies”.¹⁷ However, Diderot and Condorcet were highly critical of the results of the recent European colonisation of the Americas: slavery and mercantilism.

For Condorcet, the two were linked and had deleterious effects on the economy and morality of both metropole and colony.¹⁸ He especially attacked the restricted commercial relationships that underpinned imperial trade. Condorcet, like Diderot,¹⁹ was an advocate of freedom of

commerce.²⁰ As with other European mercantile empires, the tightly controlled commercial organisation of the French Empire forced colonies to trade solely with the metropole. This model was antithetical to Condorcet's understanding of political economy. However, Condorcet argued that European civilisation, minus the evils of slavery and mercantilism, should be exported to non-European lands, an assumption based on a theory of progress which came to influence the civilizing mission of the Third Republic.²¹ That Europeans should colonise other territories is laid out in the *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain* (1794): "colonies of citizens [...] will radiate, throughout Africa and Asia, the principles and the example of liberty, the light and the reason of Europe." The European population would "civilise or make disappear, without conquest, the savages who still occupy these vast countries."²²

The advance of French civilisation became a cornerstone of nineteenth-century French imperialism, but Condorcet's vision lacked a military dimension. Constant, another thinker identified as opposed to empire, provided a rationale for a more muscular liberalism. His anti-imperial reputation largely derives from his essay *De l'esprit de conquête et de l'usurpation: dans leurs rapports avec la civilisation européenne* (1814), but, as is made explicit in the title, it is concerned with European civilisation and, exclusively, "the present condition of European peoples".²³ The work is a direct attack on the Napoleonic Empire and its methods, which, for the author, created despotism in France and undermined political liberty and personal freedom.²⁴ Furthermore, and in spite of this condemnation of Napoleonic expansion, Constant was no pacifist. In *Principes de politique applicables à tout les gouvernements* (1815), he outlined an argument which stated that so long as war was legally sanctioned by parliamentary process and in keeping with public opinion, which is "almost never wrong about the legitimacy of war undertaken by any government", then military action was justifiable. Indeed, Constant went further, arguing that "to forbid governments to continue the war beyond their borders is again a useless precaution."²⁵

Constant, therefore, did not reject outright military action, nor is it clear that his denunciation of expansion is "a much broader brief against imperial expansion in the modern age",²⁶ which extended to the extra-European world. It certainly did not include the Dey of Algiers, as Constant's comments in *Le Temps* on the French expedition of 1830 to Algiers make clear: "we applaud the destruction of a den of pirates [...] rather than respecting the sovereignty of a barbarian. May the city of

Algiers be thrown into its harbour!”²⁷ For Constant, then, as for other French liberal parliamentarians, at least in practice, the “liberal project of representative government” was not, as some have argued, “inextricable from an international politics of peaceful commerce and mutual respect of sovereign states.”²⁸ Rather, as regards the extra-European world, the “liberal project of representative government” was used by all French regimes in the period 1815–70 to secure national resources for overseas intervention with the express purpose of abrogating the sovereignty of states which were not considered to be legitimately or enduringly constituted.

Algeria, however, was a colonial exception in French imperial policy which affected subsequent overseas expeditions. Guizot argued that it was not in France’s interests to found “new and great colonial establishments far from its territory”, which would involve France in long struggles to subjugate the local population and provoke conflict with European rivals; France had “enough in Algeria to conquer and colonise”. Rather, France’s imperial strategy was twofold: “wherever European and Christian civilisation establishes itself, there also France is bound to assume its place and exercise its own genius”,²⁹ and France would also possess points on the “globe which are destined to become great centres of commerce” maritime posts to further and protect French trade.³⁰

In part, the conclusion that informal imperial relationships with overseas states could be preferable to colonial conquest and commercially more lucrative had been arrived at as a consequence of the independence of the former Spanish, British and Portuguese colonies in the Americas. The thinker that did most to draw French attention towards Latin American independence and its potential benefit for Europe was the Abbé Dominique de Pradt. De Pradt enjoyed a peripatetic political career as a representative of the clergy to the Estates General, a diplomatic agent of Napoleon Bonaparte and a supporter of the restored Bourbons in 1814 before rallying again to the Empire during the Hundred Days. This act disgraced him in the eyes of the Louis XVIII and he became a liberal opponent of the Bourbon Restoration. His exile from politics gave new impetus to his life as a publicist. He published an array of works on various topics as well as contributing articles to newspapers and journals.³¹ The numerous editions of his works as well as foreign translations attests to his popularity both in France and abroad, but he was to gain contemporary fame in Latin America,³² where he was made an honorary citizen of Mexico and Colombia, while Bolívar paid him a pension out of his own funds,³³ in recognition of his defence of Latin American independence.

In *Des colonies, et de la révolution actuelle de l'Amérique* (1817), de Pradt reiterated what he had predicted at the beginning of the nineteenth century³⁴: colonies inevitably tended towards independence. Moreover, freedom of commerce led to prosperity, which made this outcome more, not less, advantageous for both colony and metropole.³⁵ The Latin American wars of independence had shown the futility of trying to subjugate colonies once they had reached “maturity” and it was a waste of Spain’s resources to militarily oppose independence as well as the cause of severe economic dislocation.³⁶ This view became increasingly common as influential French economists, who echoed the economic conclusions of de Pradt and built on the late eighteenth-century critiques of mercantilist colonialism to argue for freedom of commerce.³⁷ The Swiss historian and political economist Simonde de Sismondi summed up what was becoming an increasingly common view in *Nouveaux principes d'économie politique* (1819). He wrote that the monopoly on colonial trade did give the metropole advantages, but that “the free trade of all Europe, with all its colonies, would have been more advantageous for both, by infinitely extending the market of the one, and accelerating the progress of the other. What justice and policy should have taught, force will obtain, and the colonial system cannot long continue.”³⁸

That colonies tended towards independence and that freer trade was more advantageous than a system of commerce reserved only to the metropole were the conclusions not only of theorists, but also of policy-makers under the Bourbon Restoration, notably François-René de Chateaubriand, who served as French foreign minister from December 1822 to August 1824. Chateaubriand, citing Montesquieu’s *Esprit des Lois* (1748), made a declaration of freedom of commerce (by which was meant the right of all nations to trade with Spain’s colonies) a cornerstone of his policy towards Spain. Like de Pradt, he believed that the Spanish colonies were lost and could not be militarily restored, arguing that if Spain did not grant independence, its colonies would achieve it regardless. As will be discussed in more detail in Chap. 3, Chateaubriand’s solution to this was to create independent kingdoms out of Spain’s former vicerealties ruled by Spanish Bourbons *infantes*. This would, in the foreign minister’s view, ensure Spain all the advantages of “possession”, while relieving the burden of reconquest from the treasury and increasing commerce.³⁹

It was imperative that Spain come to such an amicable arrangement because the decolonisation of the Americas played out within the context of international rivalry. De Pradt had argued that global power was not a

consequence of continental domination, but rather of industrial, financial, commercial and naval pre-eminence. This meant that Britain was unrivalled and benefitted the most from the breakup of colonies.⁴⁰ Again, Chateaubriand shared this analysis as regards Latin America. He argued that the former Spanish colonies had at the moment of independence become “a type of English colony” because of Britain’s commercial and financial hegemony.⁴¹ This belief further convinced Chateaubriand to adopt a policy towards Spain’s colonies that argued for an informal relationship that retained Spanish, and by extension French, influence over its former colonies.

For Chateaubriand, the relationship of Spain’s former colonies to the metropole was one of the most important questions he faced as a foreign minister. However, events in Latin America informed ideas not only about imperialism, but also about French political thought. Constant and de Pradt became engaged in a debate over whether Bolívar should have assumed dictatorial powers in Colombia. This argument drew in French royalist *ultras*, who looked to legitimise their own views through an analysis of Latin American events.⁴² Discussions in the press such as these drew French attention towards Latin America. For French policymakers, Latin American was a testing ground for informal imperial strategies because, as will be discussed below, it was a region of great economic potential consisting of what were understood in France as weakly or illegitimately constituted states. Indeed, de Pradt argued that “France, deprived of its colonies, has of all the states of Europe, the most need of the emancipation of [Latin] America.”⁴³

LATIN AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE AND FRANCO-MEXICAN RELATIONS

Latin American independence thus presented France with particular opportunities, but the Americas had long occupied an important place in the French worldview. At its apogee, France’s first colonial empire stretched from Quebec to New Orleans⁴⁴; Saint-Domingue was “the Pearl of the Antilles” in the latter half of the eighteenth century, providing two-fifths of the sugar and over half of the coffee produced in the New World⁴⁵; French involvement in the American War of Independence renewed French interest and engendered enduring sympathies amongst influential French politicians such as the Marquis de La Fayette.⁴⁶ Furthermore, in the immediate aftermath of an earlier imperial crisis—defeat to Britain in

the Seven Years War (1756–63)—it had been to Guiana to which France looked to compensate its colonial losses with a disastrous colonisation scheme.⁴⁷ Napoleon Bonaparte's dreams of recreating France's American empire were only extinguished with the failed attempt to re-occupy Haiti (1801–03) and then defeat at Trafalgar.⁴⁸ The Bourbon Restoration harboured ambitions of restoring Haiti to the French empire up to 1818.⁴⁹ More prosaically, France retained Guadelupe and Martinique in the Antilles. These colonies regained their prosperity in the 1820s in a decade which saw colonial imports average 15% of French total imports—a figure reached again only in the 1930s.⁵⁰

In addition to these French Atlantic connections, the importance of France's economic and political relationship with Spain, and by extensions its American colonies, had long been the serious focus of French foreign policy.⁵¹ In the eighteenth century, Spain was France's largest European trading partner. The majority of French exports were, however, not intended for the domestic Spanish market, but were re-exported to Spain's American colonies. By 1716, it is estimated that one-third of all French manufactured goods were intended for re-export to Spanish America, and this remained a vital market throughout the eighteenth century.⁵² This trade was so important to the French economy that disruption, or a change in Spanish regulations or practices, directly impacted local French regions of manufacture.⁵³

This trade generated a counterflow in Spanish silver, which became increasingly important to the French economy, and direct access to the commerce of the Spanish Empire combined with political influence over the metropole was an ambition common to all French governments from Louis XIV onwards.⁵⁴ The Spanish War of Succession (1700–13) was inconclusive and involved territorial losses for Spain, but it did confirm a Bourbon, Philip V, grandson of Louis XIV, as king of Spain, and its empire. Often to the frustration of France, the Bourbons in Spain put national interests above French or dynastic ones, but as the French economy developed while Spain's stagnated, French power increased while Spain's declined, with one historian describing the relationship as one between a hegemonic France and a dependent Spain.⁵⁵ The revolutionary wars accelerated this process. A treaty of mutual assistance signed in 1796 made Spain akin to a French vassal state,⁵⁶ providing military aid to France, but Napoleon preferred a financial subsidy in lieu of troops and pressured Spain to sign a convention in 1803 that required 4 million francs a month be sent to France. It was hoped that this would maintain Spanish neutrality

in the renewed conflict with Britain that began in 1803; keeping trade links open with Spanish America was more valuable to France than troops and ships because silver was crucial for the French economy. In 1804, however, Britain put a stop to Spanish shipments destined to fund the French treasury, resulting in a French financial crisis a year later.⁵⁷ Napoleon nonetheless believed the riches of the New World could fund warfare in the Old. Increasingly disdainful of the minimal military contribution and grudging economic cooperation of his ally, Napoleon became convinced that French military intervention might achieve what the Franco-Spanish alliance had failed to accomplish; namely, efficient administration in the peninsula and colonies with the consequent financial and commercial benefit accruing to France.⁵⁸ Unfortunately for Napoleon, the invasion of Spain, intended to finally procure the wealth of Spain's colonies for France, was the catalyst for Spanish American independence.

Thus, in 1815 all Spain's mainland American colonies were in varying degrees of revolt against the metropole. However, this did not diminish the important place Spanish America had held in French foreign policy. Jean-Baptiste de Villèle, French prime minister from 1821 to 1828, noted that half the world was in chaos as consequence of Spanish policy and that the future of its colonies was as crucial to French honour and interests in the nineteenth century as they had been in the eighteenth.⁵⁹ And like Napoleon, the Bourbon Restoration hoped to procure as much as possible the benefits of Spain's Atlantic system for itself and, as with the former Emperor, intervention in Spain in order to bring about a new relationship between metropole and colonies was a means of achieving this. However, whereas Napoleon aimed to subjugate the Spanish colonies to French interest through placing his brother on the throne in Madrid, policymakers under the Bourbon Restoration hoped to bring them under French aegis through compromises over Spain's sovereignty in the Americas.

The first French attempt to put this into practice was developed by then foreign minister, Armand-Emmanuel de Vignerot du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu, who represented France at the Aix-la-Chapelle congress of 1818, where the major powers met to discuss the most important diplomatic questions of the day. He recommended three solutions to resolve the conflict with Spain's colonies: (1) the creation of an independent monarchy under a Spanish prince in the River Plate, (2) commercial and political concessions in Venezuela and New Granada and (3) a more liberal system of commerce in Mexico and Peru. Above all, he recommended the admission of creoles into high positions of office. In short, the French plan

was to give concessions to the rebels in accordance with how likely the Duc de Richelieu considered the chances of independence to be. In his view, the River Plate was lost and Venezuela and New Granada almost gone, whereas Peru and Mexico could be saved for the Spanish Empire, but only through granting two key demands of separatists.⁶⁰

Ferdinand VII, however, refused to countenance anything short of the complete restitution of Spanish sovereignty and thus rejected these proposals. Chateaubriand and Villèle nonetheless believed that the influence France gained through its intervention of 1823 to restore Ferdinand VII to absolute rule would ensure the monarch accepted French demands. Indeed, Chateaubriand secured one of his primary aims when he forced the Spanish monarch to sign a decree granting freedom of commerce to Spain's colonies, but this was only done under considerable duress—Chateaubriand ordered the French ambassador not to leave the palace of Ferdinand until the decree had been signed and told him to announce the withdrawal of French troops if the king refused.

Chateaubriand hoped that this decree would remove one of the key arguments for independence, but his plans were much greater than redressing this commercial grievance. As noted above, he believed that without French action the Spanish colonies would pass under the tutelage of Great Britain. The means to do this was to grant independence under Bourbon monarchies with freedom of commerce; support, by armed intervention if necessary, royalists in Spanish America; and raise loans on the markets of Europe to counterbalance those that British financial houses had already made to the nascent Spanish American governments. The decree on freedom of commerce, however, was as far as Ferdinand was willing to go. In a comment which revealed much about his understanding of power, an exasperated Chateaubriand asked rhetorically: "We surely have not expended 200,000,000 francs, and rescued Ferdinand, and yet are destitute of influence in Spain?"⁶¹ But Ferdinand would not yield to French pressure, and, thus, in the view of the French foreign minister, lost his colonies forever. Despite the failure of his policy, Chateaubriand had sketched an early model of informal empire: France would intervene militarily to support regimes ideologically sympathetic to French political models (in this case, monarchy); loans would provide financial support, but also political leverage, while freedom of trade would secure French commercial interests. And all French regimes from the July Monarchy to the Second Empire would employ variations of this policy in Latin America.

This was a model—minus the political dimension—France embraced as regards its former colony of Saint-Domingue. Faced with the difficulty, and dubious economic benefit, of restoring Haiti to French rule, France sent a naval squadron in 1825 to impose a treaty that granted favourable tariffs on French goods and an indemnity of 150 million francs to French colonists in return for French recognition of Haitian independence.⁶² The terms of the treaty included a secret clause which stipulated that Haiti would contract a loan of 30 million francs with French banks to help pay for the indemnity, which was the first significant overseas loan raised on the French market.⁶³

It was not only Spanish intransigence that prevented French policymakers from having a free hand in Latin America; intervention in the Americas to support royalism was seriously entertained in Europe by the Holy Alliance, particularly in France. However, the Polignac Memorandum, signed in 1823 between France and Britain, bound France not to intervene militarily in the Latin American wars of independence. Moreover, out of loyalty to Ferdinand, and much to the annoyance of many of their ministers, Louis XVIII (1815–24) and Charles X (1824–30) refused to recognise the new American republics.⁶⁴

This did not preclude, however, the French foreign ministry sending diplomatic agents to Latin America in order to develop political and economic ties. France required information about the Latin American states and therefore the foreign ministry sent representatives to Argentina, Colombia and Mexico in 1822. The aim was not merely to report, but also to develop relations with the most important politicians in these countries in order that France could influence local politics.⁶⁵ Moreover, the foreign ministry realised the commercial potential of the new republics and feared that delay in establishing ties with the new states of Latin America would hand the economic advantage to Britain.⁶⁶

The prosperity of New Spain and its centrality in the production of silver ensured that Mexico occupied a key position in the French worldview. As the instructions to one of these agents stated: Mexico was “the most important of the new American republics”.⁶⁷ The position conferred on Mexico by the foreign ministry is borne out by the value of its trade. According to the official French government statistics, between 1827 and 1836 Mexico was the twelfth largest export market for French goods in the world, totalling 145.4 million francs, and made up 2.18% of the value of France’s total exports. This was second only to Brazil in Latin America,⁶⁸ which was marginally larger at 152.5 million (2.28% of total exports). By

way of comparison, the largest export market, the United States, at 1205 million francs, was about 18% of the total.⁶⁹ Mexico was more important as a destination for French goods than European powers such as Portugal, Russia and Austria, and, although France could not match Britain's export trade to Mexico, it vied with the United States as the second largest exporter throughout the period. In terms of imports, during the same period, Mexico furnished France with 65.4 million francs worth of goods and, again, was second only to Brazil in Latin America.⁷⁰

Given this volume of trade, it was hardly surprising that calls to normalise relations with Mexico came from chambers of commerce in France's main ports. These bodies had in turn been lobbied by agents of the Mexican government. The commercial agent for Mexico at Bordeaux, Jacques Galos, in an address to the members of the Bordeaux Chamber, echoed de Pradt and argued that France, "poor in colonies" but "rich in industry", should fix its attention on these "vast regions" in order to compensate for "the painful loss of [France's] most precious overseas possessions". According to the agent, more had been exported from the port of Bordeaux to Latin America than to Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guiana, Pondicherry and Senegal and other French colonies combined. He informed Tomás Murphy, Sr, an early Mexican diplomatic agent to France, that his work had been successful and that the Bordeaux and Marseilles chambers of commerce had pressured the French government. Murphy, in turn, reported that this pressure was positively influencing the French cabinet towards recognition of Mexico's independence.⁷¹ Indeed, the French foreign ministry instructed a commercial agent, Adrien Cochelet, to tell the Mexican government of "our desire to extend and complete our relations with her", but that recognition would not be immediate: "[i]t is doubtless to be desired that this acknowledgement take place, but it is necessary that such an important action be examined with care".⁷² Diplomatic recognition was a long-term intention of the Bourbon Restoration foreign ministry.

Mexico's economic importance continued to be linked to its production of precious metals, especially silver, which was of particular concern to France given its bimetallic monetary system.⁷³ The reality behind the legend of New Spain's mineral wealth was confirmed in Europe by Alexander von Humboldt's travels through the kingdom between 1799 and 1804.⁷⁴ Indeed, Chevalier, an economist who studied at the École des Mines de Paris, published a work on the gold and silver mines of the Americas. Mexico formed a significant portion of the work and Chevalier

wrote that the mining of precious metals was “a subject of particular interest for France” because “amongst all the nations [...] it must retain the most silver” to maintain its fixed gold and silver exchange rate.⁷⁵ Silver production declined in Mexico after independence,⁷⁶ but diplomatic reports and published works recognised Mexico’s immense mineral wealth and, if some noted the decline in output, all agreed that properly exploited Mexican mines would overtake pre-independence levels.⁷⁷

The most common description of Mexico in French discourse was of a country blessed by nature through its fertile soil and favourable climates, by its abundance of natural resources and by its strategic location between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, which made it ideally placed to develop commerce.⁷⁸ It was also a destination for French settlers and by the 1850s there were some 5000 French residents there.⁷⁹ These French nationals comprised the largest group of foreigners in Mexico after the Spanish and provided an alternative means for the exchange of French and Mexican culture.⁸⁰

Mexico, then, occupied an important place in the French worldview, but relations were impeded by the refusal to recognise independence. French investors were interested in the loans raised for the newly independent Latin American republics and some subscribed on the London markets, but non-recognition meant that these loans could not be raised in Paris. Furthermore, Alamán had originally attempted to secure capital to exploit Mexico’s mines in Paris, where he spent some time after serving in the Spanish *Cortes*. In 1822 he formed the Franco-Mexican Mining Company, but the venture failed and Alamán reconstituted the company in London as the United Mexican Mining Association.⁸¹ These disappointments did not diminish interest; rather, rivalry with Britain and the United States focussed attention on ways in which France could profit from Latin American independence.

Julien Schmaltz, who had been sent by the foreign ministry to Mexico in order to report on its political, social and economic state, wrote to Paris “the English in Mexico are in a much better position than us”. His analysis may well have informed Chateaubriand’s conclusion that Latin America had become a “type of British colony” and the reasons Schmaltz gave for this for this read like a manual for informal empire. He argued the following: the British navy maintained a constant presence on the coasts and in the ports of Mexico while naval officers frequently visited the capital, which gave Mexicans a strong impression of British “power”. The pro-independence editorials in British papers, the declarations and attitude of

Canning in favour of Latin American independence, the response to the Monroe Doctrine by British journalists and, above all, the sending of accredited agents, “seemed to confirm all these good dispositions [of Britain]”. Moreover, loans contracted with London financial houses marked the beginning of a “political dependence” which was becoming all the more of a “dangerous influence” because London’s capital markets were currently the “only resource and the unique hope of the Mexican government” to relieve its current financial distress. In addition to this political and financial dominance, it was necessary to add British commercial hegemony. And, if this was not enough, British companies and capital were poised to exploit Mexico’s mines. There was even talk that a bank would be set up to disburse British funds towards agricultural improvement with the eventual result, Schmaltz concluded, that Mexico would be almost entirely subordinated to British economic and political interests.⁸²

Chateaubriand, a keen observer of informal empire, shared this analysis as regards Britain and Latin America. He similarly argued that loans tied Spain’s former colonies to British political interests. Moreover, British companies invested even more capital, and were set to exploit the mines, dive for pearls, excavate canals and till the soil. Added to this, Britain had vice-consuls in the smallest bays, consuls in the most important towns and consul-generals and ministers plenipotentiary in Colombia and Mexico. These countries were “covered with English commercial houses, with English commercial travellers, English mineralogists, English military men, English money-lenders, and English colonists [...] The English flag floats on all the shores of the Atlantic.” In short, Chateaubriand believed Britain was the “master” of former Spanish America, which was under its “supremacy”.⁸³

Despite the concerns of Schmaltz and Chateaubriand, the activities they identified above were not part of a systematic and coherent British attempt to establish what would amount to informal empire directed from London, nor did they confer as much long-lasting influence as feared.⁸⁴ Even so, Schmaltz, and many subsequent French diplomats in Mexico as well as ministers in Paris, wanted to procure Britain’s supposed hegemony for France. The problem was how to achieve it. Schmaltz, in a somewhat fatalistic early acceptance of the dominance of Anglo-Saxon capitalism, argued that the British could not be challenged financially or commercially. He claimed that “[French] capitalists and businessmen did not have either the same mass of funds disposable, nor the genius of enterprise, nor the boldness in speculation which gives so many advantages to our rivals”,

but he nonetheless urged that France should employ the means it did have to advance its interests because it “did not lack partisans in Mexico”. Schmaltz was an early proponent of a proto-pan-Latinist interpretation: just as had happened in Spain, similarity of “religion, customs, mores and spirit” in Mexico meant there was a preference for France as a protector rather than Britain.⁸⁵ Monarchy, like religion or pan-Latinism (and frequently all three were inseparable), was another means of increasing French influence via non-economic means, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

The economic wealth, both recorded and potential, combined with international and commercial rivalry meant that France saw Latin America, and especially Mexico, as an area of great importance. The identification of Latin America as a key market for French trade was borne out by the fact that the volume of French trade increased throughout the period. Further attention was drawn to the region because it was feared, in the 1820s, that British policy was securing an advantageous position for itself at the expense of other powers.⁸⁶ However, the Bourbon family compact meant that Louis XVIII and Charles X, already ideologically opposed to the independence of Spanish America because of its republican direction, had yet more reason to delay the recognition of these emerging states. This in turn meant that France, unlike Britain, could not negotiate commercial treaties with the new states of Latin America. After the collapse of the Bourbon Restoration in 1830, the July Monarchy deployed its powerful navy in order to secure by force what Britain had attained by negotiation.

WARS OF CIVILISATION IN MEXICO AND THE RIVER PLATE

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

The French foreign minister, Count Louis-Mathieu Molé, justified this course of action because these Latin American governments had failed to uphold a French conception of international law and civilisation.⁸⁷ Because France had not recognised independence, it had not negotiated treaties of amity, navigation and friendship to regulate its commerce and the status of its foreign nationals. The refusal of both Mexico and Argentina to ratify treaties and indemnify French losses during civil conflict were the pretext for French intervention. Senior French officials took the view that unstable republics such as Mexico and Argentina left France with no option other than intervention to forcibly secure French goals once both governments had rejected ultimatums. The two naval expeditions of 1838 to blockade Mexico and Argentina were predicated on the assumption that these nations were semi-civilised and based on the conviction that demonstrations of naval power would coerce these governments into accepting French demands, as had been the case with Haiti in 1825.⁸⁸ A display of French power was intended to provide a salutary lesson to the continent as a whole; Molé asserted: “The future of France’s relations with the many states of Spanish America depend on the results of the course France has taken towards Mexico and the Republic of Argentina.”⁸⁹

This course began in 1838 with the blockade of Veracruz and Buenos Aires. Discussing French policy towards Mexico in 1838, an editorial in the semi-official Orléanist newspaper the *Journal des débats* informed its readers that France no longer took up arms for conquest or ambition. Instead, its wars were in order to “uphold a great principle of the laws of nations, and to safeguard the interests of civilisation.”⁹⁰ More cynical readers may have wondered exactly how blockading the Mexican coast and seizing the fortress of San Juan de Ulúa at Veracruz in order to extract an indemnity of 600,000 piastres and force Mexico to sign a treaty would advance the cause of civilisation, but French policymakers deployed a discourse of civilisation, a continuum with which to measure other states, which drove and legitimated intervention in the extra-European world. This conception was most fully articulated by Guizot in lectures delivered at the Sorbonne between 1828 and 1830.⁹¹

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

are, as it were, rivers, of which we ask what quantity of water it is they contribute to the ocean?"⁹² For French observers in the 1830s, the "rivers" that made up civilisation in Latin America were running dry.⁹³

While there was a French discourse that depicted Mexico as part of a Latin civilisation that would naturally gravitate towards France, discussed in Chap. 4, this interpretation existed concurrently with negative views of Mexico as a backwards, unstable and semi-civilised state that required firm action on the part of France to protect its interests. This was a point made by the *Journal des débats*, which argued that independence from Spain had resulted in regression. What the paper described as the perpetual state of anarchy in Latin America was not "favourable to the progress of civilisation". Mexicans were "still childlike and barbarous". This was a state of society mirrored throughout Latin America and it was, therefore, necessary to treat these states as France treated the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, by upholding the principles of international law, French intervention would inculcate "civilisation" in Mexico.⁹⁴

The newspaper's view was one shared by France's minister to Mexico during the 1830s, Baron Antoine-Louis Deffaudis. He believed Mexico to be so politically fractious that it was impossible for them to "constitute themselves into an orderly and stable government."⁹⁵ Deffaudis summarised what he understood as the main failing of French policy towards Mexico since 1825: "[i]nstead of treating these ignorant, presumptuous, cowardly and arrogant people, without morals or probity, as one would handle [...] badly raised children [...] we have treated the Mexicans like [...] the civilised nations of Europe."⁹⁶ Deffaudis concluded that it was therefore necessary henceforth to treat Mexico as France treated the "Barbary states" or the "Turks"—with "force".⁹⁷ And the portrayal of Mexicans as infants was shared by Admiral Charles Baudin, sent in 1838 to blockade Veracruz, and Baron Alleje de Cyprey, Deffaudis' successor in Mexico from 1840–46.⁹⁸

However, Deffaudis' equation of Mexico with the Ottoman Empire or the Dey of Algiers was at the nadir of his (and France's) relations with the Mexican government in the 1830s. His representation of Mexico was not monolithic, nor was it entirely dismissive. He did not place Mexico entirely outside of civilisation: it was a "semi-civilised" state.⁹⁹ Similarly, for Guizot all the republics of "South America" were "semi-barbarous".¹⁰⁰ In this view, these nations were at risk of becoming more barbaric because of corrupt administration, ill-suited constitutions, influence of the clergy (especially in Mexico), prejudice against European immigrants, restrictive tariffs

on commerce and the lack of the rule of law. However, with the right guidance, these countries could be restored to civilisation. Moreover, it was not necessary for France to take on this burden itself because there were those who would do it for them: there were, in these republics, “many enlightened men”.¹⁰¹

The second reason why Latin America was an area where it was supposed that French informal imperialism could be effective was the role of local elites, the “enlightened men”. The 1838 interventions combined naval power with parties sympathetic to France in order to secure French goals overseas. As the cabinet minister Count Narcisse-Achille de Salvandy made clear while defending government policy in the Chamber of Deputies in 1839, there were in Latin America “parties which attach themselves to the politics and protection of France [...] we want to be sure that these parties can be for us serious sources of support.”¹⁰² The most concerted enactment of this policy under the July Monarchy, which was continued by the Second Republic, was in the River Plate. Here, France backed one faction over another in a regional power struggle that lasted from 1838 to 1852. Space precludes detailed discussion of French imperialism in the River Plate, but policy will be briefly outlined and analysed below to demonstrate how the French discourse of European civilisation played out in practice.

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

Many of Rosas' opponents not only supported French intervention, but had actively called for it. A large number of the leaders of the Unitarian Party had emigrated to Montevideo. Here they allied with a new generation of Argentines, ideologically opposed to Rosas and strongly influenced by French *doctrinaire* liberalism, who looked to the July Monarchy as a political model and to French political culture for their own intellectual inspiration.¹⁰³ For Guizot, it was clear where civilisation lay in this struggle: "there are two parties in South America, the European party and the American party [...the European party] is made up of the most enlightened men, the most accustomed to European civilisation [...] they want to assimilate America to Europe." However, the American party was "tyrannical, violent and bloody" and "outside of civilisation".¹⁰⁴ In the hope of advancing French interests and protecting French nationals, France sided with the local elites of the "European party".

The plan was that aid to Rosas' enemies would topple his regime and replace it with one sympathetic to France, or, at the very least, the pressure on Rosas would force him to concede to French demands. To achieve this, France gave leaders of the opposition to Rosas based at Montevideo diplomatic support and material aid. These individuals were "auxiliaries" (Guizot's term) for France's anti-Rosas policy.¹⁰⁵ Guizot refused to go beyond this informal-imperial strategy and send a large French expeditionary force because he feared it would be drawn into the interior where they might encounter another Abd al-Qādir (1808–83),¹⁰⁶ who was tying down 100,000 French troops in Algeria at the time.

France also supported the government at Montevideo. The city had a large population of French nationals and was besieged from 1843 to 1851 as part of a civil war which saw Rosas send Argentine troops to Uruguay in an attempt to dislodge the government there that supported his enemies and welcomed French intervention. However, a reliance upon local elites combined with limited French support proved ineffectual. Despite a second blockade of Buenos Aires in conjunction with Britain (1845–47),¹⁰⁷ a naval expedition down the Paraná River into the interior of Argentina (1846), a direct French subsidy to the government at Montevideo (1848–52) and, finally, the garrison of the Uruguayan capital with French troops (1850–52), French policy barely succeeded in maintaining the independence of Montevideo, let alone overthrowing Rosas or even coercing his government to accept French demands.

French aims in the 1838 Mexican intervention were similar to those in the River Plate. However, in contrast to the 1862–67 intervention, France

did not find obvious collaborators analogous to the Unitarian Party in the River Plate. Nonetheless, French observers viewed Mexican society through the prism of civilisation and attempted to forge links with factions within Mexico in order to further their aims. The difficulties France encountered in securing a treaty combined with the treatment of its nationals meant that French hostility developed towards those who held power in Mexico in the 1830s. During this decade, Mexican governments were generally composed of the conservative members of Mexico's elite. They had become disillusioned with the federal Constitution of 1824 and wished to create a more powerful executive, restrict the franchise and establish a centralised state. They achieved these reforms with the "Seven Laws" (discussed in more detail in Chap. 3) published in 1836 which replaced the existing constitution. The only government made up of Mexican liberals during the 1830s was a reformist administration with Santa Anna as nominal president, but run by his vice-president Gómez Farías from 1833 to 1834. Liberals who supported federalism were thus out of power at the time French grievances increased against Mexico.

It was not merely federalist opposition to the national government that led some French observers to favour their cause in Mexican politics. Liberal federalists were considered to be more sympathetic towards France, and closer to French liberal values, than their conservative opponents. The Mexican liberal Mora, who after 1834 spent most of his life in Paris, argued that the French divided Mexican politics into two camps: "federalist" and "clerical". They wished for the "reformist ideas" of the former to triumph not because they supported federal republicanism—"[in France] they love nothing but constitutional monarchy"—but because they sympathised with the federalist party which they saw as more tolerant of foreigners, and because of its "well known tendencies towards free trade" as well as freedom of worship.¹⁰⁸

Mora's analysis was correct: many French observers tended to categorise conservative politicians as retrograde. The first administration of Anastasio Bustamante, in which Alamán had significant influence, and which was in power 1830–32, was described as "faithful in some ways to the old Spanish traditions" and looked to found its power "on the same bases of fanaticism [the Church and the military]". One of the first French diplomatic agents wrote that the July Revolution "frightened" the men of this government because they feared that the "revolutionary torrent" would cross the ocean and be unleashed in Mexico.¹⁰⁹ According to another French diplomat, Bustamante's ministers had heard of the over-

throw of the Bourbons in France “with pain” because they wanted to destroy federalism and replace it with a kingdom ruled by a Spanish prince.¹¹⁰ The French foreign minister therefore looked forward to the overthrow of Bustamante’s regime because it would bring to power a government “less hostile to the principles of [the July Revolution].”¹¹¹

As with the River Plate, the conclusion was that the solution to French problems in Mexico “would seem to depend on a change of government” because federalists were understood to be more favourably inclined towards France.¹¹² In contrast to the River Plate, however, French sympathy for a political faction did not develop into a long-term relationship. Divisions within Mexican politics were exploited to further immediate French goals, but French attempts to co-opt federalists were opportunistic and short-lived. The leader of the French naval intervention, Baudin, was in communication with the leaders of federalism in Mexico. He maintained that he would not help the federalist cause because if it were associated with a foreign flag, national opinion would rise against it. He did, however, argue that the fall of the present government and the proclamation of federalism would be a mutually beneficial outcome. In order to help bring about this state of affairs, Baudin lifted the blockade on ports controlled by federal forces in revolt against the government in Mexico City, such as Tampico. Baudin considered the federalist cause to be that of “liberty, unity, civilisation and progress” against the retrograde ideas of “priests and Spaniards”. Despite this admiration, his conclusion was that Mexico was not “advanced enough in political ideas to understand and appreciate the views of the federalists”.¹¹³

In an account of the campaign published by one of his subordinates, the binary French image of Mexican politics was reinforced. There was the “party of the Church, strengthened by former Spaniards” and this “clerical-Spanish party” wanted to see the establishment of a “monarchy more or less constitutional, less rather than more.” Those who defended federalism proclaimed “strongly liberal ideas”, including freedom of worship. The head of this faction was Gomez Farías, “a man of talent and a constant defender of the most advanced liberal ideas”. However, the author reiterated Baudin’s analysis that Mexico was not ready for such ideas. Furthermore, he summarised what was to become the dominant interpretation of the prospects for liberalism in Mexico. The members of the federal party may have been “the most enlightened” section of the population, but they were not the most numerous, the richest nor the most influential, and against them were the Church and the great

landowners. The conclusion was not promising: “[i]f there is a future [for the federalists], it does not seem likely it will arrive soon.”¹¹⁴

The local situation in Mexico differed significantly from that of the River Plate, which meant that the strategy of supporting local elites in revolt against the national government did not develop into the kind of relationship France established with the Argentine Unitarian Party or Uruguayan liberals at Montevideo. First, there were fewer French nationals in Mexico than the River Plate (roughly 5000 in Mexico compared with some 15,000 in Montevideo). Furthermore, in Mexico, these immigrants were not concentrated in one place, but spread throughout the country. Although French nationals in Mexico were threatened with expulsion, at Montevideo they were faced with an army of Argentine troops that from 1843 onwards besieged the city. Second, although the blockade of the Mexican coast caused significant economic problems for the Mexican government because of its dependence on customs revenue, pressure could not be put on Mexico City without an inland military expedition. It was argued that naval power was more effective in the River Plate because the two major cities, Montevideo and Buenos Aires, were ports.

Third, Rosas’ regime was represented as barbarism incarnate, while the Unitarian liberals were seen as a viable alternative. In Mexico, by contrast, federalists were seen as enlightened, but impractical, while the Mexican government was not, unlike Rosas, irredeemable. Fourth, when Mexico declared war on France because of its naval action, many federalists rallied to the national cause, whereas in the River Plate opposition to Rosas openly welcomed French imperialism. Fifth and finally, the Mexican government was willing to negotiate with France and eventually agreed to sign a convention regulating Franco-Mexican relations until a permanent treaty was concluded, as well as paying an indemnity of 600,000 piastres. Although Rosas did sign a treaty with France, he later attempted to overthrow the French-backed government at Montevideo, which led to the second French intervention in 1845.

The success of the interventions discussed above was limited, and the interventions were widely criticised, not least by Thiers.¹¹⁵ But not because the policy was considered flawed; rather, the support given to local elites and the military force sent to procure French goals was deemed to be insufficient. Deffaudis, who after serving in Mexico was appointed as minister to Buenos Aires and coordinated efforts against Rosas from 1845 to 1848, wrote “we conducted [the intervention] with such insufficient means that, far from remedying the evil, we only increased it”.¹¹⁶

The novelist Alexandre Dumas asked rhetorically whether French intervention in the River Plate was “anything other than the ineffective aid one brings to the mortally wounded?”¹¹⁷

There was, however, no disagreement between those like Salvandy or Guizot who argued for a more limited deployment of resources, or those like Thiers, who wanted to see a greater commitment of men and money in the River Plate, over where civilisation lay. Thiers similarly understood the opponents of Rosas to be the “enlightened” party, while one of the earliest proponents of active French intervention in the region on a larger scale argued for it in the following terms: “when a revolution carries to power a party of [...] more enlightened, more moral and more capable of [...] re-establishing the nation to prosperity would France be committing a great crime if it lent, in whatever it form it might take, serious and disinterested support? Would it not be, on the contrary, the fulfilment of the duty imposed on [it] by superiority of power, of wisdom and of civilisation?”¹¹⁸ Thus, as with the Restoration’s plans to support royalists amongst Spain’s former colonies, the July Monarchy similarly backed factions in Mexico and the River Plate with the hope of bringing to power regimes that would be more favourable to French interests and influence. As will be seen, this was precisely the policy Louis-Napoléon adopted with the Mexican Conservative Party at the start of his intervention in Mexico of 1862.

Indeed, a notable critic of Orléanist policy towards Mexico and Argentina was Louis-Napoléon, who learned lessons from these interventions that would be applied to his own. In articles published in the *Progrès du Pas-de-Calais*, the future emperor attacked the July Monarchy’s imperial projects. There were only two motives to found colonies, Louis-Napoléon argued: military and commercial. Vast swathes of Africa, Asia and America had been seized in order to found “satellite kingdoms” which were “producers and consumers for the metropole”. Colonies had also been established in order to “occupy strategic points, which, by their position, dominate the great commercial routes” and, in time of war, assured influence to the countries that possessed them. French expansion in the Pacific (the Marquesa Islands, Tahiti and the Society Islands were his examples) met none of these criteria and thus the government was spending “millions in order to establish onerous colonies”. Instead, France should concentrate its resources and look to develop Algeria and Guiana, which were “the sole and unique possessions which can truly be of great benefit to France”. However, rather than developing what it had, the

French government preferred to “seize all the barren rocks that the other powers scorn.”¹¹⁹

In this article, Louis-Napoléon largely echoed the ideas of Orléanist imperialism even if he criticised the practice. If France could afford it, then the extension of French civilisation overseas was desirable, with a preference for strategic points on the globe that dominated commercial routes. These elements would underpin his own imperial policies, while the designation of Guiana as an existing French colony of value showed his interest in the circum-Caribbean.¹²⁰ The importance he attached to Latin America is demonstrated by the fact that, while he attacked Orléanist policy in the Pacific for diminishing the power of France, he condemned the government for not deploying sufficient resources in Mexico and the River Plate.

France’s overseas military interventions had been counterproductive. They had done nothing but “give foreigners more and more striking proofs of the submission of the French government to their demands”. The expeditions to Buenos Aires and Montevideo illustrated the impotence of the French government: Baudin’s forces, he argued, captured the fortress of San Juan de Ulúa, but they could not “profit from their victory because they did not have enough marines” to continue French operations inland. The result was a “weakening of our influence in [Mexico].” In the River Plate, Baron Ange René Armand de Mackau, who had led the naval squadron that imposed the treaty recognising independence on Haiti, “trampled underfoot all French interests, and abandoned to the fury of a tyrant [Rosas] 15,000 of his compatriots” by negotiating with Rosas.¹²¹ Thus the future Emperor of the French’s analysis was the same as the republican Dumas: insufficient forces and diplomatic weakness meant that the French interventions had failed. This was a mistake that Louis-Napoléon was determined not to make when he launched his own expedition to Mexico.

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

Thiers had also been a consistent critic of what he understood to be Guizot's pusillanimous policy towards Rosas at Buenos Aires. The irony was not lost on Rouher, who, in a reply to an 1864 speech of Thiers that criticised the 1862–67 French intervention, quipped that he preferred Thiers' language in 1844. Indeed, it is striking that Rouher used the identical rationale—the development of French commerce and influence overseas—in his justification for intervention in Mexico that Thiers had used in 1850 to argue for intervention in the River Plate. Like Thiers, Rouher emphasised a global role for France; Louis-Napoléon: “recognised that the balance of power in Europe is no longer [...] on the Alps, the Pyrenees, or the Black Sea, but embraces the whole world, and that such great interests must be the object of France's concern, however far it is necessary to go to protect them with the French flag.”¹²² Indeed, Thiers' opposition was based on the perceived impracticality of the Mexican intervention, not the informal-imperial ideas that lay behind it. In conversation with the British economist and lawyer Nassau William Senior, he remarked, “I believe that nothing but European intervention can save civilisation in Mexico. I should be glad to see Europe interfere [...] for a joint purpose and at a joint expense. But that [only] France [...] should send an army and a fleet for the purpose of raising an Austrian Archduke to a Mexican throne, is a madness which has no parallel since Don Quixote undertook the cause of the Princess Autonomasia [sic].”¹²³

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

For Thiers in the River Plate, and Louis-Napoléon in Mexico, one of the key reasons for intervention was economic. It has already be seen that Latin America in general and Mexico specifically were important markets for France in the first decades after independence. Trade with Latin America increased in the following years and the expansion of the French economy between 1815 and 1870 focussed attention on commerce and overseas markets. French economic growth was fairly consistent between 1815 and 1860: industrial output increased on average from 2.5 to 3% annually and total national income increased at roughly 2%.¹²⁴ Furthermore,

although France could not compete with Britain as an industrial nation, it was more industrialised than the majority of its European neighbours in the first half of the nineteenth century: 70% of its exports were manufactured goods and a similar proportion of its imports were primary commodities.¹²⁵ French exports rose steadily throughout the period, but especially under the French Second Empire, where they tripled in value between 1850 and 1870 and the French share of global exports rose to fifteen%.¹²⁶

Thiers linked commerce with military intervention and compared trade outside the French empire to colonial commerce in his arguments for further intervention in the River Plate. “Why”, asking another question to the National Assembly, “do you support the inconveniences of the colonial system and all the difficulties it entails and the [...] enormous expenses [it involves]?” There was only one reason: “restricted shipping (*naviga-tion réservée*)”. Yet, he continued, commerce with Latin America, which did not have this privilege, was more important to France than trade with its colonies.¹²⁷ Thiers’ analysis was correct: taken individually, countries like Mexico only made up a small percentage of French exports. However, as Table 2.1 shows, taken collectively, Latin America was as important a trade destination for French goods as the United States was, and second only to Britain. For the years 1849 to 1860,¹²⁸ French exports to the United States accounted for 13.14% of total exports, and those to Latin American countries were slightly higher at 13.99% (Britain was the highest at 21.16%). Latin America, therefore, had increased its share in the total volume of French export trade, while the United States’ had decreased, compared with the figures from 1827 to 1836. For those who argued, like Thiers, that this trade needed to be developed and protected by force, interventions were a logical, although not inevitable, outcome where threats were perceived.

As will be discussed in Chap. 4, some French policymakers, such as Guizot, Chevalier and Louis-Napoléon, identified US expansion as the greatest threat to Latin American markets. All three saw Mexico as a strategic barrier to prevent US expansion, but it was also a fulcrum to protect and develop markets for French commerce and industry in the region: a gateway to Central and South America. Moreover, it occupied an important place within Chevalier’s Saint-Simonian worldview which saw communications as central to the development of global commerce. Chevalier initially argued for an interoceanic canal through Panama, while Louis-Napoléon identified Nicaragua as the most promising site. The arguments

Table 2.1 Latin American, British and US share of French export trade by value (expressed in millions of francs)

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

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

for both locations outlined the civilisational advances such a project would bring.¹²⁹ The identification of Mexico or Central America as a key point of commerce fits into the general pattern of French imperialism during the period under study, a pattern concerned with developing and protecting French trade across the globe in the cause of civilisation. The semi-official *Le Mémorial diplomatique* noted the continuities between the policies of Louis-Napoléon and Guizot. An editorial argued, quoting Guizot directly, that Rouher’s defence of Louis-Napoléon’s Mexican intervention reminded the author of Guizot: both understood that in order to develop and protect commerce it was necessary for the French navy to have posts in the “great commercial regions” of the world in order to advance French interests.¹³⁰ In this context, where the French Second Empire favoured free trade and concentrated its imperial activities in Egypt, Indochina and Mexico, imperial policy does not seem quite so incoherent or bereft of ideas as some historians have alleged.

France’s ability to act on a global scale was predicated on its powerful navy, which could be deployed across the globe and came second only to Britain in overseas reach.¹³¹ Latin America was a region within which France could send its forces in pursuit of its interests because, far from

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

IMPERIAL CONDOMINIUM: THE ANGLO-FRENCH PARTNERSHIP

Thus, the fourth and final factor that made Latin America a focus for French imperialism was that, from 1830 to 1867, France could prosecute its interests through military intervention in the region without British opposition, and, at times, with active British support. This had not been the case in the 1820s when Britain opposed French plans. The Polignac Memorandum (1823) demonstrated that France remained in a subordinate position to Britain globally; it could only act unilaterally as long as Britain acquiesced. With the fall of Charles X, however, French governments lost any interest in intervening in Latin America to support Ferdinand VII or Bourbon *infantes*. Therefore Britain's principal objection to French policy in Latin America was removed. Moreover, despite the narrative of Anglo-French rivalry, and the habitual upsurge in anti-British public opinion,¹³² French foreign policy after the Bourbon Restoration, and especially from 1840 to 1870, was generally directed by Anglophile statesmen. Guizot and Louis-Napoléon wished for a cordial relationship with Britain that would avoid hostilities.¹³³ Britain never went to war against France after 1815, only with it, notably in the Crimea and the Second Opium War for the period under study.

In Latin America, the relationship varied between formal arrangements and informal cooperation. For example, in the River Plate, a joint expedition blockaded Buenos Aires from 1845 until 1847. Britain was also a participant in the Tripartite Convention of 1861, which was a prelude to the French intervention.¹³⁴ Britain and France cooperated in their attempts to prevent the annexation of Texas (1844–45). The French and British legations frequently worked together in Mexico to place more pressure on the Mexican government to support their nationals' claims, lower tariffs or protest against the imprisonment or murder of their subjects, and they frequently shared information sent from London or Paris. Beyond this open collaboration, Britain allowed France a free hand in Mexico and the River Plate: it did not oppose France's interventions in 1838 and it did nothing to prevent the establishment of the Second Mexican Empire. This partnership was based on a commonality of interests. Britain wanted broadly liberal (on economic and religious matters) and stable governments in Latin

America that encouraged trade, and protected foreign nationals and their business interests. The position of the British government over French intervention throughout the period was that if France could secure these terms for Britain, then so much the better.

Thus the British *chargé d'affaires* to Mexico wrote to Viscount Palmerston as regards the impending 1838 French blockade that "British interests will rather reap advantage than suffer injury" because it would "undeceive the Mexicans as to the power [...] of other countries to enforce the observances of international law and conventions as regards to foreigners."¹³⁵ Britain had numerous grievances against the Mexican government, from the default on its loans raised in the 1820s to the destruction of property of various British mining companies and forced loans on British nationals.¹³⁶ In short, it was hoped that a display of French naval power would compel the Mexican government to treat British interests with more respect in the future, and the British diplomat understood Mexico's refusal to accept France's ultimatum as "a temerity amounting almost to insanity, and ascribable to recklessness inspired by long impunity"¹³⁷; Palmerston agreed with his *chargé d'affaires*.¹³⁸

Palmerston followed the same course in the River Plate, although the length of the French blockade and its consequently greater deleterious effect on British trade meant that he put pressure on the French government to come to terms with Rosas short of their original demands. However, this was not because he disagreed with French naval intervention, but because this policy had failed. In 1839, Palmerston had urged the British minister at Buenos Aires to "persuade [the Argentine government] to accede without further delay to the demands made upon them by the government of France." For Palmerston, French complaints were reasonable and it was necessary to point out to Rosas "how vain it [was] to resist successfully so great a power as France."¹³⁹

In 1843, the then British foreign secretary, Lord Aberdeen, was similarly favourably disposed towards French interests and expressed his surprise that the French had not been more aggressive. He could not "understand why the French have not been more desirous of interference [...] Their interest in the war, from the many thousands of French settled at Montevideo, must be very great".¹⁴⁰ Both Britain and France wished for peace in the region and the independence of Uruguay. Furthermore, French success could lead to the liberalisation of Argentine markets: British policymakers saw France not as a rival, but as a power pursuing a course congruous to Britain's own interests. These shared foreign policy

goals explain the Anglo-French intervention (1845–47) in the River Plate.¹⁴¹

As has been noted, the 1861 Tripartite Convention launched a joint British, French and Spanish expedition to Mexico to demand that Juárez revoke the suspension of foreign payments. Britain refused to militarily support Louis-Napoléon's intervention inland and withdrew its forces as soon as it became clear that French troops would march into the interior.¹⁴² Nonetheless, Palmerston did give unofficial approval. He wrote privately to Lord Russell, then foreign secretary, outlining his view: "we should be glad if Mexico converted into a settled and well-ordered monarchy; and that we should raise no objection to it being guaranteed by France", a position he reiterated a month later.¹⁴³ Palmerston went as far as preventing Russell from sending a dispatch to Austria that discouraged Maximilian accepting the Mexican throne: "as to the question as to whether it would be advantageous or not for us and for Europe generally that Mexico should be governed by monarch instead of being prey to republican anarchy I conceive that there cannot be any doubt Mexican monarchy would be advantageous to all nations having commercial relations with Mexico." As regards France he continued, "I feel no jealousy as to the proceedings of France in Mexico."¹⁴⁴ Just as in 1838 and 1845, Palmerston understood that France would not annex any territory, but it would attempt to impose settlements, or, in the case of Maximilian, create governments, that were compatible with British interests. Where these interests converged, as in Mexico and the River Plate, France and Britain's relationship was one of imperial condominium.

* * *

French imperialism from 1815 to 1870, far from lacking a coherent doctrine, was founded upon freedom of trade and favoured the promotion of French civilisation and the expansion of French commerce through a preference for informal influence over annexation. French observers theorised new relationships with former European colonies in the Americas in light of the collapse of the old colonial system and the apparent success of the British model, which de Pradt and Chateaubriand identified as a paradigm to emulate. French overseas trade remained on an upward trajectory while its navy ensured foreign policy had a global reach. Algeria was seen as an exceptional case, and formal colonialism was to be avoided elsewhere on the globe, but it was a widely held view that French political, economic and cultural influence should be extended by informal means

wherever possible. These basic doctrines were shared in parliament by influential intellectuals and politicians such as Constant, Guizot and Thiers, all of whom considered themselves part of the “liberal project of representative government” supposedly opposed to imperialism. Louis-Napoléon expressed similar views in the 1840s and acted upon them later as emperor. The disagreements between Thiers and Guizot, or Thiers and Louis-Napoléon, were not whether France should be an imperial power, or even how it should be an imperial power, but merely over where it should be one, and what resources should be committed.

That Latin America, and Mexico in particular, was a significant focus of French imperialism is explained by the following four factors. First, it was region of imagined, potential and real wealth. France had long coveted the wealth of Spain’s American colonies and saw their independence as a chance to finally procure it. The disappointing economic performance of the new republics did not deter French observers. Mexico went into prolonged recession after the wars of independence. Precious metal production declined, as did its exports to France, but its famed riches under Spanish rule were reinforced by the popularity of Humboldt’s work and by writers who followed him, particularly Chevalier. It was, therefore, expected that with stability, economic prosperity would return. A comparison was often made with Brazil. French exports to this monarchy had risen from 20.7 million francs in 1849 to 53.4 million francs in 1860, whereas in republican Mexico, torn by civil war, French exports fell from 20.2 million to 12.3 million francs for the same years.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, Mexico’s strategic position across trade routes combined with its proximity to the United States ensured that it was seen as a vital area to prevent US expansion and to protect commerce with Latin America, which, as has been seen, was as important in terms of volume of exports as French trade with the United States.

Second, like many places in the extra-European world, Mexico was understood to be “semi-civilised”; authority was not legitimately constituted. In the civilisational worldview of French policymakers, intervention was a logical choice to shape Mexico in France’s image. However, what set Mexico (and the River Plate) apart (the third factor), was that imperialism could be prosecuted through local elites who sympathised with French political culture and French models of government, thus avoiding colonial entanglements such as Algeria and, it was hoped, advancing French goals relatively inexpensively. Latin America was not outside of civilisation; it was Catholic and its elites were steeped in Spanish political traditions. Many of its elites were admirers of European, particularly

French, intellectuals, and they looked to European political and economic models which influenced their own visions for the emerging nation states.

Political conflicts in Mexico saw competing factions contest power, and this meant that France could support one over another in times of civil war in order to further French ambitions. This is what Chateaubriand and Villèle proposed in the early 1820s, and was the case in 1838–39 and 1862–67. It was also true in the River Plate from 1838 to 1852, where the same strategy of supporting one faction over another was employed to secure French goals. Far from discrediting this policy, many critics concluded that its limited success was a consequence of insufficient forces. In essence, politicians such as a Thiers or Louis-Napoléon agreed with the maxim that the efficiency of informal empire is proportionate to the amount of “wealth and power” committed to it.¹⁴⁶ All French states from the Bourbon Restoration to the Second Empire intervened, or seriously contemplated intervening, in Latin America in support of factions or governments that they believed would further French interests: what would now be termed regime change was at the heart of the French informal-imperial model.

The fourth and final factor was that the French conception of civilisation, and the interventions which were predicated upon it, was congruous with British interests. Furthermore, because French imperialism did not aim at territorial acquisition, Britain did not consider it a strategic threat. France, after 1830, could rely on British acquiescence and, more often than not, open cooperation and support. However, Britain, unlike France, was unwilling to commit forces on the scale of France. Aberdeen made it clear that “if I had twenty-thousand British troops to spare, I would not send one of them [to the River Plate].”¹⁴⁷ Britain disapproved of Rosas’ government, but this was “not sufficient reason to attempt his overthrow.”¹⁴⁸ Similarly, while Palmerston sympathised with the French creation of the Mexican Second Empire, he ruled out any military commitment on the part of Britain to support it.

