A TRANSNATIONAL ANALYSIS OF REPRESENTATIONS OF THE US FILIBUSTERS IN NICARAGUA, 1855-1857

ANDREAS BEER

A Transnational Analysis of Representations of the US Filibusters in Nicaragua, 1855-1857

Andreas Beer

A Transnational Analysis of Representations of the US Filibusters in Nicaragua, 1855-1857

palgrave
macmillan

Andreas Beer
University of Constance
Konstanz, Germany

ISBN 978-3-319-28351-7 ISBN 978-3-319-28352-4 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-28352-4

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016946645

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2016
This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.
The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.
The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made.

Cover Illustration: © Tamara Kushniruk / Alamy Stock Photo

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Nature America Inc. New York

Acknowledgments

Throughout the preparation of this study (and the PhD dissertation it is based on), I have benefited enormously from the help of many people who have supported me both academically and emotionally. I thanked many of them personally, but would like to mention some who went out of their way to guide me with their expertise, nourish me with information or untangle my often convoluted thoughts.

The professors and students at the graduate school "Cultural Encounters and the Discourses of Scholarship" at Rostock University provided a resonance chamber to discuss my findings and test my hypotheses in a cooperative environment. My supervisor Gesa Mackenthun (Rostock University) was not only always there to critically discuss my ideas, but also to encourage me to go on in spite of difficulties. Her intellectual rigor as well as her enormous knowledge on the (proto)imperial politics of the US served as a model throughout the elaboration of this study. Gabriele Pisarz-Ramírez (Leipzig University), Werner Mackenbach (Universidad de Costa Rica, San José), Víctor Hugo Acuña Ortega (Universidad Centroamericana, Managua) and Miguel Ayerdis (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua, Managua) generously shared their profound knowledge on Nicaraguan and Central American history with me.

As with all historical research, this study could materialize only because librarians and other staff opened the treasure troves of their archives to me. Especially in Central America, the task of preserving, cataloguing and making available historical documents is more vocation than mere job. Therefore, I would like to extend my special thanks to everyone at the Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica in Managua (Aura

María Olivares, Yessica Rivas, Adriana Palacios, Aura Lila Torres, Mario Galo and the rest of the staff), the Biblioteca Nacional de Costa Rica, the Archivo Nacional de Costa Rica (especially Esteban Cabezas), the Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría in Alajuela, Costa Rica (especially Raúl Aguilar Piedra and Antonio Vargas Campos) and the Archivo Nacional de Honduras, particularly the indefatigable Karen Liliana Medrano.

These and many other people helped me while working on this study, and it is needless to say that all hasty mistakes, incongruent conclusions or downright errors that it might still contain are my fault alone and surely persisted because I did not listen to them more.

Finalmente, quiero agradecer a Bea por siempre encaminarme al camino correcto cuando me pareció que la vista se me haya perdido.

Contents

1	**A Transnational Perspective on the Nicaraguan Filibuster Episode**	1
	Being Unsettled and Unsettling Others: The Transnational Perspective	5
	The Filibusters in Nicaragua: Actors, Incidents, and (Medial) Contexts	8
	A Filibuster Press? The Transnational Influence of El Nicaraguense	12
	Reading Representations: Archives, Images and Texts	15
	Chapter Overview	20
2	**Conceptualizing the Filibuster(o)s**	25
	Filibusters and Filibusteros: Transnational Etymological Trajectories	26
	Constructing Filibuster Histories	31
	Filibusters and the US Administration	33
	The Filibusters and US Geopolitical Designs for a Transisthmian Canal	37
	Filibusters and Slavery	39
	Opposing the Filibusters	41
	The Filibusters and the US Press	43
	Nicaragua, the Absent Nation	45
	Domestic Conflicts Since Nicaraguan Independence	45
	The Transisthmian Travel Route as Catalyst of Change	51

3 The Nicaraguan Press and *El Nicaraguense* 69
El Nicaraguense and the Upheaval of the Nicaraguan Press 80
Partial Correspondents and Commissioned Pictures 89

4 Discursive Voyages Between the United States and Nicaragua 109
Travel Narratives as Imperialist Devices in US-Latin American Relations 109
Frontier Characteristics and Nicaraguans as New Indians 116
Between National and Natural Borders: Manifest Destiny and US Expansionism 125
Human and National Bodies: Race as a Homogenizer and Regenerator 133
Configuring Whiteness in Nicaragua 139
Gender, Masculinity and the Filibusters 141
Measuring Time and People 154
An Aztec Antiquity? Nicaragua and the US Search for a New Mediterranean 162
Economic Liberalism and Civilization 165

5 Between Omnipresence and Oblivion. The Filibusters in Transnational Collective Memories and Nationalist Historiographies 183

6 In Lieu of a Conclusion 201

Index 209

List of Figures

Fig. 4.1 "Transit Company's Buildings at Greytown," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 19, 1855 118

Fig. 4.2 "Transit Company's Buildings at Greytown," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 19, 1855 119

Fig. 4.3 "Grand Plaza and Market, Granada, Nicaragua," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 21, 1856 120

Fig. 4.4 "Examining a Squad at Virgin Bay," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* April 19, 1856 121

Fig. 4.5 "Examining a Squad at Virgin Bay," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* April 19, 1856 121

Fig. 4.6 "Repose after Battle," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 03, 1856 145

Fig. 4.7 "Battle of Rivas," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 17, 1856 146

Fig. 4.8 "Reception Room of Gen. Walker in the President's House, City of Granada," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, March 15, 1856 149

Fig. 4.9 "A Visit to General Walker and Suite; Early Reminiscence of Walker," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 27, 1857 150

CHAPTER 1

A Transnational Perspective on the Nicaraguan Filibuster Episode

Every tourist who visits the Honduran town of Trujillo on the Caribbean coast will notice (and probably visit) the impressive Fort Santa Bárbara which dominates the bay. Right outside of its main entrance, the visitor comes across a curious commemorative stone, inserted into the pasture surrounding the fort, which simply reads "William Walker, 1860."[1] While some visitors might associate Trujillo with the US-American author O. Henry (who had lived there in the 1890s and drew on this experience in several of his "banana republic" short stories), most will be at a loss to situate the Anglophone name of "William Walker"—as will be most Hondurans, by the way. Meandering off to the old cemetery, though, the visitor will again be struck by the name, this time as the inscription to the best-attended grave in the graveyard and the only fenced-off gravestone which reads: "William Walker, fusilado, 12 Septiembre 1860." The man who was executed by a firing squad in Trujillo on that date was what today we would call a mercenary, intimately connected to a series of attacks on the Central American isthmus that originated in the United States and had transnational repercussions: Great Britain, France and—to a lesser extent—Spain were eying the actions of the filibusters (as their nineteenth-century denomination went). The US administration was swaying between tacit support for their imperial schemes and outright condemnation for their disavowal of US laws (and their endangerment of US relations with European imperial powers) and the Central American nations of Honduras, Costa Rica and especially Nicaragua (which bore the brunt

© The Author(s) 2016

A. Beer, *A Transnational Analysis of Representations of the US Filibusters in Nicaragua, 1855-1857*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-28352-4_1

of the filibusters' attacks) were attempting to devise defensive plans, first nationally and then cooperating internationally. William Walker, the leader and most notorious name of the pack, managed to occupy the position of Nicaraguan President for some months in 1856–1857 and, while only a footnote in the US history, still looms large in Nicaraguan and Costa Rican history. Outside of these two countries, barely a trace remains in terms of *lieux de memoire* or mentionings in history books, although the "King of the Filibusters" (as Walker was called in his heyday) and his motley crew of international volunteers—recruited, among others, from post-1848 Europe, Cuban independence fighters, South American liberals and young men both from the US North and slaveholding South—in their day were highly visible, almost iconic representatives of US aggrandizement. The filibusters thus contributed significantly to what Amy Greenberg and others have called the antebellum American Empire. While in the United States, their escapades have fallen into oblivion, on the isthmus, which the filibusters roamed from the mid-1850s until the beginning of the US Civil War, they were for a long time stuck within national(ist) paradigms of research, excluding connecting views to other countries and underpinning notions of national aggrandizement in their respective versions of the successful fight against the filibusters.

Although the filibusters were never completely absent from the US collective memory or its national historiography, they have suffered from a focus on a limited, exclusively US-American set of actors, with the aforementioned William Walker as the main protagonist and transportation tycoon Cornelius Vanderbilt as the antagonist responsible for his eventual downfall and death. The same goes for Nicaragua and Costa Rica, where Walker was stylized as the monstrous foreigner, plotted against the anti-filibuster commanders Máximo Jérez and Juan Rafael Mora, respectively. Such a personalization has also hindered transnational investigations, which could complicate such dualistic narratives. In addition, as I will argue, after the US Civil War, narratives of the filibusters in the United States very quickly turned into sensationalist adventure tales, which often hindered serious academic research, leaving investigation to amateur historiographers with limited resources and methodological background. Thus, although most US historians today might be able to connect the term "filibuster" with some vague historical reference apart from the current usage linked to tactics of parliamentary blockade, a lot of research still needs to be done to better understand a period in US history which proved to be essential for the nation's transnational connections with Latin America.

Attempting to fill these lacunae, this study looks beyond the national paradigm, and examines filibustering from a comparative, transnational vantage point. It concentrates on one specific filibustering pageant: the period of 1855–1857, when during one of many Nicaraguan internal wars a small group of filibusters (headed by the aforementioned William Walker) was invited as auxiliary force for one of the warring parties and managed to control the country for several months before being defeated and forced to leave. As a cultural studies scholar by trade, I am interested in the processes the notion of culture was used during this episode to describe a conflictual contact situation, and I concentrate on tracing these processes in one specific medium: newspapers. Many filibusters and the Central Americans involved in the subsequent anti-filibustering campaign made use of newspapers to distribute their agendas, write travel reports, engage the diverse national publics in discussions, and so on. Various groups of Nicaraguans as well as the filibusters published newspapers, and US papers also reported widely on the events. The filibuster presence in Nicaragua was represented using discourses inscribing the dynamic, contingent situation "on the ground" into fixed binary logics recurring on nationalities (US vs. Nicaraguan), gender (men vs. feminized others), religion (Protestants vs. Catholics), or the national trajectory (independence of Central America vs. subordination under US control). Investigating these newspapers critically and with the aim to "treat comparatively the internal social relations of whatever geopolitical units define themselves as nation, state, region, community or group"[2] makes it possible to dissect pretensions of national unity both sides used—pretensions that have also nurtured the academic scholarship that investigated, analyzed and (re-) narrated the events of 1855–1857.

The newspapers' impact on academic scholarship, and this scholarship's interplay with popular discourses of remembrance and forgetting form the second research interest of this book. In particular, it explores in which ways newspapers interacted with academic works, especially historiography. While it is a truism that the nineteenth century holds an enduring sway over today's academic landscape, the comparative analysis of national historiographies concerning the Nicaraguan filibuster of 1855–1857 makes especially pertinent the manifold dependencies on a limited amount of sources and archives (and the omission of others), linguistic barriers and political maneuvering that often subtly shape historiographical research.