France, therefore, much more than Britain, intervened in the internal politics of Latin American states in order to further foreign policy goals, develop its commerce and promote French interests. In part, this policy can be explained by the fact that French observers described a system of informal influence they believed Britain to have attained and urged France to secure a similar position. However, unlike Britain, they encouraged non-economic (monarchy, pan-Latinism and shared religion, open and partisan collaboration with local elites and intervention) means alongside

commerce and finance in order to achieve it. This method of informal imperialism required collaborating elites, and the subsequent chapters will explore the economic, political and cultural relationship between France and Mexico which not only gave Louis-Napoléon the opportunity to fashion Mexico in the image of the French Second Empire, but, more importantly, led many members of the Mexican elite to embrace French imperialism as the only means by which Mexico itself could be saved from destruction. The Second Mexican Empire was, of course, a monarchy, and an appreciation of the existence of a shared Franco-Mexican discourse of monarchism, discussed in the next chapter, is essential to understand why supporters of Maximilian did not believe, as Thiers did, that their cause was a quixotic madness.

NOTES

1. Thiers, *Discours*, VIII, 381–82.
2. *Ibid.*, VIII, 354.
3. French involvement in the region is detailed in Jean-David Avenel, *L'affaire du Rio de la Plata: 1838–1852* (Paris: Économica, 1998). McLean discusses French policy insofar as it relates to British involvement in *War, Diplomacy and Informal Empire*. See also Shawcross, “When Montevideo Was French”.
4. ‘The Monroe Doctrine’, in Robert Holden and Eric Zolov (eds.), *Latin America and the United States: A Documentary History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 11–14.
5. Quoted in Robert William Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe, A Survey of Foreign Policy, 1789–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 94.
6. James Polk, ‘Texas, Mexico and Manifest Destiny’, in Holden and Zolov (eds.), *Latin America*, 21–23. Guizot’s speech: ‘Chambres des Députés. Présidence de M. Sauzet. Séance du mardi 10 June’, *Le Moniteur universel*, 11 June 1845, p. 1655. On the Monroe Doctrine and its evolution, see Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011).
7. First in a speech to the Chamber of Peers and then to the Chamber of Deputies, ‘Chambre des Pairs’, *Le Moniteur universel*, 13 January 1846, pp. 73–74, and ‘Chambre des Députés’, *ibid.*, 22 January 1846, pp. 158–63.
8. For an analysis of Mexico’s overseas trade for the period, see Inés Herrera Canales, *El comercio exterior de México, 1821–1875* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1977).

9. Thiers, *Discours*, VIII, 382.
10. The quote is from Alice Conklin and Sarah Fishman, *France and its Empire since 1870* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 16. For the various interpretations see Raoul Giradet, *L'idée coloniale en France* (Paris: La Table ronde 1972), 5–6; Blanchard, *Culture coloniale*, 13–14 and 92; Denise Bouche and Pierre Pluchon, *Histoire de la colonisation française*, 2 vols. (Paris: Fayard, 1991), I, 52; Henri Brunschwig, *Mythes et réalités de l'impérialisme colonial français* (Paris: A. Colin, 1960); Agnes Murphy, *The Ideology of French Imperialism* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1948).
11. Jacques Binoche-Guedra, *La France d'outre-mer, 1815–1962* (Paris: Masson, 1992), 30.
12. Bernard Lauzanne (ed.), *L'Aventure coloniale de la France*, 5 vols. (Paris: Denoël, 1987–97), II, Jean Martin, *L'Empire renaissant, 1789–1870*, 257.
13. Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 1. See also Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003) and Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1999).
14. Todd, 'Transnational Projects', 266.
15. Pitts, *Turn to Empire*, 168–85.
16. See François Véron de Forbonnais, "Colony," 'The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert Collaborative Translation Project', trans. Alyssa Goldstein Sepinwal (Ann Arbor: MPublishing; University of Michigan Library, 2004) <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.did2222.0000.246> accessed 16 July 2017. Originally published as "Colonie," *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, III, 648–51 (Paris, 1753).
17. Guillaume-Thomas Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des européens dans les deux Indes*, 10 vols. (Geneva: n.p., 1781), IV, 201. Diderot contributed to this work and is identified as the author of the quoted section in John Hope Mason and Robert Wokler (eds.), *Political Writings: Denis Diderot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 167.
18. See Condorcet, *Réflexions sur l'esclavage des nègres* (Neufchâtel: Société typographique, 1781).
19. Denis Diderot, *Observations sur le Nakaz*, printed in Paul Vernière (ed.), *Diderot. Œuvres politiques* (Paris: Garnier frères, 1963), 417–18.
20. See Condorcet, *Réflexions sur le commerce des blés* (London: n.p., 1776).

21. On the civilizing mission under the Third Republic see Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895–1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).
22. Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain* (Paris: Agasse, 1794), 332–35.
23. Benjamin Constant, *De l'esprit de conquête et de l'usurpation: dans leurs rapports avec la civilisation européenne*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Le Normant; H. Nicole, 1814).
24. *Ibid.*, vii–viii.
25. Benjamin Constant, *Principes de politiques applicables à tous les gouvernements représentatifs et particulièrement à la constitution actuelle de la France* (Paris: A. Eymery, impr. de Hocquet, 1815), 205–06.
26. Jennifer Pitts, 'Constant's Thoughts on Slavery and Empire', in Helena Rosenblatt (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Constant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 188.
27. The article was first published in *Le Temps* (Paris), 20 June 1830, and is printed in Ephraïm Harpaz (ed.), *Recueil d'articles: [1825–1830]/ Benjamin Constant; texte établi, introduit, annoté et commenté par Ephraïm Harpaz* (Paris: Champion, 1992), 481–83.
28. Jennifer Pitts, 'Republicanism, Liberalism, and Empire', in Sankar Muthu (ed.), *Empire and Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 268.
29. François Guizot, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de mon temps*, 8 vols. (Paris: Michel-Lévy frères, 1858–67), VI, 272–75.
30. 'Chambre des Députés', *Journal des débats*, 1 April 1843, third page.
31. Laura Bornholdt, 'The Abbé de Pradt and the Monroe Doctrine', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 24 (1944), 201–02. A more detailed biography is given in Colonel Daupeyroux, 'La curieuse vie de l'Abbé du Pradt', *Revue des études historiques*, 95 (1929), 279–312.
32. De Pradt was influential in Mexico. Lorenzo de Zavala translated part of his work in 'Traducción. América Española. Mexico', *El Sol* (Mexico City), 18 July 1824, pp. 135–36 and 'Concluye de traducción del artículo de Mr. Prat [sic]', *ibid.*, 19 July 1824, pp. 139–40. Estela Guadalupe Jiménez Codinach argues that de Pradt's ideas affected Mexican independence in *México en 1821: Dominique de Pradt y el Plan de Iguala* (Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1982).
33. Bornholdt, 'Abbé de Pradt', 203–08.
34. In Dominique de Pradt, *Les Trois âges des colonies, ou de leur état passé, présent et à venir*, 2 vols. (Paris: Giguet, 1801–02).
35. Dominique de Pradt, *Des colonies et de la révolution actuelle de l'Amérique*, 2 vols. (Paris: F. Béchét, 1817), i–xxvii; 196–208.
36. *Ibid.*, I, xx–xxiv.
37. Todd, 'Transnational Projects', 278–84.

38. Jean Charles Léonard de Sismondi, *Nouveaux principes d'économie politique, ou De la richesse dans ses rapports avec la population* 2 vols. (Paris: Delauney, 1819), I, 393.
39. François-René de Chateaubriand, *The Congress of Verona: Comprising a Portion of Memoirs of His Own Times*, 2 vols. (London: Richard Bentley, 1838), II, 233.
40. De Pradt, *Des colonies*, I, xviii; 193–94; II, 200; 248–70.
41. François-René de Chateaubriand, *Oeuvres complètes de Chateaubriand*. Vol. VI, *Voyage en Amérique* (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1861), 217.
42. The debates initially appeared in *La Gazette de la France*. The articles have been translated into Spanish and published in Alberto Filippi (ed.), *Bolívar y Europa: en las crónicas, el pensamiento político y la historiografía* (Caracas: Ediciones de la Presidencia de la República, 1986), 288–360.
43. De Pradt, *Des colonies*, I, xvi.
44. See Gilles Harvard and Cécile Vidal, *L'Histoire de l'Amérique française* (Paris: Flammarion, 2006).
45. Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2004), 21.
46. See Sylvia Neely, 'The Politics of Liberty in the Old World and the New: Lafayette's Return to America in 1824', *Journal of the Early Republic*, 6 (1986), 151–71.
47. See Marion Godfroy, *Kourou and the Struggle for a French America* trans. Lan Dill (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), and Emma Rothschild, 'A Horrible Tragedy in the French Atlantic', *Past and Present*, 192 (2006), 67–108.
48. Christophe Belaubre, Jordana Dym and John Savage (eds.), *Napoléon et les Amériques: histoire atlantique et empire napoléonien* (Toulouse: CNRS Université de Toulouse-le Mirail UMR 5136, 2009), especially chs. 7 and 13.
49. Jean-François Brière, 'Le baron Portal et l'indépendance d'Haïti, 1818–1821', *French Colonial History*, 10 (2009), 97–108.
50. Todd, 'Imperial Meridian', 167.
51. For an overview of French interests in Latin America from the sixteenth to early twentieth century, see Christian Buchet (ed.), *La Mer, la France et l'Amérique Latine* (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2006).
52. Adrian Pearce, *British Trade with Spanish America, 1763–1808* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 8–9; Lynch, *Bourbon Spain*, 356.
53. George Verne Blue, 'French Protests against Restrictions on Trade with Spanish America, 1788–1790', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 13 (1933), 336–44.
54. See Carlos Marichal, *Bankruptcy of Empire Mexican Silver and the Wars between Spain, Britain and France, 1760–1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). The international context is also covered in

- Barbara Stein and Stanley Stein's, *Apogee of Empire: Spain and New Spain in the Reign of Charles III, 1759–1789* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2003); *The Edge of Crisis: War and Trade in the Spanish Atlantic, 1789–1808* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2009); and *Crisis in an Atlantic Empire: Spain and New Spain, 1808–1810* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2015). See also John Eliot, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).
55. Stein, *The Edge of Crisis*, 392.
 56. Lynch, *Bourbon Spain*, 394.
 57. Marichal, *Bankruptcy of Empire*, ch. 5.
 58. The classic study of Napoleon's ambitions in Spain is André Fugier, *Napoléon et l'Espagne, 1799–1808* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1930).
 59. Jean-Baptiste de Villèle, *Mémoires et correspondance du Comte de Villèle*, 5 vols. (Paris: Perrin, 1888–90), III, 115 and IV, 488.
 60. Raoul de Cisternes (ed.), *Le duc de Richelieu, son action aux conférences d'Aix la- Chapelle, sa retraite du pouvoir, documents originaux* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1898), 25–28.
 61. Chateaubriand to Louis Justin Marie de Talaru, 29 November 1823 in *The Congress of Verona*, 300.
 62. 'Rapport a S. E. le Ministre de la Marine et des colonies de la mission a St. Domingue de M. le Bon. De Mackau', AAE, [C]orrespondance [P]olitique, Haiti, 2.
 63. David Todd, 'Republican Capitalism: The Political Economy of French Capital Exports in the Nineteenth Century', 33. Paper shared at 'France and its Empire in the Global Economy, 1815–1939' workshop, 10 June 2015, Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge.
 64. See William Spence Robertson, *France and Latin-American Independence* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1939). France's diplomatic relations with Mexico are discussed in Jacques Penot, *Les relations entre la France et le Mexique de 1808 à 1840: un Chapitre d'histoire écrit par les marins et diplomates français, thèse* (Lille: Atelier Reproduction des Thèses, Université Lille III, 1976) and Barker, *The French Experience in Mexico*. Latin American independence is placed in its international context by Gabriel Paquette, 'The Dissolution of the Spanish Atlantic Monarchy', *The Historical Journal*, 52 (2009), 175–212, and Rafe Blaufarb, 'The Western question', 742–63.
 65. 'Rapport sur les missions projetées dans les amériques Espagnoles', dated March 1822 (with a margin note stating that instructions were extracted from the report and sent to agents on 10 March 1822). AAE, [A]ffaires [D]iverse [P]olitiques 46/1.
 66. 'Question dans l'intérêt de la France et des Amériques', 25 May 1825, AAE, MD Amérique, 36.

67. 'Instructions pour Monsieur Charles Bresson, chargé par le Roi d'une mission en Amérique', AAE, MD Amérique, 36.
68. Not including the French Caribbean colonies.
69. *Tableau décennal du commerce de la France avec ses colonies et les puissances étrangères, publiée par l'Administration des Douanes, 1827 à 1836* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1838), XLII–XLIII. Jacques Penot charts the expansion of French trade with Mexico in the immediate years after independence, 'L'expansion commerciale française au Mexique et les causes du conflit franco-mexicain de 1838–1839', *Bulletin Hispanique*, 75 (1973), 169–201.
70. *Tableau décennal 1827 à 1836*, XLVI–XLVIII.
71. Jacques Galos to 'Messieurs les Membres Composant la Chambre de Commerce de Bordeaux', 19 February 1825; Tomás Murphy Sr to Vicente Rocafuerte, 20 June 1826, AHGE, Francia, L. 1; e. 1.
72. 'Instructions pour Monsieur Adrien Cochelet', 15 January 1829, AAE, CP Mexique, 4.
73. On bimetallism, see Flandreau, *The Glitter of Gold*.
74. Alexander von Humboldt and Aimé Bonpland, *Essai politique sur le royaume de la Nouvelle-Espagne*, 2 vols. (Paris: F. Schoell, 1811).
75. Michel Chevalier, *Des mines d'argent et d'or du Nouveau-monde* (Paris: Au bureau de la Revue des deux mondes, 1846), 75.
76. Jaime Rodríguez, 'La crisis de México en el siglo XIX', *Estudios de Historia Moderna y Contemporánea de México*, 10 (1986), 85–107.
77. Beltrami, *Le Mexique*, 2 vols. (Paris: Crevot, 1830), I, 332; Mathieu de Fossey, *Le Mexique* (Paris: H. Plon, 1857), 429; Hippolyte Du Pasquier de Dommartin, *Les États-Unis et le Mexique. L'intérêt européen dans l'Amérique du Nord* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1852), 51–54; Martin to La Ferronnays, 24 July 1828, AAE, CP Mexique, 4; 'Note de Monsieur Gabriac sur les mines du Mexique'; 'Note sur la Sonora par Eugène du Moflas', AAE, MD Mexique, 10.
78. See Dugast, *La tentation mexicaine*, I, chs. 5 and 6.
79. Jean Meyer, 'Les Français au Mexique au XIXe siècle', *Cahiers des Amériques latines*, 9–10 (1974), 51; Barker, *French Experience in Mexico*, 123–30.
80. Several of them published works on Mexico, such as Ancharsis Brissot, *Voyage au Guazacoalcos, aux Antilles et aux États-Unis* (Paris: A. Bertrand, 1837) and Fossey, *Le Mexique*. These French communities, as well as the influence and impact of French culture and science in Mexico, are explored in Javier Perez Siller, David Skerit and Chantai Cramaussel (eds.), *México Francia: Memoria de una sensibilidad común; siglos XIX–XX*, 4 vols. (Mexico: Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla; San Luis Potosí: Colegio de San Luis; México, D.F., CEMCA, 1998–2008).

81. Benjamin Disraeli, *The Present State of Mexico, as Detailed in a Report ... to the ... Congress by the Secretary of State for the Home Department and Foreign Affairs, with Notes, and a Memoir of don Lucas Alaman* (London: John Murray, 1825), 44; Charlotte Kellner, *Alexander von Humboldt* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 107–08; Michael Costeloe, *Bubbles and Bonanzas: British Investors and Investments in Mexico, 1821–1860* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2011), 58.
82. Schmaltz to Fleury, 16 June 1824, AAE, AD Mexique, 1.
83. Chateaubriand, *Congress of Verona*, 226–29.
84. The limited influence the British loans had on the Mexican government is explored in Michael Costeloe, *Bonds and Bondholders: British Investors and Mexico's Foreign Debt, 1824–1888* (Westport: Praeger, 2003).
85. Schmaltz to Fleury, 16 June 1824, AAE, AD Mexique, 1.
86. 'Question dans l'intérêt de la France et des Amériques', 25 May 1825, AAE, MD Amérique, 36.
87. Molé to Deffaudis, 10 November 1837 and Deffaudis to Molé, 6 May 1838, AAE, CP Mexique, 12; Molé to Roger, 7 July, 12 August, 22 November 1837, CP Argentine, 8.
88. A naval demonstration before Cartagena had also been successful. See William Spence Robertson, 'An Early Threat of Intervention in South America', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 23 (1943), 611–31. Baron Deffaudis hoped that this event would have a "salutary" effect on Mexico. Deffaudis to Broglie, 20 April 1834, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.
89. Molé to Baudin, 23 August 1838, AAE, CP Mexique, 14.
90. 'France, Paris, 30 juillet', *Journal des débats*, 31 July 1838, front page.
91. On Guizot's liberalism and its political context, see Michael Drolet, 'Carrying the Banner of the Bourgeoisie: Democracy, Self and the Philosophical Foundations to François Guizot's Historical and Political Thought', *History of Political Thought*, 32 (2011), 645–90; Aurelian Craiutu, *Liberalism under Siege: The Political Thought of the French Doctrinaires* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2003); Marina Valensise (ed.), *François Guizot et la culture politique de son temps* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991); Pierre Rosanvallon, *Le Moment Guizot* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985).
92. François Guizot, *Cours d'histoire moderne: histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe depuis la chute de l'empire romain jusqu'à la Révolution française* (Paris: Pichon et Didier, 1828), 6–9.
93. On the relationship between the discourse of civilisation and imperialism see Brett Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization: The Evolution of an Imperial Idea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), and Duncan Bell (ed.), *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

94. 'France, Paris, 30 juillet', *Journal des débats*, 31 July 1838, front page.
95. Deffaudis to de Broglie, 15 July 1833, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.
96. Deffaudis to Broglie, 2 June 1836, AAE, CP Mexique, 10.
97. Deffaudis to Thiers, 23 July 1836, AAE, CP Mexique, 6; Deffaudis to Molé, 25 November 1837, AAE, CP Mexique, 12.
98. Baudin to Molé, 19 March 1839, AAE, CP Mexique, 16; De Cyprey to Thiers, 13 July 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19.
99. Deffaudis to Thiers, 24 September 1836, CP Mexique, 12.
100. Guizot to Saint Aulaire, 26 October 1844, AAE, CP Mexique, 24.
101. 'France, Paris, 30 juillet', *Journal des débats*, 31 July 1838, front page.
102. 'Chambre des Députés. Présidence de M. Sauzet. Séance du mardi 25 juin', *Le Moniteur universel*, 26 June 1839, p. 1093.
103. William Katra, *The Argentine Generation of 1837: Echeverría, Alberdi, Sarmiento, Mitre* (London: Associated University Presses, 1996); Daniel Schwartz, 'Juan Bautista Alberdi and the Mutation of French Doctrinaire Liberalism in Argentina', *History of Political Thought*, 30 (2009), 140–65.
104. 'Chambre des Pairs', *Le Moniteur universel*, 9 February 1841, pp. 515–16.
105. 'Chambre des Pairs', *Le Moniteur universel*, 9 February, 1841, p. 515.
106. Guizot to Saint Aulaire, 21 January 1845, AAE, CP Argentine, 19.
107. Britain unilaterally raised its blockade in 1847. France continued until 1848.
108. José Luis Mora to Gomez Farías, 20 May 1845, [B]enson [L]atin [A]merican [C]ollection, The University of Texas at Austin, Valentín Gómez Farías collection.
109. Cochelet to foreign minister, 1 January 1832, AAE, CP Mexique, 7.
110. Baron Jean-Baptiste Louis Gros to Count Horace François Bastien Sébastiani de La Porta, 30 August 1832. For similar views see Gros to Sébastiani, 13 February, 5 April, 5 June 1832, AAE, CP Mexique, 7.
111. Sébastiani to Baron Gros, 4 March 1832. Tornel was pleased by the July Revolution. Tornel to Alamán, 19 and 28 September 1830, AHGE, Estados Unidos, L. 17; e.1. Alamán welcomed it insofar as it led to French recognition of Mexico and gave no indication of hostility towards it in his diplomatic correspondence. Alamán to Murphy, 29 September and 27 October 1830, Francia, L. 8; e. 57, and L. 9; e. 73.
112. Quote from Deffaudis to Molé, 24 February 1837, AAE, CP Mexique, 11. See also Deffaudis to foreign minister, 6 July, 1 and 19 October, 1836, AAE, CP Mexique, 10; Deffaudis to Molé, 12 January and 24 February 1837, CP Mexique, 11.
113. Baudin to José Urrea, 22 December, Urrea to Baudin, 27 December 1838, José Antonio Mejía to Baudin, 6 January, Baudin to Urrea and Mejía, 15 January, Baudin to Mejía, 20 January, Baudin to Molé 15

- February, Baudin to Urrea, 16 February 1839, AAE, CP Mexique, 15; Baudin to Molé, 19 March, 'Note, article pour le Moniteur sur l'affaire du Mexique', Baudin to Soult, 27 November 1839, AAE CP Mexique, 16.
114. Eugène Massin in Henri Blanchard and Adrien Dauzats, *San-Juan de Ulúa, ou Relation de l'expédition française au Mexique, sous les ordres de M. le contre-amiral Baudin, par MM. P. Blanchard et A. Dauzats. Suivi de notes et documents et d'un aperçu général sur l'état actuel du Texas, par M. E. Maissin...* Publié par ordre du roi, sous les auspices de M. le baron Tupinier, alors ministre de la Marine (Paris: Gide, 1839), 457–62.
 115. See especially his speeches on 29 and 31 May 1844, and 5 January 1850. Thiers, *Discours*, VI, 349–98 and 399–444; VIII, 327–84.
 116. Antoine-Louis Deffaudis, *Questions diplomatiques et particulièrement des travaux et de l'organisation du Ministère des affaires étrangères* (Paris: Goujon et Milon, 1849), 78.
 117. Alexandre Dumas, *Montevideo, ou Une nouvelle Troie* (Paris: N. Chaix, 1850), 159.
 118. Charles Lefèvre de Bécourt, 'Des Rapports de la France et de L'Europe avec L'Amérique du Sud' *Revue des deux mondes*, 15 (1838), 54–69.
 119. Louis-Napoléon, 'Nos Colonies dans l'océan pacifique' first published in *Progrès du Pas-du-Calais*, 14 June 1841. Republished in *Oeuvres de Napoléon III*, 5 vols. (Paris: Amyot, 1854–69), II, 3–8.
 120. Louis-Napoléon was supposedly offered the presidency of Ecuador in 1844. In 1859, and again in 1862, the idea of a French protectorate over Ecuador was discussed. Mark van Aken, *King of the Night: Juan José Flores and Ecuador, 1824–1864* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 180. On French involvement in Central America see Thomas Schoonover, *The French in Central America: Culture and Commerce, 1820–1930* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2000); Edward Richards, 'Louis Napoleon and Central America', *Journal of Modern History*, 34 (1962), 178–84.
 121. Louis-Napoléon, 'Vielle histoire toujours nouvelle' first published in *Progrès du Pas-du-Calais*, 3 August 1844. Republished in *Oeuvres de Napoléon III*, II, 35–41.
 122. 'Corps législatif', *Le Moniteur universel*, 28 January 1864, p. 147.
 123. Nassau William Senior, *Conversations with Distinguished Persons, During the Second Empire, from 1860 to 1863*, 2 vols. (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1880), II, 113.
 124. Robert Tombs, *France 1814–1914* (London: Addison Wesley Longman, 1996), 151.
 125. Jean-Marcel Jeanneney and Élisabeth Barbier-Jeanneney, *Les économies occidentales du XIXe siècle à nos jours* (Paris: Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1985), 222.
 126. Todd, 'Imperial Meridian', 178–79.

127. Thiers, *Discours*, VIII, 341–42.
128. These years were selected because the revolution of 1848 makes this an anomalous year for French commerce, and after 1860 the US Civil War resulted in a reduction of its international trade. Between 1861 and 1867, Latin America's share of the total volume of French imports and exports increased. The statistics are taken annually from *Annuaire de l'économie politique et de la statistique* (Paris: H. Guillemin & Cie, 1847–99) from the issues 1848 to 1869. By Latin America, it is meant all countries listed in the journal's tables that are part of this area today, which are the following (these names are those used by the *Annuaire* translated into English—not the present day equivalents): Brazil; Mexico; Peru; Chile; the River Plate; Uruguay; New Granada; Venezuela; Cayenne/(later) French Guiana; Haiti; Guatemala; Ecuador; Bolivia; Martinique; Guadeloupe; and Dutch, Spanish and Danish Possessions in the Americas (three separate categories).
129. Michel Chevalier, *L'Isthme de Panama, examen historique et géographique des différentes directions suivant lesquelles on pourrait le percer et des moyens à y employer, suivi d'un aperçu sur l'isthme de Suez* (Paris: C. Gosselin, 1844); Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, *Canal of Nicaragua, or a Project to Connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans by Means of a Canal* (London: Mills and Son, 1846).
130. 'Politique—Bulletin de la semaine', *Le Mémorial diplomatique*, pp. 65–66.
131. Hamilton, *Anglo-French Naval Rivalry*, 36–37.
132. Robert Tombs, *That Sweet Enemy: The French and the British from the Sun King to the Present* (London: Pimlico, 2007), chs. 7 and 8.
133. See Roger Bullen, *Guizot, Palmerston and the Breakdown of the Entente Cordiale* (London: Athlone Press, 1974) and Price, *The French Second Empire*, ch. 13.
134. See Bock, *Prelude to Tragedy*.
135. Ashburnham to Palmerston, 30 November 1837, disp., 63 marked 'confidential', FO 50/107.
136. Examples are numerous, see Wellington to Pakenham, 17 March 1835, FO 50/90; Pakenham to Wellington, 8 March 1835, disp. 10; FO 50/91 and Palmerston to Pakenham, 15 November 1836, disp., 26, FO 50/97.
137. Ashburnham to Palmerston, 7 November 1837, disp., 57, FO 50/107.
138. Palmerston to Ashburnham, 15 September 1838, disp., 35, FO 50/112.
139. Palmerston to Mandeville, 6 February 1839, FO 6/68.
140. Aberdeen to Peel, 27 November 1843, British Library, Peel Papers, Add MS 40454.
141. British interests in the River Plate are outlined in James Murray, 'Memorandum on British Trade', 31 December 1841, FO 97/284.
142. Russell to Wyke, 30 April 1862, disp., 52, FO 50/363.

143. Palmerston to Russell, 13 August 1863; Palmerston to Russell, 11 September 1863, PRO 30/22/22.
144. Palmerston to Russell, 26 September 1863, PRO 30/22/22.
145. Joseph Garnier and Guillaumin (eds.), *Annuaire de l'économie politique et de la statistique pour 1851*, 58; and Block and Guillaumin (eds.), *Annuaire [...] pour, 1862*, 68.
146. Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations', 122.
147. Aberdeen to Ouseley, 8 April 1846, *Aberdeen Papers*, Add MS 43201.
148. Aberdeen to Ouseley, 4 February 1848, *Aberdeen Papers*, Add MS 43201.

Monarchy and the Search for Order in Mexico

“The monarchical emancipation of the Spanish colonies by the generous influence of the eldest son of the Bourbons would have raised France to the highest degree of prosperity and glory. Such was the last dream of my mature years; I believed myself in America, but I awoke in Europe.”¹ These were the melancholic reminiscences of Chateaubriand, who, as foreign minister from December 1822 to August 1824 had tried to convince Ferdinand VII to allow Spanish princes to rule independent kingdoms carved out of Spain’s empire. Forty-three years later, after the execution of the Emperor Maximilian, one of the most ardent supporters of monarchy in Mexico, José Manuel Hidalgo y Esnaurrizar, wrote: “[a] great enterprise has failed. But the catastrophe with which it ended does nothing to undermine the greatness of the [monarchical] system.”² The two quotes are emblematic of the reason that the idea of monarchy in Mexico remained a possibility throughout the period 1820–67. First, many French observers saw in the venture a means of increasing French power, prestige and wealth. Second, the idea was not a French invention, but a joint one some in Mexico shared. And Hidalgo’s conclusion, that monarchy remained theoretically the best form of government for Mexico, despite its disastrous denouement in 1867, is illustrative of one of the central features of support for monarchy in Mexico: the sheer persistence of this idea.

After the fall of Iturbide, monarchy was only ever supported by a small section of the Mexican elite. As the foundation of a kingdom in Mexico lay at the heart of the French intervention in Mexico, this fact has been cited as yet more proof of Louis-Napoléon's delusions.³ However, rather than dismissing monarchism in Mexico as inconsequential because it lacked widespread support, it may be more helpful to ask: Why did monarchy persist in the minds of some influential Mexican politicians as the solution to the problems faced by Mexico after independence? After all, support for monarchy as a political system within which to achieve independence or autonomy from Spain was common to all Latin American countries; however, certainly by the 1860s, no other nation had politicians lobbying European governments for spare princes and princesses to replace republics with empires. Mexico was unique amongst all of Spain's former colonies in the Americas in that it began independent life as an empire, but support for monarchy did not end with this empire: one of Mexico's foremost intellectuals, Alamán, tried to found a monarchy in 1846; its most powerful caudillo, Santa Anna, sounded out European courts over the same possibility in 1854 while he was president; and in 1863, a former presidential candidate and a leading Mexican diplomat, Juan Nepomuceno Almonte, headed a regency government in preparation for the Second Mexican Empire, which he, amongst others, had called for.

It was not, then, merely "dreamers" like Chateaubriand or Louis-Napoléon who believed that monarchy was the system of government best suited to Mexico, but an important, if small, section of the country's own elite. Monarchy, then, clearly mattered to some people. But the question remains: Why? The defeat of the Mexican Second Empire and the triumph of liberalism resulted in the reification of federal republicanism and obscured alternative political visions for the Mexican nation. However, as O'Gorman has argued, monarchy remained a viable option for political elites throughout the period 1820–67.⁴ Nonetheless, it was not the case that there was a monarchist party which consistently advocated for a monarchy throughout the period. Rather, monarchy was embraced at different times and by different people from different political backgrounds. In order to help explain why this was the case, the section entitled "The First Mexican Empire and the Legacy of Iturbide" of this chapter will address the legacy of the First Mexican Empire and the anti-federal and anti-republican arguments made in the early 1820s. The section entitled "The Development of Monarchist Thought in Mexico after 1824" explores the endurance of these ideas in the 1830s, the attempts of conservative

politicians to adapt monarchical constitutional theory within a republican framework and then then monarchical proposals, influenced by French political culture and the model of the July Monarchy, made in 1840 by the Mexican politician José María Gutiérrez de Estrada.

The last section explores European, especially French, views on monarchy and how they were shaped by events across the Atlantic. As will be discussed, the end of the First Mexican Empire did not discredit the idea of monarchy in Mexico, merely the idea that a Mexican could be a monarch. Therefore monarchism in Mexico had an inherently transnational dimension: In order to establish an independent Mexican monarchy, a European prince had to be found willing to take the throne, which in turn required a minimum level of European support. At the very least, a monarchy in Mexico would need the acceptance of whatever ruling house from which the monarch was chosen and the consent of the major maritime powers of Europe. Mexican monarchists procured this diplomatic and material assistance twice (once in 1845–46 and again with the second French intervention). This was possible because monarchism in Mexico had evolved as a shared and mutually constituted transnational discourse with contributions from Mexican and European, particularly French, thinkers. Indeed, the idea that the political problems of Latin American states stemmed from a renunciation of monarchical principles and the adoption of overly democratic republicanism in nations that were not ready for such systems was widely held in monarchical Britain, Spain and France. Finally, a monarchy in Mexico was understood in strategic and imperial terms: it would further the interests and influence of the European power that created it.

THE FIRST MEXICAN EMPIRE AND THE LEGACY OF ITURBIDE

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

In order to appreciate what Alamán meant, it is worth recalling that Mexico's struggle for independence was fractious, often contradictory, and resistant to simple schematic interpretation.⁷ The insurgent movement led by Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, a parish priest who issued the *Grito de Dolores* on 16 September 1810, was seen by much of the creole elite as an insurrection dangerous to social order and thus rallied behind the Spanish government to defeat it. Hidalgo was executed in 1811, but the revolt continued under the leadership of another priest, José María Morelos, who was executed in 1815. Iturbide, a creole officer in the Spanish royal army, fought against Hidalgo and Morelos because, he argued, they were "a lawless band who harassed the country", not in order to win independence but "to exterminate all the Europeans, to destroy their possessions, and to trample on the laws of war, humanity and religion",⁸ a view echoed by Alamán.⁹

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

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

kingdom. These promises would be upheld by the Army of the Three Guarantees, led by Iturbide, which entered Mexico City on 27 September 1821.¹¹ Mexico thus achieved independence as a monarchy, albeit without a monarch because Ferdinand VII rejected the Plan.

The solution of Iturbide and his supporters was that he become emperor; he was crowned Emperor of Mexico on 21 July 1822. This has often been viewed as a conservative path to independence: “an act of counterrevolution”.¹² However, Iturbide’s nomination as emperor had been proposed by Gomez Farías, who went on to become the leader of the *puro* wing of liberalism in Mexico, and was initially supported by Zavala, later one of the most radical liberals of his generation. In short, the First Mexican Empire was neither liberal nor conservative, but rather represented a brief moment of consensus in Mexican politics, which was in favour of an autonomous or independent Mexico governed by a constitutional monarch. As Zavala later wrote, “Republican ideas were in their infancy: all seemed content with a constitutional monarchy”. Zavala concluded that he did not know at the time “what was the [form of government] best suited to a new nation that neither had republican nor monarchical habits. All were to be trials and experiments until a form was found suitable [...] to the needs of the nation.”¹³

Indeed opposition to the First Mexican Empire initially came not from liberals but from conservative politicians, known at the time as Bourbonists.¹⁴ This group included men such as Alamán and Francisco Sánchez de Tagle, an influential politician and lawyer as well as a former deputy to the Spanish Cortes, and centred around José María Fagoaga, whose family was one of the wealthiest and most influential in Mexico. Bourbonists did not support Iturbide’s assumption of the crown and viewed this ‘usurpation’ as one of the causes of his downfall. Instead of a Mexican emperor, they favoured a Spanish prince.¹⁵ In the Spanish parliament, they had put forward their proposal for greater American autonomy. The plan divided Spanish America into three kingdoms (New Spain and Guatemala; New Granada; and Peru, Chile and Buenos Aires), and called for a Spanish *infante*, or someone appointed by Ferdinand VII, to rule them while retaining close ties to Spain. Essentially, it was an argument for a commonwealth and Canada’s relationship with Britain was cited as an example.¹⁶

Bourbonists thus initially supported the Plan of Iguala, which called for exactly this, but it did not follow that they supported Iturbide once he became emperor. For conservative Mexican politicians and intellectuals,

the legacy of the First Mexican Empire was threefold. First, Iturbide's entry at the head of the Army of Three Guarantees on 27 September 1821 provided a good alternative date for the national commemoration for independence in contradistinction to the *Grito de Dolores* of 16 September 1810. The former signified ordered transition while the latter represented social revolution.¹⁷ Second, the Plan of Iguala was upheld as the foundational document upon which Mexican independence should have been constituted. This plan made no reference to a Mexican empire under a Mexican emperor. Rather, monarchy should have been established under a European prince. The plan had therefore been corrupted and worse, third, its non-fulfilment resulted in the adoption of a federal republican constitution in 1824, a system which conservatives understood as inimical to Mexico's political traditions and a root cause of subsequent political instability. In short, Iturbide was a figurehead for the Plan of Iguala, who, once he became emperor, was a traitor to his own plan and responsible for the failure of the First Mexican Empire. Moreover, the ideal of constitutional monarchy under a European ruler was untarnished because it had never been implemented.

This legacy meant that the federal and republican Constitution of 1824 was viewed with suspicion by former Bourbonists, suspicions which were increased because of the association of the new constitution with the model of the United States. There were good historical reasons as to why a federal republic emerged from the debris of Iturbide's empire.¹⁸ And it has been shown that the intellectual genealogy of the Mexican 1824 Constitution was primarily the Spanish Constitution of 1812 rather than that of the United States.¹⁹ It has been further argued that Mexicans, such as Alamán, who claimed the 1824 Constitution was in part based on the US one, were politically motivated and distorted the facts to undermine a system they criticised.²⁰ However, while much of the Constitution of 1824 was indeed transcribed from the Spanish Constitution of 1812, article four certainly was not derived from this centralist, monarchical document: "The Mexican nation adopts for its government a popular, representative and federal republic."²¹ Therefore, for opponents of the Constitution of 1824, the classical Spanish liberal tradition which inspired the document was somewhat irrelevant because the principal innovations were republicanism and federalism. The newspaper *El Federalista* may have carried histories of German, Swiss and Dutch federalism,²² but there was only one model in the Americas that had successfully enacted this form of government: the United States. And it was not merely conservative critics who

made the link between US federal republicanism and the 1824 Constitution, it was one made by its supporters as well. It was the US model that one of Mexico's first republicans, Servando Teresa de Mier, pointed towards.²³

Mexico may have become a federal republic because of the failure of monarchy combined with long-term historical factors that favoured federalism over centralism, rather than because of deliberate imitation of the United States, but this conclusion of twentieth-century historians was not the analysis of Mexican critics in the 1820s. This is important because the conviction that federal republicanism was at best a pale imitation of the US Constitution, or, at worst, a deliberate imposition by Washington—and, either way, entirely unsuited to Mexico—lay at the heart of conservative attacks on Mexican liberals and their constitutional ideas throughout the period 1820–67. One of the earliest proponents of this argument was the newspaper *El Sol*, which was the principal paper of the Bourbonists from 1821 to 1822. It ceased publication during the empire of Iturbide and was refounded in 1823 as the organ of conservative elements of Mexican politics. Alongside its rival, *El Aguila Mexicana*, it was the most important and influential daily in Mexico City in the 1820s.²⁴ The anti-federal and anti-republican arguments made in *El Sol* are worth discussing in detail because they laid out the central tenets of later conservative polemics against these systems.

Long before a federal republic was widely discussed in public discourse as a possibility, *El Sol* ran a series of articles between 1821 and 1822 analysing the best form of government for Mexico. According to the editorials of the paper, and echoing the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the three key concerns for Mexico were “liberty, property and security”,²⁵ which were best protected under a “moderate monarchy” with a “liberal constitution”.²⁶ The paper did not argue that federal republicanism was an objectively bad form of government, merely that it was ill-suited to Mexico's political traditions and current needs. Sovereignty lay in the nation itself, and following the seventeenth-century English thinker Algernon Sidney, the paper argued that the nation had the right to constitute whatever government was most appropriate.²⁷ It was, therefore, necessary to examine different types of political organisation past and present.

All governments, the paper argued, had a propensity to descend into tyranny: people had “sometimes been victims of monarchical tyranny” and other times of “democracy”. However, most recent republics had collapsed into the “bloodiest anarchy” because it was necessary that people

be “virtuous and obedient to the laws by conviction”, otherwise “passions, pride and avarice” were unleashed and “the thirst for public positions, particularly those of high government [...] created envy”. The result was civil war, first motivated by “rancour”, but then systematised into party political conflict. Monarchies, too, had resulted in “human misery” and “seas of blood” because invariably the monarch believed that the people existed for the dynasty and not the dynasty for the people.

The solution was a “mixed constitution” which equated to “moderate constitutional monarchy”. Under this government, the people were sovereign, the monarch depended on the people and enacted their laws, which were dictated by their representatives (ministers). The advantage of monarchy over a republic lay in the fact that it was harder for it to degenerate into despotism, a point which the example of England proved. Moreover, “what is constitutional government”, asked the paper rhetorically, “but a republic in fact if not in name?” The only difference was that under a monarchy the executive power was called a “king” or an “emperor” and, in a republic, “president”. However, while the former governed in perpetuity because of the hereditary principle, under the latter the head of state remained for no longer than the laws allowed, and in this requirement lay the seeds of a republic’s destruction: the problem of succession.²⁸ Central to the Bourbonist argument was that republics led to civil conflict, as had happened in France from 1792, and the result would inevitably be in Mexico what it had been there under Napoleon Bonaparte—military tyranny.²⁹

Constitutional monarchy, therefore, gave inherent stability to a polity, but it was not merely the perfection of the form which underpinned the argument. Unlike the United States, Mexico’s historical experience made republicanism impossible. In response to a federalist republican pamphlet,³⁰ the paper argued that “the enlightenment and social virtues necessary for a federal republic [...] do not exist in the Mexican nation.” Therefore Mexico would be best governed under a “moderate monarchy”.³¹ The paper was willing to admit that in its perfect, theoretical or “pure” form, republican government was the most desirable. But, “where has there ever existed a people in which individuals sacrifice their private interests to the common good, the laws are perfect, their execution infallible, their application impartial, and those in power as faithful and impassive as the laws?” Such a republic, “more than Platonic”, was to be desired, but it had never existed, nor could it ever exist. In reality, republics were not “pure”, but mixed. Citing most European republics from ancient

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

The answer was, predictably, no. A federal republic was deemed to be impossible in Mexico: “the reasons are so obvious, clear, simple and powerful [that] they are self-evident”. Just in case they were not as obvious to the reader as to the author, the editorial outlined them. First and foremost, in order to adopt the US Constitution it would be necessary to divide Mexico into small, sovereign states, each with their own constitution, and then form a union to create a national polity. For *El Sol* such an idea was absurd. In the United States, the division had arisen naturally out of historical circumstances—namely the thirteen colonies had become states. In contrast, Mexico was a homogenous political entity and “it is chimerical and impossible to realise the idea of a republic in this Empire with the [US] constitution”.³² To those who argued for a centralised republic, the editorial stated that the US Constitution was inherently federal.

The newspaper’s second argument against republicanism was that Mexico was not ready to go straight from absolute monarchy to a representative republic with a wide franchise. A year and a half of imperfect representative government was not enough to erase the habits, interests and opinions formed over many centuries; the stroke of a pen could not transform the traditions of an entire nation. Third, the paper maintained that Mexico lacked anyone of the stature of Washington, Jefferson or Adams to put at the head of government.

The paper’s fourth and final point was that Mexico had nothing to gain from making the change from a republic to a monarchy, but much to lose. It would make “liberal institutions unstable”, the existence of government “precarious”, unleash civil war and ensure the return of “despotism”. The “hereditary throne” was the “cornerstone” of a “great nation”. Countries that went from monarchies to republics removed this cornerstone and saw the rest of the edifice collapse. The editorial stated that for a monarchical nation to proclaim a republic was the same as proclaiming “social dissolution”. The argument was that without the legitimating force of monarchy, ambitious men would contend for supreme power and there would be “no order, no government, no society”. Constitutional monarchy was to the

benefit of order; it gave “stability, consistency and firmness”. Those who looked to the United States were mistaken, as its example was not applicable. Instead, they should look to the French Revolution if they wanted to know what would happen in Mexico: the “so-called republic will be a true anarchy”.³³

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

The direction of Mexican politics after 1824 did little to persuade those who supported the arguments of *El Sol* outlined above as to the merits of federal republicanism. In the mid-1820s, two factions developed in Mexican politics, the *yorkinos* and the *escoceses*, which were formed around Masonic lodges from which the groups derived their name. Broadly, the *escoceses* attracted conservative members of the elite, while the *yorkinos* appealed to more radical, liberal and popular thinkers, such as Zavala, who were often not from the upper echelons of Mexico’s elite.³⁴ This group had been formed with the encouragement of the first US minister to Mexico, Joel Poinsett. *Yorkinos* gained the upper hand in Mexican politics, although they split between radicals and moderates in 1827. This division cost the former’s candidate for the presidency, Vicente Guerrero, the election, but these *pueros* brought Guerrero to power through a revolt against the legitimately elected president. They advocated and enacted popular policies such as the expulsion of Spaniards,³⁵ were more sympathetic to the United States than to Europe and were generally democrats and federalists. The *escoceses* were more pro-Spanish and European and could be categorised as conservative liberals, although not on religious matters. Members of this group included former Bourbonists such as Alamán, José María Fagoaga and Francisco Sánchez de Tagle.³⁶

These lodges were loose political groupings and members changed political opinions over time; there was no straight path from the *escoceses* to the later Conservative Party. Nonetheless, the actions of the *yorkinos*—their revolt against the elected president, the expulsion of the Spaniards and, above all, their association with the United States—lived long in the memories of those who opposed them. Poinsett’s role in setting up the

yorkinos and his close ties with them fuelled the suspicion that federal republicanism was an alien imposition. Indeed, Julien Schmaltz, an agent of the French government sent to Mexico, who was close to the leading members of the Bourbonist party, wrote in May 1824 that Miguel Ramos Arizpe, who played a key role in drafting the Mexican Constitution of 1824, had had federalism “inculcated in him by an American doctor [Poinsett], who [...] is the true author of the constitutional plan” with the result that US institutions would be imposed on Mexico.³⁷ The French diplomatic agent in conjunction with his Mexican *escoceses* friends described a political divide that played out in the sphere of international rivalry between a federal republican United States and monarchical Europe.

This interpretation was exacerbated as Poinsett became a target of anti-federal republican criticism. He took a partisan interest in Mexican politics, particularly the struggle between the two Masonic lodges. Like his Mexican opponents, and Schmaltz, Poinsett cast the conflict as an international one, in which he had to participate because Britain had aligned itself with the “aristocratic and monarchical party [the *escoceses*]” and thus he was compelled to “seek friends” amongst the “democrats” in order to “sustain the institutions of [Mexico]”. He claimed his policy was successful in promoting the interests of the United States.³⁸

Poinsett, therefore, interfered in Mexican politics in order to pursue what he understood to be US national interests. The significance of this lies in the fact that the association of the *yorkinos* with Poinsett fuelled conservative suspicions of US attitudes towards Mexico more generally and thus formed the basis of an anti-American discourse that was reinforced by US expansion (discussed in Chaps. 4 and 5), but existed independently of it. This provided an additional and powerful rationale for conservative politicians to reject what they understood as US-style federal republicanism and look for alternative models influenced by European thought and examples.

Poinsett was eventually recalled by Washington at the insistence of the Mexican government, but he remained the *bête noire* of conservative politicians. Alamán blamed Poinsett for the “hatred” that existed between the United States and Mexico as early as 1830.³⁹ In a work published in 1834, Alamán concluded that the *yorkinos* under Poinsett’s direction were the “root of the so many of the evils experienced by the nation, and will be [the root] of those yet to come.”⁴⁰ Years after his recall, Poinsett remained shorthand for the pernicious influence of the United States in Mexican politics. One conservative newspaper attacked its enemies as “the liberal

disciples of Poinsett” who worked to bring about the “hateful domination of an enemy race on our unfortunate country”.⁴¹

The two arguments detailed above, the unsuitability of a federal republic for Mexico and the association of this model with liberalism and the United States, became the cornerstone of conservative discourse in the 1840s and 1850s. Nonetheless, anti-republican arguments had been laid down in *El Sol* in the immediate aftermath of independence, while Poinsett had provided proof for those who saw the malevolent hand of Washington behind federalism. What became tropes of conservative discourse were not only the consequence of “profound disillusionment”, to use Fowler’s phrase,⁴² with the political instability of post-independent Mexico or the shock of the US-Mexican War, but also the outcome of more fundamental doubts about the viability of republicanism in Mexico, doubts which the volatility of the first decades of Mexican independence reinforced, rather than created. If, in 1822, the arguments of *El Sol* could be characterised as “whatever happens will be for the worse, and therefore it is in our interest that as little should happen as possible”,⁴³ the Constitution of 1824 meant that the worst had already happened. It was, therefore, necessary, in the view of conservative politicians, to radically transform the political institutions of Mexico.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MONARCHIST THOUGHT IN MEXICO AFTER 1824

The political instability of post-independent Mexico not only confirmed *El Sol*’s worst fears, it far exceeded them. From 1828 to 1834, Mexico had five different presidents, three of whom came to power as the result of successful armed revolts. Dissatisfaction with the Constitution of 1824 led to its replacement with a centralist one in 1836,⁴⁴ but not before federalist uprisings against this proposed change broke out across Mexico, including Texas, which permanently separated from the nation. Moreover, French intervention from 1838 to 1839 resulted in severe economic dislocation, while Yucatán seceded from Mexico in 1840. Governments under the new centralist constitution proved no more able than their federalist predecessors to maintain themselves in power against those who resorted to extra-constitutional means to gain control.⁴⁵

The course of post-independent Mexican politics had therefore done nothing to disprove the arguments of the Bourbonists. Two events precipitated by *puro* liberals had especially shaken conservative politicians and thinkers. First, Vicente Guerrero used violence to force the resignation of

the constitutionally elected second president and assume the office. This revolt culminated in the Parián riot of 1828, which saw street violence in Mexico City unparalleled in its recent history.⁴⁶ Second, Gómez Farías, again after force overthrew the existing government, came to power in 1833 and promoted a liberal reformist agenda, which was seen to attack the Church and the army. For conservative politicians, the prospect of social violence combined with secular liberal reforms, within a system that had lost constitutional legitimacy, gave greater urgency to their arguments against federal republicanism.

The arguments which came to be deployed against the Constitution of 1824 had been outlined in *El Sol* as early as 1822. For many conservative thinkers, these criticisms were still valid, but they were willing to continue the republican experiment subject to significant constitutional reform. The result was the Seven Laws of 1836, which transformed Mexico into a centralised republic. The importance of the 1836 Constitution to monarchy lies in the fact that many of the ideas that drove the overturn of the 1824 Constitution were monarchical in inspiration, derived from constitutional theorists such as Burke or Constant. It was hoped that what were perceived to be the problems of republicanism in Mexico could be solved by the incorporation of elements of constitutional monarchy, as well as restoration of centralised power to the national government. The failure of the Seven Laws to create stable and legitimate rule led some to conclude, or perhaps merely confirmed their existing belief, that republicanism was unworkable in Mexico.

At this stage, the conservative tradition that critics of federalism drew upon was still predominantly that of Edmund Burke. Although conservatives referenced a range of thinkers, such as Chateaubriand, Joseph de Maistre and Constant, the British constitutional model provided inspiration and Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) strongly influenced Alamán's attacks on federalism.⁴⁷ This work had been translated into Spanish and published in Mexico City in 1826. Alamán argued that Mexico, following Burke's analysis of revolutionary France, had destroyed everything that had previously existed in order to found a government entirely alien to its historical experience,⁴⁸ echoing the argument *El Sol* had made for maintaining a monarchical regime in Mexico. He similarly argued that US prosperity was a result of its institutions conforming to its historical inheritance from British colonialism and therefore no innate superiority should be ascribed to federalism, nor could it be readily transcribed to Mexico.⁴⁹

The majority of political theorists, like Burke or Constant, whom Alamán and his supporters were adapting for their own political vision of Mexico, were constitutional monarchists and thus many of the ideas that influenced conservative politicians were inherently monarchical. The attempt to square the circle of republican Mexico with monarchical institutions, that is, to create a balanced or mixed constitution without a monarch, is most apparent in the Seven Laws. These acts incorporated many elements of conservative thought: deputies and senators had higher age and income or property requirements for eligibility to congress; executive power was strengthened and presidential terms were set at eight years; and a distinction was made between “Mexicans” and “Citizens of the Mexican Republic”. The latter status, which conferred the right to vote, required an income of 100 pesos per annum, thereby reducing the franchise. Apart from the abolition of states and their transformation into departments administered by a centrally appointed governor, the most radical change was the introduction of a fourth power in addition to the legislative, judicial and executive: the Supreme Conservative Power.⁵⁰

The role envisaged for the Supreme Conservative Power was similar to that of a constitutional monarch. The body was to be composed of five members, each to be over the age of 40 and with a high income of at least 3000 pesos, and with previous ministerial, congressional or Supreme Court experience. It had the power to declare any law unconstitutional if petitioned to do so by one of the three branches of government. It could deem the president morally or physically incapable of retaining office if prompted by congress and it could suspend the Supreme Court or congress when it saw fit or if requested by the president. In extraordinary circumstances, it could determine the will of the nation and restore any branch of government toppled by revolt.⁵¹ The aim was to provide an institution that would give stability to Mexican politics as an arbiter between the various branches of government, similar to the neutral power of the crown envisaged by Constant.⁵² It was hoped that the institution would provide continuity and stability by moderating between competing factions and thus prevent, or at least moderate, the violent conflicts which had overturned a succession of governments in Mexico.⁵³

The author and defender of the Seven Laws, and the Supreme Conservative Power, was Francisco Sánchez de Tagle,⁵⁴ a scion of one of the elite families of New Spain, and a leading member of the Bourbonist faction in the early 1820s.⁵⁵ It is, therefore, not surprising that the analysis of Mexico’s problems in the 1830s matched those outlined by *El Sol* in

1821–22. Sanchez de Tagle shared an elite worldview similar to that of Fagoaga or Alamán, and his Supreme Conservative Power was “a monarchist republic [...] a monarchy without a prince”.⁵⁶

Alamán believed that the new constitution was “in general good” and in every way “very superior” to what had preceded it because it “put authority in respectable hands and [assured] the stability of public order on the bases of individual property”.⁵⁷ Increasingly, the establishment of order was the principle to which conservative thinkers subordinated all others. The official government newspaper of the Bustamante administration claimed the government wished to free the nation from “the most ferocious anarchy” and guarantee it a “wellbeing that can only be enjoyed amidst order. This is not, nor has it ever been, a war of opinions; it is not about systems, nor even individuals; it is a war of civilisation against barbarism, of property against thieves, of order against anarchy.”⁵⁸ The new constitution, however, proved no more effective than the old in creating stability: The central republic, which lasted from 1835 to 1846, saw a familiar pattern of insurrections, constitutional revisions and ephemeral ministerial appointments. The Supreme Conservative Power failed to safeguard the constitution or arbitrate party disputes; even writers sympathetic to those who created the institution criticised it because it lacked the physical force to “make itself obeyed” and thus “fell into ridicule from the day of its installation.”⁵⁹

Conservative members of the Mexican elite had supported constitutional monarchy at independence, many of the currents of thought they drew upon were monarchist, they blamed US-style federal republicanism as the root of all Mexico’s evils, and they had seen their own attempts to modify the constitution by incorporating monarchist elements into Mexico’s political institutions fail to prevent further instability. In this context, it is perhaps surprising that it was not until 1840 that monarchy was reintroduced into public discourse as a solution to the ills of Mexican society. In this year, José María Gutiérrez de Estrada published a pro-monarchist pamphlet.⁶⁰ Gutiérrez de Estrada was a respected member of the elite from Yucatán, who had briefly served as minister for foreign affairs in 1835. He was a friend and correspondent of Mora, who described him as a “man of progress”.⁶¹

The immediate trigger for his arguments in favour of monarchy was his first-hand experience of the chaos of which *El Sol* had warned republicanism entailed. He had returned to Mexico after four years abroad, but had been refused entry into Campeche, the main port of his home state,

because it was in revolt against the national government. He then made his way to the capital and witnessed a *puro* federalist revolt, which temporarily captured the national palace and held the president hostage.⁶² Gutiérrez de Estrada witnessed directly “the effusion of blood”, when his father-in-law was wounded during street fighting,⁶³ and the damage to the most “noble buildings of the capital”. It was “twelve days of fire and scandal for the entire nation, as well as the world that contemplated in horror our crimes against morality, humanity and civilisation”.⁶⁴ Writing in 1861, he noted that he had returned to Mexico in 1840 to find it “plagued by one of those violent crises” that it had passed through without cease since it was constituted as a republic.⁶⁵

For Gutiérrez de Estrada, the solution to these ceaseless “crises” was constitutional monarchy. The arguments against republicanism made by the Bourbonists were largely reiterated by Gutiérrez de Estrada, but Mexico’s recent past was used as evidence to demonstrate their veracity. The nation had experimented with “democratic, oligarchic, military, demagogic and anarchic [republics], so that all the parties, and always to the detriment of the nation’s honour and happiness, have tried the republican system under all possible forms.” It followed, then, in his view, that this type of government could not work in Mexico.⁶⁶ Because of its Spanish colonial past, Mexico’s political culture was monarchical, not republican, and governments must conform to the present state of society.⁶⁷ While all forms of republican government had been tried, he noted, there had not been an attempt at a “*true* monarchy in the person of a *foreign prince*.”⁶⁸ The Empire of Iturbide, therefore, was dismissed, but the Plan of Iguala could and should be fulfilled.⁶⁹ Republicanism was clearly flourishing north of the border. However, it was not suitable for Mexico. Aside from its monarchical heritage, the nation was not ready for a form of democratic government which, since it had failed in a country as civilised and advanced as France, would certainly not succeed in Mexico. Gutiérrez de Estrada quoted Chateaubriand’s speech of 7 August 1830 in the aftermath of the July Revolution: “the representative republic will be the future of the world, but its time has not yet arrived.”⁷⁰

The arguments Gutiérrez de Estrada made for monarchy were familiar: republicanism in Mexico was unstable, and monarchy would provide stability. He identified one of the problems that the Supreme Conservative Power was intended to solve. He claimed that Mexico was divided into two parties equal in power that would be locked in incessant struggle, but for him this was an insolvable problem within republican institutions,

whereas a monarch could mediate between them and create a national party.⁷¹ However, there was no mention of how the monarchy would be constituted or even which foreign prince would be called upon to rule. The only practical recommendation was that a national congress be called to debate the matter. But constitutional monarchy was a programme that was largely self-explanatory and broadly liberal because Gutiérrez de Estrada's model was France, namely the July Monarchy.⁷²

Gutiérrez de Estrada was a francophile,⁷³ and his pamphlet was influenced by French history and politics.⁷⁴ He directly quoted Odilon Barrot, head of the "dynastic opposition" in the French Chamber of Deputies under the July Monarchy, as an example of how party conflicts did not lead to revolt, but were contained within a constitutional monarchy. Leading politicians like Thiers, La Fayette and Casimir Pierre Perier were cited and the July Monarchy's (apparent) consolidation as a stable political entity impressed Gutiérrez de Estrada.⁷⁵ Even the implied criticism of ephemerality inherent in the name "July Monarchy" was turned into a positive: after the July Revolution of 1830 France had not become a republic because, like Mexico, he argued, its traditions were inherently monarchical.⁷⁶

The fall of the July Monarchy in 1848 was an event mourned only by its most ardent supporters, and few subsequent historians have tried to rehabilitate it, but this should not obscure the importance of its example as well as its intellectuals and politicians to Latin America. It seemingly constructed a secure, conservative, but constitutionally liberal polity. It has already been seen in Chap. 2 that in the River Plate its political culture was important for a number of leading politicians, and the same was true in Mexico. As the liberal *Porfiriato* writer Justo Sierra Méndez noted, "the [conservative] politics at the time of Gutiérrez de Estrada [...] had no other desire than to implant [in Mexico] what [had been done] in France, our intellectual mother." This was the apogee, he continued, of the constitutional system under the house of Orléans, which seemed as though it would endure and "[Mexican] thinkers" were "fascinated by its prestige". They admired its leading statesmen, Guizot, Thiers, Victor de Broglie and Molé were named amongst others. Those who wanted a monarchy in Mexico were, then, "liberals in what pertained to civil liberty, and to a certain extent to political freedom". Justo Sierra concluded that what they were searching for in constitutional monarchy was the guarantee of "certain rights to life, property and liberty", which they did not think could be safeguarded in Mexico while the president was not outside or above party

disputes, a problem which the Supreme Conservative Power had failed to resolve.⁷⁷

In his pamphlet, Gutiérrez de Estrada listed a number of other flourishing European kingdoms to demonstrate that nothing was more natural than monarchy, but the reaction to Gutiérrez de Estrada's pamphlet in Mexico was almost universally hostile. Its impact was summed up by the wife of the Spanish minister to Mexico, Fanny Calderón de la Barca: "The whole world is talking [about it], and [it] seems likely to cause a greater sensation in Mexico than the discovery of the gunpowder plot in England." Her prediction that "the consequences are likely to be disastrous for the fearless and public-spirited author" was to be borne out.⁷⁸ Public opinion railed against the pamphlet in the press, the president condemned it publicly as seditious, as did prominent national politicians such as the *santani-ista* José María Tornel, and the publisher of the pamphlet was imprisoned.⁷⁹ Mexico's only public monarchist was thus forced into hiding before fleeing the country and spending the rest of his life trying to convince the courts of Europe rather than his fellow countrymen of the merits of a Mexican kingdom.⁸⁰

The virulence of the anti-monarchical reaction is perhaps suggestive of the fragility of the republican ideal after years of instability in Mexico. In a letter commenting on the publication of Gutiérrez de Estrada's work, the moderate liberal José Bernardo Couto wrote "you cannot imagine what a hornet's nest has been kicked with this. In public everyone speaks the language of the most exalted republicanism: some out of personal agreement, many from calculation and with ulterior motives. Very few who have pronounced an anathema against the poor writer have done so out of genuine feeling."⁸¹ Since the fall of Iturbide, there was much political capital to be gained by denouncing groups associated with monarchy and Spanish colonialism more generally, as the 1827 expulsion of the Spaniards had demonstrated. And those behind the most vitriolic responses to the pamphlet of 1840 were in part motivated by a desire to present themselves as the ardent defenders of Mexican republicanism.