Finally, I am aware that sometimes paeans on discourses or medial representations seem to neglect the physical side of transnationality: the

actors, the objects, the trajectories and losses involved in crossing geographical regions. My aim is thus to show that agents and artifacts indeed traveled between the various countries at the isthmus, toward the United States and back, and even to Europe and beyond, influencing and interacting with various other agents and artifacts on the way. On these often zigzagging routes, the newspapers encountered different readers, who interacted with them in a variety of ways: Apart from reading them, they wrote articles in response or letters to the editors, translated (and often amended) the articles, and decided to preserve them or not. Such acts of mingling and (mis-)appropriation helped to undermine national perspectives, showing that even in the high period of nationalism (and most of the actors appearing in this study would have agreed that they act nationally), transnationalism was a constant feature.

This study thus has a threefold interest: First, it analyzes the media representations of the filibuster episode in Nicaragua under a transnational scope, moving beyond perspectives bound by national borders; second, it examines which of these historical representations proliferate in today's academic and popular discourses; and third, it traces how the artifacts that transported these representations moved between Nicaragua and the United States to delineate flows of influence.

In Chap. 2, I contextualize the filibusters from a dual point of view, examining the historical background of their involvement in Central America from both the United States and Nicaragua. I fathom which preconditions allowed for the emergence of the filibusters in the United States and their invitation to Nicaragua. Chapter 3 zooms in on the newspapers that transported textual and visual representations of the filibuster deeds (and their Mesoamerican counterparts) between different regions and states in Central America, from the United States to the isthmus (and sometimes vice versa) and within the United States. The fourth chapter identifies different discourses that interacted with each other in the newspapers. Some of them were shared among several groups that used newspapers as their media of communication, while others were confined to one single group. This chapter argues that the filibusters were not only agents acting transnationally but also sutured into transnational discourses: the discourses of late Enlightenment, of masculinity, of modernity, progress and economic liberalism. I argue that this shared discursive background was one of the major components that made the filibusters' initial success feasible: Both US-Americans and Nicaraguans could integrate the filibusters into a set of ready-made

tropes, and thereby make sense of their presence. Chapter 5, finally, discusses the ways in which the newspapers were converted into source material for academic scholarship, and how this academic dimension interacted with popular forms of collective remembering, forgetting and national identity construction.

By examining the filibuster incident in Nicaragua from a comparative, transnational perspective and incorporating material that has hitherto been neglected, this study aims at contributing to an interdisciplinary effort (stretching from cultural studies to history, and political science) that attempts to adumbrate "new ways of looking at old problems but also reveals new strata of actors, events and processes," as Andrew Zimmerman has called it in his magisterial study *Alabama in Africa*, itself a prime example of transnational historiography.[3]

Being Unsettled and Unsettling Others: The Transnational Perspective

Edward Said wrote in his *Representations of the Intellectual* that "Exile for the intellectual [...] is restlessness, movement, constantly being unsettled, and unsettling others."[4] I appropriate this description for the engagement with what I call the transnational perspective; persepective because it is not necessarily a fully-fledged theory or acknowledged methodology. As an academic—which arguably always includes a certain portion of intellectual rigor—this perspective unsettles one's own institutional grounding, one's imbrication into distinct fields of study, of clear-cut methodologies and theoretical approaches. Yet, it also unsettles other scholars with its peripatetic ruminations and its insistence on interdisciplinary cross-fertilization. As the quote by Andrew Zimmerman has shown, a transnational perspective does not simply mean the confluence of two, three or more national perspectives into a wider analysis, but also the revelation of desiderata, of actors, events and processes hitherto unknown. In this study, I will attempt to live up to this challenge. Utilizing transnational perspectives, though, should not entail an insouciant forgetfulness about one's own intellectual limitations: Usually being educated in one or two academic disciplines, a certain limit is set as to how much factual knowledge one can acquire in other fields. The consequence is that many studies stand on the shoulder of giants, and this one is no exception: A large amount of cogent works have already been published on the filibusters in the US, in Costa Rica, Canada, Nicaragua, Great Britain, France, or Germany,[5] but I argue

that so far neither has ventured beyond the (always fuzzy) boundaries of their respective nation state.

Latin America, including the Caribbean and the isthmus, with its long history of US involvement (military, economic, or otherwise) is one of the geographical regions best qualified for a wider, more inclusive approach toward a transnational perspective in US-American history. Apart from the ubiquitous Chicano and Border Studies, which zoom in on the cultural and physical hybridizations of the US–Mexican border (lands), Latin American scholars have helped to unsettle the former exceptionalist pretensions of the discipline with programmatic works such as José Saldívar's *Trans-Americanity*, case studies on the influence of the transisthmian transportation route in Panama by Aims McGuiness or Greg Grandin's *Empire's Workshop*, which show how the Caribbean basin, Central America and especially Cuba served as an experimentation ground for US desires of imperial control from the eighteenth century onward, and how these experiments reflected back into US mainland cultures. In 2005, Michel Gobat sounded the interplay between transnational Nicaraguan elites and US invasions to this Central American country in his book *Confronting the American Dream,* while Gretchen Murphy looked at the hemispheric ramifications of the Monroe Doctrine in her book *Hemispheric Imaginings*.[6] Like the exiled in Said's quote, scholars from or with connections to what is usually called "Latin America" have demanded a return into a discipline that often silenced their voices in the double continent that is variously called America/América/Amérique.