Despite the reaction to the pamphlet, as has been seen, the sentiments of some of Mexico's political elite were sympathetic to monarchy. For them, the failure of the First Mexican Empire was a consequence of its Mexican emperor, not the ideas that lay behind monarchy. Moreover, the fall of Iturbide directly led to the adoption of federal republicanism, which they understood as unsuitable for Mexico, inspired by the US example and promoted by the US minister Joel Poinsett. Furthermore, Mexico's

tumultuous political experience as a federal republic from 1824 did little to convert conservatives to republicanism, while the failure to find order and stability as a centralist republic from 1836 further discredited republican ideas, but crucially not the monarchical ones that lay behind many elements of the Seven Laws. Monarchy represented a shorthand solution to all the problems of republican government: a strong executive, a centralist government and a restricted franchise and thus embodied the solutions proposed by conservative politicians without making compromises within a republican framework. Gutiérrez de Estrada even claimed that one of his most violent critics, Tornel, had adopted monarchical principles, but without a monarch,⁸² certainly, as will be seen, *santanistas* increasingly leaned towards authoritarian government.⁸³ Gutiérrez de Estrada's exile did not mark the end of monarchist support in Mexico; rather a group of conservative politicians put his call for a national convention to decide on the political institutions most appropriate to Mexico into action in 1845–46, which will be discussed in Chap. 4. First, however, it is necessary to understand why many in Europe, and especially in France, were in complete agreement that monarchy was the best form of government for Mexico.

THE VIEW FROM EUROPE: THE MONARCHIST “PARTY” IN MEXICO

In contrast to Mexico, the idea that monarchy was the form of government best-suited to Spain's former colonies, and Mexico in particular, was a constant refrain in European political discourse on Latin America. Moreover, many argued, monarchy was not only the solution to Mexico's political problems, but also a strategic opportunity that would benefit Europe and increase the power and influence of the nation that helped found a Mexican kingdom. Indeed, this rationale formed the basis of the Bourbon Restoration's policy towards Latin-American independence in the first half of the 1820s. As Chateaubriand made clear, monarchies in Latin America created through French support would increase France's “prosperity and glory”.⁸⁴ Chateaubriand's plan, supported by Villèle, was for Spain's former colonies to be constituted as independent kingdoms under Spanish *infantes* with French support. In short, France backed what had been proposed with the Plan of Iguala.

The willingness of Bourbon Restoration statesmen to compromise over sovereignty and increase Franco-Spanish influence in Latin America through commerce and finance under the Bourbon Restoration has been discussed in Chap. 2. In order to secure further political suasion, Latin American independence was to be realised through the creation of monarchies sympathetic to Europe, and France and Spain in particular because of dynastic ties. However, it was not merely commercially or politically advantageous, but also part of the wider ideological struggle between republicans and democrats on the one hand and monarchists and liberals or legitimists on the other. Again, de Pradt was one of the first to articulate the dangers to the Old World of the triumph of republicanism in the New. Although he argued that independence would bring commercial benefits for Europe regardless of the type of government it was realised under,⁸⁵ de Pradt warned: “[d]uty and personal feeling have induced [me] to point out the dangers which arise to royalty and to Catholicism, from the prolonged struggle between Spain and America”. He wrote that he knew of no constitutions proposed in Latin America that mentioned monarchy; rather they were strongly republican and inclined towards the institutions of the United States, not Europe. He further warned that the impolitic policy of Spain would likely result in the end of royalism in its former provinces and that a republican Latin America would be a dangerous example to monarchical Europe.⁸⁶

It was this threat to the post-1815 restored Europe which first attracted French policymakers to the idea of independent monarchies in Latin America and was made a key issue at the 1818 Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. Louis XVIII’s instructions to his foreign minister, the Duc de Richelieu, made this clear. The powers had gathered together to consolidate the peace of Europe, they could therefore not ignore “the dangers that would threaten the monarchies [of Europe] and even its social organisation if [republicanism] were to prevail over almost the whole of the American continent”.⁸⁷

Chateaubriand combined the ideological threat to Europe with many of the conservative arguments made in 1821–22 in *El Sol* in favour of monarchy. He similarly believed that the political traditions of the Spanish colonies predisposed them towards monarchy, the historical experience of the United States was entirely different and therefore not applicable and thus “under constitutional monarchies, [the Spanish colonies] would have finished their political education, sheltered from the storms which might overwhelm new-born republics.”⁸⁸ Rather than try to create an unworkable republican utopia, which would “risk marring the finest of destinies”,

Spain's former colonies should become constitutional monarchies because this was the form of government best-suited to them.⁸⁹ As Chateaubriand's prime minister Villèle made clear, though, the happiness of the New World was predicated upon force and co-opting the remaining royalist sympathisers in Spanish America: "[i]n all these countries armed parties exist which favour [Spain]. If the *infantes* should not find [...] submissive kingdoms, they would at least find realms that could easily be subjugated by the aid of [France's] navy and credit." Villèle wrote that the French government would permit the use of its forces for this purpose in anticipation of "commercial advantages".⁹⁰ The Prince de Polignac had informed Villèle in 1824 that support for monarchy in Mexico remained strong in part on the basis of a discussion he had in London with an Italian called Lucchesi de Campofranco, who carried on him a letter from Alamán. Lucchesi de Campofranco, who Polignac described as "strongly tied to Alamán", explained that "democratic principles" would not flourish in Mexico; the country was in anarchy and prey to revolutions. In short, exactly the arguments of the Bourbonist party and, in this context, Mexico would welcome a Spanish *infante* as ruler.⁹¹

Villèle and Chateaubriand believed they had a plan that would finally secure for France economic control of, and political suasion over, the wider Hispanic world, which had been an aspiration of all French governments from Louis XIV to Napoleon. Unlike Napoleon, who had hoped to achieve this through the occupation of Spain and the imposition of his brother, Villèle and Chateaubriand developed a template that, as has been seen in Chap. 2, later French governments would follow. Commerce and finance were important, but what would bring Spain's colonies within the French sphere of influence was that local elites sympathetic to a French political model (limited or constitutional monarchy) would be co-opted, with the help of limited French intervention, to defeat rivals with alternative political projects. The subordinate position of Spain to France as well as dynastic ties of loyalty to the Bourbons in Spanish America made the project seem realisable, but French policymakers reckoned without the intransigence of Ferdinand VII, who refused to countenance anything other than the complete restoration of Spanish sovereignty in Latin America.

Regardless of Spanish opposition, it is likely France had arrived at a solution which would have fulfilled the Plan of Iguala too late. By the time of Chateaubriand and Villèle's plan for Bourbon kingdoms in Latin America, the empire of Iturbide had already fallen in Mexico. Napoleon's

invasion of 1808 marked the beginning of independence movements in Spanish America; the French intervention of 1823 hastened its end. French troops once again occupying the Spanish peninsula created widespread hostility towards France in Latin America because it was seen not as a prelude to independent constitutional monarchies, but rather restoration of absolutist Spanish rule in the Americas.⁹² French forces in Spain ended constitutional government there and thus, according to the formerly Bourbonist paper *El Sol*, finished the party in Mexico: the ruin of “the constitutional system in Spain” meant that a Bourbon prince ruling in Mexico was an “impossibility” and therefore the party that had “desired it” dissolved.⁹³

Nonetheless, Mexico’s experience as a republic did little to dissuade many foreign observers that Mexico was inherently monarchical, and that monarchy had powerful support amongst elites (and invariably passive support amongst the majority of the population). Chateaubriand and Villèle were not alone in this belief. It was the view of numerous French (and British and Spanish) politicians, journalists and travel writers.⁹⁴ If monarchists remained a persecuted or silent minority in Mexico after 1824, they found a much more sympathetic audience in Europe. It was the endurance of this vision overseas that ensured that in Mexico monarchy remained a viable alternative to republicanism. Few observers, however, made the distinction drawn by the Italian Giacomo Beltrami, author of one of the earliest accounts of independent Mexico published in France, who “was monarchical in Europe and republican in America”.⁹⁵ And not all Bonapartes believed, as Joseph apparently did when supposedly offered the Mexican crown in 1821, that “the throne you want to raise again cannot make you happy. Each day that I pass on the hospitable territory of the United States demonstrates to me the excellence of republican institutions for America; guard them amongst yourselves as a precious gift from providence [...] imitate the United States”.⁹⁶ Most agreed with the view of the Prince de Polignac, who, in a letter to Alamán, wrote “monarchical governments are generally more stable than [republican ones]”.⁹⁷

The Parián riot of 1828 and Guerrero’s unconstitutional seizure of the presidency not only alarmed political elites in Mexico, but reinforced anti-republican prejudices in Europe. In Paris, the royalist newspaper *La Quotidienne* reported on these event in Mexico as proof of the dangers of liberalism: “thousands of citizens driven from their homes, 500 wealthy families reduced to poverty, 800 men slaughtered, one immense city pillaged, 25 million [francs] the booty of bandits, women raped, children

abused and all rights trampled underfoot: voilà, the liberty of liberalism". Although the paper did not explicitly mention republicanism, the problems of Mexico were attributable to the application of liberal doctrines, which resulted, as *El Sol* had warned, in parties contesting power and civil conflict. Was not Mexico, asked the paper, a lesson for France, which also had its Guerrero and its Santa Anna?⁹⁸ It is unsurprising that a legitimist newspaper drew its readers' attention to the didactic example of Mexico, but the more liberal *Le Constitutionnel* had a similar interpretation, and one that conservative Mexicans would have agreed with: the *escoceses* represented the "sound part of the nation", whereas the *yorkinos*, formed and sustained by Poinsett, were composed of the "low people". This "cabal" carried Guerrero to the presidency through violence, of which the Parián riot was the most deplorable example; and Poinsett the instigator.⁹⁹

Noting this negative press, the Mexican diplomatic agent, Tomás Murphy Sr, reported that the sack of the Parián market in Mexico City had been attributed in Europe to the failings of republican government. He claimed this was a widely held view, even amongst those who previously had expressed hope Mexico would consolidate under "the adopted system". Thus he feared that France and Britain would work "in secret" and "indirectly" to help Spain, "not for the reconquest of America, but for the consolidation of independence under the monarchical system". Moreover, if the "wisdom of the Mexican people did not in its future conduct restore the credit" that had been lost because of the riot then this view of Mexico would gain more credence.¹⁰⁰

Murphy's analysis of political opinion in France was accurate: French diplomats and commentators generally concluded that Mexico would be better governed under a monarchy. In addition, they reported the existence of a strong monarchical party, although publicly there was no sign of one after 1824 until 1846. This can be explained by the fact European diplomats generally preferred the company of Mexico's conservative politicians. Schmaltz wrote that he had met in Mexico a wealth of "gentlemen" notable for their "honesty" and "enlightenment" amongst other qualities, but he had also known radical liberals whose "venality, presumption, audacity and political ignorance render them capable of the most shocking and extraordinary actions, without any regard or fear for the consequences".¹⁰¹ Deffaudis wrote that of the hundred or so people who made up his social circle in Mexico "four fifths belong to the aristocratic party".¹⁰²

In 1823, Schmaltz identified Alamán as the most important man in Mexico, and listed him alongside other monarchists, such as José María

Fagoaga. Schmaltz knew these elite members of Mexican society personally and wrote letters of introduction to all of them for another French agent who was sent to Mexico.¹⁰³ Alamán and Fagoaga, moreover, were pro-French, Schmaltz argued, because of the positive view of France they had gained during stays in Paris, and as late as 1845, Mora, then in exile in Paris, wrote that they still retained a favourable reputation in France.¹⁰⁴ Alamán had studied in Paris at the Collège de France and was introduced, at the salon of the Duke of Montmorency, a Bourbon prince of blood, to such luminaries of Parisian society as Madame de Stael, Benjamin Constant, Chateaubriand, La Fayette and Polignac. José María Fagoaga also mixed in this exclusive company with Alamán.¹⁰⁵ Partially as a consequence of Schmaltz's reports, which identified an influential monarchist party, the foreign ministry concluded "after everything that we have been able to learn about the state of Mexico, it is reasonable to assume that [...] the social and religious state, the mores and the customs of the people [...] call for a [monarchical government]".¹⁰⁶

As noted in the sections entitled "The First Mexican Empire and the Legacy of Iturbide" and "The Development of Monarchist Thought in Mexico after 1824", there was no popular support for monarchy in Mexico after the fall of Iturbide's empire. However, unsurprisingly, diplomatic agents of the Bourbon Restoration or of the July Monarchy had little interest in the actual will of people as expressed through popular participation in representative politics during the decades after independence. French observers generally concluded that politics in Mexico was the preserve of the elite, Mexican society was backward and apolitical, and popular support was therefore by no means a necessary requisite for governments or political institutions. Deffaudis reported to Paris that of the 150,000–200,000 people that made up the population of Mexico City, only 6000–8000 belonged to the "bourgeois class". All the rest were "those which one calls '*los leperos*', people who do not have regular employment, nor wives, nor legitimate children". Outside of the cities, "the people of the countryside, which form the great mass of the nation, are essentially docile". They viewed with "the most profound indifference" the continual changes in government. Echoing the view of the Mexican conservatives, Deffaudis believed that "[t]he imitation of the institutions of the [United States] has been fatal to Mexico" because, unlike their northern neighbours, Mexicans had not been "raised in the constitutional school of England". Similarly, federalism arose organically in the United States, but had been imposed artificially in Mexico. As a result, Deffaudis

argued, Mexico could not find stability in any government other than a monarchical one, and it should tend towards absolutism given the level of political education in the country.¹⁰⁷

The then French foreign minister, the doctrinaire liberal Victor de Broglie, entirely agreed with this analysis: "that is to say, [on] the incompatibility of the form of its government with the character, the habits and the interests of its people". Mexico's "imperfect state of civilisation" meant republicanism and federalism were inappropriate. Indeed, in a crossed out section of the draft Broglie wrote that he had never considered the current system in Mexico as anything other than "one of those ephemeral and transitory situations" which, after "the convulsions of anarchy", lead to the "calm and regular customs of a despotism more or less tempered". In this respect, Mexico was no different from all the other states of "Spanish America" and "monarchical power" was the "port" where "these states will repose after their long agitations".¹⁰⁸ Broglie had the chance to discuss Mexican liberalism first hand with Zavala in Paris, who was briefly Mexico's minister to France (1833–34). The French foreign minister was disappointed by Zavala's "exaggerated liberalism" and his unswerving belief in federalism and "pure democracy".¹⁰⁹

Deffaudis may have preferred the company of what he called Mexico's "aristocratic party", but he did argue, as discussed in Chap. 2, that a liberal federalist government might better serve French interests. However, the arrival of Deffaudis' successor as Minister to Mexico, Baron Alleye de Cyprey, ended what little sympathy there was at a diplomatic level for liberal federalism in Mexico. Indeed, from 1840 to the French intervention, all French diplomatic agents openly supported the more conservative spectrum of politics in Mexico, with most recommending to Paris that monarchy was the best solution to the endemic political instability. De Cyprey was as dismissive of federalists in Mexico as Broglie had been in Paris. The French minister spent nine days with Gomez Fariás in the immediate aftermath of the failed federalist revolt which had so shaken Gutiérrez de Estrada in July 1840 and concluded that liberal federalist ideas were impractical in Mexico.¹¹⁰ This is not surprising given that de Cyprey was an avowed proponent of monarchy in Mexico, who did not believe that "Spanish America had republican elements".¹¹¹ He frequently recommended European intervention in order to found a monarchy. There was, he claimed, a monarchist party in Mexico, but it was badly directed and divided over who the candidate should be for the throne.¹¹²

His belief that this party existed similarly stemmed from French diplomats' contact with the narrow section of Mexico's elite who favoured monarchy. De Cyprey had known Gutiérrez de Estrada before coming to Mexico, they dined together in Paris in 1839.¹¹³ In order to escape persecution after publishing his pamphlet, Gutiérrez de Estrada considered seeking sanctuary at the French legation, but, according to de Cyprey, decided against it to spare France any embarrassment.¹¹⁴ In a personal letter to Gutiérrez de Estrada, the French minister wrote that the Mexican was a "prophet" and that monarchy was the only remedy to the Mexico's problems. De Cyprey concluded, "My honourable and excellent friend, I loved you before the publication of your work. I love you twice as much now I have read it."¹¹⁵ The French minister delighted in views that entirely matched his own and wrote to Paris that the pamphlet would leave "deep roots" and produce a revolution in ideas, which would one day be realised.¹¹⁶ The work confirmed what de Cyprey already thought to be true: "Mexico marches towards a monarchy".¹¹⁷ In two long memorandums sent to the foreign ministry, de Cyprey even took the time to outline how monarchy could be achieved in Mexico through French military intervention.¹¹⁸

Although not as extreme as those of De Cyprey, views in Paris concurred that monarchy was an appropriate solution for Mexico. De Cyprey had sent a copy of Gutiérrez de Estrada's pamphlet to Paris, where it was read by Guizot. The foreign minister complained that the writing was a "little difficult", but it sketched a picture of the situation and needs of Mexico that Guizot believed "to be true". He added that Gutiérrez de Estrada had resided long enough in Paris to leave behind him "good memories and the reputation of a being one of those small number of men who are both learned and free of prejudice." He was, therefore, a credit to his country.¹¹⁹

This was not, of course, how the Mexican government thought of him, which was sufficiently worried by Gutiérrez de Estrada's views that it reported them to its representative in Paris. The Mexican foreign minister noted that the author of the pro-monarchy pamphlet would receive the punishment he merited and that the state would do everything in its power to prevent the evils that could result from his ideas. The president and the press had therefore condemned the monarchist arguments in order to "cut at its root this new pretext for civil discord". It was further necessary to inculcate abroad "the unquestionable truth that [Mexico] would never permit the establishment of a throne, nor be governed by foreigners".¹²⁰

In this latter cause Mexican governments were unsuccessful. French publicists echoed the views of Orléanist ministers and diplomats.¹²¹ An article published in 1842 in the *Journal des débats*, outlined this monarchist discourse. Mexico, ran the editorial, proved that “forms of government which succeed in one nation [i.e. the United States]” cannot “be imposed on another nation [i.e. Mexico] completely different by its traditions, political and religious education, and by its mores.” In 1824, the newspaper argued, Mexico had adopted an imitation of the US Constitution, the only difference being that Catholicism was the sole religion of state, but the impossibility of making this work was apparent from the start. Mexico had therefore gone through various systems, none of which had provided stability. The newspaper believed that there were many monarchists in Mexico, including Gutiérrez de Estrada, whose pamphlet was described, recalling Guizot, as tracing a “true picture” of Mexico. Finally, the article concluded that monarchy was the solution to Mexico’s problems.¹²²

Indeed, foreign observers not only echoed the conservative interpretation of Mexican politics and history, in some cases they predated it. The Austrian writer, Isidore Löwenstern, travelled to Mexico in 1838 where he met, amongst others, Alamán.¹²³ In his account, he described Mexican politics and identified what he called a “conservative party” composed of the clergy and men “finally enlightened as to the abyss that the establishment of a democratic government has plunged [Mexico].” This party, within which he claimed Alamán was the most influential individual, contained “educated, but timid men”, who wished to see Mexico governed under a system “consistent with the needs of [Mexico]”. They were “timid” due to the fact that they were afraid to express their views in public for fear of the response. It is, of course, anecdotal evidence, but the reaction to Gutiérrez de Estrada’s pamphlet suggests there may be an element of truth in Löwenstern’s belief that (what he called) the “conservative party” was afraid to express its views.¹²⁴ Fanny Calderón de la Barca reinforced this, reporting that “[it is claimed] many distinguished men here hold the same opinions [as Gutiérrez de Estrada], but their voices, even were they to venture to raise them, could not stem the tide of public indignation.”¹²⁵

Löwenstern’s work demonstrates that the idea of monarchy, and even the idea of European intervention in favour of a monarchy, was part of French discourse on Mexico during the 1840s. His work concluded with a chapter that began: “The current state of Mexico cannot continue”.

He argued the country had been destroyed by representative republicanism, Mexico had been founded as a monarchy and only a return to the Plan of Iguala could save the nation.¹²⁶ Chevalier, later one of the great apologists for Louis-Napoléon's intervention in Mexico, was largely in agreement with this conclusion. In a review of Löwenstern's work he wrote that monarchy was the form of government best-suited to Mexico. However, he argued that Löwenstern "seemed to be of the opinion that Europe should intervene to impose a monarch on Mexico". This, he thought, "would be very difficult" and European intervention would face many obstacles. Moreover, a European prince that presented himself in Mexico by "right of conquest" would be opposed by the local populace. Mexico, Chevalier argued, was independent and therefore it should "freely call to its aid a European prince".¹²⁷ However, far from demonstrating that Mexico was against monarchy, the treatment of Gutiérrez de Estrada "proved nothing". To the contrary, there were strong monarchical elements in Mexico, which was like France on the eve of Napoleon Bonaparte's 1799 coup against the Directory: all that was required was a great man to assume the role of "supreme arbiter of the destiny of the nation".¹²⁸

The republican Mexican government was right to be concerned about European opinion regarding monarchy in Mexico. Mainstream French discourse from foreign ministers, diplomatic agents and the press believed, like Mexican conservatives, that republicanism was responsible for Mexico's instability and that monarchy was the solution; the form of government best-suited to Spain's former colonies. Furthermore, many countenanced some form of intervention in order to bring it about. If nothing else, this favourable environment encouraged Gutiérrez de Estrada to keep his dream of a Mexican monarchy alive while in exile in Europe. Writing in 1861, he cited the French sympathisers who had supported him. De Cyprey was one; he also pointed to the work of a French explorer, Eugène Duflot de Mofras, who had been sent by the July Monarchy to the North American Pacific coast on an exploratory mission and wrote in his report, referencing Gutiérrez de Estrada, that monarchy was the sole remedy for Mexico's problems.¹²⁹ Gutiérrez de Estrada also quoted at length the *Journal des débats* article of 13 September 1842 discussed above.¹³⁰ He argued that the idea for monarchy was not a "French idea", rather it "belonged entirely to Mexico; it is *all Mexican*".¹³¹ As this chapter has shown, this is only partially true—monarchism in Mexico was a shared transnational discourse. However, Gutiérrez de Estrada was right in a

sense—it was enough of a Mexican idea for the viability of monarchy to be seriously entertained in Europe. If he was persecuted for his ideas in Mexico, he was fêted by some men of influence in France, and the realisation of his dream would not have been possible without this intellectual context.

* * *

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

The European monarchies provided powerful alternative models: If republicans could point to the prosperity of the United States, then monarchists could cite Britain and France. Moreover, monarchists in Mexico drew on European examples of, and were encouraged by European sympathy for, monarchy. It was a project of only a small section of Mexico's conservative elite, as Justo Sierra noted, "[t]here were monarchists in Mexico, but there was no monarchical party". Monarchists, with the exception of the "most naive and honest of them", Gutiérrez de Estrada, "all hid themselves, including, Alamán, the most conspicuous".¹³² Regardless of this limited support, the idea proved remarkably durable: monarchy in Mexico was not purely a French imposition of the 1860s.

French observers, particularly those tied to the Bourbon Restoration or the July Monarchy, understood monarchy as a way to further French influence and interests in Latin America. This is apparent in the arguments

made by Chateaubriand, Villèle and de Pradt. Aside from the geopolitical importance of monarchy in Mexico, it necessarily had a transnational dimension in that it required foreign support, without which it would have remained in the realm of ideas. As will be seen, one important factor which helped to promote monarchy in Mexico from idea to French government policy was a pan-Latinist worldview, which placed Mexico on the front line against invading Anglo-Saxon hordes unleashed by US expansion in Texas and the US-Mexican War. The formation of this pan-Latinist interpretation in Mexico and France forms the basis of the next chapter.

NOTES

1. Chateaubriand, *Voyage en Amérique*, 220–21.
2. José Manuel Hidalgo y Esnaurrizar, *Apuntes para escribir la historia de los proyectos de monarquía en México, desde el reinado de Carlos III hasta la instalación del emperador Maximiliano* (Paris: Librería Española de Garnier Hermanos, 1868), xxi.
3. For example, Delmon, 'Les acteurs de la politique impériale', 77–78.
4. O'Gorman, *La supervivencia*; Pani, 'La innombrable: monarquismo'.
5. Gabriac to Walewski, 10 October 1857, AAE, CP Mexique, 47.
6. Alamán, *Historia de México*, V, 582. Alamán called the empire "a throne that was subject to ridicule from its inception", *ibid.*, V, 521.
7. Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 13–17.
8. Agustín de Iturbide, *A Statement of Some of the Principal Events in the Public Life of Agustín de Iturbide*, trans. Michael Joseph Quin (London: J. Murray, 1824), 11.
9. Alamán, *Historia de Mexico*, I, 334–36.
10. Anna, *Mexican Empire*, 8–9.
11. 'Plan de independencia de la América Septentrional Iguala, 24 de Febrero de 1821' printed in Porrúa, *Documentos*, 200–03.
12. Richard Morse, 'The Heritage of Latin America', in Louis Hartz (ed.), *The Founding of New Societies: Studies in the History of the United States, Latin America, South Africa, Canada, and Australia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964), 160. David Brading claims "the royalist establishment [...] staged a *coup d'état* against a liberal metropolis", *The Origins of Mexican Nationalism* (Cambridge: Centre of Latin American Studies, 1985), 56. Florencia Mallon calls it a "conservative declaration of independence", 'Indigenous Peoples and Nation-States in Spanish America, 1780–2000', in Moya, *Oxford Handbook of Latin American*, 285.
13. Lorenzo de Zavala, *Ensayo histórico de las revoluciones de México: Desde 1808 hasta 1830*, 2 vols. (Paris: P. Dupont and G. Laguionie, 1831), I, 172–73.

14. Rodríguez prefers the term “autonomists” to make clear that this group did not support Spanish colonial rule, but rather autonomy within the Spanish empire and later independence under a constitutional monarchy headed by a Spanish prince, *True Spaniards*, 273.
15. Alamán, *Historia de México*, V, 427–28; 449–51; 458; 541; Doris Ladd, *The Mexican Nobility at Independence, 1780–1826* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies; The University of Texas, 1976), 124–25; Rodríguez, *True Spaniards*, 272–73.
16. ‘Exposición presentada a las Cortes por los diputados de ultramar en la sesión de 25 de junio de 1821, sobre el estado actual de las provincias de que eran representantes, y medios convenientes para su definitiva pacificación; redactada por encargo de los mismos diputados por D. Lucas Alamán y D. José Mariano de Michelena’, in Alamán, *Historia de México*, V, 781–96.
17. The conservative view of 27 September is discussed by Rodríguez Piña, ‘Conservatives Contest the Meaning of Independence’, 1846–1855’. See also Christon Archer, ‘Death’s Patriots—Celebration, Denunciation, and Memories of Mexico’s Independence Heroes: Miguel Hidalgo, José María Morelos, and Agustín de Iturbide’, in Lyman Johnson (ed.), *Death, Dismemberment and Memory* (New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2004).
18. See Rodríguez, *True Spaniards*, 325–34 and Nettie Lee Benson, *The Provincial Deputation in Mexico: Harbinger of Provincial Autonomy, Independence, and Federalism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992).
19. Hale, *Liberalism*, 79. Timothy Anna, ‘Agustín de Iturbide and the Process of Consensus’, in Christon Archer (ed.), *The Birth of Modern Mexico, 1780–1824* (Delaware: SR Books, 2003), 187–204. On the influence of the Constitution of 1812 see Scott Eastman and Natalia Sobrevilla Perea (eds.), *The Rise Constitutional Government in the Iberian World: The Impact of the Cádiz Constitution of 1812* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2015).
20. Jaime Rodríguez, ‘Intellectuals and the Mexican Constitution of 1824’, in Roderic Ai Camp, Charles Hale and Josefina Zoraida Vázquez (eds.), *Los intelectuales y el poder en México: memorias de la VI Conferencia de Historiadores Mexicanos y Estadounidenses* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1991), 67.
21. ‘Acta Constitutiva de la Federación Mexicana’, 31 January 1824, printed in Porrúa, *Documentos*, 246–55.
22. ‘Ensayo histórico sobre los gobiernos federados’, *El Federalista* (Mexico City), 15 August, pp. 61–4; ‘Continúa el ensayo histórico comenzado en el numero 16’, *ibid.*, 29 August, pp. 73–76; ‘Continúa el ensayo histórico, y concluye el artículo de la confederación germánica’, *ibid.*, 5 September,

- pp. 81–84; ‘Continúa el ensayo histórico’, *ibid.*, 9, 12, 16, 19, 23, 26, 30 September, 3, 7, 10 and 14 October 1823, pp. 85–88, 89–91, 93–94, 97–100, 101–04, 105–06, 109–11, 113–15, 117–19, 121–24 and 125–28.
23. Servando Teresa de Mier, *Memoria político-instructiva, enviada desde Filadelfia en agosto de 1821, á los gefes independientes del Anáhuac* (Philadelphia: Juan F. Hurtel, 1821), 45–46; 66.
 24. Miguel Ángel Castro and Guadalupe Curiel (eds.), *Publicaciones periódicas mexicanas del siglo XIX, 1822-1855: fondo antiguo de la Hemeroteca Nacional y fondo reservado de la Biblioteca Nacional de México* (Mexico City: UNAM, 2000), 413–19.
 25. Article two of the Declaration of the Rights of Man: “The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.” Printed in Gérard Conac, Marc Debene and Gérard Teboul (eds.), *La déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen de 1789: histoire, analyse et commentaires* (Paris: Économica, 1993), 361–65. *El Sol* was noticeably silent on “resistance to oppression”.
 26. ‘Política. Continúa el anterior’, *El Sol*, 29 December 1821, pp. 31–32; ‘Apuntes sobre las bases principales y demas objetos públicos, que deben tenerse presentes para establecer un gobierno franco, liberal justo y equitativo’ and ‘Concluye el anterior’, *ibid.*, 2 and 5 February 1822, p. 73 and p. 77.
 27. ‘El Poder soberano’, *ibid.*, 23 February 1822, p. 97.
 28. ‘Gobierno’, *El Sol*, 27 April 1822, pp. 181–83.
 29. ‘Política’, *ibid.*, 29 December 1821, p. 31; ‘Gobierno’, *ibid.*, 15 May 1822, pp. 207–08.
 30. M. F. del Z. [sic], *Sueño de un republicano, ó sean reflexiones de un anciano sobre la república federada* (Puebla: Imprenta liberal de Moreno hermanos, 1822).
 31. ‘Papeles públicos’, *El Sol*, 13 March 1822, pp. 123–24.
 32. ‘Proyectos republicanos’, *El Sol*, 11 May and 15 May 1822, 201–02 and 205–07.
 33. ‘Proyectos republicanos’, *El Sol*, 11 May and 15 May 1822, pp. 201–02 and 205–07.
 34. Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 18–21; Brading, *Origins*, 64.
 35. See Harold Dana Sims, *The Expulsion of Mexico’s Spaniards, 1821–1836* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990).
 36. Fowler provides a list of those associated with the *escoceses* in *Age of Proposals*, 53, fn 62.
 37. ‘Note remise à M. Samouel à son passage à la Nouvelle Orléans’ enclosed in Schmaltz to Fleury, 10 May 1824, AAE, ADP Mexique, 1.

38. Joel Poinsett to Martin van Buren, 10 March 1829, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States Concerning the Independence of the Latin-American nations*, 3 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1925), III, 1678–80.
39. Alamán to Tornel, 24 May 1830, AHGE, Estados-Unidos, L. 17; e.2.
40. Lucas Alamán, *Defensa del ex ministro de Relaciones D. Lucas Alamán: En causa formada contra él y contra los exministros de Guerra y Justicia de Vicepresidente D. Anastasio Bustamante* first published 1834 and reprinted in Lucas Alamán, *Documentos diversos: inéditos y muy raros ... Compilación de Rafael Aguayo Spencer*, 4 vols. (Mexico City: Editorial Jus, 1945–47), III, 41. Alamán restated these charges in *Historia de México*, V, 623–24. See also Alamán to Tornel, 2 August 1830, AHGE, Estados-Unidos, L. 17; e.2.
41. ‘Proyectos contra *El Tiempo*, su acusación’, *El Tiempo* (Mexico City), 20 February 1846, front page.
42. Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 5.
43. A quote from Lord Salisbury in Andrew Roberts, *Salisbury: Victorian Titan* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999), 435.
44. For the evolution of Alamán’s constitutional thought, see Catherine Andrews, ‘In the Pursuit of Balance. Lucas Alamán’s Proposals for Constitutional Reform (1830–1835)’, *Historia constitucional*, 8 (2007), 13–37.
45. For the Federal Republic, see Anna, *Forging Mexico*. For the Central Republic, Costeloe, *The Central Republic*.
46. A five-thousand strong crowd sacked and looted the Parián market, the main commercial centre in Mexico City. On the riot see Silvia Arrom, ‘Popular Politics in Mexico City: The Parian Riot, 1828’, *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 68 (1988), 245–68.
47. Noriega, *El pensamiento conservador*, I, ch. 3; Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 60; David Brading, *The First America: The Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots and the Liberal State, 1492–1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 646.
48. Andrews, ‘In Pursuit of Balance’, 16–17; Lucas Alamán, *Examen imparcial de la administración del general vicepresidente D. Anastasio Bustamante. Con observaciones generales sobre el estado presente de la República y consecuencias que éste debe producir* printed in Alamán, *Documentos diversos*, III, 245.
49. Andrews, ‘In Pursuit of Balance’, 26–33.
50. Costeloe, *Central Republic*, 100–04. On this constitutional innovation see Frida Osorio Gonsen, ‘Seeking a Balance of Power through a Neutral Third Party Mechanism, The Mexican Supreme Conservative Power (1836–1841)’, *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 33 (2017), 125–52; Catherine Andrews, ‘El debate político de la década de 1830 y los orígenes de las Siete Leyes’, in Cecilia Noriega and Alicia Salmerón (eds.),

- México: un siglo de historia constitucional, 1808–1917* (Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Dr José María Luis Mora, 2009), and David Pantoja Morán, ‘Las Siete Leyes Constitucionales. Presupuestos históricos y teoría constitucional subyacentes al diseño de sus instituciones’, in *ibid.*, and David Pantoja Morán, *El supremo poder conservador: el diseño institucional en las primeras constituciones mexicanas* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México; Zamora, Michoacán: El Colegio de Michoacán, 2005).
51. Costeloe, *Central Republic*, 106; Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 67–68.
 52. Morán, ‘Las Siete Leyes Constitucionales’, 196.
 53. Francisco Manuel Sánchez de Tagle, *Discurso del señor Don Francisco Manuel Sánchez de Tagle en la sesión del 15 de diciembre, sobre creación de un Poder Conservador* (Mexico City: Imprenta de J.M. Fernández de Lara, 1835), 9.
 54. Noriega, *Pensamiento conservador*, I, 103–15. Sánchez de Tagle defended the Supreme Conservative Power in Sánchez de Tagle, *Discurso del señor Don Francisco Manuel Sánchez de Tagle*.
 55. María Luna Argudín, ‘De Guadalupe a borbonistas: desarrollo y proyección política de Fagoaga, Sardaneta y Sánchez de Tagle (1808–1824)’, *Secuencia*, 38 (1997), 25–50.
 56. O’Gorman, *La Supervivencia política*, 27.
 57. Lucas Alamán to Santa Anna, 23 February 1837, Alamán, *Documentos diversos*, IV, 152–56.
 58. ‘Mexico 19 de Octubre’, *El Registro Oficial del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos* (Mexico City), 19 October 1830, pp. 139–40.
 59. Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, II, 236–37; Niceto de Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico, desde sus tiempos más remotos hasta nuestros días*, 18 vols. (Barcelona-Mexico City: J.F. Párres, 1877–82), XII, 102–03.
 60. José María Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida al Excmo. Sr. ... necesidad de buscar en una convención el posible remedio de los males que aquejan a la república, y opiniones del autor acerca del mismo asunto* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1840), 24–27.
 61. Sanders, ‘Proposals for Monarchy in Mexico’, 124–25. Gutiérrez de Estrada’s correspondence with Mora is in the BLAC, José María Luis Mora archive.
 62. See Michael Costeloe, ‘A Pronunciamiento in Nineteenth Century Mexico: 15 de julio de 1840’, *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 4 (1988), 245–64.
 63. Frances Erskine Inglis Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico, During a Residence of Two Years in that Country*, 2 vols. (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown), I, 352–53.
 64. Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida*, 26.

65. José María Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Le Mexique et l'archiduc Ferdinand Maximilien d'Autriche* (Paris: Garnier frères, 1862), 9. A point Gutiérrez de Estrada also made to the British economist William Senior Nassau in a conversation of 1863. Senior, *Conversations with Distinguished Persons*, II, 275–76.
66. Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida*, 31–35.
67. *Ibid.*, 40–41; 44–45.
68. *Ibid.*, 37. Emphasis in the original.
69. *Ibid.*, 68–69; 80–82.
70. *Ibid.*, 73–74.
71. Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida*, 42–43.
72. For the liberal influences on Gutiérrez de Estrada's monarchism, see Gabriela Tío Vallejo, 'La monarquía en México: historia de un desencuentro. El liberalismo monárquico de Gutiérrez Estrada', *Secuencia*, 30 (1994), 33–56.
73. Hale, *Liberalism*, 28–29. Prior to returning to Mexico, Gutiérrez de Estrada had spent some time in Paris. He had dinner with the newly appointed French minister to Mexico, de Cyprey, before the diplomat departed for his new post. Garro to foreign minister, 6 September 1839, AHGE, Francia, L. 23; e. 238.
74. The parliamentary systems of the Bourbon Restoration and the July Monarchy were, of course, based on the British model, but its application in Catholic France in the aftermath of a republic had obvious relevance for Mexico.
75. Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida*, 3; 16–18; 20–21; 43–44.
76. *Ibid.*, 46–47.
77. Sierra, *Juárez*, 298–99.
78. Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, II, 4–7.
79. Costeloe, *Central Republic*, 171–72.
80. He reiterated his views seven years later in Gutiérrez de Estrada, *México en 1840 y en 1847* (Mexico City: Imprenta de Vicente G. Torres; Paris: impr. de Lacrampe y hijo, 1848). In 1846 he secured an interview with Louis Phillipe. Gutiérrez de Estrada to Guizot, 11 September 1846, ADP, 46/3.
81. José Bernardo Couto to Mora, 25 October 1840, BLAC, José Luis Mora archive.
82. Gutiérrez de Estrada to Mora, 3 June 1843, BLAC, José Luis Mora archive.
83. Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna*, ch. 13 and Fowler, *Age of Proposals*, 219–64.
84. Chateaubriand, *Voyage en Amérique*, 220–21.
85. De Pradt, *Des colonies*, II, 299.

86. *Ibid.*, I, xiii.
87. Raoul de Cisternes, *Le duc de Richelieu*, 25.
88. Chateaubriand, *Congress of Verona*, 209.
89. *Ibid.*, 231–32.
90. Villèle, *Mémoires*, IV, 200–01 and 239–40.
91. Prince de Polignac to Villèle in Villèle, *Mémoires*, V, 74.
92. For example, Tomás Murphy Sr to unnamed, 2 January 1826, José María Bocanegra to Murphy Jr, 30 January and 16 July 1829, AHGE, Francia, L. 4; c. 25. Mexican fears were reported back to France, Schmaltz to Fleury, 18 February 1824, AAE, CP Mexique, 2.
93. ‘Estado actual de la nación’, *El Sol*, 4 and 5 January 1824, p. 816 and pp. 818–19.
94. The view that monarchy was the form of government best-suited to Mexico was held by numerous British commentators. For example, Robert William Hale Hardy, *Travels in the Interior of Mexico in 1825, 1826, 1827 & 1828* (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1829), 514–17; Ward, *Mexico in 1827*, I, 303; Mark Beaufoy, *Mexican Illustrations, Founded upon Facts; Indicative of the Present Condition of Society, Manners, Religion, and Morals, among the Spanish and Native Inhabitants of Mexico: With Observations upon the Government and Resources of the Republic of Mexico, as They Appeared during Part of the Years 1825, 1826, and 1827, etc.* (London: Carpenter and Son, 1828), 103–17; George Frederick Augustus Ruxton, *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains* (London: John Murray, 1847), 105–06. Even the US Minister concluded in the 1840s that Mexico was not ready for institutions as “free” as those of the United States. Waddy Thompson, *Recollections of Mexico* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1846), 246–51. On persistence of the belief in Spain, see Michael Costeloe, *Imperial Spain and the Spanish American Revolutions 1810–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
95. Beltrami, *Le Mexique*, I, xxxi.
96. Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, ‘Quelques mots sur Joseph-Napoléon Bonaparte’, in *Oeuvres de Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte*, 3 vols. (Paris: M. Charles-Édouard Temblaire, 1848), II, 330.
97. Prince de Polignac to Alamán, 6 August 1823, AAE, AD Mexique, 1.
98. ‘Atrocités libérales dans le Mexique’, *La Quotidienne* (Paris), 27 February 1829, second page.
99. ‘Extérieur. Amérique. – Vera-Cruz (Mexique), 12 décembre’, *Le Constitutionnel* (Paris), 26 February 1829, front page.
100. Tomás Murphy Jr to foreign minister, 26 November 1828. AHGE, Francia, L. 4; c. 25.
101. ‘Note remise à M. Samouel à son passage à la Nouvelle Orléans’ enclosed in Schmaltz to Fleury, 10 May 1824, AAE, ADP Mexique, 1.

102. Deffaudis to foreign minister, 3 March 1835, AAE, CP Mexique, 9.
103. 'Note remise à M. Samouel à son passage à la Nouvelle Orléans' enclosed in Schmaltz to Fleury, 10 May 1824, AAE, ADP Mexique, 1.
104. Mora to Gomez Farías, 20 May 1845, BLAC, Valentín Gomez Farías Collection.
105. José C. Valadés, *Alamán, estadista e historiador* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1987), 66–68; 140–41.
106. 'Instructions données aux personnes envoyées au Mexique', 29 November 1823, AAE, CP Mexique, 2.
107. Deffaudis to Broglie, 11 June and 15 July 1833, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.
108. Broglie to Deffaudis, 24 November 1833, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.
109. Broglie to Deffaudis, 2 May 1834, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.
110. De Cyprey to Thiers, 11 August 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19.
111. De Cyprey to Guizot, 25 September, AAE, CP Mexique, 21.
112. De Cyprey to Thiers, 13 July and 28 September 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19; De Cyprey to Thiers, 15 October 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19.
113. Garro to SRE, 6 September 1839, AHGE, Francia, L. 23; e. 238.
114. De Cyprey to Thiers, 30 November 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19.
115. Gutiérrez de Estrada published the letter in *Le Mexique et l'archiduc Ferdinand*, 15–17.
116. De Cyprey to Thiers, 27 October 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19; de Cyprey to Guizot, 21 January 1841, AAE, CP Mexique, 23.
117. De Cyprey to Thiers, 27 October 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 19.
118. De Cyprey to Guizot, 17 April 1842, AAE, CP Mexique, 22; de Cyprey to Guizot, 8 January 1844, AAE, CP Mexique, 26.
119. Guizot to de Cyprey, 11 March 1841, AAE, CP Mexique, 20.
120. José María Ortiz Monasterio to José Máximo Garro, AHGE, Francia, L. 20; e. 206.
121. For example, Félix Clavé, 'La Question du Mexique—Relations du Mexique avec les États-Unis, l'Angleterre et la France', *Revue des deux mondes*, 12 (1845), 1053; Gabriel Ferry, 'Guerre entre les États-Unis et le Mexique, scènes et épisodes de l'invasion', *Revue des deux mondes*, 19 (1847), 429; Fossey, *Le Mexique*, 520–25.
122. 'France, Paris, 12 septembre', *Journal des débats*, 13 September 1842, first and second pages. The paper reiterated these views after the outbreak of the US-Mexican War. 'France. Paris, 18 septembre', *Journal des débats*, front page.
123. His work was not published until 1843. Isidore Löwenstern, *Le Mexique: souvenirs d'un voyageur* (Paris: A. Bertrand, 1843). See Margarita Pierini, 'Literatura Mexicana Un viajero austriaco en México. Los Recuerdos de Isidore Löwenstern (1838)', *Literature Mexicana*, 14 (2003), 7–42.
124. It is also striking that he used the term "conservative party" and contrasted it with the "democratic party", which he qualified as the "destructive

- party". This is the identical language that Alamán used in 1850: "the Conservative Party has existed amongst us from the moment that the opposite party was born, [the] destructive". *El Universal* (Mexico City), 'Los conservadores y la nación—(concluye)', 10 January 1850, front page.
125. Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, II, 7.
 126. Löwenstern, *Le Mexique*, 455–64.
 127. Michel Chevalier, 'Variétés: Le Mexique, souvenirs d'un voyageur, par M. Isidore Lowenstern. – Paris, chez Arthus Bertrand', *Journal des débats*, 17 September 1843, third and fourth pages.
 128. Chevalier, *Des mines*, 90–91.
 129. Eugène Duflot de Mofras, *Exploration du territoire de l'Orégon, des Californies et de la mer Vermeille, exécutée pendant les années 1840, 1841 et 1842*, 2 vols. (Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1844), I, 29–32.
 130. Gutiérrez de Estrada claimed it was written by "a distinguished writer, today an eminent member of the senate". In all probability, he is referring to Chevalier. Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Le Mexique et l'archiduc*, 15–18.
 131. *Ibid.*, 23. Emphasis in the original.
 132. Justo Sierra, *Juárez; su obra y su tiempo* (Mexico City: J. Ballezá, 1905), 300.

Towards Pan-Latinism

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

As noted in the introduction, international historians have tended to play down pan-Latinism as a factor in explaining the French intervention.³ In a separate historiographical field, cultural and intellectual historians

have focussed on the professed goals of Louis-Napoléon and Chevalier quoted above, particularly their implications for the idea of “Latin America”. In an influential argument, John Leddy Phelan associated pan-Latinism with the imperialism of the French Second Empire.⁴ For Phelan, though Chevalier never used the words “*l’Amérique latine*”, he provided the ideological framework and “spelled out the idea of Latin America”. Phelan believed the term “Latin America” first appeared in the *Revue des races latines* in 1861, a publication which was part of a wider doctrine of “Latin regeneration [that] was a creation of the Second Empire.”⁵ However, Arturo Ardao and Miguel Rojas Mix have demonstrated that the term “Latin America” was used earlier than Phelan claimed. Ardao identified the term in a poem by a Colombian diplomat and intellectual resident in France, José María Torres Caicedo, published on 15 February 1857 in a French-based Spanish-language newspaper, while Rojas Mix located it in a speech delivered in France by the radical liberal Chilean politician Francisco Bilbao in June 1856.⁶

The 1850s French context is considered key to the emergence of the idea of Latin America and pan-Latinism for two reasons. First, the US-Mexican War (1846–48) instilled fear of US aggression among both Latin American and French commentators. Therefore pan-Latinism and the idea of Latin America were constituted primarily in opposition to a US or an “Anglo-Saxon” threat: Torres Caicedo’s poem called for Latin American unity in the face of US expansion,⁷ Bilbao’s speech warned of “fragments of America falling into the Saxon jaws of the hypnotising boa”,⁸ and Chevalier claimed that a US invasion of the American continent was imminent. Second, Louis-Napoléon’s regime is considered to mark a new, aggressive phase in French imperialism.

Chevalier played an important role in the articulation of pan-Latinist discourse, and he was influential under the French Second Empire, particularly as an economist. He was an expert on Latin America, had published various works on the continent, had travelled in Mexico and,⁹ as noted in Chap. 3, believed that monarchy was the solution for Mexico’s problems. A collection of his various articles was published under the title *Le Mexique ancien et modern* (Paris: L. Hachette et Cie, 1863), in which he articulated and defended the ideas behind the French intervention.¹⁰ However, it does not follow from this, as some have argued, that pan-Latinism was: “an ideology composed to legitimate [...] the expansionist policy of Napoléon III. His chief ideologue was Michel Chevalier.”¹¹ If nothing else, Chevalier had argued for the ideas behind the French

intervention at a time when the thought of a Second Bonapartist Empire in France was preposterous for the majority of the political class, but, more importantly, there were many in France and Mexico who shared Chevalier's views on Mexico in particular and the role of France in the "Latin" world in general.

Heeding Koselleck's warnings against a "new nominalism",¹² this chapter argues that the focus on published texts that explicitly deal with "Latin civilisation" and "Latin races" in the Americas has meant that historians have ignored earlier expressions of the ideas that underpin these terms and the extent of their diffusion. By analysing French and Mexican reactions to the Texan revolt (1835–36) and its subsequent US annexation (1845) through diplomatic correspondence, newspapers, the writings of publicists and journalists, and the speeches of politicians, these ideas can be identified earlier than the 1860s: they date back at least to the 1830s. This approach brings together intellectual history and international history. Moreover, pan-Latinism was a transnational discourse, with contributions from French and Mexican commentators (amongst others). Indeed, the readiness of conservative politicians in Mexico to adopt pan-Latinist language and ideas calls into question the argument that initial proponents of the idea of "Latin America" tended to be liberals "who claimed to be waging a pro-democracy crusade against the 'aristocratic' conservatives controlling many of the continent's governments."¹³ First, however, early expressions of French pan-Latinist ideas will be analysed below.

FRANCE AND MEXICO: A CONFRATERNITY?

An axiomatic principle of Chevalier's pan-Latinism was that there was a natural affinity between "Latin" races which extended to the former Spanish colonies in America. However, Chevalier did not invent this idea: it was present during France's earliest dealings with the new states of Latin America. It was hoped that this shared culture would ameliorate France's diplomatic relations with Mexico, which, as discussed in Chap. 2, were rarely cordial. As has been seen, many French observers held negative views of Mexico's population and politicians and therefore doubted the nation's ability to constitute a stable republican government.¹⁴ What is interesting about these negative stereotypes of Mexicans, which were typical of the European prejudices of the era, is that they coexisted alongside a concurrent discourse that projected a different view of the Mexican race.¹⁵ This alternative representation placed it within a southern and

Catholic tradition, which France belonged to, and thus a natural affinity would compel Mexico towards French civilisation. Chevalier's use of the term "Latin" to express this idea is unusual, although not exceptional, in the 1830s and 1840s. Chevalier explained what he meant by the word: it was the "community of ideas, of sentiments and of mores, of origin and of belief that today binds us to these countries".¹⁶

This affinity based on a shared culture was an assumption common to many French diplomats, journalists and politicians in the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1825, the minister for the colonies and the navy informed one diplomatic agent that there were in Mexico "a great number of men who have conserved a sentiment of preference for the French". This was a consequence of a "very great similarity of character, of tastes, of practices, of mores, of habits; and even more powerfully still by the conformity of religion."¹⁷ The French agent, Schmaltz, reiterated this view in a despatch to Paris. Just as with Spain, where, he believed, a predilection was shown for the French, in Mexico, where Spanish "mores, customs and prejudices" and "the same conformity of spirit, character and religion" existed, France would be similarly privileged.¹⁸

The economic rationale that underwrote arguments for recognition of independence and improved commercial relations were often tied to these cultural assumptions. The French newspaper *Le Constitutionnel* noted that French trade had increased after the wars of independence as a result of a partiality for French goods because the "Spanish colonies were attracted towards [France] by a conformity of tastes, of religion and of sympathy."¹⁹ The commercial agent of the Mexican government at Bordeaux, Galos, argued that the development of economic ties between France and Latin America would be "easy" because "the French, of all the Europeans, are those whose character and interests coincide the best with the character and interests of [Latin Americans]." Their predilection for the French was so marked that French language and French literature were almost "the only [which] can be cultivated there". French education would make "[Latin] Americans" the "zealous partisans [of France]".²⁰ For this reason, it was argued that French commerce could rival Britain's.

The premise of a preference for political and commercial relations with France based on a shared culture was a leitmotif for French diplomats serving in Latin America. Adrien Cochelet, the French consul and then interim chargé d'affaires in Mexico from 1829 to 1832, believed that French relations with Mexico would improve after recognition because of "our language, our character and our mores."²¹ Similar claims were made about

other Spanish Americans: Charles Lefebvre de Bécourt, French minister to Buenos Aires, wrote “by our character, by our language, by our religion we have better relations with South Americans than the citizens of the [United States]”.²² The July Monarchy’s recognition of Latin American states in 1830 was justified by Molé in a report to the King in similar terms: “[t]he identity of our religion, the affinity of our language, the ease of our mores, have for a long time earned us a very marked preference of affection over all other peoples. This preference is primarily an undeniable gage of the political influence that we are destined to exert in America.”²³ This theme was further emphasised by Deffaudis in a letter of introduction to the then Mexican president Anastasio Bustamante: “the lines of friendship that have formed between France and Mexico [are because of] the likeness of our languages and customs as well as the similarity of our religion.”²⁴ While Molé and Deffaudis never used the word “Latin”, the implication was clear: France held a privileged position as regards the former Spanish American colonies by virtue of a shared culture.²⁵

Chevalier’s identification of Anglo-Saxons with Protestantism and Latins with Catholicism was also a political division, which informed the French debates on monarchy in Mexico. He claimed that the United States’ historical circumstances made it well-suited to democracy. Catholicism, on the other hand, tended towards monarchy and the anarchy of the former Spanish American colonies proved the impracticality of republicanism in states with a Catholic tradition.²⁶ As has been seen in Chap. 3, this was an assumption shared by some Mexican politicians, who argued that Mexico was not ready for US-style federal republicanism, and this view informed Gutiérrez de Estrada’s monarchical arguments. For de Cyprey, the Mexican monarch would have to be from France because the “French and Catholic element” was “the one that could best be assimilated to the Mexican element.”²⁷ He believed that Mexicans preferred “the allure of the French, the irrepressible and careless vivacity of our nation, our love of light and lively pleasures. In a word, they truly sympathise with the French.”²⁸ There was a “confraternity” between the French and the Mexicans because Mexico was drawn towards France.²⁹

TEXAS: A CONFLICT OF RACES

On its own, this assumption of “confraternity” may not have amounted to much, but US expansionism was increasingly seen in racial terms by French observers, and, by the mid-1840s, a sympathy with the southern, Catholic

race provided the rationale for an anti-US and pro-Mexican foreign policy that shared the same goals as Chevalier's and Louis-Napoléon's pan-Latinism. This policy was outlined in three speeches of 1845 and 1846 delivered by Guizot.³⁰

Guizot identified "two distinct races [in the Americas], the English race and the Spanish race". He argued it was in the interests of France "that neither of these two races be destroyed or absorbed by the other [...] that the Spanish race, the southern Catholic race, maintains in the New World its importance [...] and] that it does not fall under the yoke of, and that it is not devoured by, the Anglo-American race."³¹ Guizot's image of the southern Catholic race enslaved by the north would become a trope of the most virulent pan-Latinism of the 1850s and 1860s. How, then, had France's Protestant foreign minister come to the conclusion that the concerted policy of France should be to prevent the expansion of the United States to save the Catholic south?

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

French observers had watched these events unfold with unease and concluded that the "American enemy" was real. The "republican" and "Protestant" US may have been at odds "with the French [Second Empire] in its very essence",³³ but the legitimist *ultras* of the Bourbon Restoration and the politically conservative *doctrinaires* of the July Monarchy were able to find fault with US democracy before the 1850s.³⁴ And, as has been seen, many theorised that the triumph of republicanism in the New World was an ideological threat to the Old. Furthermore, there was little diplomatic closeness: France's 1833 refusal to indemnify the United States for shipping losses during the Napoleonic War, despite agreeing by treaty to pay 25 million francs in 1831, saw the nations threaten each other with war.³⁵ Incidents such as this did much to create an undercurrent of hostility in France towards the United States.³⁶ However, it was the geostrategic

implications of US aggression that most worried diplomats and policy-makers in Paris.³⁷

Through their dispatches to the foreign ministry, French diplomats in the Americas consistently warned Paris that Mexico would not be able withstand US expansionism. As early as 1830, Cochelet reported the opinion of Alamán that Texas would “pass to the North Americans” because (Cochelet quotes Alamán directly): “[w]e [Mexico] are too weak to successfully oppose their invasion.”³⁸ Cochelet explained four days later that there were 9000 to 10,000 “North Americans” in Texas “almost always in conflict with the Mexican authorities” and that it was an incidental question whether Texas would be taken by payment of an indemnity or by force of arms because it had already been invaded by American colonists.³⁹

Alamán, along with other Mexican leaders, was worried about Texas. Cochelet, or Alamán, may have exaggerated the number, but the US population there heavily outnumbered Spanish speakers: In 1830, there were 7000 Americans to 3000 *Tejanos*; by 1836, there were 35,000 Americans to 3500 *Tejanos*.⁴⁰ A colonisation law of 1830 drafted by Alamán, discussed in more detail below, had been designed to slow the tide of immigration from the United States, but proved unenforceable because of the weakness of the Mexican government.⁴¹ The 1835 victory of centralism in Mexico was the occasion for a revolt in Texas, which began as a federalist one, but the colonists soon called for complete independence.

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

Deffaudis was not alone among French diplomats in documenting the pivotal role of Texas in what was increasingly seen as the inexorable rise of the United States. An unsigned 1838 memorandum on Texas for the then foreign minister, Molé, discussed the merits of recognising the nascent republic and reported: “[the United States] fear nothing and already

dream of the conquest of Mexico.” It went on to summarise the process of US expansion: “[the United States] coveted [Texas] just as they had formerly coveted Louisiana before they bought it, and as they had wanted the Floridas before they invaded it, and just as they now covet the rest of the continent”. The report concluded that further expansion was inevitable: “The encroachment of, and colonisation by, the Anglo-American race are events that have long been foreseen and in truth would be difficult to prevent.”⁴³

Two decades before the 1850s, US expansion at the expense of former territories of the Spanish empire was understood as a conflict between two races. Eugène Maissin, a French naval officer who accompanied Baudin on a short visit to Texas after the conclusion of the naval blockade of Veracruz in 1839, put the battle of San Jacinto in the following context: “it has been the first decisive encounter of the two predominant races in America and it has given the advantage to the Anglo-Saxons.”⁴⁴ Frédéric Gaillardet, a writer who would become the editor of the most widely distributed French language newspaper in the Americas, the *Courrier des États-Unis*, published a series of letters on Texas, after travelling through the new state in early 1839, which shared this conclusion. In the first letter, Gaillardet informed his readers that the US colonists “constitute[d] the first act of collision [...] between the two English and Spanish races who share the Americas.”⁴⁵

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

Informed French opinion that had viewed the conflict over Texas firsthand saw it as a racial one, the outcome of which was clear, but there were different interpretations of this conclusion. Some observers saw the United States as the vanguard of a civilizing mission in North America. Its acquisition of new territories would lead to the development of previously worthless land and therefore provide new markets for France.⁴⁹ However, an

alternative interpretation was to see US expansion as a racial and ideological threat as well as a challenge to the global balance of power. This was the interpretation of pan-Latinists in the 1850s and 1860s, but it was also the editorial line of the *Journal des débats* and was developed in response to the Texan revolt, which began in 1835.

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

The *Journal des débats* occupied a privileged position under the July Monarchy. It was the ministerial paper *par excellence* and was partially funded from the *fonds secrets*, governmental money bestowed by the July Monarchy upon sympathetic publications. While it cannot be said to represent exactly the policy of any given ministry, it was particularly partisan to the *doctrinaires* (especially Guizot and de Broglie), was rarely critical and would not consistently publish a non-governmental line.⁵³ Chevalier was the economics editor and a frequent contributor. The 1839 editorial quoted above is unsigned, but may well have been written by Chevalier given the closeness in language and ideas; the authorship is less important than the views it expresses. Such an articulation of pan-Latinist ideas in 1839 demonstrates not only that it was possible to construct a role for France as defender of Latin civilisation in the Americas more than a decade before the imperialism of Louis-Napoléon, but also that it could be done in a mainstream periodical close to the views of the French government.

In an 1837 letter to a Mexican politician, Chevalier outlined what was to become French policy over Mexico. “The situation of Mexico distresses me”, he wrote. Mexico possessed everything necessary to be a powerful state, but it was falling into dissolution. Furthermore, the conquest by the United States had already begun; the taking of Texas was the first step.

"I strongly believe", he continued, "that the integrity, the strength and the independence of Mexico is important to the equilibrium of the world". France had an interest there, not the selfish interests of other cabinets, but that "great and civilizing interest which habitually regulates the foreign policy of France."⁵⁴

In this letter, Chevalier lamented the fact that European governments, and especially France, did not understand the importance of Latin America and above all Mexico. In fact, however, as has been outlined above, many French observers did share his concerns. Indeed, part of Louis-Napoléon's argument for a canal through Nicaragua rested on the idea that it would lead to "Central America [becoming] a flourishing and powerful state, which will establish a balance of power [...] and [...] prevent, by backing Mexico, any further encroachment from the north."⁵⁵ Rather than a canal to its south, Guizot looked to Mexico's north: he hoped to achieve the same goal of strengthening Mexico by developing Texas as a bulwark against further US expansion, which would in turn protect Mexico from further loss of territory. Britain shared France's desire to prevent annexation and the two governments acted in concert to achieve their goal by privately encouraging Texas to oppose annexation to the United States, while at the same time urging Mexico to recognise the independence of its former territory.⁵⁶ Guizot partially justified this course of action because of France's commercial interests in the Texan republic. However, the main rationale was what he termed France's "political interest". In a speech of 12 January 1846, Guizot mirrored the racialised language of French diplomats: an independent Texas would be "a means to prevent in North America [...] a conflict of two races, Spanish and Anglo-American, and the absorption of one by the other." This would also preserve a "number of independent states in the New World, and, by consequence, maintain a certain balance between these states."⁵⁷ Guizot, then, as much as Louis-Napoléon or Chevalier, argued for an equilibrium in the New World.

French responses to US expansion were varied and Guizot's resistance to the annexation of Texas attracted significant criticism, particularly from opposition politicians such as Thiers, who saw US expansion in a different light: the aggrandisement of the United States benefitted France because it challenged British hegemony. Thiers, therefore, attacked Guizot's policy in the Chamber of Deputies. Thiers noted that the United States had grown in population and power since independence, but this was not something to be feared. It had, in fact, been the secret plan of France inaugurated by Louis XVI when "he founded the United States" and

continued by Napoleon Bonaparte when he “knowingly and voluntarily gave Louisiana [to the United States]”. Thiers denied that America could become “a rival or an enemy of France”.

He ridiculed Guizot’s belief that the “Spanish race” was threatened by the “Anglo-American” one because the United States had neither Britain’s naval strength nor its pretensions to global dominance. Thiers could understand Guizot’s worries over America if France had retained Canada or Louisiana, but the only French colonies were Martinique, Guadeloupe and a “few other insignificant possessions.” Fears of the United States were misplaced: “who threatens these colonies? Where are they placed? [...] in the middle of an English archipelago.” Britain, not the United States, was France’s rival, and a challenge to British hegemony was therefore beneficial to France.⁵⁸

From the perspective of the immediate material interests of France, Thiers’ criticisms were pertinent. France, as Guizot himself admitted, had only a small volume of trade with Texas in the 1840s and only a few colonies in the Caribbean. This demonstrates the importance of representing the conflict in North America in terms of race. By casting France as the defender of the “Spanish race, the southern Catholic race” Guizot laid claim to hegemony over Latin America, which US expansion threatened. This was what Guizot termed France’s “political interest”, but for Thiers, who did not see the conflict in racial terms, the aggrandisement of the United States was not a threat, thus for him there was no reason to support Mexico by preventing the annexation of Texas.⁵⁹

However, in a pan-Latinist worldview US expansion was inherently detrimental to France. This was made clear in Chevalier’s early conceptualisation of the discourse: “the superiority which formerly belonged to the Latin family, has passed into the hands of the Teutonic race [...] The people of the Latin stock must not, however, stand idle in the coming struggle, or the case will go against them by default”.⁶⁰ Chevalier outlined the centrality of Mexico in this global conflict in an 1840 article that argued against the claim that US expansion could benefit France.⁶¹ Chevalier, like Guizot, argued that the balance between the two forces in America had been disturbed by the Texan revolt: “South America, with Mexico, is like southern Europe, Catholic and Latin; North America belongs to a Protestant and Anglo-Saxon population. But today the equilibrium is broken.” He warned that the “Catholic and Latin flag [...] will be replaced or conquered by the Anglo-Saxon standard” and that “one of the most beautiful jewels [Mexico] in the Catholic and Latin crown [will] fall into the

hands of the invading Anglo-Saxons.”⁶² While Guizot’s language was less alarmist than Chevalier’s, his goal was the same and his policy was predicated upon a conception of an unequal struggle on the North American continent between two races where the sympathies of France lay with the southern, Catholic peoples. In short, it was pan-Latinist in all but name.

France and Britain’s attempts to prevent the annexation of Texas were unsuccessful. In 1845, the former Mexican territory was incorporated into the Union and the next year Mexico’s politicians were forced reluctantly into a war with the United States by the bellicosity of public opinion and the determination of Polk to provoke a conflict.⁶³ The US-Mexican War confirmed the assumptions of French diplomats. Because France had broken diplomatic relations with Mexico in 1846,⁶⁴ the Spanish minister Salvador Bermúdez de Castro acted as French chargé d’affaires and it was left to the secretary of the French legation to report on the war from Havana. He believed that the Americans were “a rising people” who had invented a new way to make war: “annexation”. What the United States had done in Texas, they would repeat in Alta and Baja California to achieve their long-held ambition of reaching the Pacific Ocean.⁶⁵ Once war had broken out, he informed Guizot that it meant “nothing less than the complete annihilation of the Mexican nationality”.⁶⁶ The French consul in Havana was even more pessimistic: “the Anglo-Saxon race is going to reign in Mexico as it does in Delhi” and “I am convinced that Mexico has ceased to be”. For the consul, the incorporation of Texas into the Union was part of “a conquest that in a half century will finally be complete.”⁶⁷

The outcome of the US-Mexican War confirmed the worst fears of the *Journal des débats*. An editorial rhetorically asked: “[w]ould the possession of Texas, Florida and Louisiana satiate the ambition of the ‘Anglo-Saxon race?’” Unsurprisingly for a paper that had railed against US expansionism for the past decade the answer was no, and the article expressed the concerns Louis-Napoléon used to explain French intervention in Mexico fifteen years later: the United States would go as far as Panama and even threaten the Antilles.⁶⁸ This view was shared by many French commentators, such as Gabriel Ferry, a French writer who had spent some time in Mexico. He wrote in the *Revue des deux mondes* that the US-Mexican War had shown “how little the Spanish race, if left to itself, is in a position to offer serious resistance to the Anglo-Saxon race.” It was left to Europe to correct this “default of equilibrium”.⁶⁹

Pan-Latinist ideas were able to flourish in the 1850s and 1860s because the notion of Mexico as a southern Catholic nation with a natural affinity

for France and threatened by “Anglo-Saxon” invasion was a widespread one. It also explains why the first published arguments for pan-Latinist policies after the US-Mexican War were not written by Chevalier. In an 1849 work, Benjamin Poucel argued that it was necessary for France to “balance the material power of the Anglo-Saxon race in America by a serious alliance with the Latin race.”⁷⁰ Poucel was responding to the situation in the River Plate, but Hippolyte Du Pasquier de Dommartin, claimed, as regards Mexico, and following Chevalier’s pan-Latinist analysis closely, “the observer, who follows the movement of people on a map of the world, is struck by three great facts: the state of stagnation of the Latin race [...] the maritime progress of the Anglo-Saxon race [...] and finally the military advance of the Slavs”. This situation had “worried [Dommartin] for a long time”; he felt France’s traditions and interests were threatened, even its language. In North America, the only barrier to the ambitions of the United States was a weak Mexico, which “represents the Latin and Catholic race”. He called on “our men of the same blood, of the same mores, the same religion” to rescue Mexico.⁷¹ Phelan and Rojas Mix argue that pan-Latinism was an ideology composed to legitimate the “expansionism” of Louis-Napoléon, but, unless they were particularly prescient, Poucel and Du Pasquier de Dommartin cannot have been writing tracts to justify the imperialism of the French Second Empire before it was founded. Certainly they were not expressing ideas new to the 1850s, nor, as will be seen below, were they exclusively French ideas.

THE VIEW FROM MEXICO

In a published letter to the US Whig politician Henry Clay, the liberal theologian William Ellery Channing wrote, “Some crimes, by their magnitude, have a touch of the sublime; and to this dignity the seizure of Texas by [US] citizens is entitled. Modern times furnish no example of individual rapine on so grand a scale. It is nothing less than the robbery of a realm.”⁷² Channing’s analysis echoed that of most Mexican observers, and his letter was quoted by the Mexican monarchist Hidalgo y Esnaurrízar, who then summarised the anti-Americanism that had developed in conservative thought from 1820 to 1867. “Since 1824”, he wrote, “when the United States planted the republican seed in Mexico”, Washington had always sympathised with, and given help to, “the party that was able to do the greatest evil [*puro* liberals]”. Moreover, the “Monroe Doctrine, so unnatural, has served as the pretext to completely isolate Europe from

America” and was declared on the principle that “Manifest Destiny” was to “dominate the entire continent of America”. Those in Europe who had opposed French intervention in Mexico would soon realise that one day everyone would “bow their heads before the United States”, but, by the time they did, it would be too late to do anything about it.⁷³

In fact, as has been seen, many in France shared these fears, and the same concerns lay at the heart of conservative discourse in Mexico throughout the period under study. It has already been shown in Chap. 3 that conservative politicians in Mexico believed that from the 1820s onwards, the United States played a partisan and destabilising role which favoured federalism and liberalism in Mexican politics. This was one strand of the conservative anti-American discourse in Mexico, which was reinforced by another: US expansion. In this view, far from a model republic of liberty which the former Spanish colonies should imitate, the United States was an aggressive power, hostile to Latin America and Mexico especially. The Texan revolt convinced many in Mexico of the veracity of this interpretation more than a decade before the US-Mexican War, and was the catalyst for the development of an early Mexican national identity.⁷⁴

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

Early Mexican views of the United States were ambivalent. Although the United States was the first nation to recognise Mexican independence, it took another three years before it sent an accredited minister, Poinsett, who, as has been seen, not only antagonised much of the political class, but also had instructions to purchase Texas. Therefore relations were rarely cordial and Mexican politicians were acutely aware of US territorial ambitions.⁷⁸ In 1826, the British chargé d'affaires published a work by the former Spanish minister to Washington, Luis de Onís. This was one of the earliest and most influential accounts in Spanish of Mexico's northern neighbour. Onís warned that Anglo-Americans “looked with disdain or

contempt on all the other nations” and that their rapid success in the New World had engendered “vanity and arrogance” and a belief that they were “superior to all other men”.⁷⁹ The conduct of Anglo-American colonists in Texas, the US volunteers who joined the revolt and the material aid they received from within the United States convinced many Mexicans that Onís had been right.

Texas was an immediate cause of concern for Mexican politicians even before the events of 1835–36, but in the 1820s many had hoped that Mexican-US relations would be mutually beneficial. In 1824, Tornel warned that if Mexican “recklessness” excited “rivalry with [the United States]” then “our western borders will be overrun with the same violence as the waters of the Missouri”, but the United States were Mexico’s “natural allies” because Washington’s policy towards Latin-American independence had been more favourable than that of major continental European powers. However, Tornel came to share Alamán’s negative view of Poinsett’s involvement in Mexican politics, and Texas played a major part in forming this opinion. In the immediate aftermath of the revolt, he argued, far from being the “natural allies” of Mexico: “[f]or more than fifty years [...] the prevailing thought in the [United States] has been the acquisition of the greater part of the territory that formerly belonged to Spain, particularly that part which today belongs to the Mexican nation.”⁸⁰ Tracing the roots of US expansionism and depicting it as an inherently invasive power, the arguments in Tornel’s interpretation of US-Mexican relations in 1837 would have been familiar to a reader of the *Journal des débats*.

In order to stem the tide of US migration to Texas, Alamán drafted a law in 1830 which aimed at limiting Anglo-American colonisation. In the proposal for this law, he outlined his distrust of the United States. From its inception, it had expanded at the expense of European powers and indigenous tribes. In place of armies, battalions and invasions, the United States sent colonists, which gradually outnumbered those already in the territory and undermined the authority of the state. Once this stage had been reached—and this was the stage Texas was at in 1830—the diplomatic assault began. In the name of protecting settlers and their interests, Washington pushed the other power towards a “transaction as onerous for one side as it is advantageous for the other.” The loss of Texas would then endanger states “from New Mexico and Chihuahua to San Luis [sic] and Guanajuato”. Central to Alamán’s proposals was the idea of increasing the

number of Mexican settlers in Texas and encouraging European immigrants “whose religion, language, customs and habits are in opposition to those of the United States.” The aim was to form a barrier against further US encroachments. Without immediate and energetic action, Alamán concluded, “Texas is going to be lost to [Mexico]”.⁸¹ Moreover, once this happened it would prove impossible to reconquer. As Alamán himself noted in 1852, everything that he had predicted as regards the United States in 1830 later came to pass, and much worse besides.⁸²

This conflict with the United States was frequently represented as one which threatened Mexico’s existence: “[i]n a word, [US aggression] will leave [Mexico] without a country”.⁸³ It was thus a “war of race, of religion, of language and of customs”.⁸⁴ For conservative politicians, Poinsett and US-style federal republicanism were linked to Mexican liberals as part of a plan to destabilise Mexico in order to “tear [it] apart with continuous convulsions so that we never consolidate ourselves under any system [of government] and remain in perpetual weakness”, while [the US government] advanced their plans to seize Texas.⁸⁵ These charges against Mexican liberals were given credence by the open admiration of some of them for the United States⁸⁶; Zavala supported the federalist revolt in Texas and became the vice-president of the Texan republic.⁸⁷

The US threat led some Mexican politicians to look to Europe for support in preventing further US expansion. Tornel’s work concludes with a discussion of Britain and France, to whom he appeals to stop the march of the “Colossus of the North.” With regard to France, Tornel wrote, “the character of the French people has so many points in common with that of our own, the advantages of a reciprocal trade are so marked, and her interests in maintaining the balance of power both in the old and the new worlds so great, that she cannot very well make an exception in her magnanimous and humane policy, by abandoning Mexico to a doubtful state.”⁸⁸ In 1824, Tornel called the United States a “natural ally”; in 1837 it threatened the “political existence” of Mexico, the fate of which would be as sad as Poland’s.⁸⁹ This journey was representative of the disillusionment of many Mexican politicians,⁹⁰ but it was particularly acute amongst conservative sections of the elite because US expansion was linked to Mexican liberalism by a pernicious plan to export the “exotic flowers” of federalism and pure democracy that would weaken Mexico in order to facilitate the eventual absorption of the entire nation.⁹¹

MONARCHISM, ANTI-AMERICANISM AND PAN-LATINISM

Anti-Americanism was, then, a well-trodden path for many Mexican politicians. It is within this context that the resurgence of monarchical ideas, which looked to Europe for protection and inspiration, needs to be placed. Chapter 3 outlined how Gutiérrez de Estrada saw the July Monarchy as a model to end the anarchy of Mexican politics. He also argued for monarchy as a means to stop the progress made by the “Anglo-Saxon” race in Texas. He presciently warned that if Mexico did not act soon, then “the flag of the [United States]” would be unfurled above the national palace while Protestant services would be celebrated in the “splendid Cathedral of Mexico”.⁹² The reaction to his pamphlet meant that Gutiérrez de Estrada spent the rest of his life in exile. However, his ideas resonated with some in Mexico, who saw monarchy not only as a way to solve the domestic problems of Mexico, but also as a means to safeguard its independence in the face of US aggression. These men developed the ideas of Gutiérrez de Estrada and combined them with a strong current of anti-Americanism.

One man who came to identify with Gutiérrez de Estrada’s views and, according to one source had held them since 1832, was Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga.⁹³ Paredes was strongly pro-clerical, anti-democratic and nostalgic for the order and stability of the colonial past.⁹⁴ The liberal Guillermo Prieto wrote: “his admiration for the Spanish system was profound and his hatred of the mob was insuperable.”⁹⁵ He shared conservative contempt for federal republicanism and advocated a regime dominated by the army, the clergy and the propertied classes.⁹⁶ On 14 December 1845, he issued a *pronunciamiento* against the moderate liberal government, but what separated this revolt from the many others that had gone before was that the plan called for an “extraordinary congress with full powers to constitute the nation without any restrictions”.⁹⁷

Although monarchy was not explicitly mentioned, Gutiérrez de Estrada’s plan was in effect being put into action. Paredes was in secret communication with Alamán and, backed by Madrid, the Spanish minister to Mexico, Bermúdez de Castro, who wished to see Mexico become a monarchy and helped to compose the Plan of San Luis Potosí (the manifesto for Paredes’ revolt against the government). Nonetheless, Paredes’ supporters included staunch republican *santanistas* such as Tornel. He was, therefore, cautious about openly proclaiming monarchical intentions, although he was equally reluctant to rule out publicly a change in governmental system.⁹⁸ In order to prepare public opinion for the possibility of

monarchy, a newspaper, *El Tiempo*, was set up. Partially funded by money provided by the Spanish government, the paper was associated with various individuals, particularly Alamán, who would become influential figures in the Conservative Party, and, later, many were supporters of the French intervention and the Mexican Second Empire.⁹⁹

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

It was not, however, until 12 February 1846 that the paper declared itself openly in favour of monarchy. An editorial entitled ‘Our Profession of Faith’ outlined the newspaper’s “political principles”. Independence was a glorious and necessary fact, and the Plan of Iguala promised a prosperous future uniting all sections of Mexican society. However, as discussed in Chap. 3, the plan had not been enacted and the First Mexican Empire had fallen. In its place, “the [United States] began to build another kind of empire” through its books, its ideas, its representatives and its deceptive prosperity (deceptive because Mexican liberals had attributed US prosperity to federal republicanism) directed and encouraged republican ideas. Failing to take into account the differences of “origin, religion and history”, Mexican politicians had made the mistake of thinking that the best route to prosperity was to “throw ourselves into the arms of the [United States], slavishly imitate its institutions and follow its perfidious advice.” The “absurd” Constitution of 1824 had therefore been adopted, and with disastrous consequences. By 1846 the results were clear: a disorganised administration, a ruined economy, enormous debts, “barbarians

pushing back the borders of civilisation”, Yucatán separated, the United States occupying Mexican territory and the state unable to protect itself militarily. If Mexico continued down this path, it would lead to “not only ruin, demoralisation, anarchy, but also the entire dissolution of the nation, the loss of our territory, our name, our independence.”

The solution was “representative monarchy”, the “promises and guarantees of the Plan of Iguala.” This in turn would develop commerce, protect industry and give impetus to the intellectual activity. In this ideal state, there would be a strong army, distant provinces would be protected, Church property would not be threatened and Catholicism would be the only religion tolerated. The paper did not want a “reaction”: “[c]onservative by character and conviction, we ask protection for all legitimate interests whatever may be their origin.”¹⁰² As will be seen in Chaps. 5 and 6, monarchist, and conservative arguments more generally, developed significantly in the next decade to incorporate economic development as well as administrative reform, but the concerns of the 1840s were not dramatically different to those of the early 1820s. Fear of US aggression, however, as well as its perceived political and cultural influence on Mexico, gave the polemics an urgency lacking in earlier manifestations of monarchical arguments—in the 1840s, monarchy was a solution to an immediate and external existential threat. For *El Tiempo*, Mexico was faced with the question “to be, or not to be”.¹⁰³

Anti-Americanism was at the heart of one or more of the following familiar arguments: (1) the United States had deliberately exported federal republicanism in order to weaken Mexico; (2) some liberals in Mexico had worked, and were working, with the United States to destroy Mexico; (3) the United States was an inherently aggressive power that used immigration to weaken the national government’s hold on distant territory and this was a prelude to annexation; (4) the “Anglo-Saxon” race was the implacable “enemy” of Mexico and its “race”; and (5) the Protestant US aimed to destroy Catholic Mexico.¹⁰⁴ Taken collectively, this meant that war against the United States was a “national war” and at stake was the existence of the Mexican nation. If the United States triumphed, then “we will be its slaves, and our religion, customs and language will end with the current generation”.¹⁰⁵ In order to avoid this fate, the editorials argued, Mexico needed to restore its reputation in Europe to secure alliances against the United States.¹⁰⁶ It was in Europe’s interest, ran another editorial, for Mexico to “increase [its] forces in order to resist the [United States]” because it could not view with indifference the “immense”

increase in power that the “turbulent American democracy” would acquire by absorbing Mexico. Europe’s political influence, its commercial concerns and the equilibrium of the world necessitated a “counterweight” to the United States.¹⁰⁷

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

As with Gutiérrez de Estrada, the editorials of *El Tiempo* saw the western European constitutional monarchies, especially France, as paradigms. Just as in Europe, constitutional monarchy in Mexico would result in a meritocracy where “the democratic element is everything, the aristocratic nothing.” The evidence for this argument was that the leading statesmen of France, such as Guizot, Thiers, Perier and Villèle, had, an editorial argued, all come from humble backgrounds. The paper quoted a speech by Guizot at length.¹¹⁰

Anti-US invective was part of Mexican public discourse after the Texan revolt and in the run-up to the US-Mexican War, but what separated *El Tiempo* from its peers was that it synthesised anti-Americanism into an argument against all forms of republicanism in favour of monarchy and orientation towards Europe.¹¹¹ The details of how this monarchy would be constituted were vague because monarchy was a programme in itself. Although, as has been seen, criticisms of the Constitution of 1824 were legion, at heart they rested on two elements: a weak executive within a federal republic. This is what Alamán meant when he described it as “a monstrous graft of the US Constitution on to that of [the Spanish Constitution of 1812]”.¹¹² The same point was made by *El Tiempo*: the Spanish Constitution of 1812, following French revolutionary influence, gave too much power to the legislature, making it the “origin of all power”, whereas US-style republicanism required a strong executive.¹¹³ A monarchical regime was attractive because, in theory at least, it unravelled, at a stroke, all of these perceived problems. Congress would be elected on a restricted franchise; party divisions would be moderated by an impartial

ruler, who would be a powerful head of state at the helm of a centralist administration. Finally, it was argued that only under a monarchy could corporate bodies, key elements of society, such as the Church and the army, be protected, while order would be restored.¹¹⁴

Some insight into the vision of those who supported Paredes is given by the electoral law which was drawn up in order to choose the deputies who would make up the constituent congress. Reported to be the work of Alamán, it was distinctive, although it had antecedents in the previous electoral system used in Mexico in 1821 and 1843, and was influenced by the ideas of Burke. The main innovation was that the makeup of the congress would be organised by class as defined by occupation. In total there would be 160 deputies, which would consist of 38 landowners, 20 merchants, 14 miners, 14 industrialists, 14 literary professors, 10 magistrates, 10 public administrators, 20 clergy and 20 military.¹¹⁵ It was an attempt to impose order, to accord each valuable section of society its proper place. The majority of voters were excluded from the electoral process. The franchise was based on income, although it varied for different classes, and some representatives were elected directly, others indirectly. The system drawn up in 1846 is, then, at least illustrative of what was meant in practice by not being educated enough to enact democratic republican government.¹¹⁶ Nonetheless, it would be dangerous to extrapolate too much from this electoral experiment because the law was designed to elect a congress that would in turn vote for a monarchical government, therefore it necessarily required that a narrow section of Mexico's elite be returned who might plausibly support this. And in bringing about this composition, one of its architects judged it successful in that the deputies were, according to Bermúdez de Castro, predominantly made up of "sensible people" who belonged to (what he called) the "conservative party".¹¹⁷

Many of those elected played a prominent role in Mexican conservatism and later supported Maximilian,¹¹⁸ and, in the view of a contemporary writer who supported the politics expressed in the newspaper, "a great part of the affluent classes subscribed to [*El Tiempo*]", but its open support for monarchism "caused a profound sensation" and the "entire press, without exception [...] rose against [its] ideas".¹¹⁹ Paredes was forced to drop monarchy partly because of its controversy and unpopularity amongst his own supporters, such as Tornel. Naturally, republican papers, such as *El Siglo XIX*, *El Monitor Republicano* and the newly formed ministerial, but republican, *La Reforma*, railed against any attempt to

change the political institutions of the country,¹²⁰ but even later monarchists, such as Juan Nepomuceno Almonte and Antonio Haro y Tamariz, were at this time openly against the ideas expressed in *El Tiempo*.¹²¹ Paredes, in an ultimately unsuccessful bid to retain power, pronounced himself in favour of republican government in a speech of 6 June 1846 to the new congress. The next day *El Tiempo* announced it would cease publication because it could not continue to support the present government, but did not wish to oppose it during a time of war.¹²²

In 1846, anti-Americanism alongside monarchist ideas combined to create the most concerted attempt to found a monarchy in Mexico since the Plan of Iguala.¹²³ The failure of this plan, Duflot de Mofras argued, was greatly to the detriment of French interests because it would result in the US conquest of Mexico. He argued in 1847 that for “monarchical and Catholic France” the “annihilation of people of Latin origin [...] to which [France] is tied by the double line of language and religion” would be disaster. The solution was to support those Mexicans, like Gutiérrez de Estrada and Paredes, who wanted to found a monarchy.¹²⁴

The US-Mexican War convinced many Mexican conservative to turn their anti-Americanism into support for pan-Latinism and worldview that underpinned it. Increasingly, they turned towards France for inspiration for their political projects. Alamán had looked to Spain for help to found a monarchy in 1846, but in the 1850s attention turned to the French Second Empire. Mexican conservatives realised that Spanish power was limited and identified France as the strongest “Latin” and Catholic nation. Buenaventura Vivó, Santa Anna’s minister to Spain during his 1853–55 dictatorship, pointed out that France was the “first” power of the “Latin race” in Europe and it had “greater sympathies for Mexico and the Spanish-American people than any other nation, and was better able to make these sympathies effective.”¹²⁵

This was part of the consolidation of Mexican conservatism after 1848, but it is worth noting here the shift in the 1850s from a pan-Hispanic conception to a pan-Latinist one amongst many Mexican conservatives. Poucel’s pamphlet, discussed above, introduced the category of “Latin” more widely into the Mexican conservative press. The pamphlet was a précis of Chevalier’s ideas and cited the more celebrated author numerous times. It was translated in *El Correo de Ultramar* and reprinted from this Parisian paper in *El Orden* in Mexico City.¹²⁶ The newspaper of the Conservative Party, *El Universal*,¹²⁷ had picked up on it earlier and analysed it in a series of six editorials. Although the paper argued that reducing

the races of the Americas into two categories was overly simplistic, the argument of Poucel largely fitted the paper's own understanding of the international context.¹²⁸ Identification with the Latin race became increasingly common in 1850s Mexican conservative discourse. For example, an 1854 editorial predicted a great future for the "Latin race [...] to which we belong by our origins and to which we are bound by indestructible sympathies."¹²⁹

Conservatives also agreed with the argument that more authoritarian government was better-suited to Latin races. An 1855 pamphlet argued that liberalism was successful amongst "Teutonic" races, but amongst the Latin race, "to which we belong", the Conservative Party represented the ideas that would be most successful.¹³⁰ By the late 1850s, "Latin" was used interchangeably with "Hispano-American" or "Spanish American" in the semi-official newspaper of the Conservative Party, *La Sociedad*.¹³¹ The newspaper was contacted in an open letter from the editor of the French journal the *Revue des races latines*. In an editorial following on from the publication of this letter, *La Sociedad* described the "*Revista de las razas latinas*" as dedicated to the interests of "the Spanish American people".¹³²

Perhaps the most striking example of anti-Americanism combined with pan-Latinism in conservative Mexican discourse is provided by José Ramón Pacheco, Santa Anna's minister to France from 1853 to 1855. Pacheco argued that the United States was an expansionist power which threatened Mexico and Central America as far as Panama as well as Cuba. The Monroe Doctrine was not a fraternal policy in the interests of the other American republics; rather, it was a project which aimed at exclusive domination and allowed the United States to act with impunity. New Orleans was the "Algiers" of modern times, and filibusters were its pirates. Furthermore, in the struggle between the forces of order and "socialists" or "communists", the radical democracy of the United States supported the latter. This was not, then, merely a question of the independence of some "half-forgotten republic", but rather a crisis for the civilised world as a whole which was threatened by these "new Goths and Vandals". Mexico was on the frontline of this struggle and France must take an interest in its survival.¹³³ In private conversations with the French foreign minister, Pacheco argued that France had a duty to protect Mexico because it was "the most powerful [nation] of the Latin peoples". Moreover, Pacheco associated liberalism with the violence of the French revolution and warned that this would be unleashed across the American continent by the

“Anglo-Saxons.”¹³⁴ This is one of the first examples of an argument for French intervention in Mexico made at a government level in pan-Latinist terms, and it was made by a Mexican in 1853.¹³⁵

It was not only Santa Anna’s diplomats who interpreted the 1850s international context through the prism of pan-Latinism and looked to France to support “Latin” races in the Americas: this was a view shared by many in the Spanish-speaking world. *El Correo de Ultramar*, which was later edited by Torres Caicedo,¹³⁶ believed that there was a struggle between the “Latin” and “Anglo-Saxon” races in the Americas. The former needed to unite and work with Europe in order to safeguard its borders from the US threat, an argument the paper claimed it had made consistently for the last six years. Louis-Napoléon’s mission in America was the same in the West as it was in the East: “to sustain the weak against the strong”.¹³⁷ The paper had earlier argued that, although “Latin America” should be free from interference, Europe was necessary to maintain the balance of power and the Monroe Doctrine was an absurd fiction which aimed at US dominance.¹³⁸

Periodicals published in Madrid such as the *Revista española de ambos mundos* and *La América* made similar arguments warning that the Latin or Hispanic race faced extinction in the Americas.¹³⁹ In the former, the Spaniard Francisco Muñoz del Monte lamented Europe’s inability to prevent US expansion: “in vain Guizot [...] proclaimed the solemn commitment to prevent the annihilation of the Latin race”.¹⁴⁰ The Cuban-Spanish creole Francisco de Frías y Jacob warned Louis-Napoléon that the “triumph of the United States” would signal the end of the Latin race and as its guardian, France’s duty was to support the forces of order in Mexico against the United States.¹⁴¹ The Chilean Ambrosio Montt identified Louis-Napoléon as the most powerful sovereign in Europe and asked rhetorically: “does he [...] try to ensure the independence and integrity of the Latin republics of America so threatened by Anglo-Saxon democracy?” The answer, sadly, was no, he did not “harbour any such ambitions”.¹⁴²

In France, authors such as Chevalier, Poucel, de Fossey and Ferry had warned, in similarly pan-Latinist language, that the absorption of Mexico by the United States was imminent.¹⁴³ An 1856 article by the journalist Félix Belly in the *Revue contemporaine*, one of the first anywhere to use the term “Latin America”, wrote that “the suzerainty of the entire New World is claimed by an invading republic” which “threatens the independence of its neighbours, the autonomy of the Spanish race and the commercial freedom of the globe.”¹⁴⁴ Writing in 1855, Jean-Jacques Ampère

believed the United States to be an expansionist power, and Mexico to be more under threat than Cuba.¹⁴⁵ Such anti-Americanism was not, then, merely the minority view of publications such as the *Revue des races latines*,¹⁴⁶ but was shared by Mexican conservatives, French diplomats, the foreign ministry in Paris and many French, Spanish and Latin American publicists.

As has been shown, fear of the United States had been a preoccupation in French thought and was frequently expressed in pan-Latinist terms. In a virulently anti-American article, Alphonse de Lamartine wrote that the idea behind Louis-Napoléon's intervention in Mexico was "great": far from being motivated by petty monetary concerns, or even the protection of French nationals, the policy "was for the salvation of America and the world." Lamartine argued that the United States threatened "all the capitals of civilised South America." Therefore France must "anticipate events [and] protect the Latin race" by defending Mexico, not merely for its own interest, but for that of Europe as well.¹⁴⁷ This argument was the first of Chevalier's two "motives of general policy" for the French intervention: a "European, universal interest" to place a "barrier to the imminent invasion of the entire American continent by the [United States]."¹⁴⁸

Sara Yorke Stevenson, who grew up in Paris and moved to Mexico during the French intervention and Second Mexican Empire, describes in her memoirs how these pan-Latinist views were commonplace amongst the political class in Paris. Lamartine and Chevalier were frequent visitors to her guardian's house and their assumptions, she wrote, were largely those of the elite at the time. Moreover, "[n]one seriously doubted the possibility of occupying [Mexico] [...]. The only point discussed was, [would it be] worth it?"¹⁴⁹ Contemporaneously with these expressions of pan-Latinism in France, monarchical or authoritarian ideas gained currency in Mexico, and for those who supported them it was argued that Mexico's salvation lay in an intimate connection with Europe, especially France.

* * *

As has been demonstrated, the strategic goals of Louis-Napoléon's and Chevalier's pan-Latinism not only predated the 1860s by at least three decades, as did the assumptions that underpinned them, but also these were widely shared in France and in the Spanish-speaking world. Moreover, the only difference between the policy of Guizot and Louis-Napoléon was the means by which it was to be achieved. For Guizot, this would occur "by the sheer weight of [France's] influence alone",¹⁵⁰ whereas for

Louis-Napoléon it would come about by the force “of French arms.”¹⁵¹ And here the context is crucial: had Guizot, even with British support, strongly opposed Texan annexation, it would have meant war with the United States. Louis-Napoléon’s intervention, coming as it did during the US Civil War, faced no such constraints.

North Africa was also cast as a Latin empire and “*l’Afrique Latine*” came to describe the area of former Roman provinces under French rule or influence. Patricia Lorcin argues that pan-Latinism in Algeria was “a multidirectional process whose disparate components came together gradually” and that “it was not a predetermined justification for colonization; rather it was engendered by circumstances of conquest and colonization.”¹⁵² As with North Africa, it can be argued that pan-Latinism in America was also a discourse whose varied components came together gradually. The idea of an affinity between France and the former Spanish American colonies dates back at least to the 1820s and once US expansion began to be seen as a conflict of two races after the Texan revolt, the two principal constituents of the pan-Latinist discourse were already in place. It was therefore not an “ideology” composed to legitimate the French “expansion” of the Second Empire, as Phelan and Rojas Mix claim, but a discourse that emerged in the 1830s and only became mobilised behind a specific foreign policy in the 1860s. The consequence was that it became more coherently articulated through the propaganda of the regime’s apologists. Rather than indulging in short-term desire for a Latin empire, Louis-Napoléon was instead implementing a long-held French strategic vision: equilibrium in the New World.

From the Mexican perspective, anti-Americanism developed immediately after independence, particularly over Texas. A particular interpretation of the United States’ relationship with Mexico became embedded within conservative discourse, which maintained that Washington had a pernicious and partisan interest in Mexican politics. This formed the basis of arguments for orientating Mexico towards Europe and, in no small part, underpinned the rationale for monarchy. However, unlike the French proto-pan Latinist discourse, the majority of Mexicans did not openly associate with French interests or pan-Latinist ideas, nor did they call for French intervention, until the 1850s—it was Spain that furnished the funds to support *El Tiempo*.

It would take the catastrophic defeat of the US-Mexican War, combined with the increased polarisation of Mexican politics, for Mexican conservatives to openly identify the future of the Mexican nation with that

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

NOTES

1. Louis-Napoléon to General Forey, 3 July 1862; a draft of the letter is in AAE, MD Mexique, 10: ‘Lettre de l’Empereur à General Forey’, 8 July 1862, and another version dated 14 July 1862 is in the [A]rchives [N]ationales, 400AP/62.
2. Chevalier, *Le Mexique*, 478–79.
3. Delmon, ‘Les acteurs de la politique impériale’; Cunningham, *Mexico*; Black, *Napoleon III*. A notable exception is Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon the Third*, which argues the French intervention was a “sinister conspiracy against the United States” that aimed at “superiority for the Latins in America over Anglo-Americans”, 58 and 303–07.
4. John Leddy Phelan, ‘Pan-Latinism, French Intervention in Mexico (1861–67) and the Genesis of the Idea of Latin America’, in Juan Antonio Ortega y Medina (ed.), *Conciencia y autenticidad históricas. Escritos en homenaje a Edmundo O’Gorman* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1968), 279.
5. *Ibid.*, 295–97.
6. Arturo Ardao, *Génesis de la idea y el nombre de América Latina* (Caracas: Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos Rómulo Gallegos, 1980), ch. 2; Miguel Rojas Mix, ‘Bilbao y el hallazgo de América Latina: Unión continental, socialista y libertaria...’, *Cahiers du monde hispanique et luso-brésilien*, 46 (1986), 35–47. On pan-Latinism and the idea of Latin America see also Jaime Hanneken, ‘Infinite Latinité: French Imperial Discourses between *l’Afrique Latine* and *Amérique Latina*’, *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies*, 17 (2013), 236–44; Walter Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005); Aims McGuinness, ‘Race and Sovereignty in the Americas in the 1850s’, in Nancy Appelbaum, Anne Macpherson and Karin Roseblatt (eds.), *Race and Nation in*

- Modern Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Union latine (ed.), *La latinité en question: colloque international, 16–19 mars 2004* (Paris: Institut des Hautes Etudes d'Amérique Latine; Union Latine, 2004); Vicente Romero, 'Du nominal 'latin' pour l'Autre Amérique. Notes sur la naissance et le sens du nom 'Amérique latine' autour des années 1850', *Histoire et Sociétés de l'Amérique latine*, 7 (1998), 57–89; Paul Estrade, 'Del invento de 'América Latina' en París por latinoamericanos (1856–1889)', in Jacques Maurice and Marie-Claire Zimmerman (eds.), *París y el mundo ibérico e iberoamericano* (Paris: Université Paris X-Nanterre, 1998); Guy Martinière, 'Invention d'un concept opératoire: la latinité de l'Amérique', in Guy Martinière, *Aspects de la coopération franco-brésilienne: transplantation culturelle et stratégie de la modernité* (Grenoble: Presses universitaires de Grenoble; Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1982).
7. 'Las dos Américas', *El Correo de Ultramar* (Paris), 15 February 1857, front and second pages.
 8. Francisco Bilbao, 'Iniciativa de la América. Idea de un Congreso Federal de las repúblicas', in Manuel Bilbao (ed.), *Obras Completas*, 2 vols. (Buenos Aires: Imprenta de Buenos Aires Calle de Moreno, frente a la casa del Gobierno Provincial, 1865–66), I, 289–90.
 9. See 'Lettres sur le Mexique. Aspect du pays. – Ancien mexicains', *Journal des débats*, 20 July 1837, third and fourth page; 'Politiques des espagnols dans le nouveau-monde. Mexico', 1 August 1837, third page; 'Lettres sur le Mexique. De l'état actuel du Mexique. Mines de Real de Monte, avril 1833', 7 August 1837, third and fourth page; 'Lettres sur le Mexique. Système de colonisation des espagnols', 15 August 1837, third page.
 10. The work was translated into English and Italian and ran to a second French edition published in 1864. In a review, *The Economist* argued the work reveals the policy of Louis-Napoléon and must have had his approval. 'M. Chevalier upon Mexico', *The Economist*, 2 April 1864, pp. 414–15. This same interpretation is outlined in 'Chevalier's Mexico', *The Times*, 8 December 1864, p. 7.
 11. Miguel Rojas Mix, *Los cien nombres de América: eso que descubrió Colón* (Barcelona: Lumen, 1991), 357. An idea restated by Herminio Núñez Villavicencio, 'Sobre el concepto de identidad latinoamericana', *Cuadernos Americanos*, 124 (2008), 181–99, and Mignolo, *Latin America*, 79. This interpretation is also in the entry for "Latin America" in Barbara Tenenbaum (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Latin American History and Culture*, 5 vols. (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1996), III, 391.
 12. Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 88.
 13. Gobat, 'The Invention of Latin America', 1361.
 14. See Henri Favre, 'Race et nation au Mexique. De l'indépendance à la révolution', *Annales*, 49 (1994), 951–76, and Nancy Nichols Barker,

- ‘The Factor of “Race” in the French Experience in Mexico, 1821–1861’, *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 59 (1979), 64–80.
15. That these two views could co-exist may in part be explained by the fact that within the continuum of civilisation discussed in Chap. 2, it was possible to regress as well as progress. For example, in 1846 Chevalier wrote “after twenty five years [of independence...] Mexico, instead of advancing in civilisation, has gone backwards, it has returned to barbarism”. Chevalier, *Des mines*, 89.
 16. Michel Chevalier, ‘Variétés. De l’expatriation considérée dans ses rapports économiques, politiques et moraux; par M. S. Dutot. Le Texas et sa Révolution; par M. T. Leclerc, médecin en chef de l’hôpital-général de Tours’, *Journal des débats*, 23 September 1840, third and fourth pages.
 17. ‘Instructions pour Monsieur Martin. Agent Français à Mexico’, 22 December 1825, AAE, CP Mexique, 2.
 18. Schmaltz to Fleury, 16 June 1824, AAE, ADP Mexique, 1.
 19. ‘Intérieur. Paris, 29 janvier. Dixième letter. D’une vallée des Vosges, le 25 janvier’. *Le Constitutionnel*, 30 January 1825, 1–2.
 20. Galos to ‘Messieurs les membres composant la chambre de commerce de Bordeaux’, 19 February 1825; Galos to Tomás Murphy Sr., 6 and 17 May 1826; Murphy Sr. to Rocafuerte, 22 May and 20 June 1826, AHGE, Francia, L. 1; c. 1.
 21. Cochelet to foreign minister, 5 November and 22 November 1830, AAE, CP Mexique, 5; Cochelet to Sébastiani, 13 February 1832. See also same to same, 1 January 1832, AAE CP Mexique, 7.
 22. De Bécourt, ‘Des Rapports de la France’, 60.
 23. Molé, ‘Rapport au Roi’, August 1830, AAE, MD Amérique, 36.
 24. Deffaudis to Broglie, 12 February 1833, and Broglie’s response, Broglie to Deffaudis, 9 May 1833, AAE, CP Mexique, 8.
 25. See also Deffaudis to Molé, 24 February 1837; same to same, 29 March 1837; same to same, 18 April 1837; same to same, 17 August 1837, AAE, CP Mexique, 11.
 26. Chevalier, *Lettres*, II, 291.
 27. De Cyprey to Guizot, 12 August 1844, AAE, CP Mexique, 28.
 28. De Cyprey to Guizot, 17 April 1842, AAE, CP Mexique, 22.
 29. De Cyprey to Guizot, 5 November 1841, AAE, CP Mexique, 21.
 30. To the Chamber of Deputies on 10 June 1845 in François Guizot, *Histoire parlementaire de France: recueil complet des discours prononcés dans les Chambres de 1819 à 1848, par M. Guizot*, 5 vols. (Paris: Michel-Lévy frères, 1863–64), IV, 559–73; to the Chamber of Peers on 12 January and to the Chamber of Deputies on 21 January 1846 in *ibid.*, V, 1–32 and 43–59.
 31. *Ibid.*, V, 21.

32. Daniel Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 20 and 746; Donald Meinig, *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History*, 4 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), Volume II, *Continental America, 1800–1867*, 128.
33. Maïke Thier, 'The View from Paris: "Latinity", "Anglo-Saxonism", and the Americas, as discussed in the *Revue des Races Latines*, 1857–64', *International History Review*, 33 (2011), 630. On French views of the United States see also Maïke Thier, 'A World Apart, A Race Apart?', in Axel Körner, Nicola Miller and Adam Smith (eds.), *America Imagined: Explaining the United States in Nineteenth-Century Europe and Latin America* (New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
34. Philippe Roger, *The American Enemy: The History of French Anti-Americanism*, trans. Sharon Bowman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), ch. 1.
35. Henry Blumenthal, *A Reappraisal of Franco-American Relations, 1830–1871* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), 74–77.
36. See René Rémond, *Les États-Unis devant l'opinion française, 1815–1852*, 2 vols. (Paris: A Colin, 1962).
37. The French minister to Washington warned that, unless checked, it would lead to global catastrophe, Pageot to Guizot, 15 July 1845 and 29 September 1845, AAE, CP États-Unis, 101.
38. Cochelet to foreign minister, 16 January 1830, AAE, CP Mexique, 5.
39. Cochelet to foreign minister, 20 January 1830, AAE, CP Mexique, 5.
40. David Weber, *The Mexican Frontier, 1821–1846: The American Southwest Under Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), 166.
41. Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'The Colonization and Loss of Texas: A Mexican Perspective', in Jaime Rodríguez and Kathryn Vincent (eds.), *Myths, Misdeeds, and Misunderstandings: The Roots of Conflict in U.S.-Mexican relations* (Delaware: SR Books, 1997), 47.
42. Deffaudis to Broglie, 1 July 1836, AAE, CP Mexique, 10.
43. 'Memorandum sur Texas', 8 May 1838, AAE, CP Texas, 1.
44. Massin in Blanchard and Dauzats, *San Juan de Ulúa*, 540.
45. Frédéric Gaillardet, 'Variétés. Lettres sur la Texas. (Première lettre.) Envahissements de la race Anglo-Américaine sur le Texas', *Journal des débats*, 1 October 1839, third and fourth page.
46. For Saligny's career, see Nancy Nichols Barker, 'In Quest of the Golden Fleece: Dubois de Saligny and French Intervention in the New World', *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 3 (1972), 253–68.
47. Dubois de Saligny to Soult, 4 May 1840, AAE, CP Texas, 2.
48. Édouard de Lisle to Soult, 1 January 1840, AAE, CP Mexique, 18.