Like all historical research, transnational history is dependent on the sources it can use, and for the Caribbean and the isthmus, these often leave lacunae that make a reliable argumentation troublesome. This absence leaves two possibilities: Either, once can start an attempt to read "against the grain" those texts that are available today, or to transgress the disciplinary divides and incorporate findings from other disciplines such as ethnology or (cultural) anthropology. In many cases, the first method produces a clearer vision of the blank spaces within dominant texts, but can lead only to tentative results or "academic guesses." The second method, too, often encounters its limits in a historical setting which did not allow either the production or the preservation of deviant knowledge. A transnational approach asks questions that have not been asked before, but this does not mean that definite answers are necessarily included in the package. It rather is a game of addition, adding small insights to the already existing body of research, and opening up new horizons.

Another unsettling factor is the very denomination of the perspective, its insistence on nations as important (if not prime) categories. In the present case, one might argue that this includes the risk of falling into easy binaries between the United States as the dominant, always-present nation state and an interchangeable other (being this Nicaragua, Canada or Togo, as in Zimmerman's study), something Anna Brickhouse has aptly called a mix between "blindness and binocularity."[7] This results, in my view, in the need for a special focus on those actors, events and processes that transgress the nation state, not only physically, but also structurally. It also means that we should engage with "the history, the conditions and the specifics of US exceptionalism and US imperialism in their differences from non-US histories and non-US manifestations of exceptionalism and imperialism."[8] Via the powerful instruments of travel grants, research programs and university cooperations (which favor interchange between the highly industrialized countries), the possibility of incorporating non-Euro-Americacentrist scholars and sources remains precarious. Consequently, one of the blank spots on the map of transnational studies is its negligence of sources, practices and actors that are situated in the shadows of US-American and European academia. Mirroring foci of the older Area Studies, geographical hierarchies have formed in transnational historiographies, and academic attention and research have been distributed unevenly: Mexico and Cuba have been more widely taken up as subjects, as have been Argentina, Chile and, more recently, Brazil. Due to the interest in *mestizaje* and *creolité*, and because it was the site of first contact between the so-called New and Old World, "the Caribbean" (often a generic term for Cuba, Hispaniola and, to a certain extent, Jamaica) also received widespread attention from transnational historians. Laudable as they are, these efforts nevertheless have created unrecognized and undertheorized areas, which were (and still are) shaping both the society in the United States and elsewhere. The smaller islands of the Caribbean, the Central American countries, but also islands like Guam or Diego Garcia, which have a long and painful history with the US military, spring to mind here.

Listing these shortcomings does not imply that the transnational approach is fraught with more risks than possibilities. Quite on the contrary, the transnational perspective demands not only to unsettle others, but also to constantly unsettle one's own academic comfort zone. Mine, as a German-based scholar of US cultural studies, is shot through with an unyielding preference for textual archives and my limited linguistic knowl-

edge (which include Spanish and French, but exclude any indigenous idiom spoken in the Americas).

The Filibusters in Nicaragua: Actors, Incidents, and (Medial) Contexts

This study focuses on a historical incident which involved US American as well as Nicaraguan, Cuban, Hungarian, British, German, French and other European actors as well as Hondurans, Costa Ricans and several other Central American nations, and which played an important part in the history of the United States and a variety of isthmian countries, primarily Nicaragua and Costa Rica. The US filibuster takeover[9] of Nicaragua from 1855 to 1857 was far from being only a queer anomaly of US history in which a privately organized force of 50-odd men under the command of a former journalist named William Walker was contracted as a mercenary force by one of the factions of a soaring Nicaraguan civil war, and which eventually became so powerful that they could install Walker as Nicaraguan President for almost 11 months before being ousted in May 1857. Rather, with its manifold bifurcations into the realms of national and international imperial politics as well as economy and popular culture, the Nicaraguan filibuster episode lends itself as a prime example for transnational and interdisciplinary research. Nevertheless, given the nationalist interest in the topic on both sides (on which I will elaborate in Chap. 5), such a transnational approach has been conspicuously absent, and research into the filibusters still remains an open field in this regard.

Most of the studies on the filibusters contain a certain amount of historical background, which is why I will only outline the major events here, which I consider fundamental for my own analysis (a closer look on the specific transnational crossings and connections will be provided in Chap. 2).

After its independence in 1821, Nicaragua entered a period of political unrest (often flaring up in military confrontations), and in May 1854 a new conflict started between the two major political groups, the Liberals from León and the Conservatives from Granada. What would become a civil war commenced when some Liberal expatriates, led by Francisco Castellón and Máximo Jerez, returned to Nicaragua and attempted to overthrow the government of the Conservative Fruto Chamorro. The Liberals quickly succeeded in establishing a provisional government in

León and sent forces to attack the Conservatives in their own stronghold, Granada. The siege lasted until February of the next year, when the Liberals withdrew. Fruto Chamorro, though, also died in March 1855, and the Conservatives could not use the momentum to their advantage, thus prolonging the hostilities. During its first year, this civil war reproduced the well-known parameters of many civil wars in Central America, that is, ineffectual strives between poorly trained and armed militias of peasants and artisans.