49. Deffaudis to Broglie, 29 July 1835, CP Mexique, 9; Deffaudis to Thiers, 1 September 1836, CP Mexique, 10; Massin in Blanchard and Dauzats, *San Juan de Ulúa*, 543; 'Memorandum on Texas', 8 May 1838, AAE, CP Texas, 1. Frédéric Leclerc, 'Le Texas et sa révolution', *Revue des deux mondes*, 21–22 (1840), 220–53; 605–39.
50. 'Paris, 22 juin', *Journal des débats*, 23 June 1836, front and second page.
51. 'Paris, 2 septembre', *ibid.*, 3 September 1836, front and second page.
52. 'Paris, 16 mars', *ibid.*, 17 March 1839, front and second page.
53. Hugh Collingham and Robert Alexander, *The July Monarchy: A Political History of France, 1830–1848* (London: Longman, 1988), 178–79.
54. Chevalier to Rafael Mangino y Mendivil, 30 September 1837. AHGE, Francia, L. 14; c. 109.
55. Louis-Napoléon, *Canal of Nicaragua*, 7.
56. Guizot to Sainte-Aulaire, 29 January 1844, Sainte Aulaire to Guizot, 8 February 1844 and same to same, 19 June 1844. AAE, CP Texas, 7; Guizot to Saint-Aulaire, 13 January 1845, same to same, 11 February 1845 and Guizot to Dubois de Saligny, 27 April 1845. AAE, CP Texas, 8. See also Guizot to Alleye de Cyprey, 27 April 1844, AAE, CP Mexique, 26.
57. Guizot's policy as regards Anglo-French cooperation as regards Texas is outlined in *Histoire parlementaire*, V, 1–32 and 43–59.
58. Guizot, *ibid.*, V, 21.
59. Just as Thiers ridiculed Guizot over the threat to the "Spanish race" in 1846, so too he ridiculed Louis-Napoléon over the "Latin race" in 1864. "You will pardon the word I am about to use, but I do not take seriously this idea of Latin races opposed to Saxon races. No, it is not a consideration that deserves attention." Thiers, *Discours*, IX, 492.
60. Chevalier, *Lettres*, I, x–xi.
61. The article was a review of Leclerc, 'Le Texas et sa révolution'.
62. Michel Chevalier, 'Variétés. De l'expatriation considérée dans ses rapports économiques, politiques et moraux; par M. S. Dutot. Le Texas et sa Révolution; par M. T. Leclerc, médecin en chef de l'hôpital-général de Tours', *Journal des débats*, 23 September 1840, third and fourth pages.
63. Jesús Velasco Márquez, *La guerra del 47 y la opinión pública, 1845–1848* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1975); Gene Brack, *Mexico Views Manifest Destiny, 1821–1846* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1975).
64. Over a somewhat bizarre incident, de Cyprey became involved in a fight in an attempt to rescue one of his horses which had been taken hostage. This turned into a street brawl, shots were exchanged and, while fleeing a crowd of angry Mexicans, members the French legation, minister included, were arrested. It is likely that de Cyprey hoped this would pre-

- cipitate French intervention on his behalf; he therefore broke relations with Mexico and demanded his passport. Before leaving, he further demonstrated his inability to grasp the finer points of diplomacy one evening in the lobby of the Mexico City opera house, where he spat in the face of a Mexican journalist, who had ridiculed him in a national newspaper, and then beat him with his cane. Barker, *French Experience in Mexico*, 110–13. This was not the only animal-related obstacle to diplomatic relations in North America. In 1841, in Texas, Saligny had one of his servants shoot a pig, which had been accused of attacking the fine linen in the French legation. The pig's owner threatened Saligny with physical violence and the French chargé d'affaires unilaterally broke relations with Texas, although Paris did not recognise this breach. Nancy Nichols Barker, 'Devious Diplomat: Dubois de Saligny and the Republic of Texas', *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 72 (1969), 324–34.
65. Goury de Roslan to Guizot, 4 April 1846, AAE, CP Mexique, 33.
 66. Goury de Roslan to Guizot, 2 September 1846, AAE, CP Mexique, 34.
 67. Gaspard Théodore Mollien to Guizot, 8 September and 25 October 1847, AAE, CP Mexique, 35.
 68. 'France. Paris, 8 juillet', *Journal des débats*, 9 July 1845, front and second page; 'France. Paris 23 septembre', *ibid.*, 24 September 1845, front page; 'France. Paris, 5 juillet', *ibid.*, 6 July 1847, front page.
 69. Ferry, 'Guerre entre les États-Unis et le Mexique', 431. Clavé also argued for French intervention in Mexico in 'La question du Mexique', 1029–59.
 70. Benjamin Poucel, *Études. Des intérêts réciproques de l'Europe et de l'Amérique. La France et l'Amérique du Sud* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1849), 20–21.
 71. Dommartin, *Les États-Unis et le Mexique*, 5–7.
 72. William Ellery Channing, *A letter to the Hon. Henry Clay, on the Annexation of Texas to the United States* (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1837), 20–21.
 73. José Manuel Hidalgo y Esnaurrizar, *Apuntes para escribir la historia de los proyectos de monarquía en México desde el reinado de Carlos III hasta la instalación del emperador Maximiliano* (Paris: Garnier hermanos, 1868), 16; 18.
 74. See William Fowler, 'The Texan Revolution of 1835–36 and Early Mexican Nationalism', in Sam Haynes and Gerald Saxon (eds.), *Contested Empire: Rethinking the Texas Revolution* (University of Texas at Arlington: A&M University Press, 2015), ch. 4.
 75. Daniel Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 20.
 76. 'Iturbide's Message to Congress', in Poinsett, *Notes on Mexico*, Appendix, 65–68.

77. Tenenbaum, *The Politics of Penury*, xi.
78. Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'War and Peace with the United States', in William Beezley and Michael Meyer (eds.), *The Oxford History of Mexico* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 326.
79. Luis de Onís, *Memoria sobre las negociaciones entre España y los Estados-Unidos de América, que dieron motivo al tratado de 1819, con una noticia sobre la estadística de aquel país* (Madrid: Imprenta de D. M. de Burgos, 1820), 73. Republished under the same title in Mexico: Reimpresa en la oficina a cargo del C. Martin Rivera, 1826.
80. José María Tornel, *Tejas y los Estados-Unidos de América, en sus relaciones con la República Mexicana* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1837), 3.
81. Alamán, 'Iniciativa de ley' and 'Dictamen sobre la independencia de Tejas', in *Obras*, II, 523–54.
82. Alamán, *Historia de Méjico*, V, 663–66.
83. 'Mexico, noviembre 10 de 1835', *El Mosquito Mexicano*, 10 November 1835, fourth page.
84. Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza, *Dictamen leído el 3 de Junio 1840 en el Consejo de Gobierno, sobre la cuestion de Tejas* (Mexico City: Imprenta de la Casa de Corrección, 1844), 19–20.
85. 'Mexico: 14 abril de 1835', *El Mosquito Mexicano*, 14 April 1835, second and third pages. The link between US expansion and Mexican liberals was a favoured theme of the paper. See, for example, 'Mexico: 24 abril de 1835', 24 April, second and third pages; 'Mexico: 19 mayo de 1835', 19 May, third and fourth pages; 'Mexico, junio 30 de 1835', 30 June 1835, third page.
86. Zavala, *Ensayo histórico*, II, 146; 310; See also, Lorenzo de Zavala, *Viaje a los Estados-Unidos del Norte de América* (Merida de Yucatán: Castillo y compañía, 1846).
87. Margaret Swett Henson, *Lorenzo de Zavala: The Pragmatic Idealist* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1996), 103.
88. Tornel, *Tejas y los Estados-Unidos de América*, 97.
89. *Ibid.*, 89–90.
90. Gómez Farías, who had admired US institutions, was transformed into "a stout Yankee hater" by events in Texas. Pedro Santoni, *Mexicans at Arms: Puro Federalists and the Politics of War, 1845–1848* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1996), 27.
91. "Exotic plants" was a phrase used by Tornel, *Discurso que pronunció el Exmo. Señor General D. José María Tornel y Mendivil, individuo del Supremo Poder Conservador, en la alameda de la ciudad de México, en el día del solemne aniversario de la independencia* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1840), 7. The argument was developed to further incorporate the US dimension in a series of editorials entitled 'La Cuestion del día', *El Tiempo*, 12, 13, 17 March and 5 April 1846, all first page.

92. Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Carta dirigida*, 58.
93. Arrangóiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 159; The French minister, de Cyprey, claimed that Paredes was seeking to set up a constituent congress that would decide in favour of a monarchy as early as 1841, De Cyprey to Guizot, 27 August 1841, AAE, CP Mexico, 20.
94. Costeloe, *Central Republic*, 284.
95. Guillermo Prieto, *Memorias de mis tiempos, 1828–1840*, 2 vols. (Paris; Mexico City: Vda. de C. Bouret, 1906), II, 178.
96. Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna*, 241. On Paredes see Frank Samponaro, 'Mariano Paredes y el movimiento monarquista mexicano en 1846', *Historia Mexicana*, 32 (1982), 39–54; Michael Costeloe, 'Los generales Santa Anna y Paredes y Arrillaga en México, 1841–1843: rivales por el poder o una copa más', *Historia Mexicana*, 39 (1989), 417–40; José Antonio Aguilar Rivera, 'La convocatoria, las elecciones y el congreso extraordinario de 1846', *Historia Mexicana* (2011), 531–88; Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'In Search of Power: The Pronunciamientos of General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga', in Fowler, *Malcontents*.
97. 'Manifiesto y plan de San Luis, 14 de diciembre de 1845', Saint Andrews University 'Pronunciamiento in Independent Mexico 1821–1876' database: <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/getpdf.php?id=518>
98. Santoni, *Mexicans at Arms*, 102–09; Costeloe, *Central Republic*, 284–92.
99. Soto, *Conspiración*, 60; Prieto, *Memorias de mis tiempos*, II, 179.
100. 'Editorial', *El Tiempo*, 24 January 1846, first page.
101. 'Post-scriptum: cuatro palabras a La Reforma', *El Tiempo*, 26 January 1846, front page.
102. 'Nuestra profesión de fe', *ibid.*, 12 February 1846, front page.
103. 'Parte política', *ibid.*, 29 January 1846, front page.
104. See in *El Tiempo*: 'Proyectos de los Estados-Unidos', 13 February; 'Los padres de la patria', 18 February; 'Importante. Proyectos contra *El Tiempo*. Su acusación', 20 February; 'La cuestión del día', 12, 13, 17 March and 5 April; 'Parte política', 18 March; 'Parte política', 23 March; 'Los Estados-Unidos y el clero', 27 March; 'Emigración de los Estados-Unidos a Californias', 16 May 1846, all front page.
105. 'La Independencia de México amenazada por los Estados Unidos', *ibid.*, 15 May 1846, front page.
106. 'Nuestra profesión de fe', *ibid.*, 12 February 1846, front page.
107. 'Proyectos de los Estados-Unidos', *ibid.*, 13 February 1846, front page.
108. 'Paris, 11 janvier', *Journal des débats*, 12 January 1846, second page.
109. 'Parte política', *El Tiempo*, 6 April 1846, front page.
110. 'Prensa extranjera: La Monarquía constitucional', *ibid.*, 14 March 1846, second page.

111. 'Otras cuatro palabras a *la Reforma*', *ibid.*, 14 February 1846, front page.
112. Alamán, *Historia de México*, V, 589–90.
113. 'Parte Política', *El Tiempo*, 3 March 1846, front page.
114. 'Parte Política', *ibid.*, 26 February 1846, front page.
115. Rivera, 'La convocatoria', 535–44.
116. On representative politics in nineteenth-century Mexico see Erika Pani, 'Misión imposible: la construcción de la representación política en México, siglo XIX', *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research*, 20 (2014), 36–49.
117. Despatch number 253 dated 29 May 1846 of Bermúdez de Castro, document number XIII in Delgado, *Monarquía*, 241–44.
118. A list of those elected can be found in Antonio Aguilar Rivera, 'La convocatoria', anexo 1, 582–88.
119. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XII, 428–29. See also de Cyprey to Guizot, 27 February 1846, AAE, CP Mexique, 30.
120. The response of the republican press to *El Tiempo* is discussed in Santoni, *Mexicans at Arms*, 109–14, and Soto, *La conspiración*, 147–69.
121. Antonio Haro y Tamariz, *Exposición que Antonio Haro y Tamariz dirige a sus conciudadanos, y opiniones del autor sobre la monarquía constitucional* (Mexico: Imprenta en el Arquillo de la Alcaicería, 1846). Haro y Tamariz was in Paris when he wrote this work and it was also published in France (Paris: impr. de H. Fournier, 1846). On Haro y Tamariz see Jan Bazant, *Antonio Haro y Tamariz y sus aventuras políticas, 1811–1869* (Mexico City: Colegio de México, 1985).
122. 'Despedida del Tiempo', *El Tiempo*, 7 June 1846, front page.
123. Alamán and his co-conspirators even had a candidate for the throne, the *infante* Enrique, Duke of Seville. Delgado, *Monarquía*, 52–53.
124. 'Note sur le Mexique. D'après les renseignements fournis par M. le général Paredes. Traduits et rédigé par M. de Mofras', 4 January 1847, AAE, MD Mexique, 9.
125. Buenaventura Vivó, *Memorias de B. V., Ministro de Mejico en España durante los años 1853, 1854 y 1855* (Madrid: M. Rivadeneyra, 1856), 86.
126. 'De la necesidad de una alianza sólida y sincera de todos los estados de la América del sud con Francia', *El Correo de Ultramar*, 15 December 1852, third page; 'América', *El Orden* (Mexico City), 17 February 1853, p. 2.
127. On *El Universal*, see Miguel Ángel Castro and Guadalupe Curiel, *Publicaciones periódicas mexicanas del siglo XIX, 1822–1855*, 441–46.
128. 'Emigración europea a los americas', *El Universal*, 2, 8, 9, 19, 22 and 30 June 1852, all front page.
129. 'Moviemento general', *ibid.*, 24 May 1854, front page.
130. Anonymous, *El Partido conservador en México* (Mexico City: J. M. Andrade and P. Escalante, 1855), 5.

131. For example, see in *La Sociedad*: 'La política norte-americano', 1 May, front page; 'El partido liberal y los Estados-Unidos', 15 May, front page; 'Proyecto de un periódico frances destilando a defender y propagar en Europa los intereses politicos y materiales de la América Latina', 10 September 1858, front and second pages.
132. 'Conveniencia de dar a conocer el extranjero la historia y la situación actual de nuestra país', *La Sociedad*, 2 December, front and second pages; 'Conveniencia de hacer que se conozca en Europa la verdadera situación de México—Peligros que corre nuestra nacionalidad—Un artículo de la "Aurora" de Tehuacan', *ibid.*, 13 December 1859, front page.
133. José Ramón Pacheco to Édouard Drouyn de Lhuys, 24 October 1853, AAE, CP Mexique, 41.
134. Pacheco to el Sr. Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, 10 October 1853, 'copia' contained in Pacheco to Almonte, 10 October 1853, AHGE, Estados-Unidos, L. 43; e. 2.
135. In a pamphlet published in 1833, Pacheco wrote that Mexican "mores" were a mixture of Spanish and French traits. José Ramon Pacheco, *Lettres sur le Mexique* (Bordeaux: impr. de C. Lawalle neveu, 1833), 41. From 1831 to 1833 Pacheco served as Mexican consul at Bordeaux.
136. 'La Nueva redacción', *El Correo de Ultramar*, 15 March 1860, front page.
137. 'Variedades: Caracteres de los razas preponderantes', *ibid.*, 30 June, third page and 'La Raza latina', *ibid.*, 15 July 1859, third page.
138. 'Revista Americana. Nicaragua y los filibusteros oficiales y estra-oficiale. Tratados y reclamaciones', *ibid.*, 30 November 1858, second and third pages.
139. Mark Van Aken, *Pan-Hispanism: Its Origin and Development to 1866* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), 69–74.
140. Francisco Muñoz del Monte, 'España y las Repúblicas Hispano-Americanos', *Revista española de ambos mundos*, I (1853), 264.
141. Francisco Frías y Jacott, *Lettre à Sa Majesté l'Empereur Napoléon III sur l'influence française en Amérique à propos du message de M. Buchanan. Par un homme de la race latine* (Paris: Ledoyen, 1858), 22.
142. Ambrosio Montt, *Ensayo sobre el gobierno en europa* (Paris: Imp. d'Aubusson y Kugelman, 1859), 359.
143. Chevalier, *Des mines*; Ferry, 'Guerre entre les États-Unis et le Mexique'; Fossey, *Le Mexique*; Poucel, *Études*.
144. Félix Belly, 'Du conflit anglo-américain et de l'équilibre du nouveau-monde', *Revue contemporaine*, 26 (1856), 122; 153.
145. Jean-Jacques Ampère, *Promenade en Amérique; États-Unis, Cuba, Mexique*, 2 vols. (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1856), II, 71–78; 225.
146. On this journal, see Thier, 'The View from Paris'.

147. Alphonse de Lamartine, 'Littérature américaine. Une page d'histoire naturelle, par M. Audubon—première partie', *Cours familier de littérature: un entretien par mois*, 118 (1865), 100–01.
148. Chevalier, *Le Mexique*, 478–79. Jacques Louis Randon, Louis-Napoléon minister of war at the time of the intervention, explained the rationale for the intervention in similarly pan-Latinist terms, *Mémoires du maréchal Randon*, 2 vols. (Paris: Impr. de Lahure, 1875–77), II, 59–60.
149. Sara Yorke Stevenson, *Maximilian in Mexico: A Woman's Reminiscences of the French Intervention* (New York: Century Co., 1899), 1–6.
150. Guizot, *Histoire parlementaires*, IV, 568.
151. Louis-Napoléon to Forey, 14 July 1862, AN, 400AP/62.
152. Patricia Lorcin, 'Rome and France in Africa: Recovering Colonial Algeria's Latin Past', *French Historical Studies*, 25 (2002), 327. See also Michael Greenhalgh, 'French Reliance on the Roman Past during the Conquest of Algeria', *War and Society*, 16 (1998), 1–28.

The Western Question

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

This continued fear of US expansion was the backdrop to which the consolidation of Mexican conservatism in the 1850s took place. As Chap. 4 has shown, this was not new to Mexican politics, but the disastrous defeat in the US-Mexican War and the consequent loss of nearly half of Mexico's national territory confirmed the worst fears of Conservatives. The Conservative Party, founded in 1849 by Alamán, represented itself as the true national party in contradistinction to liberal *moderados* and *puros* because, it was argued, liberals sympathised with the United States and its political institutions, federalism and republicanism, institutions which, in this view, were responsible for Mexico's weakness and catastrophic defeat. The question then, for the Conservative Party, was not merely how to establish a state based on conservative principles, but also how to construct a nation that could prevent further territorial losses.

Rather than lacking a positive programme or merely defending a form of irrationalism and traditionalism,³ the Conservative Party despite its name, did not wish to conserve much of what existed in Mexico; instead, they wanted to overhaul the economic, political and administrative institutions of the Mexican state. In their attempts to achieve this, the Party drew upon international events and transnational ideas, especially the reaction to the European revolutions of 1848. In the words of *El Universal*, 1848 was not a revolution of "France, or of Italy or of any one nation, but a radical and social revolution in which all civilised peoples take part in from the Bosphorus to the Pillars of Hercules [i.e., Spain], and from Canada to the Amazon River"⁴; and the result had been everywhere the triumph of what the newspaper called the "conservative principle".⁵ This triumph Mexican Conservatives termed an "international reaction" in Europe and the Americas, and one in which Mexico was in the vanguard.

The Party was formed with the distinctly modern aim of contesting local elections in 1849 followed by presidential elections in 1850. Previously disdainful of democratic politics, this engagement with the ballot box was partially inspired by the example of Louis-Napoléon, who was elected president of the Second Republic in November 1848. Conservatives in Mexico, however, failed to replicate the electoral success of Louis-Napoléon. However, his transition from prince president to French emperor provided another model that could be adapted to Mexican politics: the Conservative Party supported Santa Anna's dictatorship (1853–55) and the caudillo's return to power was compared to Louis-Napoléon's 2 December 1851 coup d'état and the foundation of the French Second Empire a year later.

Santa Anna's dictatorship, however, was short-lived: it was overthrown by the revolt of Ayutla (1854–55), which brought to power a new generation of *puro* liberals with anti-clerical aims. The result was the liberal Constitution of 1857, which in turn led to the War of Reform between a de facto Conservative government at Mexico City, headed by Félix María Zuloaga and then Miguel Miramón, and a de jure Liberal government led by Juárez at Veracruz. This polarisation of Mexican politics was also a battleground for international rivalry. In 1859, the United States recognised Juárez's Liberals, while France, Britain and Spain maintained that the Conservatives at Mexico City were the legitimate government. Moreover, Conservatives believed that US support for Juárez contributed to their eventual defeat in 1861, and the inability of Conservatives to defeat their opponents saw the identification with European ideas turn into a call for European arms to support them in their struggle against what they saw as the twin threat of Mexican liberalism allied to US expansionism—what many Conservatives termed the western question. The alignment of domestic politics and foreign policy towards France, combined with a transition from a pan-Hispanic worldview to a pan-Latinist one discussed in the previous chapter, gave France considerable influence in Mexico, ensuring that Louis-Napoléon would have willing collaborating elites in Mexico should he decide to intervene.

This chapter places Mexican conservatism within the context of the international realignment of political ideologies prompted by events in 1848,⁶ whereby so-called parties of order sought to appropriate elements of political and economic modernisation to establish regimes in the face of revolutionary challenges and follow a conservative path to modernity. The second section explores the impact of the threat of further US expansionism on Mexican conservative thought and the US involvement in the War of Reform, which gave new urgency to the calls of Mexican Conservatives for European intervention. Finally, the French interpretation of the western question will be evaluated to see to whether Paris agreed with the claims of the Conservative Party that the continuing rise of US power posed as much of a threat to Europe as it did to Mexico.

MEXICAN CONSERVATISM AND THE EUROPEAN REVOLUTIONS OF 1848: A CONSERVATIVE PATH TO MODERNITY

The collapse of the French Second Empire, the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War and the dominance of French Republican historiography created a black legend around Louis-Napoléon. The judgements of his

contemporary critics endured and Karl Marx provided the epitaph for the regime at its inception: “the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce”.⁷ Marx, however, showed less disdain for historical repetition in Mexico. In a letter of 1854, in which he claimed that Mexicans were merely degenerate Spaniards, he nonetheless noted that “the Spanish have produced no talent comparable to that of Santa Anna.”⁸ Had Marx followed Mexican affairs closely, he might have been more reserved in his praise for the caudillo. At the time of his letter, Santa Anna, the self-proclaimed Napoleon of the West, was serving for the fifth and final time as Mexican president. His new government, in the words of its minister to France, “had decided to follow the same path as the Emperor of the French.”⁹ And the conservative press that supported Santa Anna’s ascent to power praised Louis-Napoléon as the man who had defeated socialism,¹⁰ and saw the French Second Empire as a political paradigm for Mexico’s own institutions.

For the Conservative Party, the overhaul of these institutions was imperative because the original sin of independence, the Constitution of 1824, with some alterations, had been reinstated in 1847. Conservative thinkers were, therefore, faced with almost the same problems that the Seven Laws had intended to solve in 1835. What distinguishes Mexican conservative thought after 1848, however, is the importance of European events and models to conservative ideas, which resulted in important changes to previously held positions. These were explored through articles in *El Universal*, first published on 16 November 1848 and edited by many of those who had been associated with *El Tiempo*, including Alamán.

While the arguments for a centralised state and strong executive remained, one of the most striking examples of how Mexican conservative thought changed after 1848 is in its attitude towards popular sovereignty. That overly democratic politics led to political instability had been an axiom common to all conservative politicians, and indeed many liberals, in Mexico, just as it was elsewhere. And thus entirely in keeping with this received wisdom, as part of Alamán’s attempt to turn Mexico into a monarchy in 1846 (discussed in Chap. 4), he had authored an electoral law that excluded the overwhelming majority of voters from the electoral process—the most restrictive electoral law up to that point in independent Mexico.¹¹ Yet only four years later, Alamán stood up in Congress and argued that direct, popular elections should be basis of Mexico’s electoral law, while the conservative press berated liberals who refused to support such a radical change.¹² This was nothing short of a Damascene conversion of Conservatives into radical democrats, with the founding father of Mexican conservatism suddenly a tribune of the people.¹³

How to explain this extraordinary volte-face? First, Mexican Conservatives were impressed by events in Europe after 1848, particularly in France and, second, the Party proved remarkably adept at popular electoral politics in Mexico. The fall of Louis-Phillipe and the Revolution's aftermath in France had a profound influence on conservative political thought in Mexico because France played a leading role in terms of political culture. The importance of French philosophes, the French Revolution of 1789 and liberal constitutional theorists in the grand canon of French intellectuals is well-known in Latin America; French republicanism was a model that many liberals in Latin America had long sought to emulate.¹⁴ Less well-explored is the influence of conservative French thinkers and political models, but as one supporter of the Mexican Conservative Party wrote: "France can be considered as the richest in intellectual possessions, the one that has attained the highest degrees in the scale of civilisation and the most universal in knowledge".¹⁵ This was not a panegyric to merits of Voltaire, Diderot and Rousseau; Mexican Conservatives associated anti-clerical liberalism with the ideas of the French philosophes, but to their antidote: the European, especially French, counter-enlightenment and conservative tradition.¹⁶ Thus, as an editorial in *El Universal* explained, France occupied a key position in world affairs: it had been the centre of the revolutions that swept across Europe, but it remained a "beacon of modern civilisation" that "set the tone for the whole universe".¹⁷

In February 1848, however, the tone that France set for the universe was not, for Conservatives at least, a happy one. The overthrow of the July Monarchy and the subsequent revolutions across Europe merely reaffirmed what they had long argued, namely that a small cabal of radical politicians wanted to whip up the populace to overthrow governments with violence that endangered private property and personal security, while what they called atheists threatened the Catholic Church.¹⁸ And, for Conservatives, this pattern was most powerfully demonstrated by the Roman Republic of 1849, which resulted in the Pope's flight from the Vatican.¹⁹ Initial Conservative analysis of events unleashed by the revolutions of 1848, therefore, merely required its writers to dust off their old notes on 1789 and adopt a few new words with which to attack their enemies. The revolutions were seen as the prelude to Jacobin Terror and inspired by the same ideas: "socialists" and "communists" were admitted into an unholy pantheon alongside "philosophes" and radical liberals. The revolutions in Europe were, therefore, cited as further proof that sovereignty of the people was a dangerous doctrine; elections should, as

Alamán's 1846 electoral law had outlined, be based not on universal manhood suffrage, but on a very restricted franchise.²⁰ Indeed, the month of December 1848 was something of an anti-democratic special in *El Universal*, with at least nine editorials dedicated to the dangers of elections and popular sovereignty; all were a variation on the argument that the principles behind this doctrine were irrational in theory and, worse, disastrous in practice.²¹

However, events in Europe, and France in particular, combined with the political success of the Conservative Party in Mexico, soon forced a fundamental rethink of this interpretation. Far from inaugurating a new reign of terror as *El Universal* predicted,²² the French Second Republic was increasingly dominated by conservatives hostile towards socialists and radical democrats. The constitution provided for the direct election of the president through universal male suffrage, which resulted in an unexpected and overwhelming majority for Louis-Napoléon. At the time, politicians in France, let alone in Mexico, had little or no idea what Louis-Napoléon represented, but what was clear was that this was not a vote for a socialist republic. The two radical candidates in the French presidential secured just over 400,000 votes between them—not even a tenth of the 5.4 million votes Louis-Napoléon received.

Conservative success did not end there; what became known as the “party of order” in France, a group of politicians made up primarily of former monarchists, dominated the politics of the early republic. The party won a majority in the National Assembly elections of May 1849 and was thus able to pass a series of conservative laws, most notably in education, as well as impose repressive measures against political clubs and the press.²³ Meanwhile, in the wider European context the forces of reaction reasserted themselves in the Habsburg Monarchy, the German Confederation and, significantly for Mexican Conservatives, the Roman Republic was defeated and Papal temporal authority restored through French intervention.²⁴ Although France had taken the leading role in this, *El Universal* proclaimed it was a consequence of “THE WHOLE OF EUROPE [sic] allied in the name of the conservative principle”—a principle which, the paper argued, had fought against revolutionary barbarism in the name of “humanity, civilisation and true progress”.²⁵

Rather than demonstrating what Conservatives had long believed, that universal male suffrage was inherently incompatible with good government, the election of Louis-Napoléon as president of the Second Republic

and the success of the so-called party of order was seen as the triumph of conservative principles. Not only had the French people rejected revolutionary ideas in their own country through the ballot box, they had elected a president and an Assembly that had in turn put down a revolution in Rome. It is important to stress here that this outcome contradicted the entire body of thought that made up mid-nineteenth-century conservatism.

The key conclusion to be drawn from this was a radical one: popular politics could be a legitimating factor for conservative ideas. France, *El Universal* argued, wanted to overturn the false revolutionary doctrines and, inspired by this example, a reaction was sweeping across Europe.²⁶ This had important implications for Mexico, which had been both “spectator and actor in the great revolutionary drama”.²⁷ As had happened in France, it was imperative in Mexico that “THE PARTY OF ORDER ORGANISES ITSELF [sic]”.²⁸ It was hoped that the newly formed Conservative Party would fulfil this role in Mexico, and, for a group of individuals who had railed against democracy, Mexican Conservatives proved themselves remarkably adept at winning electoral support, even advocating a sophisticated system of tactical voting in alliance with *puro* liberals to defeat moderate liberal candidates.²⁹ That the self-proclaimed party of order would imitate the success of its French counterpart in Mexico appeared to become a reality when Conservative candidates secured impressive results in the Mexico City local elections of July 1849, which resulted in the *ayuntamiento* (municipal council) coming under Conservative control.³⁰

The next challenge for the Conservative Party was to secure a majority in upcoming congressional elections, and early signs indicated that Conservatives were on course to repeat the success they had enjoyed in Mexico City. Even liberal newspapers conceded that public opinion in Mexico was shifting towards conservative principles.³¹ The apparent popularity of the Conservative Party saw *El Universal* adopt language that would have shocked only a year earlier; the paper argued that the nation had called out to the party, and that elections could be a “beautiful” thing.³² The paper conceded that Conservatives had been the first to point out the deficiencies of the electoral system, but, sometimes, the goodness of the people could triumph over bad laws and institutions and the principles of order, progress and reform could win out. “The century marches”, concluded the paper, “and it is necessary to march with it” or be “crushed”.³³

This new found belief in democratic politics did not last long. Conservatives were not able to replicate their popularity outside the federal district and the elections for the congress of 1850 returned a moderate liberal majority.³⁴ Furthermore, these moderate liberals had undermined Conservative success in the Federal District of Mexico City. Here, Conservatives won the primary congressional elections, but the government prevented secondary elections from taking place on a technicality. Even more outrageously from the Conservative point of view, the minister of war, Mariano Arista, organised a mass protest against the Conservative *ayuntamiento*, with crowds threatening the lives and property of its leading members, and the Conservative councillors resigned in protest.³⁵

Despite these setbacks, the Conservative Party threw itself into a third contest, the presidential election of 1850. However, the moderate liberal candidate—and, given his role in ousting them from the *ayuntamiento*, the *bête noire* of the Conservatives—Arista was victorious, with the Conservative nominee in third place. Conservatives' flirtation with democracy therefore resulted in ambivalent conclusions. On the one hand, the Conservative Party had some success in local elections, and Louis-Napoléon's victory combined with the electoral success of the party of order in France had convinced them that conservative principles could be supported by the masses. On the other hand, they had not been able to translate local success nationwide, they had been, in their view, illegally undermined by the national government and finally had been resoundingly defeated in the presidential election. Happily, though, for Mexican Conservatives, Louis-Napoléon in France was himself becoming similarly disillusioned by democratic politics, and provided a different model upon which order and progress could be predicated.

The constitution of the French Second Republic prohibited the president from standing for re-election. In order to amend the constitution, Louis-Napoléon required a three-quarters majority in the National Assembly; numbers which he was unable to secure. Determined not to relinquish power, Louis-Napoléon launch a coup d'état on 2 December 1851 and first confirmed himself as president for 10 years and then a year later proclaimed the foundation of Second French Empire.

Unlike Marx, Mexican Conservatives saw nothing farcical in this and Louis-Napoléon's coup d'état provided a new paradigm that could be adapted to local circumstances, contributing to another transformation in conservative thought. Napoleon Bonaparte's role in French history had been interpreted as the inevitable military despotism with which revolutions

culminated; not so the nephew.³⁶ Rather, *El Universal* argued, Louis-Napoléon had rescued France from a revolutionary abyss and, fortunately, the “civilised world” seemed destined to follow France in its “return to the right path” as well as in its mistakes. France was now the “theatre of reaction, and the shining focal point from which the lights of religious and social truths were again spread.”³⁷ This joyful outcome, however, had by no means been certain in the analysis of European events which served as a parable for Mexico. France had been on the edge of catastrophe because the “red party” wanted to turn it into a “theatre of horrors”.³⁸ Nonetheless, the revolutions of 1848, and the Second Republic itself, had never enjoyed popular support. *El Universal* identified two forces in France. The first consisted primarily in secret societies formed in Paris, with branches in some provincial cities, and were essentially socialist. They were small in number, but they made up for this by their political activism. The second force was conservative, its motto was “God, *patria* and family” and it comprised almost all the remainder of the nation. It had immense power, but was undermined by a “lamentable apathy and indifference that characterises this part [of the population] everywhere in the world.”³⁹

It was this latter force that Louis-Napoléon had energised: first, through his election as president of the Second Republic, which was proof that the people were opposed to the “new and exotic [republican] institutions that had been imposed on them”, the language echoing the Conservative argument against liberalism in Mexico;⁴⁰ and second, through the plebiscites of December 1851 and November 1852 that confirmed Louis-Napoléon’s seizure of power and the creation of the Second Empire. In its editorial, *El Universal* wrote that this marked the “final defeat of the democratic idea, vanquished on its own ground and by its own weapons.”⁴¹

The lessons of this, the newspaper argued, were obvious: “every country, every nation, every people that have felt the shameful effects of liberalism [...] can take France as a beautiful example to imitate.” And these lessons learned from Louis-Napoléon’s rise to power would be applied in Mexico, but it was not a case of Conservatives slavishly following events in France; rather, the Mexican context for the adaptation of elements of Bonapartism to the Mexican Conservative Party’s political projects was key. The initial response to Louis-Napoléon’s coup d’état was lukewarm; *El Universal* saw his actions in terms of a *pronunciamiento* and worried that their political rivals in Mexico, and other groups in Latin America, would be encouraged by his actions to seize power themselves. However, Louis-Napoléon’s transition from Prince-President to Emperor of the

French provided another model that could be adapted to Mexican politics, because it was not only Conservatives who were disillusioned with moderate liberals governing under a federal republic in the years 1848 to 1852. Supporters of many-times president Santa Anna, as well as some liberals, were increasingly hostile, and a revolt which began in 1852 culminated in the resignation of President Arista in January 1853. The Conservative Party entered into an alliance with Santa Anna's supporters and called for his return to Mexico with dictatorial powers to reorganise the nation. Prior to 1853, all conservative proposals for change had been predicated upon some form of constitutional and representative system. The example of Louis-Napoléon in France helps explain the willingness of Mexican Conservatives to support an authoritarian alternative.

For these Conservatives, the French case proved that Mexico needed a dictator to restore order. Louis-Napoléon presented "[Mexico] with an example of his heroic valour",⁴² and, in case the didactic nature of the editorial was lost on the reader, the paper asked rhetorically who did not see the parallels between France since 1848 and Mexico? Mexico, like France, had been ruled "by a miserable minority, whose power only consists in the indifference and apathy" of the majority. Mexico, therefore, required "a saviour" like Louis-Napoléon.⁴³ Those who brought this "saviour" (Santa Anna) to power identified his government as part of the international "reaction" that "today is in operation, as much in Europe as in America, in favour of conservative principles."⁴⁴ And in a private conversation of 1853 with the French minister to Mexico, Alamán made it clear what these principles were: "they are those of your illustrious sovereign [...] principles of order, of justice and of religion". The founder of the Conservative Party spelled out what this meant: "It is upon your country, it is upon your sovereign, that we base all our hopes for the future, we want to model our political institutions on those of France." Alamán added that "[w]e would even like to follow [France's] example to the point of establishing a hereditary monarchy", but, failing that, "we would like [Santa Anna] to have [an emperor's] authority and strength."⁴⁵

For André-Nicolas Levasseur, the French minister to Mexico, this enthusiasm for the French model translated into political influence. Levasseur was the sole representative of the diplomatic corps invited to a political banquet held by Santa Anna's chief ideologue, Tornel, in February 1853, at which the only toast to a foreign sovereign was to the Emperor of the French. This was especially surprising as Tornel had previously been seen as anti-French.⁴⁶ Other important *santanistas*, such as General José

López Uruga, toasted Louis-Napoléon at a similar banquet held at the end of the same month, while yet another banquet in March saw the General Manuel María Lombardini, the interim president charged with ensuring Santa Anna's return to power, toast the French sovereign again to the exclusion of all others. Levasseur reported these incidents to demonstrate the high regard for Louis-Napoléon and support for the French Second Empire in Mexico.⁴⁷

For Conservatives, the French Second Empire appeared to be a genuinely innovative political construct that could be adjusted to Mexico's circumstances. What Louis-Napoléon seemingly had done was make monarchy modern, creating what Pierre Rosanvallon defines as an "illiberal democracy",⁴⁸ and three areas in particular appealed to Conservatives beyond their association of the regime with an international reaction in favour of conservative principles. First, the Empire provided an alternative to representative democracy insofar as it was predicated upon the right of the Emperor always to appeal directly to the French people through the mechanism of a plebiscite, which thus by-passed any intermediary body, such as representative assemblies, and ensured that Louis-Napoléon was the ultimate incarnation, and interpreter, of the popular will. That contemporary supporters and critics alike could find no modern comparison to this system of government is demonstrated by the fact that many classified it as Caesarism.⁴⁹ And, it was not merely Mexican Conservatives who were impressed: the English liberal and constitutional theorist Walter Bagehot described it as the "best finished democracy which the world has ever seen."⁵⁰

Louis-Napoléon supposedly said "do not fear the people, they are more conservative than you".⁵¹ Whether or not this was actually one of his aphorisms, the implied marriage of direct democracy with authoritarianism was an experiment the Mexican Conservative Party was willing to try with Santa Anna as dictator in 1853. Under his rule, an advisory council of state replaced Congress and Santa Anna appointed all ministers who were only answerable to him.⁵² Levasseur approved of these measures, claiming that the council of state was made up almost entirely of Conservative Party members, who wanted, in lieu of a hereditary monarchy, a strong, almost despotic, centralised power, which was, in Levasseur's words, "the only [government] appropriate for Mexico."⁵³ This was not the only similarity with the French Second Empire. With the blessing of Alamán, Santa Anna had been granted extraordinary dictatorial powers for one year in 1853. A *pronunciamiento* of 17 November 1853 in

Guadalajara called for his powers to be extended indefinitely and was adopted by enough communities for Santa Anna's council of state to declare that this represented the will of the people.⁵⁴ This was in keeping with the tradition of pronunciamientos in Mexico,⁵⁵ but in 1854 Santa Anna made the distinctly Bonapartist move of holding a plebiscite on whether he should continue in his extraordinary powers.⁵⁶

The second area where Santa Anna's dictatorship drew upon the example of the French Second Empire was over press regulation. In France, newspapers were closely monitored not only because of the effect they were believed to have on public opinion, but, as one supporter of the regime theorised, the press constituted an unsanctioned rival to state power, representing private interests, not the public good.⁵⁷ The press, as with political parties, encouraged division and individuality, whereas the empire emphasised the homogeneity of society, as expressed through the majority popular will in its support for the emperor.

Mexican Conservatives shared this vision of a corporate society. The press law introduced under Santa Anna's dictatorship on 25 April 1853, the most restrictive since independence, was based on the French model. Alamán had asked the French ambassador to send him a copy of the French 17 February 1852 press regulations, which the legation provided. After consulting the documents, Alamán sought the ambassador's endorsement for the Mexican version of the law.⁵⁸ Press censorship was a key Conservative policy because it was considered as "one of the first necessities for the establishment of good government."⁵⁹ The moderate liberal paper, *El Siglo XIX*, criticised the law for being an imitation, but *El Universal* responded that the law was not a copy, and, even if it was, plagiarism did not undermine it. In France, as in Mexico, the periodical press had been an obstacle to the solid foundation of "peace, order and public tranquillity."⁶⁰ More importantly though, the newspaper argued that "the reaction" taking place in all nations shaken by "the revolutionary storm" was "not the work of parties, nor of men taken individually, it is the work of societies".⁶¹ Freedom of the press was anathema to this process insofar as it promoted private interest, not the public good.

The third aspect of the French Second Empire that Mexican Conservatives applauded was economic. The Empire placed what would now be termed economic growth at the heart of its political platform. Various degrees of state intervention, technocratic expertise, the democratisation of capital and credit and the attempt at the disassociation of the political from the social led to an impressive economic performance in the

first decade of the Empire.⁶² Together these measures seemed to amount to something new in France, because, whereas leading French politicians in the years from 1815 to 1848 had been satisfied with the existing social order and were unwilling to endanger free enterprise to help those less fortunate than themselves, Louis-Napoléon harboured grandiose, if vague, schemes to eliminate pauperism which were, in part, inspired by the writings of Saint Simon.⁶³ In this he was encouraged by former Saint-Simonians, notably Chevalier. However, if the idea that universal suffrage could legitimise conservative politics, or that dictatorship might be a necessary precondition to impose order, were new to Mexican Conservative thought in the 1850s, state intervention to stimulate economic expansion was not.

In part the emphasis that Conservatives placed on economic growth, or what they called “progress”, was an inheritance from the paternalistic policies of Bourbon Spain. However, it was also borne out of practical experience; Alamán was not only a politician and historian, but also an entrepreneur with interests in textiles and mining. He supported the foundation of a government investment bank to develop industry,⁶⁴ and, as Charles Hales notes, he introduced the idea and the reality of modern industry to Mexico, however imperfectly.⁶⁵ From 1848 to 1855, in the editorials of *El Universal*, Conservatives began to articulate a programme approaching a kind of proto-economic nationalism which, argued, amongst other things, for the creation of a national bank to manage Mexico’s debt, moderate protectionism to help national industry and government intervention in order to develop Mexico’s infrastructure, especially telegraph lines and railways.

A favoured theme for editorials was that liberals had appropriated the word “progress” to refer to their own political project, whereas in fact progress had little, if anything, to do with politics, and, regardless, liberal politics had resulted in instability and chaos that undermined true progress, which was material and technological. As one editorial argued, “the steam engines, the electric telegraph, and the other inventions that the century can glory in” are not a consequence of “modern liberalism”.⁶⁶ Progress should not be defined in political terms, but rather in economic ones. “The spirit of the century” and “positivism” had been confused with the ideas of the French revolutions of 1789 and 1848. In this sense, the “positivism that marks the current era” had resulted in “disappointments” because it had brought violence and disorder. The paper did not doubt that the “spirit of the century [was] the spirit of progress”, but this should

not be confused with democracy. For the newspaper, “progress” meant “peace, individual security, the perfection of the arts, the development of agriculture, the increase of industry and commerce”. Moreover, “the enemies of modern democracy and the defenders of the conservative principle, they are the true men of progress, and the legitimate sons of the century.” Nowhere demonstrated this more than France, argued the editorial, where Louis-Napoléon embodied the triumph of the conservative principle, which, unlike socialism, represented all classes. Under this definition of progress, Conservatives argued, “we are the most progressive”, and the Conservative Party was in line with “the spirit of the century”.⁶⁷

The Conservative concern for economic modernisation is demonstrated through the increasing emphasis placed on industry, which was to be encouraged through moderate protectionism and government support. In one editorial, entitled “There is No Freedom without Industry”, *El Universal* argued that Mexican society needed to be agricultural, commercial and industrial. However, cheap foreign imports would stifle Mexican industry, which would in turn damage Mexican commerce; therefore, Mexico would become only an agricultural society and regress on the path of “civilisation and true liberty”. The authority which the editorial quoted at length in order to prove its point was none other than Chevalier.⁶⁸

El Universal championed a number of other causes that it believed would lead to economic development. The newspaper supported societies, particularly the *Sociedad Promovedora de Mejoras Materiales y Morales*, which was founded in 1851 with the aim of promoting and organising projects that would develop Mexico’s infrastructure.⁶⁹ In terms of agriculture, the newspaper backed the introduction of new, scientific methods to increase production, praising and publicising the first course in agronomy offered in Mexico.⁷⁰ A member of the Conservative Party took the leading role in trying, unsuccessfully, to found a national bank, a project supported in the conservative press. *El Universal* campaigned ceaselessly throughout the period for the development of communications and infrastructure, especially railway and telegraph lines.⁷¹ Part of the rationale for backing Santa Anna’s regime was the hope that it would concentrate on exactly the economic issues Conservatives had identified between 1848 and 1853, and a ministry of *fomento* (development) was established under his rule.⁷²

However, for Conservative Party apologists the death of Alamán in June 1853 marked the end of their influence over the government of Santa Anna.⁷³ Levasseur agreed: Alamán’s death was a significant loss for Santa

Anna, and also for Levasseur himself, because the former Mexican minister of foreign affairs had shared exactly his own opinions, including a complete agreement over the political institutions appropriate to Mexico. Moreover, Levasseur felt there were no other Conservative politicians equal to Alamán in ability.⁷⁴ Conservatives did still support Santa Anna's regime, but Alamán's death, followed shortly afterwards by Tornel's, ensured that the General's domestic programme departed significantly from what had been envisaged in the first half of 1853.

Post-1848, the Mexican Conservative Party had a radical political, economic and administrative programme which they understood as entirely in keeping with the so-called "spirit of the century", a conservative path to modernity. The way in which this programme rapidly evolved is better understood within the transnational context in which Conservatives placed themselves. This helps elucidate elements of domestic politics: viewed merely from a national perspective, the Mexican Conservative Party's embrace of direct elections and the principle of popular sovereignty is conventionally understood as either inexplicable or a cynical attempt to gain political power. Rather, Conservatives, buoyed by their own electoral success, consciously hoped to replicate the achievements of the party of order in France and thus not only actively participated in representative politics in the years 1849 to 1852, but at times even argued for more democracy, not less. And just like Louis-Napoléon in France, Conservatives argued that the national government illegitimately thwarted their possibility of effecting change within the system. Therefore, they were justified, they argued, in supporting the return of Santa Anna to overthrow what they considered a corrupt regime and replacing it with one that conformed to the ideas of the international reaction sweeping Europe and the Americas. As will be seen below, this reaction was not only threatened by revolutionary doctrines, but by Mexico's national enemy: the United States.

THE US THREAT TO MEXICO

Santa Anna's dictatorship may have deviated from the domestic Conservative Party programme, but Manuel Díez de Bonilla, a Conservative, replaced his friend Alamán as foreign minister and tried to put into practice the foreign policy principles they had outlined seven years earlier in *El Tiempo*, namely to orientate Mexico towards Europe as a counterweight to the US threat. *El Universal*, which was the organ of the Conservative Party and by

extension the foreign ministry under Alamán and Díez de Bonilla, argued that in order to avoid another “Yankee” occupation of Mexico City, Mexico needed to look to Europe, and base itself, as Europe did, in conservative ideas because this would lead to the formation of an “alliance of conservative principles between [...] the nations of the old and new world”.⁷⁵ This reaction in the Americas and Europe was motivated by the same beliefs, but in Europe it was not a life-or-death struggle, whereas in Mexico it was one of “existence” because of the US threat.⁷⁶

The worldview of the Conservative Party was subordinated to this US threat. In his conversation with Levasseur, Alamán had explained that in order to construct the Mexican state along the lines of the French Second Empire it was necessary to have “the sympathy of Europe and in particular the support of France, and when we have accomplished our work of regeneration we will still need the support of our friends to conserve it because we are constantly threatened by [US] invasion.” Was not, Alamán asked, the extension of US power over all of Mexico and perhaps as far as Panama” a danger for Europe too? This was a serious question for Britain and Spain, but France was key to Mexico’s future: “[w]e are convinced that if [Louis-Napoléon] desires to save us, he can do it, he can assure our independence and contribute to the development of our power, which would become a counterweight to the United States.”⁷⁷ In short, what would become French policy in 1862 had been summarised in 1853, and it has already been seen that Santa Anna’s minister to France put this argument to the French foreign minister in pan-Latinist language.

Díez de Bonilla developed an argument that US ambition was not limited to destabilising Mexico: Washington wanted to export its radical democracy across the Atlantic. It supported the “rebels of Hungary”, the “reds of Italy”, the “socialists of France” the “disloyal subjects of Spain” as well as the “scum of Mexican politics”. As the Ottoman Empire was to Russia, so was Mexico to the United States, and it was in France’s interests to enter into an alliance or mutual agreement in order to “contain” the United States and maintain the balance of power in the Western Hemisphere,⁷⁸ views reiterated numerous times in *El Universal*.⁷⁹

In this view, the United States was not only an aggressive power, but also one ideologically opposed to conservative principles. Moreover, what made European, especially French support, crucial was that, in the Conservative view, Washington openly supported Liberals in order to promote its interests and weaken Mexico. This threat was not theoretical because the end of the US-Mexican War in 1848 did not mark an end to

the threat of further US expansion. Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan served as presidents from 1853 to 1861 and were elected on expansionist tickets, and both coveted Mexico's northern states.⁸⁰ There was widespread support for their policies and many in the United States categorised Mexicans alongside the United States' indigenous population in a racial hierarchy.⁸¹ *The Democratic Review*, the mouthpiece of Manifest Destiny, outlined what Conservatives believed to be US policy⁸²: "the Mexican race now see, in the fate of the aborigines of the north, their own destiny. They must amalgamate and be lost, in the superior vigor of the Anglo-Saxon race, or they must utterly perish."⁸³ Most US policymakers and diplomats shared these racist and ethnocentric biases towards Mexico.⁸⁴

Pierce's foreign policy goals as regards Mexico were to move the US border with Mexico southwards, to purchase significant territory beyond this revised border and to secure favourable transport rights across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. Ominously for Mexico, Pierce stated in his inaugural address that his administration would not be held back by "any timid forebodings of evil from expansion".⁸⁵ The Sale of La Mesilla (known in the United States as the Gadsden Purchase), ratified in 1854, saw the United States pay \$10 million for 29,640-square miles of additional Mexican territory. The US minister, James Gadsden, charged with securing Pierce's foreign policy goals, made it clear to the Conservative Mexican foreign minister, Díez de Bonilla, that the southern and westward migration of US citizens was unavoidable. To oppose it would only encourage it, and all Mexico could do was to "conciliate and harmonize, what was not to be diverted; [sic] overawed or crushed".⁸⁶ Fearing that the United States would take by force what Mexico could not defend, and faced with acute financial difficulties at home, Santa Anna accepted a treaty which, in these circumstances, he considered favourable.⁸⁷

Although this marked the last acquisition of Mexican territory by the United States, it did not end the desire to obtain more, which increased under Buchanan. He outlined his vision to the Senate: "it is beyond question the destiny of our race to spread themselves over the continent of North America, and this at no distant day [...] nothing can eventually arrest its progress."⁸⁸ In preparation for this, Buchanan's secretary of state instructed the US minister to Mexico, John Forsyth, to purchase from Mexico much of its northern territory.⁸⁹ With implied menace, Forsyth informed the Conservative Mexican foreign minister Luis Gonzaga Cuevas that, regardless of whether Mexico sold these lands or not, they would one day pass into US possession.⁹⁰ In a despatch to Cass, Forsyth made his

own views on US expansion clear: "I am, of course, a believer in [...] 'Manifest destiny'. I believe [...] that our race, I hope our institutions, are to spread across this continent and that the hybrid races of the West must succumb to, and fade away before, the superior energies of the white man."⁹¹

Conservatives, then, had ample demonstrations of the hostile intentions of the United States and the racist attitudes that lay behind them. US designs on Cuba and filibusters further highlighted the expansionist nature of the United States.⁹² However, as with previous decades, it was not only territorial expansion that alarmed Conservatives. They were worried by Washington's support for Mexican liberals. In part this stemmed from the argument, outlined in Chap. 3, that the United States had deliberately exported federalism to Mexico in order to weaken it. *El Universal* restated this view and cited the US-Mexican War as proof of its veracity.⁹³ *La Sociedad* expanded this to a hemispheric scale: "The Spanish American nations, notwithstanding their monarchical traditions and their Catholic religion, committed the shameful error of taking [the United States] as a model". In so doing they condemned themselves to 30 years of anarchy and civil war.⁹⁴ This was far from a new argument, but it was given renewed impetus by the US-Mexican War: liberals were appalled by the US invasion, and the majority of *puros* urged the government to reject any peace negotiations in favour of continuing the war; however, a minority worked with the United States during the occupation and advocated the establishment of a protectorate over Mexico.⁹⁵ *El Universal* took advantage of this fact and proclaimed that liberals were traitors, a charge frequently reiterated in the conservative press, which represented the Conservative Party as the true defender of the Mexican nation.⁹⁶ US support for liberals, combined with the continual threat of US expansion, was an important element in the self-definition of the Conservative Party.

The revolt of Ayutla (1854–55) forced Santa Anna into exile (again) and his dictatorial regime was replaced by a reformist liberal one. The subsequent War of Reform ensured Conservatives were fighting for their political survival as well as their ideas. This resulted in an increasing number of appeals for foreign support. *El Universal* was so symbolic of the Conservative Party that its offices were destroyed in 1855 when liberal forces entered Mexico City.⁹⁷ It was replaced by *La Sociedad*, which continued its foreign policy line. An 1856 editorial entitled "La intervención europea" gives the tone of its views. Europe had brought civilisation to the Americas and the two regions were intimately connected.

Since independence, Spanish American politics had followed the “old continent” for good and bad because it was “our progenitor and teacher of civilisation.” This was followed by the usual accusations of US hostility, which required Europe to intervene in order to maintain the independence of the “Spanish race”, to preserve the balance of power and to bring order and prosperity to Mexico.⁹⁸

During the War of Reform, the Conservative government at Mexico City was even more desperate to procure European aid, and preferably intervention, to support its cause than Santa Anna had been. From Mexico City, the French minister who replaced Levasseur, Alexis de Gabriac, forwarded petitions for French intervention to the Quai d’Orsay. One, at the behest of Ignacio Aguilar y Marocho, a former minister and councillor of state under Santa Anna, asked for the support of France in order to prevent “the ruin of [Mexico] and its fall into the hands of the United States.”⁹⁹ Joaquin Velázquez de León, a prominent Conservative and one of the architects of the Mexican Second Empire, petitioned for forces to pacify the country,¹⁰⁰ and, as president of the Conservative government at Mexico City, Zuloaga requested 5000–6000 French troops.¹⁰¹

Conservatives were desperate for European support because, they argued, the United States was aiding Juárez. Washington was openly pro-Liberal; it is worth emphasising that not only did Washington back Juárez, but they did so in full awareness of the polarising effect their policies had in Mexico during the 1850s. James Gadsden noted that the “Church-Army-Conservatives” look with “deep mistrust, I might say, hatred towards the [United States].” For Gadsden, the liberal revolt which resulted in the end of Santa Anna’s dictatorship, was “a most signal triumph” for the United States.¹⁰² According to Gadsden’s successor, during the War of Reform, the Conservative government at Mexico City would “sooner fall than treat with the detested Yankees”.¹⁰³ Buchanan made his views plain in his Annual Message to Congress in 1858: The United States should intervene militarily in Mexico because a Conservative victory in the War of Reform was against US interests.¹⁰⁴ The defeat of Mexican Conservatives was the preferred outcome of the US president and one he was willing to send soldiers to achieve. This was not disinterested support for the cause of liberalism; rather, a course of action calculated to secure US imperial aims. William Churchwell, charged with reporting on which faction Washington should recognise in Mexico during the War of Reform, concluded that, as long as the United States did not “despoil Mexican territory”, Juárez’s Liberals would look to the Washington as a

“virtual Protector [...] and as if she were sub-divided and erected into sovereign States of the Union.”¹⁰⁵ On this advice, Buchanan recognised the Liberal government at Veracruz.¹⁰⁶

Juárez’s government at Veracruz worked to secure US recognition in order to help raise loans in the United States and, more importantly, to secure a treaty that would provide immediate financial aid.¹⁰⁷ The result was the 1859 McLane-Ocampo Treaty which, in return for \$4 million, gave favourable transit rights to the United States.¹⁰⁸ Buchanan envisaged the treaty as a means to annex Mexico’s northern territory without having to secure authorisation from Congress. The treaty, had it been ratified, would have allowed the United States to “trespass Mexican sovereignty at will” and turn a temporary presence into a permanent occupation because it permitted the United States to intervene without the consent of the Mexican government if the lives or property of US citizens were endangered in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.¹⁰⁹

For Conservatives, that Liberals were willing to come to such an arrangement with Mexico’s national enemy was further proof of their complicity with Washington, but the final event that confirmed to Conservatives the extent of the Liberals’ collaboration with the United States occurred in March 1860. Two naval vessels purchased by the Conservatives were intercepted and captured by the US Navy as they steamed to attack the liberal-held port of Veracruz at the same time as General Miramón’s Conservative forces approached from land.¹¹⁰ The *Diario Oficial del Supremo Gobierno*, the official newspaper of the Conservative government, denounced the incident and argued that the United States was a “barbaric and savage nation”, which had abrogated the universally accepted conventions of international law, whose civilisation was founded entirely on money and whose principles were based solely on its own material interests. Worse, it had intervened in Mexico’s internal affairs as a result of the “outrageous treachery of the men of Veracruz, who did not hesitate to accept foreign help in order to achieve the triumph of principles that the nation detests.”¹¹¹ Without naval support, Miramón abandoned the siege of Veracruz and by January 1861 Liberals had defeated Conservatives and Juárez took Mexico City.

That the United States was a factor in the inability of conservative politicians to consolidate their political system from 1821 to 1855 is unlikely, and whether US support was a significant cause in Juárez’s victory in the civil war is an open question,¹¹² but such was the interpretation of the Conservative Party. Moreover, Washington threatened to expand further

at Mexico's expense and appeared hostile to Latin America in general. In addition, conservatives had long held US federal republicanism as anathema to Mexico's traditions, customs and religion, as well as having been deliberately exported in order to weaken Mexico. However, while conservatives had always accused liberals of working with the United States, the War of Reform saw the Liberal government at Veracruz in open collusion with the United States, receiving diplomatic and military assistance, and thus confirmed Washington was hostile to the political projects of the Conservative Party. Thus, long before defeat in the War of Reform, Conservatives argued that Mexico's salvation lay in European intervention. But the question remains: Why did France come to the same conclusion?

THE FRENCH RESPONSE TO THE WESTERN QUESTION

Many historians maintain that Louis-Napoléon intervened in Mexico at the behest of a small clique of Conservative Party émigrés in Paris and as a result of poor information provided by the agents of the Quai d'Orsay in Mexico.¹¹³ But, as has been seen, calls for European intervention were not the dreams of a few isolated Mexicans in exile; rather, they lay at the heart of the anti-liberal programme. Numerous *santanistas*, monarchists and republicans in the Conservative Party advocated European intervention in one form or another and instructed their representatives in France to work to secure it. This section evaluates the evidence for the hypothesis that Louis-Napoléon "failed to understand completely the reality of Mexico, and, misled as much by his diplomats as by the Mexican Conservatives in exile" blundered into an ill-advised intervention is correct.¹¹⁴

Certainly the diplomatic despatches of French agents in Mexico consistently favoured the Conservative Party. As has been seen, Levasseur described himself as entirely in agreement with Alamán on all matters political and diplomatic, while his successors, Dano, Gabriac and Dubois de Saligny, were equally sympathetic to the Conservative cause. The latter two are especially implicated by historians as diplomats who misled Paris as to the situation in Mexico in close collaboration with individuals who had dubious connections to financial reclamations France hoped to secure from the Mexican government.¹¹⁵ However, in advocating French intervention, they merely reiterated what every French representative to Mexico had proposed since France recognised Mexican independence in 1830.

That they were in favour of the Conservatives can be explained by the fact that they believed the Conservative political programme to be the most appropriate to Mexico. Like Mexican Conservatives, they understood democratic federal republicanism to be the cause of Mexico's endemic instability. The solution was a strong, limited franchise and centralist government, or, better still, a monarchy under a European prince. Forsyth's description of Gabriac to the US Secretary of State was, excepting the hyperbole, accurate: "This gentleman [...] has been the open [and] active partizan of the [Conservative Party ...] His head is filled with dreams of a European protectorate, to be followed by a Mexican kingdom or Empire."¹¹⁶ Gabriac had close relationships with the principal Mexican Conservative politicians,¹¹⁷ frequently gave them advice, constantly promoted their cause to Paris and even went as far as recommending, against the advice of the rest of the diplomatic corps and much to the annoyance of the French foreign minister, that French nationals in Mexico pay Miramón's government a forced loan.¹¹⁸ Indeed, Miramón's administration took the unusual step of sending Louis-Napoléon a letter, signed by prominent members of the Conservative Party, celebrating Gabriac's six years in Mexico and praising his conduct.¹¹⁹ Gabriac's sympathies, then, were not in doubt and he did, whether deliberately or not, represent the Conservative cause as more likely to succeed than it in fact was.

The Quai d'Orsay, however, viewed Gabriac's efforts on behalf of the Conservatives as unenthusiastically as it had done all calls for intervention in Mexico since 1838. The French foreign minister, in response to a despatch detailing the possibility that Conservatives would request French troops to defeat the Liberals, instructed Gabriac to decline any overture of this nature.¹²⁰ In 1859, the then French foreign minister, Alexandre Colonna-Walewski, warned the French minister in Mexico that he must show strict neutrality in the internal disputes of the nation.¹²¹ A few months later, the foreign minister further admonished Gabriac for his partisanship towards Conservatives: France had no obligation or desire to support the Conservative government against the Liberals at Veracruz.¹²²

Saligny did not arrive in Mexico until the end of 1860, just in time to see Mexico City fall to Juárez's Liberals. In his first despatch to Paris, he wrote that information about the state of the country was difficult, if not impossible, to acquire, but one thing was incontestable: "Miramón does not occupy more than two important places, Mexico City and Puebla. The rest of the country is controlled by his enemies, who are concentrating their forces, which number 25,000 to 30,000 men, as quickly as possible

in order to attack the capital." Saligny reported that Miramón, without money, starved of resources of any kind, betrayed or abandoned by his generals, retaining, with difficulty, some thousand or so discouraged and demoralised troops, whom he was unable to pay and who deserted his cause each day, would not be able to prolong much longer an impossible struggle. "Success", concluded Saligny, would require nothing less than a miracle and miracles had become "extremely rare."¹²³ It is hard to discern in this précis of Conservative fortunes which element of it was seized upon as proof by Louis-Napoléon or his foreign minister that a French expeditionary force on behalf of the Conservative cause would result in inevitable triumph.

It was not, then, the pro-Conservative sympathies of French diplomats or their misrepresentation of the Party's fortunes which convinced Paris to intervene in Mexico. The Quai d'Orsay was, however, more receptive to the view that US expansion needed to be prevented. Just as Mexican conservatives had always presented their political programme as a response to external threats as much as a solution to the internal problems of Mexico, so too did French diplomats present their recommendations to the Quai d'Orsay. As has been shown, de Cyprey consistently argued for European intervention in support of monarchy partially because he believed that without this form of government, Mexico would be lost to US expansion. His successor, Levasseur, supported Alamán's ideas in 1853 not only because of shared principles, but also because "republicanism and federalism would achieve the ruin of [Mexico] and deliver it to the [United States]."¹²⁴ Dano made the identical point and argued that monarchy was essential for the survival of Mexico.¹²⁵

Gabriac was no exception to this trend, and in him Mexican Conservatives found a kindred spirit and a fellow advocate for the western question. Placing Mexico in the context of the Crimean War, Gabriac warned "Mexico seems to have become the Constantinople of America". He argued that if Mexico fell into US hands, it would be difficult to prevent their complete domination of the hemisphere. "Masters of this immense territory", he asked rhetorically, "will they not dictate the law to Europe?"¹²⁶ Gabriac agreed with the ideas of the Aimé- Louis Victor du Bosc, Marquis de Radepont, who had served as a military attaché to the US army during the US-Mexican War and had settled in Mexico afterwards. In a plan submitted to the Quai d'Orsay, Radepont, claiming to speak on behalf of the "most eminent men in Mexico", argued, just as Díez de Bonilla had done in his letter to Gabriac, that the United States was a radical democratic

power that gave asylum to the revolutionaries of Europe. Radeponet added the Crimean analysis: US foreign policy was the same as Russia's in Europe and Asia; worse, filibusters were used openly to advance its expansionism, and Mexico was the Ottoman Empire of the west. "The Spanish population, or the Latin race of the New World", knew that the "Anglo-Saxons" were their implacable enemies. Only a monarchy, he argued, could save Mexico from internal disorder and inevitable conquest. During a trip to Paris, Radeponet was granted an audience with the emperor and was able to discuss his ideas on two separate occasions.¹²⁷

In light of the US threat, French diplomats concluded that the Conservative Party was the only one that could save Mexico. They argued, like Mexican Conservatives, that the Church and Catholicism were the most significant barriers which could prevent US expansion.¹²⁸ As Guizot had done with the River Plate in the 1840s, Gabriac divided Mexican politics in the "European Party" (Conservatives) and the "American Party" (Liberals).¹²⁹ In his view, the so-called "reaction" was an expression of "conservative politics and conforms to the interests of Europe in America". It was contrasted with the ideas of federalism, which had led to religious persecutions and disorder, and had been supported for "forty years by the agents of Washington in Mexico."¹³⁰ The Constitution of 1857 was a series of "social and political paradoxes" formed from "socialist, demagogic and irreligious" ideas that would further ruin Mexico.¹³¹ Gabriac accused the US representatives, Gadsden and Forsyth, of aiding Liberals and pointed out to Paris that Liberals were pro-Washington.¹³² He argued that Washington's recognition of Juárez's government proved his warnings correct.¹³³ The McLane-Ocampo Treaty provided yet more evidence of US ambitions and the complicity of Liberals with the United States, which would irrevocably damage European interests.¹³⁴

In Gabriac's view, the United States aimed at the complete exclusion of Europe from Mexican affairs, either through direct annexation or indirect domination, which would destroy the hemispheric and, one day, global balance of power.¹³⁵ Gabriac secured a copy of a despatch from the US minister, Forsyth, which he forwarded to the Quai d'Orsay as proof of US designs on Mexico. In the despatch, the US representative outlined his own support for Manifest Destiny, his attempts to secure territorial concessions and his view that Mexico was the "battleground for the maintenance of American supremacy in America, a theatre for the practical illustration of the value and virtue of the Monroe Doctrine."¹³⁶ For Gabriac, this would be a disaster both economically and politically. US

industry would soon compete with Europe's and its control of precious metals would exacerbate financial crises,¹³⁷ while it would export its political doctrines internationally to the detriment of the European social order. Even if the United States did separate into various republics, "these Anglo-Saxon societies all aimed at the same goal: the enslavement of Southern America to the yoke of their material interests". US policy in California and Texas demonstrated what awaited these conquered people—"the Latin race there was harried like the Indian".¹³⁸

In a conversation with the newly arrived Prussian minister, Gabriad found a fellow anti-American who outlined the imminent danger facing Europe. Baron Emil von Wagner had just arrived from the United States and argued it was motivated by nothing more than "fever for the dollar". This material culture made it "the most disgusting country in the world, and the country that glories the most in being disgusting." The Prussian minister argued that Buchanan wanted to create a balance between the slave South and the free North by conquering Mexico. The consequences of the McLane-Ocampo Treaty would be ruinous for Europe. It was, therefore, more urgent each day that Europe make Mexico the centre of a policy that would create an equilibrium in the Americas. The only way to do this would be if Louis-Napoléon, in concert with the other powers of Europe, established a monarchy in Mexico.¹³⁹

As has been seen, the Quai d'Orsay had given no encouragement to the various interventionist schemes of its agents prior to 1861, but it did make it clear that further expansion of the United States was antithetical to the interests of France. Although more sober in their analysis of US ambitions, French foreign ministers agreed throughout the 1850s that the United States was an ambitious power that wanted to expand. The then French foreign minister, Édouard Drouyn de Lhuys, wrote to Levasseur that the "interests of our policy make us strongly desire that Mexico be independent and prosperous." He opposed the Gadsden Purchase and argued that it was necessary to support Santa Anna's regime as far as possible in establishing its prestige because it worked to check the ambitions of the United States and improve relations with Europe.¹⁴⁰ Gabriad's forwarding of Forsyth's despatch which outlined the US diplomat's support for Manifest Destiny had "particularly caught [Walewski's] attention".¹⁴¹ Walewski had already warned that the fall of Santa Anna meant Mexico had been plunged into complete dissolution which provided the United States "with new opportunities for aggrandisement".¹⁴² He feared Mexico might cease to exist, and warned that the War of Reform threatened independence.¹⁴³

France had hoped that the combination of internal divisions within the United States; Mexican opposition to its attempts to secure more territory; and diplomatic pressure from Britain, France and Spain would be enough to prevent US expansion. However, by 1860 it was clear that a Washington alliance with Juárez's Liberal government would at best result in US hegemony or, worse, further annexation. Saligny's instructions from the French foreign ministry stated that "the United States, already masters of the provinces which formerly belonged to Mexico" worked towards new "territorial acquisitions". The recognition of Juárez's government at Veracruz was part of this process because the Liberals, unlike Conservatives, were willing to sell concessions to the United States in return for Washington's support. The interest of France, like all other European powers, was that Mexico did not lose its independence, and therefore "our sympathies" are for Miramón's government which had shown itself "more anxious to preserve the integrity of the national territory".¹⁴⁴ This was a reiteration the Quai d'Orsay's view on Mexican affairs outlined a month earlier: "Nothing, unfortunately, confirms the doctrine of Manifest Destiny more than the current state of Mexico [...] The successive absorption of its provinces by the United States has already begun and will continue". In this analysis, a reiteration of the similar warnings made from the Texan revolt onwards, the United States had been reluctant to annex territory too early because of the dangers it posed to the Union, but it had worked to fuel civil war in Mexico in order to weaken it and had allied with Juárez to further this goal. The anarchy which now reigned in Mexico was the pretext Washington would use to occupy it. Buchanan's message to Congress of 19 December 1859 demonstrated beyond doubt that this was the policy of his administration.¹⁴⁵

As discussed in Chaps. 3 and 4, fear of US expansion had concerned French diplomats since the 1830s, an interpretation frequently expressed in French public discourse.¹⁴⁶ However, this fear was not only voiced by pan-Latinists or French imperialists. In a letter to Lord Clarendon, Palmerston wrote "I have long felt inwardly convinced that the Anglo Saxon Race will in Process of Time [sic] become Masters of the whole American Continent North and South" and Britain "ought to delay [this] as long as possible." However, Palmerston believed there was little Britain could do. Treaties could not prevent the US advance because it would continue through "the indirect agency" of filibusters "in alliance with the [United States]". "In short", he concluded, "Texas over again."¹⁴⁷ Clarendon held the same view: "unless Britain and France are prepared to

occupy Central America and Mexico with a large land force and to have their fleets to support it in both oceans we may be sure that sooner or later those countries will be overrun and occupied just as have been Louisiana, Texas, and California added to the Union.”¹⁴⁸ These two leaders of British foreign policy understood the expansion of the United States to be detrimental to the interests of Britain, but impossible to stop without extraordinary measures. Just as with the interventions of 1838, French policy in the 1860s was seen as a means of securing British interests by proxy. Palmerston, therefore, privately supported Louis-Napoléon’s attempt to establish the Second Mexican Empire.¹⁴⁹

Indeed, there was nothing controversial about intervention in Mexico from a British perspective; the first European power to argue for it was Britain, not France. In the British view, Mexico was, to use an anachronism, a failed state. It had been riven by civil war and instability since independence. The current division of the country between two parties was the most recent, and the most anarchic, demonstration of this. The British government proposed a cease fire that, through the mediation of Britain and France, would be agreed between Liberals and Conservatives for a period of six months, during which a national assembly would be convened in order to constitute whatever form of government the nation wished.¹⁵⁰ France agreed to the British proposal, but it was rendered irrelevant by Juárez’s refusal to accept mediation.¹⁵¹ However, France had reservations because of Washington’s open sympathy for Juárez. The French foreign ministry maintained, echoing the language of Guizot over Texas, that France had an “incontestable interest in maintaining the independence of Mexico [and] delaying the invasion of this vast market by the [United States] to the detriment of Europe”. However, it would not countenance any policy that would prejudice French relations with Washington. The report remarked that France had for a long time received numerous requests from the Mexican Conservative Party to lead a European intervention or to support a monarchical restoration, but Washington’s objections to this policy made it impossible to carry them out.¹⁵² The US Civil War, then, was the occasion which allowed Louis-Napoléon to prosecute freely France’s long-held, “incontestable interest” without fear of US protest or reprisal.¹⁵³

Further US aggrandisement was Louis-Napoléon’s greatest concern, and therefore it was to this that representatives of the Conservative government appealed, not the reaction against liberal reforms or the popularity of the Conservative Party or enthusiasm for monarchy in Mexico.

Hidalgo y Esnaurrizar saw it as his primary duty to highlight this threat and he brought it up whenever possible with Thouvenel, who expressed “strong interests in Mexico”, understood the US threat and had wanted “to do something for [Mexico] in 1854 and 1855”.¹⁵⁴ Hidalgo y Esnaurrizar argued that the McLane-Ocampo Treaty would end Mexican independence, upsetting the balance of power in the Americas. The civil war was a struggle between a party that fought for the independence and national territory of Mexico against one that had no support other than the “sympathy of the United States”, a nation whose people, “by education and political system”, were “the irreconcilable enemy of the Latin race, and the Catholicism which it professes.”¹⁵⁵ France must intervene as the principal power of the Latin race and to protect French strategic and economic interests, and, in making this argument, which tied pan-Latinism to conservatism and European trade, Mexican interventionists were preaching to the converted.

It was not the Conservative programme in itself that convinced the French government of the necessity to intervene, nor was it the representation of the political situation in Mexico by French diplomats or Mexican émigrés. Rather, it was the belief that a struggle between Europe and the United States was playing out in Mexico. French policymakers—Louis-Napoléon especially—had long worried about this, but the outbreak of the US Civil War presented the opportunity to do something about it; while ideological (conservative) and cultural (pan-Latinist) association with France meant that French intervention could rely on auxiliaries and collaborating elites to help prosecute its foreign policy, which amounted to the greatest challenge to the Monroe Doctrine in the nineteenth century. Indeed, this is exactly how the *New York Times* understood the situation in 1860 before the outbreak of the US Civil War, before French intervention was even considered a possibility. The newspaper argued that the McLane-Ocampo Treaty must be ratified and that European influence in Mexico be opposed at all costs: “if our Government goes back of [sic] the Monroe doctrine, there is a chance at last that a barrier may be placed to the Anglo-Saxon wave. If it be established, a sad future opens upon liberal Republican institutions in America.”¹⁵⁶ Louis-Napoléon and Chevalier, on the other hand, saw intervention during the US Civil War as the opportunity to erect precisely the barrier US expansionists feared.

US expansion remained a constant threat to Mexico throughout the 1850s. Moreover, Conservatives understood the United States to be in alliance with Liberals, and during the War of Reform Washington did actively work to secure the triumph of Juárez. Therefore, in order to find support for their own political vision, Conservatives increasingly looked overseas for material and diplomatic assistance as well as political models. Already predisposed towards Europe, Louis-Napoléon's success after 1848 in constructing an authoritarian and stable regime drew Conservatives—who placed themselves within the context of a European-and-American-wide reaction against anti-clerical democratic and liberal doctrines—towards France. Conservatives adapted lessons drawn from post-1848 France for Mexican elections in 1849 and 1850, as well as seeing the French Second Empire as inspiration for the dictatorship of Santa Anna. In so doing, they articulated a conservative path to modernity which drew upon the renewed intellectual vigour of conservatism and emphasised order and economic progress rather than political liberty. The failure of their political projects followed by the polarisation of Mexican politics further convinced members of the Conservative Party that their salvation lay outside the nation. This, in turn, meant that France found sympathetic local elites through which it could pursue its long-term objective of checking US power in the Americas while developing French influence in the region as the United States tore itself apart in civil war.

This foreign policy goal was praised by the French statistician and senator Charles Dupin. It was not possible for him to congratulate the French emperor in public because it would have meant “imprudently lifting the veil with which it is necessary to cover the true reason for the [French intervention in Mexico].” Far above the nominal causes, Dupin was able to articulate the thought that truly directed the intervention, and this was the “boldest of our century, I would say further, of modern times”: It was to stop the expansion of the United States. Dupin noted that the population of the US had been 2 million in 1763, was 32 million in 1863, and he calculated that in 1963, it would be 512 million. The United States would need more land for these people; exactly as Louis-Napoléon and Chevalier feared, the United States would thus absorb Mexico, cross over the Isthmus of Panama and invade South America. In 100 years, the Anglo-Saxon race would number more than half a million. “Jealous of Europe, enemies of the old world, it would be capable of trying to enslave the universe.” Of all the sovereigns, only Louis-Napoléon had understood the danger the United States posed, and this was the idea that lay behind

his attempt to save Mexico.¹⁵⁷ This was the exactly the rationale of pan-Latinism discussed in Chap. 4; a zero-sum interpretation of the world that argued for an equilibrium between races. And for this reason, the article which contained the first use of the term “Latin America” also described Mexico as a “new Eastern question”, but in the Western Hemisphere.¹⁵⁸

The rationale for intervention was a joint creation by French imperialists and Mexican Conservatives as collaborating elites. Indeed, the War of Reform was to some extent a struggle over whether Mexico would be under US hegemony or European tutelage. What the Liberals were offering Washington was a virtual economic protectorate. Juárez’s minister to Washington made this clear: “the [United States] will derive all the advantages which they might obtain from annexation of Mexico, without suffering any of the inconveniences which such a step would produce.”¹⁵⁹ Conservatives wanted European rather than US protection, and France wanted the benefits Liberals offered to Washington for itself. And Dupin’s fears were proved correct: the Spanish-American War of 1898 and US construction of the Panama Canal was everything that France (and Britain and Spain, for that matter) feared in the 1850s. French intervention was, above all, the outcome of a contest between Europe and the United States. The means that France adopted to challenge Washington’s regional hegemony was informal empire on a grand scale, and its failure was as great as its ambition. In order to explain this failure, the next chapter explores the form that the French intervention and the Second Mexican Empire took.

NOTES

1. ‘La Guerra de oriente’, *El Universal*, 3 December 1854, front page.
2. ‘La alianza anglo-francesa. – Sus principios y su influjo’, *ibid.*, 12 January 1855, front page.
3. Vigil, *México a través*, 281; 367; Gargarella, *Legal Foundations*, 98.
4. *El Universal*, and ‘Situación de Roma’, 25 May 1849, front and second pages.
5. *Ibid.*, ‘Situación de Europa. – Término probable de la lucha. – Sus consecuencias para la América. – Interés de las Repúblicas americanas’, 19 May 1849, front page.
6. On the revolutions of 1848, see Mike Rapport, *1848: A Year of Revolution* (London: Little, Brown, 2008); Axel Körner (ed.), *1848: A European Revolution? International Ideas and National Memories of 1848* (London: Macmillan, 2000); Jonathan Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848–1851* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

7. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, trans. Eden and Cedar Paul (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1926), 23.
8. Quoted in James Dunkerley, *Americana: The Americas in the World around 1850* (London: Verso, 2000), 127.
9. José Ramón Pacheco to Drouyn de Lhuys, 24 October 1853, AAE, CP Mexique, 41.
10. 'La República necesita un hombre', *El Universal*, 13 February 1853, front page.
11. Rivera, 'La convocatoria', 535–44.
12. For example, 'Sistema electoral', *El Universal*, 18 April 1850, front page. Alamán had also proposed direct elections for Congress and the presidency in *Historia de Méjico*, V, 937.
13. Michael Costeloe notes that Alamán's arguments were "rather surprising given his record of antipathy to popular elections" in 'Mariano Arista and the 1850 Presidential Election in Mexico', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 18 (1999), 54.
14. Thomson, *European Revolutions*, 5.
15. Quoted in Pablo Mijangos y González, *The Lawyer of the Church Bishop Clemente de Jesús Munguía and the Clerical Response to the Mexican Liberal Reforma* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 72–73.
16. See, for example, 'Educación democrática', *El Universal*, 6 July 1853, front page.
17. 'Carácter de las últimas noticias de Europa. Un pensamiento que asoma en Francia', *El Universal*, 15 and 22 November 1850; front pages; 'Luis Napoleón Bonaparte', *El Orden*, 25 and 26 November 1852, front pages.
18. 'La revolución francesa de 1791 y de la 1848. Comparaciones. – Consecuencias', *El Universal*, 13 January 1849, front page.
19. 'Situación de Roma', *ibid.*, 25 May 1849, first and second pages.
20. 'Sistema electoral', *El Universal*, 3 December 1848, first and second pages.
21. *El Universal*, 'Soberanía Popular', 7 and 10 December, front and second pages, 13 December, front page, 17, 18 and 27 December 1848, front and second pages. See also 'Sistema Electoral', 3 December 1848 and 'elecciones', 19 December 1848.
22. 'Los retrogrados y la Monitor (concluye)', *El Universal*, 25 December 1848, front page.
23. Maurice Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment 1848–1852*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 119–24.
24. Sperber, *European Revolutions*, ch. 5.
25. 'El espíritu del siglo presente no es la democracia pura—Pruébase con la actual revolulción de Europa (concluye)', *El Universal*, 2 September 1849, front page.
26. 'Revista política del mes de Febrero de 1849', *ibid.*, 10 May, p. 2; 'Situación de Europa—Término probable de la lucha—Sus consecuencias

- para la América—Interés de las Repúblicas americanas’, 19 May, p. 2; ‘Revista política de Europa. Mes de marzo de 1849’, 10 June 1849, p. 2.
27. ‘Espíritu positivo del siglo—Su origen—Sus consecuencias—Aplicaciones en Méxco’, *ibid.*, 8 July 1849, front and second pages.
 28. ‘Principios conservadores’, *ibid.*, 2 July 1849, front page. Capitals in the original.
 29. See, for example, ‘Fusion’, *ibid.*, 9 June, and ‘Elecciones—partidos’, 22 June 1849, front pages.
 30. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XIII, 291–92.
 31. ‘Revolución moral (El Universal.)’, *El Siglo XIX*, 23 February 1850, front page.
 32. ‘Elecciones. – Voluntad nacional. – Situación del país. – Partido conservador. – Lucha electoral. – Esperanzas’, *ibid.*, 12 August, and ‘Mas sobre elecciones’, 5 September 1849.
 33. ‘Porque triunfa el partido conservador?’, *ibid.*, 9 September 1849, front page.
 34. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XIII, 346. Leading Conservatives were elected deputies though, including Alamán, Manuel Díez y Bonilla and Luis Gonzaga Cuevas.
 35. Costeloe, ‘Mariano Arista’, 54.
 36. This was the role the Bourbonist newspaper *El Sol* had ascribed to Napoleon Bonaparte in French history after his 1799 coup d’état. ‘Política. Continúa el anterior’, *El Sol*, 29 December 1821, pp. 31–32.
 37. ‘Reacción que ha tenido lugar en Europa y en América respecto de las ideas políticas’, *El Universal*, 16, 19, 22 and 24 December 1853, p. 2.
 38. ‘Luis Napoleón Bonaparte’, *El Orden*, 25 and 26 November 1852, front pages.
 39. ‘Una ojeada sobre el viejo continente—Reacción’, *El Universal*, 29 January 1853, front and second pages.
 40. ‘Luis Napoleón Bonaparte’, *El Orden*, 25 and 26 November 1852, front pages.
 41. ‘Un ojeada sobre el viejo continente. – Reacción’, *El Universal*, 28 and 29 January 1853, front and second pages.
 42. ‘Luis Napoleón Bonaparte’, *El Orden*, 25 and 26 November 1852, front pages.
 43. ‘Un ojeada sobre el viejo continente. – Reacción’, *El Universal*, 28 and 29 January 1853, front and second pages.
 44. ‘Los principios conservadores y el progreso’, *El Universal*, 5 July 1853, front page.
 45. Levasseur to French Édouard Drouyn de Lhuys, 30 April 1853, AAE, CP Mexique, 41.
 46. Alphonse Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 3 October 1853, CP Mexique, 41.
 47. Levasseur to Drouyn de Lhuys, 2 March and 27 April 1853, CP Mexique, 41.

48. Pierre Rosanvallon, *La démocratie inachevée: Histoire de la souveraineté du peuple en France* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), ch. 5.
49. See the entry in Jean Dubois, *Le Vocabulaire politique et social en France de 1869 à 1872. A travers les œuvres des écrivains, les revues et les journaux. Thèse, etc* (Paris, 1962).
50. Walter Bagehot, 'Caesarism as it Exists Now', *The Economist*, 4 March 1865 in Norman St John Stevas, *The Collected Works of Walter Bagehot*, 15 vols. (London: The Economist, 1965–86), IV, 112.
51. Anonymous, *Le Tiers Parti et les libertés intérieures* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1866), 13.
52. Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 296–303.
53. Levasseur to Drouyn de Lhuys, 27 April 1853, AAE, CP Mexique 41.
54. Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 297; Johnson, *Ayutla*, 19
55. Fowler, *Independent Mexico*.
56. Mantecón, *Santa Anna*, 54–57; Johnson, *Ayutla*, 63.
57. Rosanvallon, *Démocratie inachevée*, 214–15.
58. Levasseur to Drouyn de Lhuys, 27 April 1853, AAE, CP Mexique 41.
59. Alamán to Francisco Serapio Mora, 2 May 1853, AHGE, Francia, L. 29; e. 365. 'Ley sobre imprenta', *El Universal*, 29 April 1853, front page; Anonymous, *El partido conservador*, 913.
60. 'La prensa periódica', *El Universal*, 8 June 1853, front page.
61. 'La prensa periódica (concluye)', *El Universal*, 9 June 1853, front page.
62. Agulhon, *Republican Experiment*, 178–83.
63. See Anceau, *Napoléon III*.
64. Hale, *Mexican Liberalism*, 259.
65. *Ibid.*, 288.
66. 'Espíritu de progreso que se halla en los principios conservadores', *El Universal*, 21 July 1853, front page.
67. 'Espíritu positivo del siglo—su origen—sus consecuencias—aplicaciones en México', *El Universal*, 8 July, front and second pages; 'Progreso—espíritu del siglo—espíritu de los mexicanos', *ibid.*, 15 August, front page; 'El espíritu del siglo presente no es la democracia pura—Pruébase con la actual revolulción de Europa', *ibid.*, 1 and 2 September 1849, front pages. Although *El Universal* used the word "positivism" (*positivismo*) it is not clear what link, if any, this had with the ideas of Comte or earlier Saint-Simonians. Chevalier, though, also made a distinction between political liberty and civil liberty. The former was only the concern of a narrow elite, whereas the latter was important for majority because its benefits were greater. Michel Chevalier, *Examen du système commercial connu sous le nom de système protecteur* (Paris: Guillaumin et Cie., 1852), 10–18. The classic studies of positivism in Mexico see it introduced after the Mexican Second Empire. See Leopoldo Zea, *El Positivismo en México* (Mexico City: Colegio de México, 1943), and

- Apogeo y decadencia del positivismo en México* (Mexico City: Colegio de México, 1944). See also Hale, *Transformation of Liberalism*.
68. 'No hay libertad sin industria', *El Universal*, 20 December 1851, front page. It should be noted, though, that at the time of this article Chevalier was a supporter of free trade.
 69. 'Arreglo del acta de navegacion', *ibid.*, 4 January 1852. On the organisation of the society see *Reglamento interior para el gobierno de Sociedad Mexicana, etc.* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1851), and *Actas de la Sociedad Mexicana promotora de mejoras materiales y morales, desde su instalacion* (Mexico City: M. Murguía y compañía, 1854). The paper also supported the Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística. For example, 'Instituto de geografía y estadística', *ibid.*, 14 April 1851, front page.
 70. 'Agricultura', *El Universal*, 7 May 1850, front page.
 71. For example, 'Mejoras materiales', 1 July 1849; 'Mejoras positivas', 5 February 1851; 'Camino de Hierro de Veracruz a Acapulco', 14 January; 'Mejoras materiales', *ibid.*, 18 January 1852.
 72. Mantecón, *Santa Anna*, 40; 44–46.
 73. Arrangoiz, *México desde 1808*, II, 340–41; Anonymous, *El partido conservador*, 909–10; Miranda, *Esposición pública*, 41.
 74. Levasseur to Drouyn de Lhuys, 3 June 1853, AAE, CP Mexique 41.
 75. 'Política europea y americana—necesidad de estudiar la primera y de abrir un camino á la segunda—alianza de los principios conservadores para el porvenir de la raza española—reformas importantes en el "Universal"', *El Universal*, 1 August 1853, pp. 2–3.
 76. 'Congreso Americano', *ibid.*, 23 June 1853, front page.
 77. Levasseur to Drouyn de Lhuys, 30 April 1853, AAE, CP Mexique, 41.
 78. Díez de Bonilla to Gabriac, 2 March 1854 contained in Gabriac to foreign minister, 'Reservé et confidentielle', 4 March 1855, AAE, CP Mexique, 43.
 79. See, for example, *El Universal*: 'Temores de la política de la Unión Americana', 6 December 1851, front page; 'Situación política de Europa', 15 March 1852, front page; 'Cuestión de Oriente', 24 October 1853, p. 2; 'Los estados unidos a favor de la Rusia', 25 March 1854, front page; 'La guerra oriente—Nuestra intereses y nuestra simpatías', 15, 16 and 18 December 1854, front pages; 'La demagogia y los Estados-Unidos—La cuestión de Cuba en España', 10 and 14 April 1855, front page; 'La revolución en Europa y en America—quienes son los enemigos de nuestro gobierno', 6 August 1855, front page.
 80. Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 307–08 and 320–21; Meinig, *The Shaping of America*, 160; Donathon Olliff, *Reforma Mexico*, 26.
 81. Meinig, *Continental America*, 191; Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*

- (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 210; Thomas Hietala, *Manifest Design: Anxious Aggrandizement in Late Jacksonian America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 134–35.
82. *El Universal* frequently translated, published and commented upon US articles expressing views towards Mexico inspired by the ideas of Manifest Destiny. For example, on *The New York Herald*, ‘Temores permanentes de la política americana respecto de nuestra país’, 8 and 9 January 1852, front pages; on *The United States Review*, ‘La prensa de los Estados-Unidos y la República de México’, 2 February 1853, front and second pages. *El Universal* also dedicated a series of editorials to “Manifest Destiny” itself: ‘La raza española y la raza anglo-sajona’, 15, 25, 29 September and 5 October 1853, pp. 2–3, pp. 2–3, p. 2 and p. 2. See also *El Orden* on the *The Weekly Picayune*: ‘México—su porvenir’, 28 April 1853, front page.
 83. ‘The War’, *United States Democratic Review*, 20 (1847), 100.
 84. Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 153.
 85. Franklin Pierce, ‘Inaugural Address’, 4 March 1853, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/index.php> (accessed 4 October 2014).
 86. James Gadsden to Manuel Díez de Bonilla, 14 and 29 November 1853 in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 650–63 and 667–69.
 87. Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 306–07; Carmen Vázquez Mantecón, *Santa Anna*, 116–30; Richard Johnson, *The Mexican Revolution of Ayutla, 1854–1855: An Analysis of the Evolution and Destruction of Santa Anna’s Last Dictatorship* (Rock Island: Augustana College Library, 1939), 35.
 88. James Buchanan, ‘Message to the Senate on the Arrest of William Walker in Nicaragua’, 7 January 1858, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=68291> (accessed 4 October 2014).
 89. Lewis Cass to John Forsyth, 17 July 1857, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 234–38.
 90. John Forsyth to Luis Gonzaga Cuevas, 18 March 1858, in *ibid.*, IX, 971–76.
 91. Forsyth to Cass, 4 April 1857, in *ibid.*, IX, 902–09.
 92. On Cuba, see Piero Gleijeses, ‘Clashing over Cuba: The United States, Spain and Britain, 1853–55’, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 49 (2017), 215–41. On filibusters, see Robert May, *Manifest Destiny’s Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).
 93. ‘Relaciones de México con las potencias extranjeras’, *El Universal*, 1 May 1853, front page. *El Orden* made the same argument, ‘Nuestra fe política’, *El Orden*, 21 and 22 August 1852, front pages; ‘México y los Estados-Unidos’, *ibid.*, 8 December 1852, front page; ‘Desenlace de la revolución: La federación mexicana comprada con otras (concluye el sexto artículo)’, *ibid.*, 5 January 1853, front page.

94. 'Reflexiones sobre los gobiernos, aplicadas a la República', *La Sociedad*, 6 January 1858, front page.
95. Santi, *Mexicans at Arms*, 215–16; Dennis Berge, 'A Mexican Dilemma: The Mexican Ayuntamiento and the Question of Loyalty, 1846–1848', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 50 (1970), 229–56.
96. Examples are numerous; see, for example, 'Traición de la patria—inconsecuencias', *El Orden*, 3 May, front page; 'Los anexionistas', *ibid.*, 12 and 16 May, front pages; 'No hay anexionistas', *ibid.*, 30 May and 2 June, front pages; 'Los Partidos', *ibid.*, 11 May 1853, front page; 'Situación actual de la República. – El pasado y el porvenir', *El Universal*, 11 October 1850, front page; 'El porvenir de México. – La idea anexionista y la idea conservadora', *ibid.*, 13, 16 and 18 October, front pages; 'El espíritu anexionista', *ibid.*, 29 July 1853, front page; 'Estado de la cuestión', *La Sociedad*, 5 April 1858, front page.
97. Gabriac to Walewski, 18 January 1857, AAE, CP Mexique, 46; 21 January 1858; AAE, CP Mexique, 48; Gadsden to Marcy, 19 August 1855, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 782–84.
98. Félix Ruiz, 'La intervención europea', *La Sociedad*, 10 June 1856, front page. Similar examples in *La Sociedad* are numerous, for example: 'Que sería México bajo el domine norte-Americano', 18 April, front page; 'El partido liberal y los Estados-Unidos', 15 May 1858, front page; 'Las potencias occidentales de Europa y la Unión norte-americana respecto de los asuntos de Centro América y México', 7 January, front page; 'Alianza de los constitucionales y el gobierno de los Estados-Unidos—Los discursos de Mac-Lane y de Juárez—La circular de Ocampo—Protesta solemne del gobierno de la República', 17 April 1859, front and second pages. These same arguments were also made in the diplomatic correspondence of the Conservative government: Díez de Bonilla to Almonte, 20 April 1859; Muñoz Ledo to Almonte, 24 February 1860, AHGE, Francia, L. 38; e. 558; Castillo Lanzas to Almonte, 1 May, 1 August, 1 September and 2 October 1858, AHGE, Francia, L.38. e. 550. Muñoz Ledo to Almonte 29 March; Hidalgo to Almonte and Tomás Murphy Jr., 23 March 1860. Francia, L. 38; e. 558.
99. Petition of Ignacio Aguilar to Louis-Napoléon, 15 December 1858, contained in Gabriac to Walewski, 'Personnelle et particulière', 1 January 1859, AAE, CP Mexique, 50.
100. Petition of Joaquín Velázquez de León, 15 January 1859 enclosed in Gabriac to Walewski, 1 February 1859, 'Particulière', 1 February 1859, AAE, CP Mexique, 50.
101. Gabriac to Walewski, 11 May 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 48.
102. Gadsden to William Marcy, 5 November 1855, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 792–94. Gadsden argued that Washington should actively promote liberals. Gadsden to Marcy, 25 November 1855, in *ibid.*, IX, 797–99.

103. Forsyth to Cass, 1 July 1858, in *ibid.*, IX, 1010–12.
104. James Buchanan, 'Second Annual Message to Congress', 6 December 1858.
105. William Churchwell to Cass, 8 February 1859, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 1024–30.
106. Olliff, *Reforma Mexico*, 124–28.
107. Schoonover, *Dollars over Dominion*; Olliff, *Reforma Mexico*; Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'Los últimos intentos expansionistas', in *México y el mundo: historia de sus relaciones exteriores*, 8 vols. (Mexico City: Senado de la República, 1990), I, 151–80.
108. See Patricia Galeana, *El tratado McLane-Ocampo: la comunicación interoceánica y el libre comercio* (Mexico City: UNAM, 2006).
109. Pearl Ponce, "'As Dead as Julius Caesar": The Rejection of the McLane-Ocampo Treaty', *Civil War History*, 53 (2007), 346.
110. A French report on the incident concluded that the incident must be considered an intervention by Washington in the War of Reform on behalf of Juárez's liberals. 'Saisie des bateaux à vapeur le Miramon et le Marquis de la havane par le frégate américaine, le Saratoga, Captain Turner', 28 April 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53.
111. 'Los yankees en el gulfo mexicano', *Diario Oficial del Supremo Gobierno* (Mexico City), 20 March 1860, front and second pages. See also 'Los Yankees prestando ayuda a nuestros demagogos—La campaña de Veracruz', *La Sociedad*, 18 March 1860, front page.
112. Josefina Zoraida Vázquez and Lorenzo Meyer, *The United States and Mexico* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 66.
113. A view most recently restated by Delmon, 'Les acteurs de la politique', 75–99. See also Dugast, *La tentation mexicaine*; Gouttman, *La guerre du Mexique*; Lecaillon, *Napoléon III*; Barker, *The French Experience in Mexico 1821–1861*; Schefer, *La Grande Pensée de Napoléon III*.
114. Delmon, 'Les acteurs de la politique impériale', 99.
115. Barker, 'In Quest of the Golden Fleece'; Barker, 'The French Legation in Mexico'; Cunningham, *Mexico*, 4–5.
116. Forsyth to Cass, 25 June 1858, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 1007–10.
117. And with the moderate liberal president Comonfort, who in several meetings Gabriac encouraged to renounce the liberal government he headed and suspend the Constitution, a course of action that Comonfort took in December 1857. Gabriac to Walewski, 5 February 1857, CP Mexique, 46; same to same, 22 November, 18, 28 and 31 December 1857, CP Mexique, 47.
118. Gabriac to Walewski, 30 May 1858; Walewski to Gabriac, 29 July 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 48; Walewski to Gabriac, 28 August 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 49.
119. Díez de Bonilla to Louis-Napoléon, 9 May 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53; *La Sociedad*, 9 May 1860, 'El exmo. Sr. ministro de Francia en México'.

120. Gabriac to Walewski, 1 August 1858; Walewski to Gabriac, 28 August 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 49.
121. Walewski to Gabriac, 30 May 1859, AAE, CP Mexique 51.
122. Walewski to Gabriac, 30 November 1859, AAE, CP Mexique, 52.
123. Saligny to Thovenel, 26 November 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53.
124. Levasseur to foreign minister, 2 June 1853, AAE, CP Mexique, 41.
125. Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 4 January 1854, AAE, CP Mexique, 42.
126. Gabriac to Drouyn de Lhuys, 31 December 1854, 1 January and 25 January 1855, AAE, CP Mexique 43.
127. Radepont 'Project pour la régénération du Mexique', undated, enclosed in Radepont to Gabriac, 4 October 1856, AAE, CP Mexique, 46. See also Radepont to Louis-Napoléon, 25 February 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 48. Radepont remained in contact with Louis-Napoléon during the intervention and his correspondence to the emperor is contained in AN, AP400/62.
128. Gabriac to Walewski, 2 October and 29 October 1856, AAE, CP Mexique, 46.
129. Gabriac to Walewski, 31 December 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 49.
130. Gabriac to Walewski, 1 December 1856, AAE, CP Mexique, 46.
131. Gabriac to Walewski, 14 March 1857, AAE, CP Mexique, 46.
132. Gabriac to Walewski, 25 August, 26 September, 1, 12 and 17 October 1855, AAE, CP Mexique, 44; 1 and 14 August, 19 September, 11 November and 1 December 1856, AAE, CP Mexique, 46; same to same, 5 February, 11 April, 20 and 25 October 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 49.
133. Gabriac to Walewski, 18 April 1859, CP Mexique, 51.
134. Gabriac to Walewski, 19 December 1859 and 20 February 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 52.
135. Gabriac to Walewski, 30 January 1857.
136. Enclosed in Gabriac to Walewski, 22 April 1857, AAE, CP Mexique, 47. The forwarded despatch is identical to Forsyth to Cass, 4 April 1857, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, IX, 902.
137. A view shared by Chevalier, *Des mines*, 93–97.
138. Gabriac to Walewski, 11 May 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 48.
139. Gabriac to Walewski, 27 January 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 52.
140. Drouyn de Lhuys to Levasseur, 29 Decemeber 1852, AAE, CP Mexique, 40; Drouyn de Lhuys to Dano, 31 January 1854, AAE, CP Mexique, 42; Drouyn de Lhuys to Dano, 30 November 1854, AAE, CP Mexique, 43.
141. Walewski to Gabriac, 2 July 1857, AAE, CP Mexique, 47.
142. Walewski to Gabriac, 15 November 1855, AAE, CP Mexique, 44.
143. Walewski to Gabriac, 29 November 1856, AAE, CP Mexique, 46; 27 February 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 48.
144. Thouvenel to Saligny, 30 May 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53.

145. 'Note pour le Ministère', April 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53.
146. Stève Sainlaude, *La France et la Confédération sudiste, 1861–1865: la question de la reconnaissance diplomatique pendant la guerre de Sécession* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011), 192; Thier, 'The View from Paris'; Thier, 'A World Apart, A Race Apart?'; Roger, *The American Enemy*; Rémond, *Les États-Unis*.
147. Palmerston to Clarendon, 31 December 1857 quoted in Richard van Alstyne, 'Anglo-American Relations, 1853–1857: British Statesmen on the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty and American Expansion', *American Historical Review*, 42 (1937), 491–500.
148. Clarendon to Cowley, 21 May 1857, FO 519/175.
149. Palmerston to Russell, 13 August 1863; Palmerston to Russell, 11 September 1863; Palmerston to Russell, 26 September 1863, PRO 30/22/22.
150. 'Note verbale remis par Lord Cowley', 7 February 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 52.
151. Gabriac to Thouvenel, 24 April 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 53.
152. 'Proposition anglaise', January 1860, AAE, CP Mexique, 52.
153. Louis-Napoléon states clearly that the US Civil War afforded him a free hand to pursue his policy in Mexico. Louis-Napoléon to Count Flahault, 9 October 1861, AN, 400AP/63.
154. Hidalgo to foreign minister, 30 March 1860, AHGE, Francia, L. 38; e. 558.
155. Hidalgo y Esnaurrizar to Édouard Thouvenel, 12 May 1860, AHGE, Francia, L.38; e. 558.
156. 'Mexican Affairs; Decision of the European Powers upon their Mexican Policy—Cruelties Practised by Rojas—A Terrible Affray—Anxiety for the Fate of the McLane Treaty', *The New York Times*, 14 April 1860, no page nos. given.
157. Charles Dupin to Louis-Napoléon, 9 November 1863, 'Du Mexique dans ses rapport avec Napoléon III par le baron Charles Dupin, sénateur', AAE, MD Mexique, 10.
158. Belly, 'Du conflit anglo-américain', 122.
159. Quoted in Olliff, *Reforma Mexico*, 150–51.

The Limits of Informal Empire: French Intervention and the Mexican Second Empire

After a long siege, French forces took the city of Puebla and in the face of the advancing French army, supported by its Mexican allies, Juárez resolved not to defend Mexico City, fleeing with his government to the state capital of San Luis Potosí. Thus on 10 June 1863, Forey entered the Mexican capital unopposed and in triumph. Two days before, aware of the historical importance, Forey had addressed his troops; he noted that the French eagles were going to enter the ancient capital of the Aztecs, but, whereas Hernán Cortés had come to destroy, the French were coming to build, and in place of “reducing a people to slavery, you are going to liberate them.”¹ The contrast between the French informal-imperial model and the conquest and colonisation of the Spanish Empire was thus made clear. However, Forey’s address immediately put him at odds with the faction France had ostensibly intervened to support. For many members of the Conservative Party, Cortés had not enslaved Mexico’s people, but rather liberated them from the tyranny of the Aztecs; he may have destroyed pagan barbarism, but he replaced it with European and Christian civilization. In fact, the Spanish conquest of Mexico, in contrast to “all other conquests and wars”, was the only one that was truly beneficial for “humanity and civilization”.²

Had this disagreement over the interpretation of Mexico's history been an isolated incident, it would be of little importance, but it was indicative of the troubled relations between many members of the Conservative Party and the French intervention. Two days after entering Mexico City, Forey issued a proclamation that outlined the political direction of the intervention and it contained two points that entirely contradicted the Conservative vision for Mexico: (1) the forced sale of mortmain Church property by Liberals would not be revised and (2) Louis-Napoléon wanted to see freedom of worship in Mexico.³ Later, Maximilian would go further; at the beginning of 1865, he confirmed nearly all of the Liberal reforms that Conservatives had fought against, and the Emperor of Mexico did so in open opposition to the Pope in Rome. Thus the ultramontane and reactionary Archbishop of Mexico, Pelagio Antonio de Labastida y Dávalos, used the same word to describe the intervention as the French republican Favre: It was "a chimera".⁴

That opponents and supporters of the intervention could come to the same conclusion is revealing of its politically ambiguous nature. Intended to appeal to Mexicans across the political spectrum, the regime it created was condemned by opponents and supporters alike after its collapse, while both the French and Mexican Second Empires themselves came to be seen as anachronisms, merely painful interludes before the triumph of republicanism in Mexico and France. Maximilian, however, was not, as has been argued, merely a "proxy" for the Conservatives, nor was the French intervention launched on behalf of this Party to sustain a backwards and reactionary form of politics. The Chilean intellectual Francisco Bilbao caricatured the struggle between the French-backed Second Mexican Empire and Juárez's Liberals as that of the Old World against the New, the former encompassing "monarchy, feudalism, theocracy, castes and ruling families" and the latter embodying "democracy". In order to construct a positive view of American republican modernity, claims such as these are taken at face value and repeated.⁵ But doing so reduces the debate over modernity to institutions and forms of government and fundamentally misses the point of what many hoped to achieve in establishing a French-backed monarchy under a Habsburg prince. Overturning a republican constitutional government and replacing it with a monarchy under a European prince was, of course, a radical move, and those who backed it were trying to create a world that had never existed, rather than recapture a mythical colonial past untouched by revolutions.

As has been argued, in order to understand why France created a monarchy in Mexico—and many in Mexico collaborated with this—it is necessary both to imperialise and Mexicanise the intervention. The Second Mexican Empire was intended to be a conservative path to modernity (Chap. 5), underpinned by a pan-Latinist worldview (Chap. 4) and, as a monarchy, a solution to the political problems of Mexico (Chap. 3). The French intervention itself was not an exceptional “adventure”, but an example of French informal imperial expansion (Chap. 2). The basic aims of the intervention were simple: to develop the Mexican economy (and secure much of the consequent benefit for France) and to create a powerful and stable regime in North America tied to France that would prevent further US expansion. However, unlike other contemporary examples of French imperialism, the intervention ended in catastrophic failure.

To help explain this failure, this chapter explores what it was that France and many Mexicans who rallied to the intervention hoped to create: the conservative path to modernity. The second section will then investigate the architecture of French informal imperialism, the means by which France hoped to establish “a close solidarity of interests” between the Mexican and French empires through a political system that aimed to rally moderates from both parties that had fought in the War of Reform.⁶ Finally, the third section will discuss the reasons for the spectacular failure of this imperial project.

ORDER AND PROSPERITY: THE MEXICAN CASE FOR EMPIRE

Mexican Conservatives had called for European intervention and thus those who initially supported the intervention belonged to the Conservative Party. From a French point of view, these individuals acted as “auxiliaries”.⁷ Once Forey occupied Mexico City, he put into operation the plan sketched out by Louis-Napoléon, who had instructed him to form a provisional government that would choose an assembly to deliberate on the future form of Mexico’s government.⁸ The result was the *Junta Superior del Gobierno*, composed of thirty-five men, predominantly members of the Conservative Party,⁹ set up by decree in June 1863. This body nominated a triumvirate Regency Council as an “executive power” and selected an “Assembly of Notables” made up of 215 men, who supposedly represented the will of the Mexican people which voted on the form of government Mexico should adopt. The process was, of course, carefully stage-managed: Forey was able to report to Paris, and Mexican monarchists

to Maximilian, that the assembly would vote in favour of monarchy before it had delivered its verdict.¹⁰

The most important “auxiliary” to France for the first two years of the intervention (from January 1862 to May 1864) was Juan Nepomuceno Almonte. He enjoyed Louis-Napoléon’s, and Maximilian’s, confidence and was sent to Mexico under French protection to organise local forces against Juárez and to act as an intermediary between the French intervention and the Conservative Party.¹¹ He was not, however, one of the founding members of this Party. Almonte only became associated with it once the polarisation of Mexican politics post-1855 turned it into a heterogeneous organisation that included all those who opposed Juárez’s Liberals. Prior to this, and as has been shown in earlier chapters, Mexican politics was fluid, categorisations difficult and political affiliations changed over time. Santa Anna provides a typical example as he charted a course from *puro* federalist to authoritarian centralist; Almonte is another striking case in point. He had been a member of the *yorkinos* in the 1820s, but gravitated towards the anti-liberal spectrum of Mexican politics and the *santanistas* in the 1830s and 1840s. He fought alongside Santa Anna against the Texan rebels and later served as a diplomat to Washington and the major courts of Europe. He was minister of war in 1840 and directed a proclamation to the army calling Gutiérrez de Estrada a traitor for his monarchical tract published in the same year. Similarly, in 1846 he had been a vocal critic of *El Tiempo*’s monarchical arguments.¹² He stood as a candidate in the 1850 presidential election and came second to Arista (see Chap. 5), but performed better than the Conservative candidate. Under Santa Anna’s dictatorship he served again as minister to the United States (1853–56). He supported the Conservative governments of Zuloaga and Miramón and was their minister to Britain (1856–58) and France (1857–61), but had been appointed to these positions by the moderate liberal Ignacio Comonfort; his republican credentials were not questioned until the late 1850s.¹³ The son of one of the heroes of Mexican independence, José María Morelos, his political journey took him from the company of radical liberals to the Conservative Party and then the leader of France’s “auxiliaries” during the intervention.¹⁴

Almonte embraced the strand in conservative thought that emphasised economic development and administrative rationalisation, outlined in the previous chapter. These remained a central part of Mexican conservatism in the 1850s and were the underlying principles upon which the Mexican Second Empire was founded. Almonte’s own concern for economic

matters is shown by the fact that he founded and chaired the *Sociedad Promovedora de Mejoras Materiales y Morales* in 1851, which encouraged economic development in Mexico,¹⁵ and his published works reflected his interests in administration, forestry, statistics and geography.¹⁶

It was not true, as liberal opponents claimed, that “[t]he reactionary party lacked a positive program; its war cry was simply the negation of liberal ideas and principles” or that the Conservative Party could only “repeal, destroy; postpone the rest for a better time.”¹⁷ And, despite the increasing centrality of the issue of the Church in Mexican politics and the consequent radicalisation of both sides in the debate, the conservative path to modernity remained a fundamental part of the Party’s political programme from the mid-1850s to the defeat of Maximilian’s Empire. For example, Miguel Miramón, who became president of the Conservative government in 1859 during the War of Reform, synthesised the ideas expressed in *El Universal* in the period 1848–53. He presented his manifesto for the Mexican nation in a proclamation of July 1859. What is remarkable about this document is that in it he did not attribute Mexico’s problems to the Constitution of 1857 or anti-clericalism: only one paragraph out of 35 mentioned the Church. Instead, he argued that every branch of Mexico’s government needed reform, including the treasury, tax collection, education and justice. In addition, he proposed public works to stimulate the economy and provide employment.¹⁸

For those, like Almonte, who supported this programme, the French intervention provided an opportunity to put it into effect under French guidance. In 1863, *La Sociedad* ran a series of articles outlining the fiscal, commercial, agricultural and industrial reforms necessary to modernise what the author saw as Mexico’s largely colonial system. These began with an article entitled “Finances”. This was, according to the writer, a word borrowed from the French language, and French administrators had already begun the reform of Mexican government revenues. The article argued that “administrative science” was not as advanced in Mexico as it was in other countries, not because Mexico lacked men who had indicated the route that needed to be followed, but because the incompetence of those in power, or vested interests, had prevented reform. Crucially, the systems of internal customs needed to be abolished and replaced with direct contributions.¹⁹

What followed over the next few months was a discussion of political economy which ranged from the purpose of and types of taxation to the role of industry, agriculture and commerce, questions which the newspaper

considered to be equally as important as the political and constitutional ones being debated at the same time. The central theme to the articles was the need for reform. Mexico's fiscal policy was "truly monstrous and totally unsupportable". Theorists from Jovellanos to Adam Smith were invoked, but on a practical level there was a model to imitate: "truly admirable, as it is in all other branches of public administration, France." This "perfect type" had two advantages for Mexico: first, it was intrinsically good and, second, Mexican society, based as it was on Spanish customs and traditions, was ideally placed to implement French ideas because Spain had based its own institutions on France. Moreover, unlike Spain, Mexico had the opportunity to overhaul completely its old practices because it was now unencumbered by interests which would resist the "patriotic task of properly ordering our economy."²⁰

The editorials argued that indirect taxation was inefficient and archaic. Instead, direct taxes, traditionally disdained in Mexico, and which hardly figured in government revenues, were the foundation of European fiscal systems, especially in France, and needed to be adopted by Mexico. Mexico was not an exception in the civilised world, and with the help of France, the same principles applied in Europe would work across the Atlantic. The reform of Mexico's fiscal structures, combined with order and peace, would mean that "[Mexico's] economic problem, which includes [its] national debt and is the fundamental basis of all [its] social problems, would be definitively resolved".²¹

Many of these articles were initialised "M. P. y C." and were most likely written by Manuel Piña y Cuevas, who was a member of the Assembly of Notables that voted for Maximilian as monarch and a councillor of state under the Empire. He had been finance minister under the moderate liberal presidents and had argued for the formation of a national bank to manage Mexico's debt.²² He was described by a French diplomat as a member of the "reactionary party", but clearly one with a positive programme as far as economic reform went.²³ He is illustrative of a current of thought in Mexican conservatism that belies simple categorisation as "reactionary", and viewed the increasing economic power of France with admiration.