The situation changed in June 1855, when the Liberals hired a small force of US filibusters (accounts put their number between 55 and 58), who entered the country to boost the Liberals' ranks—a move that alarmed Great Britain and the United States, who had political interests in the region. The main interest of the group led by William Walker, though, was not to support the Liberals, but to occupy the interoceanic transit route, as they wanted to profit from the travel transportation run by Cornelius Vanderbilt. After initial military failures, October 12, 1855 brought a decisive change: In arguably his only genuinely impressive tactical move, Walker captured the city of Granada and with this resounding success the filibusters assumed power in Nicaragua. The Conservatives were forced to sign a peace treaty with the Liberals, and a new provisional government was established under the presidency of compromise candidate Patricio Rivas, but effectively under Walker's control, who managed to obtain the post of commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

This outcome alarmed the other Central American governments, as Walker had publicly declared that he would attempt to conquer all the five Central American republics to force them into a union with the United States.[10] Thus, in March 1856, a Costa Rican army left for Nicaragua to fight the filibusters, thereby further converting this civil war into an international conflict. The Costa Rican expedition, commanded by President Juan Rafael Mora, ultimately ended in failure, as they could not decisively rout the filibusters and were forced to abandon their goal when cholera broke out in their ranks. Further trouble was experienced by the filibusters in February 1856, when Walker had expropriated Vanderbilt's Nicaraguan assets, turning the powerful shipowner into one of his fiercest enemies. From May to September 1856 Central and Latin American diplomats expressed their concern about the filibuster occupation to the US government; Costa Rican delegates took their grievances to London (the European imperial power having assumed the role of custodian against US influence in Costa Rica), and the events in Nicaragua were followed

with great interest by the European public. The widening dimension of the conflict (and the filibusters' growing influence) was underscored by the fact that for a short time in the summer of 1856 the US administration officially recognized Walker's government. Yet, in early June 1856, Nicaraguan Liberals broke with Walker, declaring him a traitor after he held fraudulent elections a month prior and then declared himself President. When Nicaraguan politicians had established a united front against the filibusters in September 1856, troops from Guatemala and El Salvador arrived in Nicaragua. In a series of fights, the filibustering forces withdrew to Granada, where they were besieged by the united Central American armies, but not only did they manage to escape but they also burned most of the city to the ground. Walker's forces adjourned to Rivas (a town on the transit route), where they were finally ousted after Costa Rican troops, led by Sylvanus Spencer—a sailor hired and sent by Vanderbilt—captured vessels and fortresses along the transit route and cut off supply from the United States and the east coast. Finally, on May 01, 1857, William Walker surrendered to the commander of a US navy frigate, which lay anchored at Rivas.

In its entirety, the civil war and the subsequent anti-filibuster campaign lasted three years, from May 1854 to April 1857. William Walker's exploits in Central America did not end with his defeat, though: In November 1857, he and some fellow filibusters disembarked at the Nicaraguan harbor of San Juan del Norte in an attempt to regain control over the country. They were arrested by forces of the US navy and sent back to their home country. Undaunted, Walker organized several further armed expeditions against Central America. In the last one, he was captured by the British on the north coast of Honduras,[11] handed over to a military detachment, and executed at the aforementioned Fort Santa Bárbara on September 12, 1860.

All these actions took place within the wider context of domestic politics of the isthmian countries, mainly Nicaragua and Costa Rica as well as international, imperial politics, with Great Britain and the United States as principal actors. Half a century before the jingoistic watershed moment of 1898, the US administration had already entered into a tentative bid for isthmian domination, with geopolitical designs on the Caribbean and Central America. Although the filibusters were private actors, different US administrations—under presidents Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan—used filibustering to test how far they could meddle in the American version of the "Great Game" opposite the British Empire: The filibusters were tacitly tolerated and, when their actions seemed success-

ful, diplomatically encouraged in their quest to "Americanize" the isthmus; only when the British seemed to be ready to seriously intervene, US politicians reprimanded the filibusters and attempted to enforce the Neutrality Laws. These efforts, though, were often thwarted by local politicians, law enforcement officers, judges and juries who regarded the southern expansionism the filibusters stood for as the logic consequence of what they perceived as the "traditional" settlers' push eastwards. At a time when the geographical boundaries of the US nation state were redrawn every few years by incorporation of new territory and the forced displacement of native Americans, the majority of the US society found it understandable that expansionism should also move southward. As Kirsten Silva Gruesz has pointed out, such a "traslatio imperii" does not only constitute a movement of the physical borders of an empire as well as a diachronic succession of rulers, but also necessitates a "translation of its imperial language."[12] Although the United States at the mid-nineteenth century cannot be regarded as a typical imperial nation state, movements like the filibusters (and their wide support network that reached into high echelons of the political structure) showed the readiness of significant parts of the population to not only expand into the supposedly "empty wilderness" on the North American continent, but also to engage with independent and internationally recognized nation states like Mexico, Nicaragua or Cuba, which formed part of the Spanish empire. As mentioned, such endeavors moved in tandem with a "translation" of the expansionist lingo that had legitimated the drive eastward. Such a translation built on the use of well-known metaphors, an update of old stereotypes and the appropriation and restructuring of linguistic devices to relate the filibusters' actions to their audience, to make "visible" the hitherto unknown Nicaraguan society and to incorporate both the potentially alien isthmian landscape and the people living in Central America into a familiar narrative of imperial domination.

Antebellum America newspapers (daily, weekly, or monthly) played a crucial part in these "translations." In the already highly diverse media landscape of antebellum America, with party organs, local papers, early examples of yellow journalism, academic periodicals and many forms in-between, news on filibustering activities usually provided a spike in sales. The aim for most expansionist US media consisted in tying the Central American landscape to the United States so that it would seem "natural" to annex it while incorporating its people into a recognizable matrix of race relations constituted the primary focus, but for a couple of publica-

tions, this pattern was complicated by its international audience, which included—or even primarily consisted of—Central or Latin Americans. It is again Kirsten Silva Gruesz who reminds us in her seminal study *Ambassadors of Culture* that the US publishing boom that began in the 1840s not only created "distinct 'cultures of letters' located in the urban publishing centers of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago,"[13] but also included editors in minor cities writing in languages other than English, and having their eyes set on readers in Europe, Canada, Latin America, or the Caribbean basin.[14] For Spanish-language periodicals, New York City and especially New Orleans established themselves as publishing hubs, with the latter city boasting "at least twenty-three periodicals in Spanish […], making it the undisputed capital of Hispanophone print production."[15] The major port town in Louisiana with its manifold political and commercial connections to the circum-Caribbean area was a logical center of the Spanish-language publication industry, while New York City became a secondary basis with its diaspora of Cuban freedom fighters. All these men (and occasionally women) wrote in newspapers that catered either to the emerging Latin circles in the United States or for audiences directly in their home countries: Cuba, Mexico, Honduras and Nicaragua. That these editors and writers, often elite go-betweens between an Anglophone US culture and the Hispanophone culture of their native countries, approached the topic of expansionism and filibusterism in a different way, might seem a foregone conclusion.[16] Yet, as this study argues, we encounter a surprisingly supportive stance in many of their articles. The editors' embeddedness into transnational elite circles meant that their view on the subject was framed by notions of racism, economic liberalism and national aggrandizement—so much so that the filibusters were regarded as harbingers of progress.

A Filibuster Press? The Transnational Influence of *El Nicaraguense*

In the border-crossing network of all these periodicals, this study puts one publication into the spotlight that has hitherto been gravely overlooked: *El Nicaraguense*, the newspaper the filibusters themselves churned out from Nicaragua from October 20, 1855 to November 22, 1856.[17] It was published every Saturday, except for three occasions (bringing up the number to a total of 55 issues), and usually contained between four and eight pages. This meager size and its price of two dimes per copy—10

times the regular price New York papers charged—would seem to have disqualified this publication from any wider circulation.[18] Yet, as this study shows, due to the filibusters' tight connection with editors in New York and San Francisco (the two US ports connected by steamship lines to Nicaragua's Atlantic and Pacific seaboard), *El Nicaraguense* quickly outgrew its limitations and became a "paper of record" for anybody interested in the filibusters' progress in Central America. That it was one of the few English-language papers with reports from the isthmus also furthered its appeal on a US market which had, as mentioned, several foreign-language titles but little inclination to translate from one language into another. At a time when the journalistic field had not fully fleshed out its professional techniques and working standards yet, it was commonplace for editors to copy articles from other sources, sometimes without indicating its origin. The major source for such articles was *El Nicaraguense*, a fact many historians have been unaware of. The wide availability of the filibuster paper in the crucial print centers at the US East and West coasts also testifies to the filibusters' professional distribution scheme, which involved private newsagents, sympathetic travelers and direct mailing of the paper to influential power-brokers in the United States. The filibusters also excelled in presenting their own flock as correspondents to US papers, thus inserting their viewpoints into periodicals from the *New York Daily Times* (the antecedent of today's *New York Times*) to the *New Orleans Picayune*. Furthermore, when they controlled Granada, the major Nicaraguan city as well as Rivas, the transportation hub for US passengers crossing the isthmus, they were able to present visiting correspondents of other papers with a carefully crafted charade of a successful "Americanization" program that was enthusiastically embraced by the local population. Travel limitations and constant vigilance made sure that critical correspondents had a hard time reporting dissatisfaction—although critical voices were scarce, as many visitors already harbored strongly expansionist and pro-filibuster feelings. That some of the reporters switched sides and stayed to fight at the filibusters' side thus comes as no surprise. While the language barrier between Spanish- and English-language periodicals with news about Nicaragua worked to the *Nicaraguense's* advantage in the United States, Spanish-speaking Latin America preferred other sources of information. Yet, even those Honduran, Costa Rican or Mexican editors who eschewed the openly partisan filibuster mouthpiece nevertheless read its biased articles grudgingly because of its influence in the United States. Furthermore, they knew that prior to the split between Walker and the

filibusters on one side, and Patricio Rivas and the Nicaraguan Liberals on the other, *El Nicaraguense* served as the official organ of the joint Nicaraguan government; and even after the filibusters and their erstwhile allies had parted ways, the *Nicaraguense* was skimmed to counter its most outrageous pieces of propaganda in their domestic media. This eagerness to engage the filibusters on the medial front, as well as the fact that *El Nicaraguense* seems to have found its way to various Latin American editors in spite of the conflictual situation on the ground shows the interconnectedness between the literate elites on the isthmus and beyond. To track such networks—of both actors and articles—is a task which scholars have begun before, but, at least with regard to the filibusters, has so far been hampered by almost exclusive attention to national contexts. Especially on the US American side, historians such as Robert May have researched networks that span diachronic continuities from the US–Mexican War via various filibuster expeditions to the US Civil War, but have failed to consider transnational connections. In addition, there exists a divide between researchers interested in personal networks, and researchers investigating the textual dimension of the filibuster expeditions. The present analysis attempts to bridge this gap by considering the material level of the exchanges as well as the textual ones. I try to show the influence the filibusters commanded with their strategic tool, the *Nicaraguense*, and delineate how this influence did not stop with the end of the expansionist designs on Central America in 1861, when the US War of Secession commenced. Rather, the filibusters and their tight integration into the US journalistic field allowed for an uncanny afterlife of the texts and images they had produced.

Although dominant, expansionist viewpoints did not go completely uncontested. Opposition to US imperialist designs in general and the filibuster maneuvers in particular came from different quarters—not exclusively from the attacked populations on the isthmus. US Americans, too objected to filibustering on ethical, ethnic, religious, political, or juridical grounds, and expressed their discomfort in newspaper articles. This study discusses the sundry notches of dissent in the imperialist discourse into which the filibusters inscribed themselves. Especially gender and masculinity models became bones of contention the filibusters attempted to integrate by projecting a twofold image of virility in the ranks and civility in the 'officership' of their private army.