Development and modernisation were central to the Second Mexican Empire, or at least to its rhetoric. One of the first acts of Maximilian's reign was to set up an "Economic Commission", which was charged with examining all aspects of the Mexican economy, particularly the inability of the treasury to cover expenses, the system of taxation, the national debt,

colonisation, and industry, as well as concessions for the construction of railway and telegraph lines.²⁴ The Emperor's speech for the inauguration of the Imperial Academy of Sciences and Literature began by highlighting the benefits of modernisation for the Mexican economy through railways and steam ships.²⁵ Limited progress was made in railway construction,²⁶ but urban regeneration, decimalisation of the currency and administrative reform along European lines were successfully implemented.²⁷

The promise of policies such as these was one of the principal justifications for intervention. As the conservative newspaper *El Pájaro Verde* editorialised: The civil war in Mexico had severely damaged industry, agriculture and commerce and therefore improvement of public finances, administration and the economy were as important as the moral and social regeneration of the country.²⁸ In December 1863, *La Sociedad*, wrote that "[w]ith hopes of the political and social regeneration of the country, come projects of material development of similar importance." The paper noted and translated appreciatively an article from the French press, which listed schemes such as draining the Valley of Mexico, piped drinking water, gas lighting, improved mining, and development of cotton, tobacco and coffee for export.²⁹ The paper concluded that draining the Valley of Mexico was the most important of all of these measures and the editorial ended with a report from the moderate liberal José Fernando Ramírez, at the time an opponent of the intervention, on this subject. Later, Ramírez rallied to the empire and was appointed Maximilian's foreign minister. In this position, he outlined and praised the various schemes of Maximilian to develop the Mexican economy.³⁰ As with economic reform, intervention would facilitate this process through European capital, expertise and immigration, a point made by various pro-intervention newspapers.³¹ For *imperialistas*, as supporters of Maximilian became known, a strong government aided by European expertise would be able to fulfil the long-held desire for economic and administrative reform, a conservative path to modernity.

They also believed the Mexican empire was a solution to the endemic political instability of Mexico. In a proclamation of January 1863, Almonte restated that the aims of the intervention were to "end the civil war" and contribute to the establishment of a solid government based on "order and morality", which would leave it to the Mexican people to elect a government "of the form most suited to them".³² His first proclamation identified Juárez's government as "the enemies of order", opposed to "morality". The oldest refrain in the canon of anti-federal conservative

thought was ever present: Mexico needed a government in accordance with its “character, needs and religious beliefs”, which would finally end “anarchy” and guarantee “life and property”, and, as a consequence, allow commerce to develop and take advantage of the “immense resources” of the country.³³ The provisional executive council set up by the French intervention, and known as the Regency from June 1863, was described by Almonte as a step towards the “moral, social, political and industrial restoration of Mexico”.³⁴

The intervention and the Regency government always emphasised “order and stability”, together with various combinations of “progress”, “peace” and “prosperity”. A letter from the Conservative general, Antonio Taboada, to his Liberal friend, Tomás O’Horán y Escudero, began by appealing to the latter’s “ideas of order and patriotism”. Taboada wrote that O’Horán must, as he himself had done, have studied the situation of “our unfortunate country” and concluded that Mexico lacked the capacity to find within itself “the radical remedy, much less the peace, progress and much-vaunted freedom” the nation needed in order to find stability. Similarly an *imperialista* pronunciamiento in Chiapas called for the foundation of a government based “on the principle of order [...] a strong and robust government”.³⁵

For supporters of the intervention, monarchy was a solution to the perceived anarchy of Mexico because, for its advocates, it was synonymous with “order, peace, prosperity and respect for individual rights”,³⁶ and would provide “strong and robust government” without descending into tyranny. One monarchist argued that Mexico since independence had been “tyrannised” by “military dictatorships”, like Santa Anna’s, which were “immoral”, but respected property and “gave guarantees of security”, or by governments of “unchecked demagoguery”, as exemplified by Juárez, that “respected nothing, neither religion, nor those who did not think like them, nor property”. Having seen the country lose nearly half of its territory, and in order to safeguard the existence of the Mexican nation, the Conservative Party, therefore, “finally turned to the only remedy that could save their nationality and traditions [...]: monarchy.”³⁷ It was hoped monarchy would end the “vicious circle” or revolts that around which the nation had revolved “without cease since independence”.³⁸ Monarchy was a solution to this endless conflict because, as Gutiérrez de Estrada had argued in 1840, the person of the monarch was above party conflict and thus factional fighting would cease. And the same argument made by *El Sol* in 1821–22 was made again in 1863: The hereditary

principle provided stability in contrast to the elected presidents of a republic.³⁹ In response to those who argued that monarchy was retrogressive or incompatible with liberty, independent Mexico was contrasted with the constitutional monarchies of Europe. Personal and commercial liberty, political rights and freedom of the press, which in Mexico had only existed on paper, would become a reality as they were in the “great European monarchies”.⁴⁰

Other arguments from Mexican monarchist discourse discussed in Chap. 3 were deployed. The conservative press countered those who claimed that with the French intervention Mexico would renounce its independence and abdicate its sovereignty; Mexico would only lose the presidential seat, which would be replaced by a throne. Moreover, monarchy was a chance to complete the Plan of Iguala and guarantee independence. Indeed, Mexico would affirm the latter because at present “the weakness of our industry means we depend on foreign nations, and a powerful neighbour [the United States] still conspires to weaken us.” Furthermore, by tying itself to the great powers of Europe, Mexico would assure its independence in the event of any future international threat.⁴¹ And it was not only Spanish colonialism that made Mexico’s customs suited to empire; Mexico had been a monarchy for as long as a thousand years under various different pre-Columbine rulers.⁴² For committed monarchists, the intervention was presented as the culmination of the work of (what they called) the “monarchist party” begun by *El Tiempo* in 1846.⁴³

The Regency marked the high-water mark both of Franco-Mexican cooperation in support of the intervention and of optimism for the future. In a manifesto to the Mexican people immediately prior to the formal dissolution of the Regency and the proclamation of the Empire, Almonte celebrated a government which owed its existence to the “combined action of the national interest and the magnanimous and civilizing France”.⁴⁴ From fiscal reform to political institutions, France was seen as a model, the French army was the portrayed as the restorer of order and the intervention was a legitimate means of saving Mexico. Pro-intervention publicists combed through the pages of Emer de Vattel and Fortuné-Barthélemy de Félice to find justification for France’s actions in international law. They concluded that since the revolt of Ayutla (begun in 1854), Mexico had been in state of perpetual anarchy and, far from diminishing Mexican sovereignty, France had come to restore and guarantee it. The French were, therefore, not “conqueror[s] of the country”, but “supporters

of [conservative] ideas".⁴⁵ The combined French and Mexican forces that entered Mexico City in June 1863 were the "allied army", the French were "generous helpers",⁴⁶ and "auxiliaries to the conservative cause" who "would take down the [Liberal] government and prepare a situation of order and stability."⁴⁷

For Mexican defenders of the intervention, the political institutions set up by France were proof that there was no intention of "conquest", "domination", "or of a "French colony". Moreover, the material benefits of the Franco-Mexican relationship would be vast. *La Sociedad* recognised that the interests of France were not absent from its policy, but they were combined with those of Mexico: railways, telegraphs, immigration, capital and the development of national industry.⁴⁸ Panegyrics to Louis-Napoléon were published, hyperbolic even by Bonapartist standards: "[w]e pray to heaven that the Bonapartist dynasty lasts forever, and that it continues the work of the current emperor".⁴⁹ In the ideal view of committed *imperialistas*, the election of Maximilian was the free wish of the Mexican people and there was no interference in internal political affairs. The French Second Empire was a paradigm to emulate and the "work undertaken in France by [Louis-Napoléon] has much in common with the ongoing work of Maximilian".⁵⁰

At a national level there were,⁵¹ then, a number of reasons for Conservatives to support the intervention. Central amongst these was the hope that the empire of Maximilian would create order and stability, the conditions necessary for the administrative reforms and economic development at the heart of the Conservative programme. Conservatives theorised a mutually beneficial relationship between themselves and France that would further their political project as well as French interests without compromising the independence of Mexico. As will be seen below, however, there was a disjuncture between the French vision for the Mexican Empire and that of some in the Conservative Party, which, within the asymmetrical relationship between the two, could only be resolved in France's favour.

France would not have intervened in Mexico without the support of the Conservative Party, but the utility of these Mexican collaborating elites was that they provided a government in waiting which gave a semblance of legitimacy for the establishment of the Mexican Second Empire. The narrow section of Mexico's politicians that either supported monarchy, or at least would be sympathetic to one, were used to proclaim the Mexican Second Empire and present its crown to Maximilian. The

establishment of the Mexican Second Empire was, then, an elite project, which relied on the “respectable and wise portion of the Mexican public to express its wishes [in favour of monarchy]”.⁵² Chapters 3 and 4 have shown just how narrow French commentators considered the “respectable and wise” portion of the Mexican public to be. As will be seen, once established, the Mexican Empire was presented as the will of the Mexican people and, eventually, to be constituted on lines not dissimilar to the French Second Empire, but, to continue the parallel, the intervention was Louis-Napoléon’s coup d’état of 2 December 1851; the popular, liberal empire would come later. And, in this sense, discussion of the popularity or otherwise of monarchy in Mexico, and whether Louis-Napoléon was misled over this, somewhat misses the point: there was support for monarchy amongst limited—but crucial—sections of the Mexican elite.

The political course of the French intervention and the empire of Maximilian, however, demonstrates that neither were intended for the benefit of this elite alone. As soon as the Regency was established, French policy broke with those who had done most to bring about and support the intervention, which in turn led some Mexican Conservatives to disown both the intervention and later Maximilian. Hence the ultramontane Labastida could agree with the republican Favre that French policy was a chimera. Louis-Napoléon’s vision for Mexico was Bonapartist. The clerical-conservative wing of Mexican conservatism would have agreed with the French Emperor that “a country torn by anarchy cannot be regenerated by *parliamentary* liberty.” However, they were less enamoured with Louis-Napoléon’s solution: “What is needed in Mexico is a *liberal* dictatorship; that is to say a strong power which shall proclaim the great principles of modern civilisation”, which included “religious liberty”.⁵³ The Emperor had made it clear to Almonte that “as long as my army is in Mexico, I will not permit the establishment of a blind reaction that compromises the future of this beautiful country and, in the eyes of Europe, dishonours our flag.”⁵⁴ Instructions to Forey and Bazaine, who in October 1863 replaced Forey as commander of the intervention, were unequivocal: do not follow a reactionary policy because France represents the “cause of civilisation and progress in Mexico”.⁵⁵

The French interpretation of civilisation and progress in Mexico differed from the clerical wing of the Conservative Party in one important aspect: relations between Church and state. One of the primary aims of clerical conservatives was the revocation of the reforms against the Church enacted during the War of Reform and confirmed by Juárez after his victory. The intervention was supported not only because monarchy would

restore order and prosperity, but also because the new government would be founded upon “the principles of Catholicism and the Church”, principles which, Conservatives argued, liberal republicanism had attacked. The clerical conservatives could not in any event accept a religious settlement unless it was authorised by the Pope; in their eyes, France had been sent by providence to rescue Mexico from the irreligious abyss Juárez had plunged it into.⁵⁶ Liberals had oppressed the Church in Mexico and wherever, argued a conservative newspaper, there “exists an oppressed people, there will go the flag of France to protect them”.⁵⁷ Unfortunately for Mexican clerical conservatives, however, this French intervention was not the one they identified as at the head of an international reaction sweeping Europe after 1848 and which had restored Papal temporal power. Rather, French policymakers believed that “the secret of [France’s] influence in the world is that she represents those immortal ideas known as the principles of 1789”. The intervention must, therefore, “foster in Mexico those liberal and progressive ideas which she has introduced into [France] with so much success.”⁵⁸

It was over this divergence that clerical conservatives soon became disillusioned with the intervention despite the role they had played in bringing it about. Almonte worked with the French and refused to revoke the sale of Church property, but in so doing he earned the disdain of other Conservatives, such as Labastida, who was also a member of the Regency (along with Almonte and José Mariano de Salas, a former interim president of Mexico) and tried unsuccessfully to restore mortmain property to the Church. Arrangoiz, a clerical conservative and supporter of Labastida, argued that Almonte presented himself as the leader of the “progressive Conservatives” in contrast to those, like Labastida or Gutiérrez de Estrada, who belonged to the “retrogressive Conservatives”.⁵⁹ Another clerical conservative, the Bishop of Puebla, Javier Francisco Miranda, warned: “[Almonte] counts on no elements [of support] and by his apathy, moderatism (*moderantismo*) and indolence he may yet lose those I have so painstakingly put into his hands.” The Bishop argued that Almonte was determined “to follow a policy of half-measures and compromises” to the detriment of the Conservative Party.⁶⁰

Many leaders of the Conservative Party refused to be associated with this moderate policy.⁶¹ However, Almonte’s “eminently practical” nature,⁶² which Liberals and later clerical conservatives attacked as “ambition” and an absence of principle, made Almonte useful to the French, and he enjoyed the support of Louis-Napoléon, Thouvenel and Saligny.⁶³ He

acted as an intermediary between the French political vision for the intervention and the ultramontane members of the Conservative Party, attempting to reconcile their views with the liberal settlement envisaged by Louis-Napoléon. It was hoped that Almonte would form a “liberal-conservative” party, which would be “wise, moderate, fighting Juárez and opposed to [the clerical conservatives].”⁶⁴

As Chaps. 4 and 5 have shown, transnational ideas such as pan-Latinism and anti-Americanism were flexible enough to be embraced by Mexican Conservatives. They were not, however, flexibly interpreted in Paris. Louis-Napoléon was determined to impose his own vision on Mexico through an informal-imperial framework and if this was unpalatable to clerical conservatives—which it was—then so be it. This was not only an ideological decision, but also a pragmatic one. Mexican Conservatives had proved themselves unable to defeat Juárez’s Liberals. If the Mexican empire were to survive, it was necessary to attract moderate liberals to the cause as well. It was the implementation of liberal ideas during the intervention and under Maximilian which followed from this policy that led Arrangoiz to conclude the “disastrous end” of the Mexican Second Empire was “exclusively” the result of the “improvidence of the Emperor of the French” because of the “complete ignorance of his ministers in Mexican affairs” and the “desire to govern [Mexico] from Paris and in a French fashion”. As regards the initial collaborating elites who supported the intervention, the failure of Mexican Second Empire was “not the fault of the Conservatives [...] or the clergy”.⁶⁵ Arrangoiz was right: It was not the Conservatives who were responsible for the collapse of the Mexican Second Empire, but nor was it the interference in the internal affairs of Mexico from Paris he criticised. Rather, it was the model of imperialism that France adopted. The final two sections will address what this model was, and why it failed.

“YOU ARE FREE, GOVERN YOURSELF!”⁶⁶: THE ARCHITECTURE OF INFORMAL RULE

French imperialism in Mexico followed the model it did because policy-makers of the French Second Empire wished to avoid the burden of formal rule. The lawyer and economist William Senior Nassau, in conversation with French foreign minister Drouyn de Lhuys, remarked “[y]our presence and your influence [in Mexico] can do [Britain] nothing but good. I should be glad to see you make an Algeria of [Mexico].” Alarmed, Drouyn

de Lhuys replied that he would not: “[w]e are mad, perhaps, to go thither at all; but we are not mad enough to wish for a dependency, four thousand miles off [...] which would cost us two or three millions sterling a-year, and would be lost the first time that we quarrelled with you, or the Southern Anglo-American States. What we might do, and what it is your interest that we should do, is to establish there a constitutional monarchy with European sympathies.”⁶⁷

As Drouyn de Lhuys made clear in December 1863 to the French minister in Mexico Charles-François-Frédéric, Marquis de Montholon, “the part that [France] has taken as the guardian of [Mexico’s] regeneration” meant Montholon was charged with imprinting on “the administration of this country a direction conforming to the ideas France attempts to make prevail everywhere it extends its influence.”⁶⁸ Or what Louis-Napoléon described as the necessity that “in Mexico you [General Forey] are [in charge] without appearing to be so”.⁶⁹ In short, the aim was exactly that identified by Walter Bagehot in *The Economist*: “[Louis-Napoléon] has contrived to obtain a splendid position upon the American continent without incurring all the responsibility a colony would have imposed.”⁷⁰

Aside from Chevalier’s work, the clearest articulation of the French plan for the Mexican Empire modelled on the French was sketched by Emmanuel Masseras, a journalist and former editor of the *Courrier des États-Unis*. He had been hired by Montholon to edit *L’Ère Nouvelle*, a newspaper set up by the French legation in order to promote French interests. Having spent only 15 days in Mexico, Masseras published *Le Programme de l’Empire*, a small brochure which outlined familiar pan-Latinist ideas behind the intervention and the problems caused by republicanism in Mexico followed by the imperial solution. Previously, argued Masseras, the word “empire” had been associated with “absolute” government, but Louis-Napoléon had made “an intimate alliance” between the “modern principles of progress” and “democracy” with conservatism and stability. France’s role in founding the government in Mexico would ensure that the regime could not be a “retrogressive” one.⁷¹

This was an argument frequently made during the intervention: France was “one of the freest [regimes] in Europe”, founded on the principle of universal suffrage so it would never impose colonial government on Mexico.⁷² The brochure concluded by outlining what underwrote the Mexican Empire: the reconciliation of parties, the organisation of a stable government supported by the law, religion and the nation, material and moral transformation and “democracy in the empire”. Mexico would

perhaps one day supersede the United States, it was claimed, and for those who thought such dreams unrealisable, one need only compare the sad state of France in 1851 with its present day glory.⁷³ The brochure, written by a Frenchman, commissioned by the French minister, agreed by Bazaine and Almonte, was sent to Maximilian for his approval the day he disembarked at Veracruz.⁷⁴

The paper that Masseras edited, *L'Ere Nouvelle*, was set up to defend the French worldview: "conservative and liberal [...] it worked to spread the doctrines of equality before the law, the abolition of Church and aristocratic privilege"—the "doctrines of 1789".⁷⁵ It was, as Masseras described it, an "organ of French policy". The contract stated that intervention had established "a special bond" between France and Mexico, which it was necessary to maintain through "moral influence" in the press. The paper, therefore, would be "devoted to the interests and legitimate influence of France".⁷⁶ According to Montholon's replacement, Dano, the paper was not a success. It had failed to attract the sympathies of anyone—either amongst the French or the Mexicans—and it would have folded without the financial support of France. It had only a quarter of the subscribers of the other French language paper, *L'Estafette*.⁷⁷ This paper, edited by Charles de Barres, existed prior to the intervention, when it was liberal and pro-Juárez.⁷⁸ Barres welcomed Juárez's entrance to Mexico City in 1861, but was equally happy to celebrate the arrival of the French in 1863,⁷⁹ his contentment no doubt facilitated by the subsidy he received from the new government.⁸⁰ However, given that the French backed the Church reforms enacted under Juárez, there was no need for an embarrassing volte-face except insofar as supporting a monarchy over a republic was one. The arguments in favour of the sale of Church property, freedom of worship and the supremacy of the state in ecclesiastical matters remained the same.⁸¹

The proclamation of 12 June 1863 issued by Forey outlined the general French vision for Mexico. The key points were: the sale of Church property would be confirmed; the press would be regulated as it was in France; army recruitment was to be reformed; the system of taxation would be overhauled; and Catholicism was to be "protected", but Louis-Napoléon would welcome the freedom of worship if it were possible. However, while Forey confirmed the sale of existing Church property, the proclamation contained the caveat that fraudulent purchases could be revised,⁸² which gave hope to clerical conservatives who further expected that Maximilian would not implement a liberal religious settlement, or

that at least that any settlement would be agreed upon by the Pope. Nonetheless, clerical conservative opposition forced the French to shatter whatever illusion there was of Regency autonomy. This was precipitated by the return of Archbishop Labastida to Mexico, who was opposed to the French idea of “civilisation” and the “ideas of the century”. He attacked the political direction of the French intervention. He explained to Bazaine that “to search for the elements of a restoration [in Mexico] similar to those that have consolidated order [in Europe] is a chimera.” Mexico could not be understood through the prism of Europe and to judge it so was a mistake that would have disastrous consequences, “the revolution here has sacrificed everything to greed”, concluded the Archbishop, “and as regards the century, we are part of the current one, but only chronologically; Mexico shares nothing more with this century than the date, that is all.”⁸³

Labastida, as a member of the executive council of the Regency, and as Archbishop of Mexico, had power and influence. Regardless, Bazaine had been instructed to ensure that the Regency governed in accordance with “modern civilisation” and Louis-Napoléon relied on him “in order to direct the Provisional Government towards justice and reconciliation.”⁸⁴ Bazaine had succeeded in coercing the Regency to reverse a decree confiscating the property of those who had fought against the intervention, although it did so “reluctantly”, but he considered the problem more serious than merely controlling the executive power because the government’s administration was anti-liberal and therefore could carry out retaliatory measures, especially through the judiciary.⁸⁵ Therefore the revocation of the sequester of property was not carried out; the high clergy urged renters of property formerly belonging to the Church not to pay the new owners and refused to issue bearer bonds to those who had acquired Church property under Juárez’s reforms. In a letter to Almonte, Bazaine threatened to employ the powers granted to him by Louis-Napoléon in order to ensure that Forey’s declaration of 12 June was carried out, and in a letter to the French Emperor he claimed that, if it were necessary, he would “place this weak and spiteful power [the Regency] under guardianship”. Nonetheless, Bazaine was able to accomplish what was asked of him: to follow a moderate liberal policy in the hope that it would rally liberals to the intervention. According to Bazaine, Almonte remained well-disposed towards France and Bazaine was able to control the Regency.⁸⁶ When Labastida’s protest became too much, he was removed from the executive council, which thereafter governed with Almonte and

Salas alone. Judges that did not follow the French line were dismissed from office.⁸⁷

It was hardly an exercise in the subtleties of informal influence, but France was at least able to achieve its aims, and Bazaine's conduct was approved by Louis Napoléon and Drouyn de Lhuys.⁸⁸ Partially to convince Maximilian that he was called by the will of the Mexican people, and partially as a means of fulfilling the Bonapartist model of government, a plebiscite was undertaken in the states under French occupation to endorse the Assembly of Notables' decision to declare in favour of monarchy and invite Maximilian to become emperor. Drouyn de Lhuys left to Bazaine's discretion the best way to procure this vote according to the customs and traditions of Mexico,⁸⁹ which General François Claude du Barail, one of those charged with collecting the vote, described in his memoirs: Mexicans "would have acclaimed the devil or the Grand Turk, if we had presented them as a candidate at the end of our sabres and bayonets."⁹⁰ Montholon admitted that to implement "universal suffrage" as it was understood in Europe was impossible and therefore the figures that were sent to Paris were merely a census of the states that had adhered to the Empire. Using this measure it was declared that 5,498,587 Mexicans had pronounced in favour of the Empire and Maximilian, while 2,184,468 remained in states not under control of the Regency.⁹¹ Here, and on other key issues such as confirmation of the sale of Church property and the composition of the Regency or the judiciary, France was able to push policy in the direction that it wanted.

Once Maximilian accepted the imperial crown, however, the Empire would have to be governed differently; the relationship between France and Mexico was legally formalised by the Treaty of Miramar. This was signed on 10 April 1864 and marked a new phase in the relations between the two Empires. The treaty regulated, amongst other things, the number of French troops and the pace of eventual French withdrawal. In addition to 270 million francs payable at three percent interest for the cost of the intervention up to 1 July 1864, Mexico undertook to cover the expense of a continued French presence at 1000 francs "per man per year" as well as a transport service between France and Veracruz. Moreover, the treaty contained a secret clause, which demonstrates the importance France attached to its liberal policy in Mexico, that committed Maximilian to "the principles and promises announced in General Forey's proclamation, dated 12 June 1863, as well as the measures taken by the Regency and by [Bazaine] in accordance with said declaration".⁹² On top of this, two loans

totalling 534 million francs were raised by British bankers and French capitalists.⁹³ If these financial ties were not enough, a “Commission of Finances” was set up in Paris, the purpose of which was to make sure that the financial stipulations of the treaty and French reclamations were paid using money kept in France from the loans.⁹⁴

In Mexico itself, institutions were modelled on France, often with French administrators to oversee them. A Legion de Gendarmería, which was commanded by officers from France, was set up in consultation with the French gendarmerie.⁹⁵ Moreover, a Corsican who had organised the police in French-controlled Cochinchina⁹⁶ was appointed head of the Mexican police.⁹⁷ France provided civil and military engineers and teachers as well as advice on economic and administrative reform, mining and the development of railways and telegraph lines.⁹⁸ The Scientific Commission of Mexico, a Franco-Mexican venture, was intended as much to encourage the rationalisation and modernisation of the Mexican state, as it was to add to the canon of knowledge.⁹⁹

Maximilian’s Empire was thus financially indebted to France, owed its establishment and continued existence to French troops and was bound by treaty to approve and continue the moderate liberal policy begun by the intervention. However, less than a month after Maximilian had been crowned Emperor of Mexico, Montholon already identified “worrying tendencies for the future” in his government, which, he claimed, rapidly demonstrated anti-French tendencies amongst its ministers. Maximilian showed his determination to reconcile factions in Mexican politics by appointing a mixed cabinet. Thus the moderate liberal and formerly republican José Fernando Ramírez, who had opposed the intervention, was appointed foreign minister, while Joaquín Velázquez de León, a prominent Conservative, served as minister of state.¹⁰⁰

Montholon was unhappy with these ministerial appointments. He noted that one belonged to the “retrograde party” and the other the “moderate party”, but believed that both were part of the “Hispano-Mexican school” and therefore hostile to France. Moreover, these Mexicans charged with directing affairs were “not up to the task”.¹⁰¹ These frustrations with the government of Maximilian were expressed by Drouyn de Lhuys in a despatch that was to be brought to the attention of Ramírez: “The lustre of a court, academic solemnities and the spread of compulsory education are the lights of the most advanced civilisation”, wrote the foreign minister, and “we would applaud these intentions and acts more willingly if we were able to observe at the same time the effects

of [Maximilian's] government on the social, political, administrative, financial and military reorganisation of a country, where, despite our efforts and our sacrifices, everything remains in crisis." A government "born under [the French] flag, and defended by [French] arms" seemed determined in its political direction to "make every day the task of sustaining it more onerous [for France]." ¹⁰²

In a circular to French army officers, Bazaine, too, acknowledged the change in power now that Maximilian had arrived to govern his kingdom. He wrote that the civil administration returns to the hands of the Emperor and that French officers should avoid entangling themselves in administrative matters as well as stop surveillance of local officials, although Bazaine encouraged his officers to continue to send confidential reports on political affairs. In summary, concluded the commander of the intervention, the relationship of French officers to Mexican officials was to be analogous to that of an officer to a prefect or civil administrator in France. ¹⁰³ Although in theory the Regency had governed and appointed local officials, in reality Bazaine had been the ultimate authority in Mexico, and ensured that the political direction of the intervention was in accordance with the wishes of Louis-Napoléon. Masseras sketched the relationship between France and Mexico once Maximilian arrived: Paris would give advice and the Mexican Emperor would follow it. ¹⁰⁴

Those tasked with the direction of the intervention, however, soon became frustrated because Maximilian rejected this model and, they argued, did not follow French advice. In part, this criticism was a consequence of the slow progress that was made in the development of the two areas Paris identified as critical to the survival of the Mexican Empire: its finances and the organisation of its own armed forces. Louis-Napoléon blamed Maximilian: "I cannot understand by what fatality it always happens that the most essential measures are always adjourned or opposed. Mexico owes her independence and her present regime to France, but it looks as though some mysterious influence constantly stepped in to prevent French agents from devoting themselves to the good of the country." ¹⁰⁵

French frustrations, however, were largely of their own making. As Maximilian explained, it was impossible to have a government composed completely of Europeans. ¹⁰⁶ The Emperor needed to construct an image that overcame the contradiction between Mexican nationalism, European dynastic rule and French intervention. ¹⁰⁷ If independence and national sovereignty were largely a fiction under the intervention and Regency,

under the Empire, despite the enormous pressure France was able to exert on the regime, they became too real for Paris. Maximilian's commitment to continue the liberal path of Forey's 12 June 1863 manifesto, combined with the attempt to reconcile the parties and attract moderate liberals to his cause, meant that he had to appoint Mexicans, not French nationals, to key positions in his ministries, his council of state and other branches of the Mexican government.

In spite of this, Maximilian did appoint numerous French administrators to positions of power. In addition to the post and positions described above, Bazaine headed the commission set up to deliberate on military reform, a French civil servant was the vice-chairman of the economic commission, Léonce Détroyat, a French naval officer, was named head of the Imperial Navy.¹⁰⁸ In his correspondence with Louis-Napoléon, Maximilian wrote that it was difficult to find capable Mexicans and therefore he relied on French advisers, especially for financial matters. He even claimed that Mexicans had told him that they were incompetent and finances were too important and must be left to foreigners. In a letter to the Emperor of the French he concluded: "the more I study the Mexican people, the more I arrive at the conviction that it will be necessary to make them happy without their aid, and perhaps even in spite of themselves."¹⁰⁹ Montholon wrote to Paris that Maximilian would therefore soon come to arrangement that would favour French over Mexican administrators and this would advance French interests. The minister looked forward to a day when France would exercise complete control over the Mexican administration, particularly its finances.¹¹⁰

These French appointments, however, contributed to the very thing France complained about: anti-French attitudes. Ramírez complained to Hidalgo y Esnaurrizar that the idea had been to create an independent empire and not have Maximilian as a puppet, but French administrators behaved as if Mexico were a conquered country and Bazaine was treated better than the Emperor himself.¹¹¹ Referring to the new gendarmerie, Arrangoiz noted that it was "not very wise" to staff this organisation with those who did not know Spanish and that a "foreign police force" would not be looked upon kindly by Mexicans. Conservatives, he argued, did not mind the appointment of capable men regardless of nationality, but they did object to the "appalling number of foreign mediocrities" involved in the Empire. Distrust of foreign influence was exacerbated by the multinational nature of the Empire itself, which manifested itself through Maximilian's privy council. This body was described by Arrangoiz as

“polyglot, a sort of Tower of Babel, composed of French, Belgians, Hungarians and I do not know what other nationalities”.¹¹²

Many in the Conservative Party were further angered that France retained control of the military command, refusing their generals, with the exception of Tomás Mejía, a significant role in the pacification of the country.¹¹³ This was a deliberate French policy. Louis-Napoléon instructed Bazaine: “[in order to] prevent the reaction in Mexico, make sure that it is always the sword of France that commands [...] Organise a small Mexican army”.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, the liberal policy necessitated excluding many clerical conservatives from positions of power in favour of moderates. Arrangoiz described Ramírez, Maximilian’s first foreign minister, as formerly “one of the reddest republicans” and claimed his appointment was “agreed in the Tuileries”. Wrong on the specifics, Paris had no more love for Ramírez than it did the clerical conservatives, Arrangoiz was correct in general: France wished to see moderate liberals appointed to positions of prominence. In addition to Ramírez, Arrangoiz noted that Pedro Escudero y Echánove, the minister of justice and ecclesiastical affairs, was a “moderate republican”, and the interim minister of war merely a “republican”¹¹⁵; the appointment of moderate liberals necessarily reduced the number of Conservatives serving in the highest positions of state.

What was worse for clerical conservatives like Arrangoiz was that Maximilian continued the liberal direction of the intervention. Apart from their exclusion from office—the Party’s two most famous generals, Miramón and Márquez, leaving Mexico on diplomatic missions to Berlin and the Ottoman Empire, respectively, was the most high-profile example of this—the Mexican Emperor decreed that government employees should work on Sundays, gravitated to merging the two independence holidays into one celebrated on 16 September, the *Grito de Dolores*, rather than the Conservative preference for 27 September, which marked Iturbide’s entry into Mexico City and celebrated the Plan of Iguala.¹¹⁶ The liberal *pièce de résistance* which most angered clerical conservatives was, of course, the confirmation of Juárez’s reforms, namely freedom of worship, civil registry, the sale of Church property and the supremacy of the state over the Church and Rome, which Maximilian enacted through a series of decrees and laws between December 1864 and December 1865 after he had failed to arrange a concordat with a Papal nuncio.¹¹⁷

These policies were satirised by the periodical *La Orquesta*, which depicted Maximilian as more liberal than Juárez, and described by the

Empress Carlota as “going beyond the programme of the liberal party”, and were intended to attract adherents to the Empire, strengthen the moderates and facilitate a fusion of the parties along Bonapartist lines.¹¹⁸ They were successful insofar as many did rally to the Empire.¹¹⁹ Many such as Juan de Dios Peza (War), Luis Robles Pezuela (Development) and Pedro Escudero Echánove (Justice) served as ministers, while important military figures became imperialistas, including Santiago Vidaurri, a regional leader with considerable influence in Coahuila, Nuevo León and parts of Tamaulipas. He betrayed Juárez and became one of the most determined supporters of the Mexican Empire, standing with Maximilian to the very end. Similarly, another of Juárez’s best generals, José Lopez Uraga, joined the Empire, becoming a trusted confidant and adviser to the Emperor.¹²⁰ Tomás O’Horán, was another example; he had fought against the intervention at Puebla and refused Taboada’s overtures to join the intervention in 1862, but was killed in Mexico City in 1867 defending the capital against liberal forces. He decided to join the *imperialistas* because, like many republicans, according to one contemporary, he realised that “national independence” was not threatened and that the Empire had widespread support.¹²¹

The failure of the Mexican Second Empire was not a consequence of its inability to rally support from across the political spectrum to its side, certainly not at elite level.¹²² Indeed, the official Liberal history of the period argued that its ability to do this was the reason it lasted so long.¹²³ Adherents were attracted for a number of reasons, many of them outlined in previous chapters. There was significant support for Maximilian beyond monarchists, or those whose association with the Conservative Party made their support something of a default option (although, as has been seen, clerical conservatives disowned his liberal policies). Many of the factors that drew Mexican elites to the Empire were concerns that stretched back in Mexican history long before the 1860s. The fear of US expansion, the economic programme of the Empire, the hope that the Empire would end party conflict, the creation of a strong centralised government, and the belief that a French-backed regime would bring order and stability were mutually reinforcing reasons to support it.

The rapid advance of the Franco-Mexican army did much to convince those who abandoned Juárez that they had made the right decision. Much of the campaign in the summer of 1864 merely saw French troops occupy important towns unopposed. Durango was taken on 4 July, Saltillo on 20 August and Monterrey, the latest seat of republican government, on 26

August. Juárez was forced to flee further north again, this time to Chihuahua, while on 20 August he sent his family to the United States for safety. The last important port in Liberal hands, Matamoros, with the thin Rio Grande marking the US border, fell to imperial forces under Tomás Mejía in September. At the beginning of 1865, republican resistance seemed all but defeated: Juárez had been pushed back to the US border at Paso del Norte (today Ciudad Juárez), Porfirio Díaz had been captured at the siege of Oaxaca and Bazaine was optimistic that the pacification of Mexico was nearly complete.¹²⁴ Why, then, seemingly on the brink of military success, with French troops occupying Chihuahua City, only a four-day march from Juárez's last refuge on the border, did Louis-Napoléon order the withdrawal of his soldiers? And why did Maximilian's regime collapse so swiftly without French bayonets to support it?

THE FAILURE OF THE SECOND MEXICAN EMPIRE

Shortly after his arrival in Mexico, Maximilian went on a tour of his kingdom. The Mexican correspondent of *The Times* reported that the journey was a "continual ovation" and that under his rule the Empire would soon be a prosperous country.¹²⁵ In 1864, *The Economist* argued that Louis-Napoléon's intervention had been a success.¹²⁶ The English commentator on foreign affairs, Robert Hogarth Patterson, argued "[o]f all the projects of [Louis-Napoléon], this is the one which is to be the most applauded for the good which it will accomplish for the world" and added "it may happen that the House of Hapsburg [...] be the head of a great and flourishing empire in the New World after the original empire in Europe has been broken into pieces."¹²⁷

It was not, therefore, merely French imperialists and Mexican monarchist who believed in the viability of the Mexican Empire, but also some of the most respected periodicals of the day. Yet the Empire ended with the execution of its emperor only months after the final withdrawal of French troops. As has been noted, for many contemporary critics, as well as subsequent historians, the explanation was simple: the French intervention failed because Louis-Napoléon was misled over the reality of Mexico. His project was doomed to failure because a monarchy there was an impossibility. As has been seen, this was not the case; there was support for the Empire. However, even if the interpretation that Louis-Napoleon was mistaken as to the actual situation in Mexico, the assumption inherent within the conclusion is that a detailed knowledge of the economic, political and

social "reality" is necessary for imperialism to succeed; a cursory glance at nineteenth-century imperialism elsewhere would suggest otherwise.

The claim that France lacked knowledge of Mexico has an element of truth to it. An anecdote told by France's minister of war suggests that France was not best-prepared: The army had no good maps of Mexico and thus Louis-Napoléon was obliged to lend Forey, the leader of some 30,000 troops, one from his own personal collection.¹²⁸ However, such seemingly farcical levels of preparation were hardly uncommon in nineteenth-century imperialism. In 1830, France launched its expedition against Algiers; the primary reference material for commanding officers was Sallust and Livy.¹²⁹ Even so, the long conquest of Algeria was eventually completed. In Mexico, by comparison, France could rely on local allies, knowledge gained from the 1838–39 intervention, and maps and narrative accounts from the US-Mexican War.¹³⁰ In this sense, Mexico was not a *terra incognita*.¹³¹

If the failure of the intervention was not predicated upon a lack of knowledge, and the policy never relied upon the clerical conservatives for its success, then another explanation must be sought for its catastrophic denouement: the model of imperialism France adopted. It was in large part because Algeria took over 17 years to "pacify"—with more than 100,000 French troops deployed at enormous expense—that French imperialism that elsewhere was informal in nature. Syria, Cochinchina and China were all small-scale expeditions, usually in cooperation with one or more power and which did not aim at territorial conquest. In Mexico, the defeat at Puebla saw significant reinforcements sent to Mexico, but the intention was always to create a stable regime that would ultimately sustain itself, indemnify France for the intervention, pay for the ongoing cost of French occupation and honour its foreign debts to ensure access to international credit markets.

However, the Mexican Second Empire was not able to pay for the privilege of French occupation, and nowhere was France's frustration more apparent than in its attempts to reform Mexico's finances. The Mexican Second Empire, like all Mexican governments before it,¹³² failed to establish itself on a firm financial footing. This was a consequence of the financial burdens the French imperial model imposed upon Maximilian's treasury. France had a "direct interest" in Mexican finances: "the proper management of the public money is the guarantee of our debts [...] we have good reason to exercise active control over the financial administration." A succession of financial advisors, "special agents delegated for [the

purpose of reforming Mexico's finances] by the [French] minister of finance",¹³³ were sent to Mexico including a deputy of the *Corps législatif*, Charles Corta, who provided a glowing report on the financial future of the Empire upon his return to France.

According to Corta, Mexico, properly governed, had more than enough resources to cover its deficits and from a financial point of view the government of Mexico "has a chance of strength in the future, providing it hastens to develop the numerous resources which are in the country."¹³⁴ However, Montholon lamented that Corta had left Mexico at the "most painful period in a time of transition full of dangers and difficulties."¹³⁵ In a dispatch of 10 October 1864 to Drouyn de Lhuys, Montholon wrote, "I cannot hide [from you] how worried I am about the financial situation". Expenses were increasing while income was diminishing—the overall situation warranted "strong concern for the immediate future". The weakness of Mexican finances, the difficulty of reforming the treasury and the penury of a government which often required advances from the French treasury were the consistent complaints of French diplomats.¹³⁶

Whether these complaints were founded or not is somewhat irrelevant given the enormous burden of debt that the two loans undertaken by Maximilian and the Treaty of Miramar placed on Mexico. It was expected that under the "enlightened influence" of France's financial advisors, the "seeds of prosperity [...] cannot fail to be rapidly developed".¹³⁷ In this, however, France proved no more successful than previous Mexican governments: Between 1822 and 1856, only one had managed to run a budget surplus (for nine months, 1822–23).¹³⁸ The French counsellor of state, Jacques Langlais, was sent to Mexico in 1865 on a salary of 150,000 francs a year, and his team of French employees, were given "dictatorial powers" to reorganise Mexican finances. He died before he could complete his task, but his report was finished by his assistant. It was withering in its assessment of the Mexican treasury: "properly speaking, up to the present, there has been no budget in Mexico" and "it is impossible with such a system, which excludes all idea of order or control, to have good finances."¹³⁹

Nonetheless, Langlais was no more successful than those sent before him balancing the Mexican budget. Based on the estimates of the Mexican Ministry of Finance for the year 1866, the treasury would receive 18.43 million piastres. Of this, more than half (54%) would go to service the Mexican loans and just over a quarter (26%) to honour the Treaty of Miramar, the majority of which was to pay for the French army in Mexico.

Thus, financial obligations arranged with France as a consequence of the intervention took up more than four-fifths of the Empire's income, while the British and Spanish debt added another 6%. With the application of Langlais' proposed cuts to expenditure, the budget deficit for the year 1866 would be roughly 11.5 million piastres. This was to be partially dealt with by various measures that intended to raise revenue through new and more efficient taxation. However, even with a reduction in expenditure combined with the proposed increase in revenue, a deficit of 1.1 million piastres remained. In short, even in the imagination of French administrators, where all their reforms were not only carried out, but their hypothetical estimates for increased revenue met, the Mexican budget could not be balanced.¹⁴⁰

The Empire was not a model of austere government, and was more expensive than the previous republican regimes.¹⁴¹ But it was not domestic expenditure that bankrupted Maximilian. The foreign and domestic debt was calculated at nearly 510 million francs, to which it was necessary to add the 270 million francs Maximilian agreed to pay France as the cost of the intervention.¹⁴² Moreover, of the 534 million francs raised by the two loans, Maximilian only received 34 million.¹⁴³ The Emperor complained to Louis-Napoléon, "without order and economy in the finances, with a constantly recurring deficit, I cannot govern." Maximilian argued Mexican finances were in a "deplorable" state because the vast majority of revenue went to cover the cost of the military expenses, while most of the money raised from the loans remained in Paris in the hands of the Commission of Finances to cover French claims on the Mexican government.¹⁴⁴ The precarious finances of Maximilian's government proved fatal: The failure to meet the obligations under the Treaty of Miramar was the reason Louis-Napoléon gave in a letter of January 1866 to Maximilian for the withdrawal of French troops.¹⁴⁵ Drouyn de Lhuys made it clear that France would not take upon itself "the burdens of the Mexican government"; the French army could not be responsible for Mexico's defence, nor the French treasury for its administration.¹⁴⁶ In short, France refused to take on the costs of direct rule.

The miscalculation that France made, then, was not political, but financial. The historian Paul Gaulot, who completed his history from the notes and correspondence of Ernest Louet, the paymaster general of the French army in Mexico, wrote that the French government, and the *Corps législatif* which voted for the funds to finance the intervention, "counted on the riches which are usually attributed to faraway countries in order to cover

the cost with interest. It seems", he continued, "so simple to our regularly organised societies to establish order amongst all nations, and by this order bring them a wonderful prosperity." No one doubted that Mexico would soon find the resources to pay its debt to France. This in itself was not an illusion. Gaulot estimated that the cost of governing Mexico was about 100 million francs annually and it could easily secure revenues of 250 million francs. "The illusion consisted in believing that these results could be reached in months, and that they could be achieved by the sole fact of the French army occupying Puebla and Mexico [City]."¹⁴⁷

Washington forced the pace of the withdrawal. Louis-Napoléon wanted to withdraw its troops more gradually from Mexico and leave behind the Foreign Legion, but US pressure ensured that the last French troops evacuated the country just over a year after their retreat was first announced.¹⁴⁸ In a speech in January 1867 from the throne, the emperor proclaimed that: when "our sacrifices seemed to me to surpass the interests which had called [France] to the other side of the ocean, I spontaneously decided to recall our troops."¹⁴⁹ There was nothing spontaneous about it, and the sacrifice Louis-Napoléon was unwilling to make was confrontation with Washington.

France further undermined Maximilian's government through a treaty which replaced Miramar. This convention, signed on 30 July 1866, and which came into effect on 1 November of the same year, secured half of all Mexico's customs receipts raised on imports entering from the Atlantic seaboard and a quarter of all Pacific coast exports to pay French debts,¹⁵⁰ thus denying Maximilian his principal source of revenue. Bereft of French support, Maximilian was forced to fall back on the only section of Mexican politics willing to support him in continuing the struggle against Juárez: the Mexican Conservative Party. Moderate liberals deserted the Empire once it became clear that France's withdrawal, combined with US diplomatic and material support for Juárez, made the survival of the Mexican Second Empire highly unlikely.¹⁵¹ The limited resources Conservatives could mobilise meant that Maximilian's Empire was swiftly defeated militarily: the leaders of the Conservative Party, Miramón and Márquez, who returned to Mexico from their diplomatic missions in November 1866,¹⁵² proved no more able to vanquish Juárez than they had done in the War of Reform. On 19 June 1867, Maximilian, alongside two leaders of the Conservative Party, was executed. It had taken nearly 10 years of civil conflict culminating in the execution of a Hapsburg prince, to finally vanquish the idea of a European-backed monarchy in Mexico embracing a conservative path to modernity.

After the shock of the defeat at Puebla on 5 May 1862, the fortunes of the French intervention improved. France was able to impose on Mexico a political system that attracted adherents from Liberal and Conservative moderates, particularly as a consequence of the economic and administrative reforms which appealed across the political spectrum. France created a regime closely tied to Paris and wielded considerable influence over it. However, this informal imperial model, which placed the financial burdens of the French intervention and occupation on the Mexican Empire, was unable to pay for itself. This meant that the Mexican Second Empire was unable to divert resources to consolidation. Moreover, Louis-Napoléon refused to countenance devoting more French military resources than were already present in Mexico, which proved insufficient to pacify Mexico in the time afforded to France before the end of the US Civil War resulted in US demands for complete withdrawal.

The monumental failure of Louis-Napoléon's Mexican intervention led Émile Ollivier, briefly prime minister of the Second Empire before its catastrophic denouement, to claim that he "had searched vainly for a great thought in the mass of contradictions" that made up French policy in Mexico. However, it was not his inability to comprehend the ideas behind the intervention that led him to this conclusion, but rather his conviction that "what is impossible in politics is not great, it is absurd".¹⁵³ On the other hand, Jacques-Louis Randon, Louis-Napoléon's minister of war at the time of the intervention, believed that the ideas behind the expedition "were undoubtedly great." However, he agreed with Ollivier in that these ideas had one fault, but "a serious one: they were impossible."¹⁵⁴

For those Frenchmen in Mexico who fought for and helped administer the Mexican Empire, the debates were of a more practical nature. In his memoirs, the military commander Barail asked if the conquest of Mexico had been feasible: "Yes, obviously [...] it is impossible to say what would have happened if the [intervention] had been better conducted [...] by sending sufficient forces to crush all resistance", but he believed that had this been done, Mexico would have been "reconciled and reunited under the incontestable rule of Maximilian".¹⁵⁵ In his history of the French intervention, the French soldier who served as part of France's "counterguerrilla" forces, Émile de Kératry, complained that the French "army spent itself gloriously in the immensity of space", and that "our troops traversing Mexico resembled a ship gliding through the water and leaving behind it no traces of its track."¹⁵⁶ French troops temporarily occupied territory, but their departure resulted in "scenes of horror" as the local population was

assailed by armed bands, “so-called liberals, who pillage”.¹⁵⁷ Bazaine wrote that “the Empire built by [France] does not yet have deep roots.” The problem was not a lack of sympathy amongst the “great majority of the intelligent population of Mexico”, but rather that there was little confidence in the civil and military functionaries because it was believed the support of France was only temporary.¹⁵⁸ The diplomats Montholon and Dano both concluded that Mexico’s financial problems could only be resolved under French control.¹⁵⁹ Indeed, one naval officer summed up what many others on the ground had concluded: the solution was “none other than the permanent occupation of Mexico [...] and the complete absorption of all the branches of government and administration.”¹⁶⁰

This solution was, however, exactly what Louis-Napoléon had hoped to avoid by backing the creation of the Second Mexican Empire. This regime’s survival was not impossible, but French policy did make its success highly improbable. In the end, the Second Mexican Empire collapsed because of the informal-imperial model France imposed upon it. By refusing to take on the burden of pacification, and placing the financial cost of this on a regime that was unable to pay for it, France ensured that the Mexican Second Empire remained on shallow foundations.

NOTES

1. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 518.
2. Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 116. See also Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 518–22.
3. The manifesto is printed in full in Gustave Niox, *Expédition du Mexique, 1861–1867: récit politique & militaire* (Paris: J. Dumaine, 1874), 289–92.
4. Arrangóiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 159; Favre, *Discours parlementaires*, II, 334–35.
5. Quoted in Sanders, *Vanguard of the Atlantic World*, 5.
6. A term used by Drouyn de Lhuys, quoted in ‘La Doctrine Monroe et L’Empire du Mexique’, *Le Mémorial diplomatique*, 12 March 1865, p. 173.
7. Jurien de la Gravière to Thovenel, 9 February 1862, AAE, CP Mexique, 57.
8. Louis-Napoléon to Forey, 8 June 1862, AAE, MD Mexique, 10.
9. A list of the members of both bodies is included in a revised version of Hidalgo y Esnaurrizar, *Apuntes para escribir la historia* republished as *Proyectos de Monarquía en Mexico* (Mexico City: F. Vasquez, 1904), 359–73.

10. Forey to Drouyn de Lhuys, 7 July 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60; Almonte to Maximilian, 26 June 1863, JNA.
11. Almonte personally corresponded with Louis-Napoléon, the Empress Eugenie and Maximilian. His letters to Louis-Napoléon are in AN, AP400/61. His letters to Maximilian are reproduced in [J]uan [N]epomuceno [A]lmonte Papers, 1834-1865, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin. Correspondence to Almonte is contained in El archivo del [C]entro de [E]studios de Historia de [M]éxico Carso Juan Nepomuceno Almonte, Fondo XXIII.
12. Manuel Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México: galería de biografías y retratos de los vireyes, emperadores, presidentes y otros gobernantes que han tenido México, desde don Hernando Cortes hasta el c. Benito Juárez*, 2 vols. (Mexico City: J. M. Aguilar Ortiz, 1872-73), II, 638-39.
13. Oseguera warned the liberal minister in Paris that Almonte had fallen under the influence of Gutiérrez de Estrada. Oseguera to Juan Antonio de la Fuente, 29 October 1859, AHGE, Francia, L. 38; e. 553.
14. His public service is chronicled in Anonymous, *Hoja de meritos y servicios del ... General de Division D. J. N. Almonte ... hasta 30 de agosto de 1864* (Mexico City: Imp. Andrade y Escalante, 1864), and his diplomatic career is detailed in AHGE, L. 302; A, B and C—'expediente personal'. Almonte's life is covered briefly in Jack Jackson (ed.), *Almonte's Texas: Juan N. Almonte's 1834 Inspection, Secret Report & Role in the 1836 Campaign* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2003). See also Helen Willets Harris, 'The Public Life of Juan Nepomuceno Almonte' (PhD thesis: University of Texas at Austin, 1935).
15. Anonymous, *Hoja de meritos*, 5; Reports from the society were published in the newspaper *El Orden*. See also *Reglamento interior para el gobierno de Sociedad Mexicana, etc.* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1851), and *Actas de la Sociedad Mexicana promotora de mejoras materiales y morales, desde su instalacion* (Mexico City: M. Murguía y compañía, 1854).
16. Juan Nepomuceno Almonte, *Noticia estadística sobre Tejas* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1835); *Catecismo de geografía universal para el uso de los establecimientos de instrucción pública de México* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1837); *Guía de Forasteros, y repertorio de conocimientos útiles* (Mexico City: Ignacio Cumplido, 1852).
17. Vigil, *México a través*, 281; 367.
18. Printed in 'Miguel Miramón, general de division, en jefe del ejército, y Presidente sustituto de la República Mexicana, a la Nación', *Diario Oficial del Supremo Gobierno*, 12 July 1859, front and second pages. The Plan of Tacubaya, the document with which Conservatives announced the overthrow of the constitutional government in 1857, similarly

- emphasised the need for “order and progress”, administrative reform, a short dictatorship for the “pacification” of the country, the development of the economy and the establishment of a constitution conforming to the “history, traditions and customs of Mexico”. ‘Plan de Tacubaya’, 17 December 1857, Saint Andrews University, ‘The Pronunciamiento in Independent Mexico 1821–1876’ database: <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/dates.php?f=y&pid=1006&m=12&y=1857>
19. ‘Finanzas’, *La Sociedad*, 10 August 1863, front page.
 20. ‘Hacienda. Contribuciones directas’, *ibid.*, 4 September, front page; ‘Hacienda. Contribución territorial’, *ibid.*, 6 September, front page; ‘Hacienda. Catastro para la repartición del impuesto territorial’, 11 September, front page; ‘Hacienda Pública. Agricultura’, *ibid.*, 1 November, front page; ‘Hacienda’, 28 November 1863, front page.
 21. ‘Hacienda’, *ibid.*, 16 and 22 August 1863, front and second pages.
 22. Pani, ‘Appendice 1: El Personal del Imperio’, 374. His attempts to found a national bank in 1848 are described in Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XII, 230–39.
 23. Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 26 June 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62.
 24. *Boletín de las leyes del Imperio Mexicano, ó sea Código de la restauración*, 4 vols. (Mexico: Imprenta literaria, 1863–65), III, 45–49; Pani, *Para mexicanizar*, 244–49.
 25. ‘Discurso Pronunciado por S. M. el Emperador en la solemne instalación de la Academia de Ciencias y Literatura, día de su cumpleaños’, *El Pájaro Verde* (Mexico City), 13 July 1865, front page.
 26. Railway construction is detailed in a report by the minister of development, Luis Robles Pezuela, *Memoria presentada á S. M. el Emperador por el Ministro de Fomento L. Robles Pezuela de los trabajos ejecutados en su ramo el año de 1865* (Mexico: Imprenta de J.M. Andrade y F. Escalante, 1866).
 27. Duncan, ‘Political Legitimation’, 34–35; 45–48.
 28. ‘Agricultura, comercio, industria’, *El Pájaro Verde*, 28 July 1863, p. 2.
 29. ‘Mejoras materiales proyectadas—desagüe de la ciudad y del Valle de México—un opusculo inedito del José Fernando Ramirez’, *La Sociedad*, 6 December 1863, front page.
 30. Ramírez to Hidalgo, 29 October 1864, AHGE, Francia, L. 41; c. 622.
 31. ‘Últimas noticias de Europa. - Celebridad de la toma de Puebla en París. - Manejos de los partidarios de la política de Prim. - Proyectos de mejoras materiales en México’, *El Cronista de México* (Mexico City), 21 July, front page; Miguel García Vargas, ‘Mejoras Materiales’, *ibid.*, 9 November, front page; ‘Algunas observaciones económico-políticas’, *ibid.*, 21 November 1863, front page; ‘Editorial’, *L’Estafette* (Mexico City), 21 July 1863, front page.