Reading Representations: Archives, Images and Texts

As mentioned, this study discusses the imbrications of the medial representations concerning the filibuster expedition to Nicaragua from October 1855 to May 1857. Although the time slot seems quite manageable, the enormous output of print material in the United States at the time makes an attempt at an all-encompassing analysis illusionary. The study's transnational vantage point further widens the scope of possible inclusions, and so its corpus necessarily has to be a selection from a far vaster amount of material. This selection was made after a review of archives in Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Honduras put me on the scent of the transnational connections between several newspapers and articles. Due to the material connections via steamship routes as well as personal connections by different editors, a handful of newspapers emerged as potential candidates for this study. The *New York Daily Times*, founded only four years before the filibusters set foot on Nicaraguan soil, became an important paper on the US East coast for information on William Walker and his followers. This paper was chosen because in its editorial line it veered between pro- and anti-filibuster stances, and its policy to reprint a substantial amount of reports from Nicaragua (often from *El Nicaraguense*) made it possible to trace the routes of articles.[19] Another daily paper that held a prominent role in the circulation of information as well as in commenting on the filibusters was the *New Orleans Picayune*, due to its home town's connection with the Caribbean region. I am aware that in the United States alone, I could have picked several other daily newspapers (and some others such as the San Francisco-based *Alta California* appear in these pages), but that would have doubled or tripled the dimension of this study. Rather, I chose to add a quite different publication to the list of close readings: *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, a so-called story paper, established in 1852. These papers featured little to no political analysis but, similar to a literary magazine, focused on illustrated storytelling, with the distinction that the literary quality of the stories told was often secondary. The story papers lived off travel narratives, adventure tales, crimes-of-the-cities stories and other content that would later be found in dime novels or boys' pulp magazines. Indeed, story papers are regarded as early forerunners and competitors to dime novels which themselves began to be published in the late nineteenth century, and in their heyday enjoyed much

the same success as their successors.[20] Media historian Ronald Zboray sees the reasons for the decline of this hybrid between newspaper and magazine in the 1870s in the "increasing storytelling skills of news reporters, along with the growing popular participation in the new time- and event-consciousness."[21] *Frank Leslie's* was expansionist and pro-filibuster from the beginning, but it leaned even more toward Walker's side when the paper struck a deal with some filibusters to report as correspondents from Nicaragua. The format of the story paper allowed for longer descriptions of the filibusters themselves, their deeds, the Nicaraguans and the social contexts these were embedded in, supplementing the often short reports featured in daily newspapers. The most important reason for the inclusion of *Frank Leslie's*, though is the enormous influence it had on the visual representation of the filibusters: As one of the few widely available publications to feature visual material on contemporary affairs, the paper created images that would be used over and over again throughout the years; and not only by US Americans but—due to the lack of alternatives—by Central Americans as well.[22] Therefore, *Frank Leslie's* is not only interesting for the insertion of texts and images created directly by filibusters, but also because its (partisan) visual material still influences our views when it comes to the filibusters.

On the Nicaraguan side, the study zooms in on a variety of short-lived publications on the eve of the filibuster expedition, with a special focus on the mouthpieces of the two dominant political groups: *El Defensor del Orden* (established in May 1854 and ceased in September 1855) and *El Telégrafo Septentrional* (possibly from November 1856 to June 1857) as the papers of the Conservatives; and the *Parte Oficial* (established in October 1854 and later changed to *Boletín de Noticias*) as the organ of the Liberals. When Patricio Rivas and the Liberals broke with the filibusters, they set up another short-lived paper called the *Boletín Oficial* in their stronghold León, which was discontinued when the Nicaraguans formed a shared government between Liberals and Conservatives after the filibusters' ouster.

As major Nicaraguan politicians in the "republic of letters" often took the role of newspaper editors as well, it comes as no surprise that the aforementioned papers include contributions by the Liberals Francisco Castellón (President of Nicaragua from 1854 to 1855) and the Nicaraguan intellectuals and Liberal ministers Buenventura Selva, Hermenogildo Zepeda and Francisco Díaz Zapata. On the Conservative side, politicians-cum-editors (or vice versa) include Mateo Mayorga, Sebastián Salinas

and Fruto Chamorro; the latter had been editor of the influential *Mentor Nicaraguense* in the 1840s before becoming President in 1853.

The most interesting paper included in this study is, arguably, *El Nicaraguense*, the filibuster publication. Printed in Granada and with an intended double readership in the United States as well as Central America, this bilingual publication defies easy categorization. *El Nicaraguense* was initially composed of two pages, quickly growing to four (at occasions reaching up to eight), thus being from the start more voluminous than Nicaraguan papers.[23] Its English-language editors consisted of various members of Walker's forces: For the first two numbers Joseph R. Malè and George Cook signed responsible, the latter being replaced by Charles T. Cutler from numbers three through fourteen. When Cutler died of illness, John Tabor took over as the sole responsible editor from issue number 17 to 22, with Malè being in the United States at that time. When Malè returned, the two figured as publishers together until number 50, when Tabor was wounded in battle, and Malè was joined by Owen Duffy until the paper folded. All these men were picked directly by William Walker, who—although he never figured as an editor—was closely involved in the paper's production.[24] *El Nicaraguense* might be considered two periodicals rolled into one: The main part was in English, with adventurous and ever optimistic articles depicting the supposed victories of the filibusters, the progress achieved in "civilizing" the isthmian people, the dependency of the Nicaraguans on Anglo-Saxons to instill vigor into their "decaying race," and so on. This part, edited by a permanent staff of editors and at least four typesetters, was clearly intended to be read by the US American public and induce young men to volunteer for Walker's filibuster army. It also followed US American conventions of layout and content, with a mix of international news items, obituaries, gossip, jokes, travelistic works on Nicaragua and advertisements. These ads were limited to some shops in Granada as well as news agents and express transport lines connecting the isthmus with the United States; in short, the few locations and items that the filibusters and their small group of supporters in Nicaragua deemed interesting for the rank-and-file.