32. 'Manifiesto Del general de division D. Juan Nepomuceno Almonte, á sus compatriotas', 12 January 1863 enclosed in Saligny to Drouyn de Lhuys, 21 January 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60.
33. 'Proclamation du Général Almonte [French translation]', enclosed in Jurien de la Gravière to Thouvenel, 18 April 1862, AAE, CP Mexique, 57.
34. 'Manifiesto del Supremo Poder Ejecutivo á la Nacion', enclosed in Saligny to Drouyn de Lhuys, 26 June 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60. Many of these proclamations are printed in Román Iglesias González (ed.), *Planes políticos, proclamas, manifiestos y otros documentos de la independencia al México moderno, 1812–1940* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1998).
35. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 495.
36. *Ibid.*, XVI, 592.
37. Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, IV, 345–46.
38. 'La Cuestion del día', *La Sociedad*, 4 July 1863, front and second pages.
39. 'República y monarquía', *ibid.*, 29 June 1863, front and second pages.
40. Sebastián Monterde, 'La monarquía y la democracia', *La Sociedad*, 30 June, front page; Sebastián Monterde 'La Libertad y la monarquía', *ibid.*, 29 July 1863, front and second pages; Miguel García Vargas, 'La Intervención Francesa en la República de México. – Opúsculo escrito por Miguel García Vargas, ciudadano jalisciense', *El Cronista de México*, 6, 7 and 9 July 1863, first and second pages.
41. Sebastián Monterde, 'El Plan de Iguala', *La Sociedad*, 13 July, front and second pages; Sebastián Monterde, 'El Imperio Mexicana', *ibid.* 16 July 1863, front page.
42. Sebastián Monterde, 'México bajo la monarquía', *ibid.*, 2 July, front page; J. M. Roa Barcena, 'La clase indigena y la intervención', *ibid.*, 11 July 1863, front page. Similar arguments were made in the Assembly of Notables, Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 73–74; 593–95; 599–607.
43. M. Acevado, 'Forma Monarquía', *El Cronista de México*, 1 July 1863, front page; 'Apuntes biograficos del Señor Don Manuel Diez y Bonilla', *El Pájaro Verde*, 20 and 21 August 1864, front and second pages.
44. 'La Regencia del Imperio', *La Sociedad*, 22 May 1864, front and second pages.
45. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 146.
46. 'El Ejercito aliado en México', *La Sociedad*, 11 June 1863, front page.
47. Miranda to the Duke of la Torre, 10 June 1862, quoted in García, *Documentos inéditos*, IV, 110–15.
48. Sebastián Monterde, 'La intervención francesa y la indendencia nacional', *La Sociedad*, 14 September, front and second pages; Sebastian Monterde, 'Motivos de la intervención', *ibid.*, 17 September, front and second pages; Sebastian Monterde, 'Carácter de la intervención', *ibid.*, 6 October 1863, front page.

49. 'Napoleón III—El Arbitro de la paz del mundo', *El Pájaro Verde*, 15 August 1863, p. 2.
50. 'Conciliación de los partidos—discurso de Mr. de Morny', *La Sociedad*, 8 July 1864, front page.
51. Focus has necessarily been on politics at national level in Mexico City. Many recent studies have explored local and regional reasons for supporting or opposing the French intervention, See fn 35 Chap. 1.
52. As Drouyn de Lhuys remarked to Senior, *Conversations*, II, 290–91.
53. Louis-Napoléon to Maximilian, 2 October 1863, printed in Corti, *Maximilian*, I, 389–90. Emphasis in original.
54. Louis-Napoléon to Almonte, 16 December 1863, CEHM, Fondo XXIII; 1–1. 3. 1.
55. Louis-Napoléon to Forey, 8 June 1862, AAE, MD Mexique, 10; Louis-Napoléon to Bazaine, 30 July 1863, quoted in Paul Gaulot, *L'Expédition du Mexique (1861–1867) d'après les documents et souvenirs de Ernst Louet ... Nouvelle édition*, 3 vols. (Paris: P. Ollendorff, 1906), I, 144–45; Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, 17 August 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60; Louis-Napoléon to Bazaine, 12 September 1863, in García, *Documentos*, XVI, 34–36.
56. Sebastián Monterde, 'México independiente', *La Sociedad*, 27 June, front page; José de la Luz Pacheco Gallardo, 'La religión y independencia', *ibid.*, 12 July, front page; Sebastian Monterde, 'El episcopado Mexicano', *ibid.*, 4 October, front page; Sebastian Monterde, 'Carácter de la intervención', *ibid.*, 6 October 1863, front page; Moralidad pública', *ibid.*, 11 September 1864, front page; Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 853.
57. 'Napoleón III—El Arbitro de la paz del mundo', *El Pájaro Verde*, 15 August 1863, p. 2.
58. Chevalier, *Mexico Ancient and Modern*, trans. Thomas Alpass, 2 vols. (London: John Maxwell and Company, 1864), I, vii–viii. The English edition has an introduction written by Chevalier not contained in the first or second French editions from which this quotation is taken. The settlement of Church-state relations in accordance with the principles of "modern civilisation" forms the final section of the work, *Le Mexique*, 547–603.
59. Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 176–77; Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 852–53.
60. Miranda to Santa Anna, 5 June 1862; Miranda to Márquez, 21 September 1863, quoted in García, *Documentos inéditos*, IV, 103; 176–77. Emphasis in the original.
61. Justo Sierra, *Juárez*, 303–04. Justo Sierra did not count Almonte amongst these men because "he was a "man of resentment and ambition; a politician." Rivera Cambas similarly attributed ambition as the driving motivation for Almonte's actions in *Los gobernantes de México*, 638–43.

62. Emmanuel Domenech, *Le Mexique tel qu'il est, la vérité sur son climat, ses habitants et son gouvernement* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1867), 222.
63. Saligny to Thouvenel, 11 March 1862, Thouvenel to Saligny, 20 March, 31 May 1862, AAE, CP Mexique, 58; Louis-Napoléon to Lorencez, 15 June 1862, AAE, CP Mexique, 59.
64. Domenech, *Le Mexique tel qu'il est*, 222–23; Gaulot, *L'Expédition du Mexique*, I, 352; 360.
65. Arrangoiz, *Mejico desde 1808*, IV, 346.
66. The quote is from a poem that celebrates the creation of the Second Mexican Empire: Mariano A. Bejarano, 'Variedades. Al Fundador del Imperio', *La Sociedad*, 20 June 1864, p. 3.
67. Senior, *Conversations*, II, 290–91.
68. Drouyn de Lhuys to Montholon, 15 December 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 61.
69. Louis-Napoléon to Forey, 14 February 1863, quoted in Gaulot, *L'Expédition du Mexique*, I, 132.
70. 'The New Mexican Empire', *The Economist*, 22 August 1863, pp. 925–26.
71. Emmanuel Masseras, *Le programme de l'empire/El Programa del Imperio* (Mexico City: Imprimerie de J.M. Lara, 1864), 18–19. A copy of the brochure is contained in Montholon to de Lhuys, 28 May 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62. It is printed in *Boletín de las leyes*, II, 416–43. Masseras published a history of his time in Mexico, *Un essai d'Empire au Mexique* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1879).
72. Proclamation of Saligny and Forey, 16 April 1862, enclosed in Saligny to Thouvenel 18 April 1862, AAE, CP Mexique, 57.
73. Masseras, *Le programme de l'empire*, 21; 36.
74. Montholon to de Lhuys, 28 May 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62.
75. Gaulot, *L'Expédition du Mexique*, II, 5–6.
76. Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 28 August 1864.
77. Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 'Confidentielle', 10 July 1865, AAE, CP Mexique, 64.
78. Zamacois; *Historia de Méjico*, XV, 91; 267; 583–84. Gabriac to Walewski, 2 December 1858, AAE, CP Mexique, 49.
79. 'Courrier', *L'Estafette*, 2 and 7 January 1861, front pages; 'Courrier', *ibid.*, 2 July 1863, front pages.
80. Eugene Lefèvre, *Documents officiels recueillis dans la Secrétairerie privée de Maximilien. Histoire de l'intervention française au Mexique*, 2 vols. (Brussels: n.p., 1869), II, 34–41.
81. For example, see 'Courrier', *L'Estafette*, 14 July, 14 and 30 September, 21, 24 and 26 October and 7 November 1863, front pages.

82. 'Manifieste à la nation mexicaine', 12 July 1863, AN, 400AP/61.
83. Arrangóiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 159.
84. Louis-Napoléon to Bazaine, 12 September 1863, Garcia, *Documentos*, XVI, 34–36.
85. Bazaine to Drouyn de Lhuys, 8 October 1863, CP Mexique, 62; 'Derogación de todas las disposiciones sobre secuestro de bienes de individuos hacen armas contra la Intervención' in *Boletín de las leyes*, I, 386–87.
86. Bazaine to Almonte, 7 November 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, Bazaine to Drouyn de Lhuys 10 November 1863; Bazaine to Louis-Napoléon, 25 October 1863, Bazaine to Budin, 29 October 1863 and Bazaine to Louis-Napoléon 10 November 1863 in García, *Documentos*, XVI, 133–44; 197–99; 223–31; Bazaine to Almonte, 20 November 1863, in *ibid.*, XVII, 9–12. Despite his cooperation with the direction of French policy, Almonte was not happy with the erosion of Mexican sovereignty and what he saw as the overly liberal policy of France. Almonte to Maximilian, 27 October, 10 and 27 November 1863. JNA Papers.
87. Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 25 January 1865, AAE, CP Mexique, 61; Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVI, 819–40; Gaulot, I, 235–44.
88. Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, 15 December 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60.
89. Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, 17 August 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60; Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, Drouyn de Lhuys to Montholon, 6 February 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 61.
90. François Charles du Barail, *Mes Souvenirs, etc.*, 3 vols. (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit et Cie, 1895–96), II, 483–84; The process was similarly ridiculed by Ollivier, *L'Empire libéral*, VI, 455–57, and Charles Blanchot, *Mémoires: L'intervention française au Mexique*, 3 vols. (Paris: E. Nourry, 1911), II, 133.
91. Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 29 March 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 61.
92. The various drafts of the treaty are contained in AAE, CP Mexique, 61.
93. The loans are discussed in detail in Manuel Payno, *Cuentas, gastos, acreedores y otros asuntos del tiempo de la intervención francesa y del imperio. De 1861 a 1867 / obra escrita y publicada de orden del Gobierno Constitucional de la República, por M. Payno* (Mexico City: Imprenta de Ignacio Cumplido, 1868), 757–815 and Anonymous, *Révélations sur l'occupation française au Mexique au point de vue financier documents officiels et inédits trouvés dans les archives de Mexico et publiés par ordre du gouvernement constitutionnel de la république* (Brussels: Typ. de D. Brismée, 1869), 97–107. For a contemporary British analysis, see 'Confidential Memorandum', 28 August 1866, Peter Campbell Scarlett to Lord Clarendon enclosed in Scarlett to Cambell, 26 August 1866. FO 50/396. The loans are analysed in Jan Bazant, *Historia de la deuda exterior de México, 1823-1946* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1968),

- 84–96, and Steven Topik, ‘When Mexico Had the Blues: A Transatlantic Tale of Bonds, Bankers, and Nationalists, 1862–1910’, *The American Historical Review*, 105 (2000), 714–19.
94. The organisation of the commission and its relationship with Maximilian’s government is documented in AHGE, Francia, L. 43; e. 652.
 95. Hidalgo to Arroyo, 30 May 1864; Peza to Hidalgo, 10 August 1865, AHGE, Francia, L. 46; e. 703.
 96. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 1034–35; Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 295–96.
 97. *Boletín de las leyes*, IV, 490–91.
 98. For economic and administrative reform, see AHGE, Francia, L. 45; e. 653; exploitation of mines, L.43; e. 655; French administrators in Mexico, L. 45; e. 697; gendarmerie, L. 46; e. 703; railways and telegraphs, L. 48; e. 727.
 99. On the Scientific Commission see, Paul Edison, ‘Conquest Unrequited, French Expeditionary Science in Mexico, 1864–1867’, *French Historical Studies*, 26 (2003), 459–95; Nadia Prévost Urkidi, ‘La Commission scientifique du Mexique (1864–1867): un exemple de collaboration scientifique entre l’élite savante française et mexicaine?’, *Revue d’Histoire des Sciences Humaines*, 2 (2008), 107–16; Alberto Soberanis, ‘Sabios, militares y empresarios Sansimonismo y exploración científica’ in *México Francia*, II, 243–68.
 100. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 431; Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 219–20.
 101. Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 26 June, 10 July and 28 July 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62.
 102. Drouyn de Lhuys to Dano, 15 August 1865, AAE, CP Mexique 64. The Empire’s education policies are covered in María de Lourdes Herrera Feria and Rosario Torres Domínguez, ‘El proyecto educativo del Segundo Imperio Mexicano: resonancias de un régimen efímero’, *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos* (2012).
 103. Gaulot, *L’Expédition du Mexique*, I, 371–72.
 104. Masseras, *Un essai d’Empire*, 56–57.
 105. Louis-Napoléon to Maximilian, 16 April 1865, quoted in Corti, *Maximilian*, II, 901–03.
 106. Maximilian to Louis-Napoléon, 27 December 1865, in Corti, *Maximilian*, II, 925–30.
 107. The means by which Maximilian attempted to do this are discussed in Ibsen, *Maximilian*, ch. 1 and Duncan, ‘Political Legitimation’.
 108. Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 278; Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 1033–34; *Boletín de las leyes*, IV, 398.
 109. Maximilian to Louis-Napoléon, 26 July, 9 August, 27 December 1864 quoted in Corti, *Maximilian*, II, 841–42; 845–47; 860–62.

110. Montholon to de Lhuys, 10 October 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62.
111. Ramírez to Hidalgo, 18 November 1864, AHGE, Francia, L. 43; c. 660.
112. Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 220–21; 267–68; 278–79.
113. For Mejía's career see Hamnett, 'Mexican Conservatives, Clericals, and Soldiers'.
114. Louis-Napoléon to Bazaine, 29 September 1863, Garcia, *Documentos*, XVI, 49–51.
115. Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 219–20; Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 431.
116. Arrangoiz, *Méjico desde 1808*, III, 228, 249–52; Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 342–46.
117. Patricia Galeana, *Las relaciones iglesia-estado durante el Segundo Imperio* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1991), 123; 181–83.
118. Ibsen, *Maximilian*, 32–35; Charlotte to Eugenie, 8 December 1864, in Corti, *Maximilian*, II, 857–58.
119. For a list of the Mexicans who served in government positions under the Mexican Empire, see Pani, *Para Mexicanizar*, Appendices 1–4.
120. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 352; 420.
121. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVII, 419–22.
122. Pani, 'Dreaming of a Mexican Empire', 3–4. See also Pani, *Para Mexicanizar*; Duncan, 'Political Legitimation'.
123. Vigil, *La Reforma*, V, 649.
124. Thus in Paris *Le Mémorial diplomatique* announced that the forces of Juárez had been defeated by French arms, 'Politique—Bulletin de la semaine', 27 August 1865, pp. 553–54.
125. 'The State of Mexico', *The Times*, 29 September 1864, p. 10. The correspondent consistently supported the Empire and was a friend of Maximilian and Carlota. See, for example, 'The French in Mexico', 17 May 1864, p. 12, and 'The Emperor of Mexico', *ibid.*, 13 July 1864, p. 12.
126. 'The Prospects of the New Regime in Mexico', *The Economist*, 6 August 1864, pp. 986–87.
127. Robert Hogarth Patterson, 'The Napoleonic Idea in Mexico', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 96 (1864), 72; 83.
128. Randon, *Mémoires*, II, 72.
129. Lorcin, 'Rome and France in Africa', 298–99.
130. The French explorer Eugène Duflot de Mofras, who had travelled to Mexico in the early 1840s, published *Expéditions des Espagnols et des Américains au Mexique en 1829 et en 1847* (Paris: impr. de Panckoucke, 1862). Jurien de la Gravière studied the US invasion prior to arriving in Mexico. Jurien de la Gravière to Thouvenel, 7 and 9 December 1861, AAE, CP Mexique, 57.
131. Jean-Yves Puyo argues that it was in 'The French Military Confront Mexico's Geography: The Expedition of 1862–67', *Journal of Latin American Geography*, 9 (2010), 139–57.

132. See Tenenbaum, *The Politics of Penury*.
133. Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, 17 August 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60. Louis-Napoléon made clear to Forey that it was essential to "introduce to [Mexican] finances the regularity for which France offers the best model. To this end, we will send [to Mexico] men capable of helping its new organisation." Louis-Napoléon to Forey, 3 July 1862, quoted in Niox, *Expédition du Mexique*, 212–15.
134. The speech was published, Charles Eustache Corta and Eugène Rouher, *Mexique; discours de M. Corta député au Corps législatif et de S. Exe. M. Rouher, ministre d'état* (Paris: Typ. E. Panckoucke et cie 1865), 15; 21.
135. Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 27 September 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 62.
136. Monathalon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 10 and 29 October; 10 and 28 November 1864, CP Mexique, 62; Montholon to de Lhuys, 8 January 1865, CP Mexique, 63; Dano to de Lhuys, 28 November 1865, CP Mexique, 65.
137. Drouyn de Lhuys to Bazaine, 17 August 1863, AAE, CP Mexique, 60.
138. Tenenbaum, *Politics of Penury*, Appendix, 'Table C: Income vs Expenses, 1821–1856', 182.
139. 'Rapport a sa Majesté l'Empereur sur le budget de 1866' enclosed in Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 29 May 1866, AAE, CP Mexique, 67. Langlais' predecessor had similarly disparaged the Mexican budget and despaired at it being balanced, Bonnefons to Monsieur le Ministre, 9 April 1865, AN, 400AP/61.
140. The figures are taken from 'Rapport a sa Majesté l'Empereur sur le budget de 1866' enclosed in Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 29 May 1866, AAE, CP Mexique, 67.
141. Payno, *Cuentas, gastos, acreedores*, 599–612.
142. 'Bulletin financier', *Journal des économistes*, 124 (1864), 149–52.
143. Bazant, *Historia de la deuda exterior*, 93–96.
144. 'Note lue par l'Empereur à M. M. Dano et Langlais', contained in Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 'Confidentielle et réservée', 27 October 1865, CP Mexique, 66; Maximilian to Louis-Napoléon 27 December 1865, in Corti, *Maximilian*, II, 930.
145. Louis-Napoléon to Maximilian, 15 January 1866, in Corti, *Maximilian*, II, 930–31.
146. Drouyn de Lhuys to Dano, 14 and 15 January 1866, AAE, CP Mexique, 66.
147. Gaulot, *L'Expédition du Mexique*, I, 118–22.
148. The diplomatic role of the United States in hastening French withdrawal from Mexico is well-documented, as is the material and moral support Washington provided to Juárez. See Hanna and Hanna, *Napoleon the*

- Third*; Robert Ryal Miller, 'Arms Across the Border: United States Aid to Juárez During the French Intervention in Mexico', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* (1973), 1–68; Schoonover, *Dollars over Dominion*; Arnold Blumberg, 'The Diplomacy of the Mexican Empire, 1863–1867', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* (1971), 1–152; Dabbs, *French Army*, 157–59.
149. 'Discours de l'Empereur', *Journal des débats*, 15 February 1867, front page.
 150. For the terms of the convention, see 'Projet de Convention' contained in Dano to Drouyn de Lhuys, 28 July 1866, AAE, CP Mexique, 67.
 151. In January 1867, some of Maximilian's former liberal ministers departed for Europe, notably Ramírez, and most high-level politicians who supported the Empire but were not clerical conservatives advised Maximilian to abdicate on 11 January 1867. Many of those who had submitted to the empire took up arms again in favour of Juárez once the French withdrawal became known. Zamacois, VIII, 876–77; 484–85; 881–92.
 152. Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico*, XVIII, 657–58.
 153. Ollivier, *L'Empire libéral*, V, 241.
 154. Randon, *Mémoires*, II, 59–60.
 155. Barail, *Mes Souvenirs*, II, 303; 488. See also Blanchot, *Mémoires*, II, 328.
 156. Kératry, *L'élévation et la chute*, 41; 179.
 157. Montholon to de Lhuys, 9 February 1864, AAE, CP Mexique, 61. A view shared by another French officer who served in Mexico, Pierre Henri Loizillon, *Lettres sur l'expédition du Mexique* (Paris: L. Baudoin, 1890), 160–61.
 158. Bazaine to Drouyn de Lhuys, 2 January 1866, AAE, CP Mexique, 66. A point also made by Henri Agustin Brincourt, who temporarily occupied Chihuahua in 1865. Brincourt to Castagny, 17 October 1865 printed in Henri Agustin Brincourt, *Lettres du Général Brincourt, 1823–1909* (Plon-Nourrit et Cie, 1923), 342–46.
 159. Montholon to Drouyn de Lhuys, 9 February 1864, AAE, CP Mexique 61; Dano to same, 'Confidentielle et réservée', 28 May 1865, CP Mexique, 63.
 160. Didelot to Roncière, 3 June 1866 in Camille Clément de La Roncière-Le Noury, *Correspondance intime de l'Amiral de la Roncière le Noury avec sa femme et sa fille, 1855–1871*, 2 vols. (Paris: H. Champion, 1928–29), II, 289–90.

Conclusion

In 1863, the pro-intervention French-language newspaper *L'Estafette* understood French imperialism in Mexico to be qualitatively different from that practised in Algeria. An editorial argued: “[w]hat comparison can seriously be made between Algeria and Mexico”? In “Africa”, ran the article, France was faced with a people to “fight, reduce or to exterminate”, but in Mexico “we have six and a half million allies calling us”. In Algeria, it was necessary to “conquer” a nation; in Mexico “to liberate and constitute” one.¹ As has been noted, *L'Estafette* was a (paid) supporter of the Mexican Second Empire; nonetheless, in its differentiation between the French intervention and other examples of imperialism, it echoed the sentiments of many who backed the creation of a monarchy in Mexico.² It has been argued that, in order to understand why many in France and Mexico believed the Second Mexican Empire to be the solution to internal problems of Mexico and beneficial to the interests of France, it is necessary to analyse both the imperial and Mexican context within which it took place; to imperialise and Mexicanise the French intervention and the Second Mexican Empire.

By placing the French intervention in the context of French policy in other parts of the world, light has been shed on the rationale behind Louis-Napoléon’s course of action towards Mexico. Rather than viewing

it as an aberration, the French expedition to Mexico was part of the informal assertion of French power and influence globally during the period 1820–67, which reached its high-water mark under the French Second Empire. This was underpinned by a discourse of European civilisation within which France occupied a privileged position and, as Chap. 2 has shown, Latin America, and Mexico specifically, were marked out as areas especially receptive to French approaches to a non-colonial form of imperialism. Moreover, there was nothing particularly controversial at the time about Louis-Napoléon's general goals in Mexico: the development of French influence and commerce. As Favre, one of the most ardent French critics of intervention, remarked: A monarchy "placed in [France's] orbit" founded on French "civilisation" was a great "dream".³ Favre's point of departure, like Thiers, was not the aims of the French intervention, but its impracticability. For contemporary critics of Louis-Napoléon, and for many historians, the Mexican Second Empire was always an impossible dream.

This work has challenged this conclusion. The attempt to consolidate the Empire of Maximilian was the greatest effort to establish an informal-imperial relationship anywhere on the globe in the nineteenth century, and was transnational in both the ideas that underpinned it and the means mobilised to support it. Aside from the resources France mobilised across its formal and informal empire, and the Mexican soldiers who fought for it, the Empire attracted thousands of Austrian and Belgian volunteers, 534 million francs of European capital raised by two separate loans, recognition by the major powers of Europe, and support in the press from influential periodicals such as *The Times* and *The Economist*. If it was a dream, it was one dreamed by many, and the weight thrown behind it convinced others that it would become reality.

MEXICANISING THE FRENCH INTERVENTION

However, the call to both imperialise and Mexicanise shows that French intervention should not merely be considered a delusion of the Emperor of the French which he tried to will into existence. Nor should the Mexican origins of the Mexican Empire be dismissed as only existing in the imagination of a few Mexican émigrés defeated in civil war. Chapter 3 has shown the endurance of monarchism in Mexico as a solution to the endemic instability of Mexican politics. The foundation of a federal republic was seen by some as the cause of Mexico's inability to constitute an enduring and constitutional regime after independence. In this view, Mexico's

political traditions were monarchical and independence had been achieved on these principles. The failure of the First Mexican Empire was attributed to the inadequacies of Iturbide rather than a disproof of the Plan of Iguala and the ideas behind it.

Monarchism had a transnational dimension from early on; therefore, because those who supported monarchy in Mexico looked overseas for both a monarch and material aid from European powers in order to found a kingdom. This was not limited to avowed monarchists, such as Gutiérrez de Estrada, but remained an option for conservative politicians in Mexico, such as Alamán, who tried to found a monarchy with Spanish support in 1845–46, or Santa Anna, who in 1854 authorised the search for a monarch to replace him during his dictatorship. From a European perspective it was a generally accepted truth, at least amongst those who were not republicans, that monarchy was the form of government best-suited to Mexico. It is hardly surprising that policymakers and diplomats under the Bourbon Restoration, the July Monarchy or the French Second Empire believed what they considered to be overly democratic federal republicanism to be the cause of the so-called anarchy in Mexico. And it is even less surprising that Louis-Napoléon believed that the cure for the tumultuous politics of post-independence Mexico was the same medicine he had seemingly applied so effectively in France. But it was not only those tied to these French regimes who saw monarchy as a panacea for Mexico: it was a view frequently stated in British and French commentary and travel writing on Mexico.

Nonetheless, monarchism in Mexico, at the level of public political discourse at any rate, had limited support even amongst conservatives after the fall of Iturbide in 1823. What further drew conservatives towards Europe was the increasing anti-Americanism within conservative thought. As Chap. 3 has shown, this was in evidence in the 1820s, but the Texan revolt followed by the US-Mexican War confirmed what conservatives already held to be true: the United States was the avowed national enemy of Mexico intent on its destruction.

US expansionism, which caused Mexico to lose nearly half its national territory within 32 years of its independence, was bad enough for conservatives. However, conservative discourse was concerned about the role the United States played in Mexican politics as well. In the conservative view, the US government, through the agency of Poinsett, had deliberately exported federal republicanism, which was ill-suited to Mexican political traditions, in order to weaken Mexico and facilitate the seizure of its

northern states. As has been shown in Chaps. 4 and 5, this narrative was present in the 1820s, but conservative fears had become more acute in the 1850s for two reasons. First, US expansion was no longer a fear, it was a fact. Second, the polarisation of Mexican politics saw Washington openly side with Juárez's Liberals diplomatically and materially during the War of Reform. European intervention, therefore, was deemed to be a solution to the external threat to Mexico posed by the United States and the internal one posed by US-backed liberalism.

It was within this context of a hostile power, which conservatives viewed as ideologically opposed to their vision for the nation and which posed an existential threat to Mexico, that the transnational discourse of pan-Latinism found adherents amongst members of the Conservative Party in the 1850s. Here monarchism and anti-Americanism, combined with French influence and power, came together. However, as Chap. 4 has demonstrated, pan-Latinism can be traced back much earlier than the 1850s, where it is usually first identified. The idea of Latin America was not a French construct of the 1850s, and nor was pan-Latinism an ideology composed to legitimate French imperialism under the French Second Empire. Moreover, Mexico shows that it was by no means the case that early adopters of the term "Latin America" tended to be liberals. In Mexico, the opposite was true. It was the Conservative Party that was waging an anti-democratic crusade against Juárez's US-backed Liberals.

In part, the conservative association with pan-Latinism may be seen as a logical outcome of the European sympathies of conservative Mexican politicians and intellectuals, such as Alamán, who never renounced Mexico's Spanish past. However, the declining power of Spain, and the hispanophobia ingrained in much of Mexico's political culture, meant that France was a more attractive and useful European benefactor. As outlined in Chap. 4, one of the first arguments for French intervention in Mexico made at a government level and depicted in pan-Latinist terms was advanced not by French pan-Latinists, but by José Ramón Pacheco and Buenaventura Vivó—Santa Anna's ministers to Paris and Madrid, respectively. They asked France to cash the cheques written out by French pan-Latinists in their repeated assertions that France was the leader of Latin civilisation and must take an active role to defend it.

Finally, the international dimension to the consolidation of Mexican conservatism was crucial. As Chap. 5 has argued, it was not only Louis-Napoléon who saw in his own regime the cure for Mexican ills: the Mexican Conservative Party identified itself as part of an "international

reaction” based on “conservative principles”. Alamán believed that the French Second Empire was the model upon which to construct the dictatorship of Santa Anna in 1853. Furthermore, the Conservative Party argued that French politics after the revolution of 1848 mirrored Mexico: a small cabal of radical and well-organised liberals had overthrown the government against the wishes of the people, who were a silent conservative majority. What was needed was a strong leader to defeat revolution and restore order. The groundwork for the hyperbolic praise of Bonapartism in the conservative press during the early years of the intervention had, therefore, been laid in the 1850s. In this decade, France under Louis-Napoléon appeared to have been restored as the greatest continental power in Europe. Victory in the Crimean War demonstrated the prowess of the French military, and French policy towards the Ottoman Empire was transplanted to the Americas in order to present Mexico as the “western question”, which argued that European powers, headed by France, should intervene in Mexico in order to save it from the United States.

Mexican Conservatives believed the French Second Empire had married authoritarian government with economic development and democratic politics. In short, it was an ideal example for Mexico to follow. Moreover, French administration was seen by many in Mexico as a model to imitate in order to achieve rationalised government combined with material progress, a goal which formed a significant part of Conservative Party’s programme, and was given particular prominence by Almonte. In 1867, the Emperor of the French stated that behind his Mexican policy lay the desire to “implant there ideas of order and progress”.⁴ For the reasons outlined above, there were many in Mexico who, even if they had not called for French intervention, ultimately rallied to the Mexican Empire and saw in it the best chance for Mexico to become a stable and constitutional regime free from US interference.

Maximilian’s Empire did rally support from moderate liberals as well as from the Conservative Party, but it was from this latter institution that France initially found its collaborating elites and its imperial bridgehead in Mexico. This was a consequence of the fissure in Mexican politics between Liberals and Conservatives during the 1850s, which reached its apogee in the War of Reform. From independence, Mexican conservative politicians were never strong enough to impose their vision on Mexico. Administrations in Mexico in which conservatives actively participated (and subsequently approved of) were short-lived. Bustamante’s regime directed by Alamán lasted for two years (1830–32); Paredes was president for only seven

months in 1846; Santa Anna's last dictatorship endured from 1853 to 1855; and the de facto Conservative governments of Zuloaga and then Miramón contested power with, and were defeated by, Juárez from 1858 to 1861. Whatever configuration conservatives relied upon in Mexican politics to remain in power, whether in alliance with moderate liberals or *santanistas*, and with the backing of the Church, proved insufficient to sustain them in power. Partly as a consequence of this weakness, many in the Mexican Conservative Party called for European intervention throughout the 1850s.

When it finally arrived, French arms provided what seemed a providential opportunity to implement the Conservative Party's conception of the Mexican nation after defeat by Juárez. The transnational ideas which underwrote French imperialism were, initially at least, embraced by Mexican Conservatives, who represented an intervention led by what they called the most civilised power in Europe, as necessarily civilizing in itself. In this view, France, as it had (supposedly) done elsewhere, would protect Christian civilisation, impose order, rationalise administration, increase commerce and develop the economic potential of Mexico, while at the same time safeguarding the social order, protecting Mexico from further US invasion and stemming the tide of radical *puro* liberalism. In this sense, locating Mexico within Latin civilisation was not merely a sensible strategic option, but a shorthand expression for the core aims of the Conservative Party in the 1850s. This helps explain why some Mexican elites supported French intervention: transnational ideas supported by French arms could be adapted to local circumstances and French power could be co-opted to further the ends of collaborating elites.

IMPERIALISING THE FRENCH INTERVENTION

At least that was the theory. The asymmetrical relationship between Mexican Conservatives and France is demonstrated by the fact that the Conservatives were swiftly marginalised once the intervention was underway. Certainly France's initial allies in Mexico were Conservatives, but the problem for Mexican Conservatives who supported the intervention was that France had little interest in Mexican conservatism except insofar as it could deliver immediate French goals: the swift pacification of the country and the establishment of stable regime tied closely to France. With the defeat at Puebla, 5 May 1862, it became clear to Paris that Mexican Conservatives were unable to secure this and, therefore, what little

autonomy they enjoyed in the intervention ended. As Chap. 6 has shown, the utility of Mexican Conservatives for the French was not primarily military, but rather political in that they provided an imperial bridgehead as well as acting as collaborating elites to set up and administer the Empire. However, once the regime was established, those who proved inimical to French, or later Maximilian's, broadly liberal policy were discarded.

The disavowal of the Mexican Conservative programme—or at least the clerical wing of Mexican conservatism—calls into question the conclusion that France intervened at the behest of those who supported it. In fact, Louis-Napoléon had a singular vision for the French intervention that had little to do with the clerical-conservative plans of many of those who called for the intervention. Transnational ideas such as pan-Latinism were flexible enough to be shaped to fit Mexican conservatism, but they were not interpreted quite so freely by policymakers in Paris. As Chap. 6 has shown, Louis-Napoléon ordered his commanders not to follow what he called a “reactionary” course in Mexico. French intervention was predicated upon the assumption that a moderate liberal government, ordered on the principles of French civilisation and backed by French arms, was the solution to endemic political instability in Mexico and one that would quickly defeat opposition. Although driven by the belief that French civilisation was the apex of modernity and inherently attractive, the attempt to rally moderates from both parties was also a pragmatic choice. The weakness of the Conservative Party meant the Mexican Empire needed support from moderate liberals as well as clerical conservatives in order to survive.

This was the vision for Mexico that lay behind the French intervention. But why try to implement it in Mexico in the first place? As outlined in Chap. 2, Latin America occupied a position of increasing importance for French global trade, the protection and development of which was at the forefront of French policy in the region, as much for Thiers as it was for Louis-Napoléon. Mexico was identified as a particularly lucrative potential market because, it was argued, its immense wealth under Spanish colonialism could be restored by bringing an end to the so-called anarchy that reigned there after independence. A strong, regular, government administered along French lines would develop the mineral resources and agricultural potential of the country. Mexico had been cut off from European capital markets, while immigration had been low because of political instability, but the Mexican Second Empire would attract both. It would, therefore, be easy to restore Mexico's place as a world-leading economy under French tutelage.

As Chap. 3 has shown, French diplomats, policymakers and many commentators argued that the political solution for Mexico, from which economic progress would follow, was monarchy. This shared discourse of monarchism undoubtedly influenced French thinking towards Mexico under the French Second Empire. In 1861, Gutiérrez de Estrada thanked the French champions of monarchy: Chevalier, Eugène Duflot de Mofras and Alleye de Cyprey.⁵ It is worth stressing that without European support for the idea of monarchy in Mexico it would never have been realised, and that this support, unlike in Mexico, was not confined to a minority, but was shared by many in Britain and Spain as well as France. Although monarchy enjoyed only limited support amongst elites in Mexico itself, the endurance of the idea and the willingness of some Mexicans to declare in favour of it meant that Mexico was the only country in Latin America, certainly by the 1860s, where a European attempt to establish a monarchical regime could be seriously entertained.

The economic development of a wealthy nation subordinated to French interests and part of the European dynastic system was an attractive one in itself, but it was the geopolitical significance of Mexico that placed it at the forefront of Louis-Napoléon's worldview. As outlined in Chap. 4, French fears of US aggrandisement in Mexico and the circum-Caribbean were a leitmotif of foreign policy discussion as regards Latin America from the Texan revolt onwards. These were often expressed in pan-Latinist terms. And the ideas that lay behind pan-Latinism were expressed beyond the canonical texts of influential proponents, such as Chevalier, and shaped the views of diverse French diplomats and commentators on Mexico. Indeed, Guizot's insistence on an equilibrium in North America between the Protestant United States and (what he termed) southern Catholic nations was pan-Latinist in all but name.

Pan-Latinism was central to the intervention because, as discussed above, it drew some Mexican conservatives towards France and it demarcated Latin America as a sphere of French influence. In this sense, pan-Latinism was a confident assertion of the primacy of French civilisation in Latin regions, but it should also be noted that it was also an explanation for the diminishing influence of France in the face of rising US and Prussian power. A pan-Latinist worldview greatly expanded the reach and power of France, but at the same time made this influence precarious because any Latin nation challenged by a non-Latin nation undermined France and upset the balance of power.

US policy had shown itself to be openly hostile towards Cuba, Central America and especially Mexico, while at the same time threatening

European interests in the Caribbean. As discussed in Chap. 4, many French commentators identified rising US power as a direct affront to Latin civilisation and Mexico as a battleground between races and civilisations, which, if not fought, would result in the destruction of one by the other. Even for those like Guizot who did not openly discuss the US in pan-Latinist terms, Mexico was seen as a bulwark to prevent US expansionism because it was feared further US annexation would limit European access to markets and, more generally, US power threatened the global balance of power. As Chaps. 4 and 5 have demonstrated, Louis-Napoléon and Chevalier, alongside many others, understood French intervention in Mexico to be a response to the rise of US power and a chance to reassert French influence in the Americas.

Any analysis of the French intervention must therefore place Latinity at its heart because it underpinned the intellectual argument for geopolitical concerns, marked Latin America as an area of French imperial influence and saw some Mexicans welcome France in this role. It is also worth noting that Thiers opposed both Guizot's policy over Texan annexation and Louis-Napoléon's policy in Mexico because he dismissed the idea that the United States was a threat to France and ridiculed the notion of Spanish or Latin races. For Thiers, the rise of the United States benefitted France because it diminished Britain. Guizot and Louis-Napoléon, on the other hand, were both anglophiles who largely understood Anglo-French cooperation as a means to extend European influence in the extra-European world and to protect British and French interests in Europe itself.

France was prepared to intervene militarily across the globe in order to advance its interests with a marked preference for limited military expeditions, in conjunction with other European powers, rather than colonial conquest. Mexico should be placed within this context of the extension of French global influence, especially the Orleanist interventions in Latin America of 1838 and the joint overseas expeditions of the French Second Empire: the Second Opium War (Anglo-French, 1856–60), Syria (with international agreement, 1860–61) and to Cochinchina (initial campaign, Franco-Spanish, 1858–62). In addition, France was consolidating its long-term influence in Egypt, particularly with the construction of the Suez Canal. Nonetheless, the currents of French thought outlined above and the trends in French imperialism should not be seen as an ineluctable march towards French intervention. It was the outbreak of the US Civil War which provided France with a free hand to prosecute its goals in Mexico, while it was the end of civil war in Mexico which increased the number of elites willing to work with France in order to further their own ends.

THE DOWNFALL OF THE MEXICAN SECOND EMPIRE

Nonetheless, if the French intervention is placed within French imperialism generally and the Mexican origins of Maximilian's Empire are taken seriously, the question still remains: Why did it fail? For some in the Conservative Party who requested French intervention, its collapse was a consequence of too much imperialism. Directing affairs from Paris, and with little understanding of events in Mexico, Louis-Napoléon's refusal to follow the Conservative Party programme was the primary cause for the failure of Maximilian's Empire. This charge can be dismissed: It is clear that the Mexican Empire did not collapse because it was not conservative enough. Contradicting the Mexican Conservative interpretation, contemporary French critics, and many subsequent historians, argued that it was precisely because the intervention was launched in favour of a clique of Mexican Conservative émigrés, who misrepresented the chances of success, that it did not succeed.

From a military point of view, however, the temporary conquest and occupation of Mexico had been demonstrated to be a very real possibility by the US-Mexican War. Certainly the French defeat at Puebla by the republican Mexican army was a shock, but this was a consequence of the assumption that 6000 battle-hardened French troops—veterans of various conflicts such as the first Carlist War, the conquest of Algeria, the Crimean War and the Italian campaigns—would easily defeat the forces of Juárez. Furthermore, the 23,000 or so reinforcements sent by France ensured that there were no major subsequent military defeats. The military campaign in Mexico was expensive, requiring more soldiers than originally anticipated in 1862, and the resistance of Juárez and his liberal supporters proved far more determined than expected. Nonetheless, as the 1864 Treaty of Miramar made clear, France was willing to maintain a significant level of troops in Mexico with numbers reduced to no fewer than 20,000 by 1867, and with an 8000-strong French Foreign Legion remaining in Mexico for six years after the departure of all other French troops (after which it would pass into the service of the Mexican government).

It was not, therefore purely military concerns that led to the announcement of the withdrawal of French troops in 1867. France faced determined resistance to imperialism in Algeria and Indochina, but what local leaders in these regions did not have was the support of a major regional power, with an army of 500,000 over the border, that refused to recognise the legitimacy of the French-backed regime, provided material aid to

Juárez and ultimately threatened France with war if it did not withdraw its troops. Far from checking US power, French intervention in Mexico merely afforded Louis-Napoléon the opportunity to witness its reality.

Still, if US pressure explains the withdrawal of French troops, it does not account for the collapse of the Mexican Second Empire. Indeed, Louis-Napoléon had always taken into account that the Union was hostile to French intervention, reasoning that even if the North won the US Civil War, Maximilian's Empire would have been consolidated, internationally recognised and internal opposition crushed. Presented with a *fait accompli*, and with France legally bound to withdraw its troops, the United States would have had no choice but to acknowledge the Mexican Second Empire.

In large part, the reasons that the Mexican Second Empire failed to establish itself before the end of the US Civil War can be found in the informal-imperial model that France adopted in Mexico. The nominal reason for the French withdrawal of troops given to Maximilian was the inability of the Second Mexican Empire to comply with the terms regulating the French intervention in the Treaty of Miramar. As discussed in Chap. 6, the exhausted Mexican treasury was unable to maintain the payments agreed upon in order to finance the French army in Mexico. This was the pretext for French abandonment of Maximilian, but it was symptomatic of a wider problem that made the consolidation of his Empire problematic.

All Mexican regimes after independence suffered from financial difficulty, which was why Juárez suspended international payments in 1861 precipitating the intervention; however, the Treaty of Miramar, combined with the Mexican loans contracted in Paris and Spanish and British claims which predated the intervention, meant that 86% of Maximilian's budget for 1866 was taken up with foreign debt repayment. The French goal was to create a stable regime that would ultimately sustain itself, indemnify France for the intervention, pay for the ongoing cost of French occupation while building up its own military and honour its international debts to ensure access to international credit markets. However, the Treaty of Miramar made it highly improbable that the French aim of establishing a self-sustaining regime could be achieved given the weight of debt it put on the Mexican treasury. After the announcement of the French withdrawal in 1866, France replaced the Treaty of Miramar with a convention that appropriated Mexico's customs receipts to cover French debts, thus further starving Maximilian of the resources required to administer his Empire.

This problem was exacerbated because, like many previous Mexican regimes, the Second Mexican Empire did not control the entire territory of the nation it claimed to rule. In part, this was also a failure of French policy. French forces did not take Puebla until May 1863, the French army only reached Mexico City in June of the same year, and Maximilian did not accept the crown until April 1864. This meant that the French army and French administrators alongside Mexican *imperialistas* had little over a year in which to consolidate the Second Mexican Empire before the end of the US Civil War. This short period of time proved insufficient to secure and legitimise the regime, let alone organise a Mexican army capable of defending the Empire independently of French troops. Although many moderate liberals did rally to the Empire, their support proved ephemeral and, once it became clear that French soldiers would leave Mexico, these liberals encouraged Maximilian to abdicate. In short, it was the shallow foundations of the regime and the lack of resources available to Maximilian in order to maintain his government, combined with the unwillingness of France to commit more money and men to maintain the state it had help create in Mexico—the consistent reluctance of France to assume the costs of formal empire—that led to its swift collapse in the face of republican forces after French withdrawal.

INFORMAL EMPIRE

As has been noted in the introduction, the commitment of French resources to Mexico was far larger than any other contemporary imperial French project, with the exception of Algeria. This scale of French military involvement in Mexico has obscured historians' understandings of the intervention. However, to categorise the intervention as "formal empire" and "colonialism" is to conflate the means by which French intervention was conducted with the ends of the imperial project: At no point did France want to establish direct rule, acquire territory or maintain a permanent military presence in Mexico.

This disjuncture between the practice of French imperialism in Latin America and the desired outcome highlights one of the distinguishing features of French imperialism in Latin America which separates it from British policy: Namely, in both Mexico and the River Plate, France was willing to deploy military force in order to achieve its ends. In addition, it became involved in domestic politics in the hope of securing its goals. France distanced itself from the Mexican Conservative Party once Mexico

City was occupied in 1863, but those who initially fought alongside the intervention were those who had lost the War of Reform. Similarly, as discussed in Chap. 2, in the River Plate, French forces aided Argentine Unitarians who had recently been defeated in civil war by Rosas, while they backed Uruguayan liberals in their civil conflict against the pro-Rosas Oribe. Furthermore, in the 1838–39 Mexican intervention, Admiral Baudin briefly flirted with liberal federalists in revolt against the central government and lifted the blockade on liberal-held ports. This was present in the earliest proposals for French informal imperialism in Latin America. Villèle and Chateaubriand wanted to support, financially and militarily, royalists in Spain's former colonies to create independent Bourbon kingdoms.

The trend is clear: France was willing to involve itself in domestic politics because it was thought that factions in Latin America would further French policy goals. These elites were attracted to France because of a sympathy for French ideas, but also because French arms were a means of advancing local ambitions. Moreover, in both the River Plate and, more dramatically, in Mexico, the combination of local allies and French support proved incapable of founding long-lasting informal influence, or even securing the aims of those local elites who sided with France.

The contrast with Britain is perhaps not as marked as it initially appears. As Chap. 2 has shown, Britain supported some French policy goals in the region. Furthermore, they did commit limited naval forces in support of these aims and in conjunction with France. Britain jointly blockaded Buenos Aires from 1845–47 and was part of the tripartite intervention of 1861. Furthermore, Palmerston privately welcomed the 1838 expedition against Mexico and hoped that the Second Mexican Empire under Maximilian would be a success. Influential British periodicals such as *The Economist* and *The Times* also championed the Mexican Second Empire. While Britain was not willing to deploy military force on anywhere near the same scale as France, particularly not in support of such an ambitious project as overturning the political institutions of Mexico and establishing a Mexican empire under French tutelage, Britain was willing to acquiesce, and at times openly collaborate, with French imperial ambitions in Latin America.

Nonetheless, Lord Aberdeen made clear that if he had 20,000 British troops to spare he would not send one to the River Plate, while Lord Clarendon similarly balked at the resources that would be necessary to contain US expansionism in Mexico and Central America. How, then, to

account for the willingness of France to mobilise its forces to develop its influence in Latin America? Many French policymakers, including Chateaubriand, Guizot, Thiers and Louis-Napoléon, believed that the extension of French influence in Latin America was a desirable outcome. The question was how to achieve it. All of them, albeit to different degrees, were prepared to send French forces in order to further this goal.

This may perhaps be explained by the fact that France lacked the economic hegemony enjoyed by Britain, but, nonetheless wished to emulate what policymakers like Chateaubriand and Thiers sketched as Britain's informal imperial strategies. In the classic model of informal empire commerce and capital, backed by the threat of military intervention, are the means to procure political influence. In the case of France, to secure political influence it was first necessary to create the conditions for it. The threat of force was not the means by which French influence was to be maintained; rather, force was the method that would establish French power in regions like Mexico, where it was thought French civilisation would be welcomed. The preferred means of doing this was through collaborating elites influenced by elements of French political culture who, at times of domestic political conflict, were willing to embrace French arms in support of transnational ideas, which were adopted and adapted to their local circumstances in order to promote their own vision of the nation.

In terms of what they hoped to create in Mexico, namely an independent regime tied closely to French interests, the model of French informal imperialism is closer to Darwin's categorisation, discussed in the introduction, of the "eastern" version of British informal empire, which was underwritten by legal and/or territorial concessions.⁶ There were no territorial concessions, but France's relationship with Mexico was regulated by the Treaty of Miramar. This document outlined the financial obligations undertaken by Maximilian in return for the military support of France, while a secret clause bound the Second Mexican Empire to continue the policies enacted by France at the beginning of the intervention and followed by the Regency government. The two Mexican loans tied the Mexican government to French capital, and intellectual institutions, such as the Franco-Mexican Scientific Commission and the Imperial Academy of Arts and Sciences, were intended to spread culture; however, French capital (the first Mexican loan was raised in 1864) and French culture (the Academy was opened in 1865) followed the establishment of French political influence (the Regency was proclaimed in 1863), they did not create it. Commerce was always an important consideration, and French

trade with Mexico was second to that of Britain and equal to that of the United States, but, again, the intervention was intended to protect and develop French economic interests, which had not in themselves secured much, if any, political influence for France in its relations with Mexico. French informal empire in Mexico then, was an aspiration, and one to which policymakers were willing divert considerable resources in order to create, even without the economic bases which British informal influence in Latin America is conventionally understood to have been predicated upon.

That French regimes—which in the (until recently) dominant historiography have frequently been dismissed as failures or anachronisms—were admired by many Latin American intellectuals and politicians presented France with opportunities. Moreover, it was not only the political thought of the widely influential pantheon of French intellectuals, such as Constant or Guizot, that drew some towards France in this period, but also the constitutional, administrative and, in the case of the French Second Empire, economic examples French regimes provided, the conservative path to modernity. Indeed, in 1853, as discussed in Chap. 5, it was Alamán's interest in the apparent success of Bonapartism in France, as well as the international reaction with which Mexican Conservatives placed themselves, that led him to seek legislation from Levasseur, the French minister to Mexico, on which to base Santa Anna's press law and saw the French minister fêted at various banquets held by various important politicians in 1853. In this sense, it was this French political model that gave Levasseur what he termed "influence" in Mexican politics, not French capital or commerce.

Informal empire elucidates our understanding of the Mexican Second Empire because it theorises a relationship through which those who embraced French imperialism hoped to benefit from French intervention. This was not based on economic self-interest; the advantageous economic relationship with France never developed beyond the commerce endemic to the period, but rather was motivated by an ideological conviction that Conservative Party's vision for Mexico was the only one that could save the nation, and that it could only triumph with the help of French arms.

Finally, if the intervention is placed within French imperialism regionally and globally, it also should be situated within the context of the US Civil War, the study of which has undergone a "transnational turn". This has led one historian to conclude that the French intervention and the Union's conflict against the South were linked as an "illiberal alliance

between the slaveholding Confederate States of America and monarchical France [...] an ideological conflict centred in North America's southern tier."⁷ However, such a conclusion is not plausible. A central aim of the French intervention was to prevent the further expansion of the United States, and this threat was understood by French policymakers to emanate primarily from the South, while the liberal face of the Second Mexican Empire belies any attempt to tie it ideologically to the Confederacy, or as part of a reactionary and backwards politics opposed to modernity. As regards the United States, the intervention should be understood as a direct and deliberate challenge to US regional hegemony, the greatest defiance of the Monroe Doctrine until the Cuban Missile Crisis. The discourses that underwrote monarchism, pan-Latinism, conservatism and French imperialism were part of this challenge and tied to anti-Americanism. The attempt to support and further these currents of thought in Mexico was in part provided by the break-up of the Union, and the failure of the Second Mexican Empire was in no small part due to reconstitution of the United States in 1865.

French imperialism has been placed in its global and Latin American context; however, the focus has necessarily been on Mexico. Further research into French imperial projects worldwide, and regionally in Latin America, particularly comparative case studies, would help elucidate links, commonalities and differences. Pan-Latinism, for example, was not just a discourse applied to Latin America, but to Africa and Asia as well, while France's role as the defender of Catholicism in the period 1815–70, particularly under the French Second Empire, may have more important implications for its appeal to Mexican conservatives. The impact of the failure of the French informal-imperial model in Mexico on French imperialism may also perhaps help explain the move to formal colonialism under the Third Republic. Ultimately, informal empire building in Latin America was, for France, an expensive and futile exercise, and thus may have led French imperialists towards other imperial strategies on other parts of the globe.

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An article published in 1863 in *El Pájaro Verde* concluded that the memory of Louis-Napoléon would remain engraved in the hearts of all Mexicans.⁸ In the aftermath of the French intervention, it was, although not in the manner that the pro-intervention newspaper or the Emperor of

the French would have hoped. The importance of the French intervention in the construction of Mexican national identity, as one of the foundational myths of Mexican history, is well-documented.⁹ However, if Louis-Napoléon is remembered at all today in public discourse, it is generally because of Marx's oft-repeated quip on history—the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce—or, because of Louis-Napoléon's catastrophic defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, rather than his Mexican policy. Maximilian would be an even more obscure footnote to European history than he currently is if not for Manet's "Execution of Maximilian". Juárez, by contrast, has Mexico City's international airport named after him.

Despite Louis-Napoléon's fondness for the "ideas" or "spirit" of the century, contemporaries and historians have generally concluded that the Emperor of the French, the Mexican Conservative Party and Maximilian were on the "wrong side" of history. This book has built on the work of scholars who have deepened our understanding of ideas that underpinned their projects, especially recent work in Mexican history which has demonstrated that the Manichean division between Liberal patriots and traitorous reactionaries is unhelpful. As Van Young writes, "revolutionary mythologies [...] blur or efface others altogether, the act of creative remembering implies selective forgetting as well."¹⁰ After all, Juárez's Liberals disagreed with Alamán, but his analysis of the best course for Mexico, namely economic development combined with political authoritarianism, was one largely adopted by the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) in the twentieth century. And Porfirio Díaz may have fought against French ideas on the battlefield, but he would surely have agreed with Louis-Napoléon's judgement that "[w]hat is needed in Mexico is not parliamentary liberty, but a liberal dictatorship".¹¹

NOTES

1. 'Courrier', *L'Estafette*, 3 October 1863, front and second pages.
2. For example, the conservative newspaper, *El Pájaro Verde*, ran a series of articles which discussed different types of foreign intervention. 'Bibliografía. La Intervención Europea en México', 4, 5, 6 and 7 August 1863, front and second pages. Conservatives made the point that the United States owed its independence to French intervention. For example, 'Discurso pronunciado en la Alameda de México el 16 Septiembre de 1863 por Joaquín M. de Castillo y Lanzas', *ibid.*, 24 September 1863, second page.
3. Favre, *Discours parlementaires*, II, 334–35.

4. 'Discours de l'Empereur', *Journal des débats*, 15 February 1867, front page.
5. Gutiérrez de Estrada, *Le Mexique et l'archiduc*, 14; 17–18.
6. Darwin, 'Imperialism and the Victorians', 617.
7. Patrick Kelly, 'The North American Crisis of the 1860s', *Journal of the Civil War Era*, 2 (2012), 337; 339. For an overview of the US Civil War in an international context, see Don H. Doyle, 'The Global Civil War' in Aaron Sheehan-Dean (ed.), *A Companion to the US Civil War*, 2 vols. (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), II, 1103–20.
8. 'Editorial. Napoléon III—El Arbitro de la paz del mundo'. *El Pájaro Verde*, 15 August 1863, p. 2.
9. See, for example, Knight, 'Peculiarities of Mexican History', 125.
10. Van Young, *Writing Mexican History*, 160.
11. Louis-Napoléon to Maximilian, 2 October 1863, quoted in Corti, *Maximilian*, I, 389–90.

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