The Spanish section of the filibuster paper, started in issue number two, seemed to be a different type of newspaper altogether: Edited by Spanish-speaking Cuban filibusters—or maybe only one filibuster—it inscribed itself into the tradition of Nicaraguan state organs, reproducing proclamations by the Rivas (and later Walker) administration, copying correspondence with other heads of states and announcing official

events, army promotions, and so on. It lacked the manpower of the English section, which meant that translations from English to Spanish were scarce, and the focus of this section was geared toward domestic Nicaraguan politics. No advertisements, no adventure stories boasting of imaginary victories, no claims of the importance towards of the filibuster influx for national progress: The Spanish part of *El Nicaraguense* was clearly disconnected from the parallel reality of the Anglo-American filibusters. Nevertheless, these different realities (and subsequent representations) were not only linked by their spatial proximity on the pages of the *Nicaraguense*, but also created productive frictions for those able to read the two together, as some bilingual editors in the United States (or on way points along the Transit route) and certainly many Central American editors could.

This newspaper, with all its internal contradictions and its border- and culture-crossing trajectories was long dismissed by historians as a purely propagandistic tool for William Walker and his private army. Although it is certainly true that the *Nicaraguense* served this propagandistic function, a close reading of selected articles from the paper can reveal how the filibusters—quite successfully—inscribed their publication into a wider transnational discourse of progress, civilization, masculinity and white supremacy that was accepted both in North and Central America. To this end, I return to selected articles more than once in my close readings throughout this study, not so much because some articles are pivotal as such but because a close reading can connect discursive devices—metaphors or lines of argument, say—with others in US or Central American publications. This becomes especially clear on the visual level: As the incorporation of a lot of *Frank Leslie's* images would certainly have proven repetitive, I instead focus on one particular issue—that of April 19, 1856—and examine the visual language that various images of that issue create.

It should be noted, though, that this study with its main thrust toward a US–Nicaraguan comparison can only provide a first approximation to a real transnational analysis of this fascinating periodical. To take the filibuster publication seriously also helps to identify the source of many news items that found their way into respectable US periodicals and have long been used in other contexts without the necessary critical distance by historians.

A word or two are necessary on the archival situation of these sources: Research into early Nicaraguan newspapers remains a desidera-

tum. This is due to the extremely limited amount of newspapers that has survived to this day. A number of (mostly Nicaraguan) historians have analyzed their country's publications from the 1870s (the "liberal period") onward, but only very few have ventured further back in history. The reason might be that the national historiography depicts the 1820–1860s as a "dark period" in which continued armed hostilities made any national progress (and a national press) impossible, while the 1870s saw the limited emergence of a bourgeois middle class and with it the blooming of several newspapers, magazines and scientific journals. The historian Jorge Eduardo Arellano provided one of the major overviews of pre-1870 Nicaraguan newspapers with his *Catálogo de Periódicos y Revistas de Nicaragua (1830–1930)*, published in 1992 and still the starting point for all serious research on this subject. His compilation includes findings by all major historians from the 1950s onwards, such as Gustavo Alemán Bolaños, Carlos Cuadra Pasos, Mauricio Pallais Lacayo, Andrés Vega Bolaños, Franco Cerutti and Carlos Meléndez Chaverri. Carlos Meléndez Chaverri, especially, has published extensively on Nicaraguan journalism, and one of his major overview articles ("Fichero del periodismo antiguo de Nicaragua"), which was published in the *Revista Conservadora del Pensamiento Centroamericano* (issue no. 116, May 1970), constitutes a vital source for tracking down early Nicaraguan newspapers. Arellano's catalog, Meléndez Chaverri's article and the corresponding Nicaraguan papers can be found in the library of the Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua and Centroamérica (IHNCA) at the Universidad Centroamericana, the Universidad Nacional Autónoma and the Banco Central de Nicaragua, all located in Nicaragua's capital Managua.

El Nicaraguense, although being printed in Nicaragua, was brought to the United States on a large scale and today copies survive in various libraries, with major stacks at the university libraries of Tulane (Louisiana), Berkeley (California), as well as the Louisville Free Public Library (Kentucky). For decades, the Nicaraguan filibuster enthusiast Alejandro Bolaños Geyer gathered photocopies of all remaining issues in the IHNCA in Managua, which ironically means that the filibusters' newspaper is now far more easily available than other Nicaraguan papers of the period. Today, the *Fondo Alejandro Bolaños Geyer* at the IHNCA is one of the most important collections one can consult for investigations on the filibusters in Nicaragua. In 1998, Bolaños Geyer privately

published a facsimile edition of *El Nicaraguense*, and also served as the editor of the bilingual reprint of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, published in 1976 by the Banco de América.

Chapter Overview

Chapter Two of this study, Conceptualizing the Filibuster(o)s, delineates the transnational contexts which made it possible for the filibusters to be invited to Nicaragua and wreck havoc there. While previous studies have set their eyes exclusively on one nation state—either the United States or Nicaragua—this chapter aims at thinking together the historical situations in the two countries. With this emphasis on border-crossing entanglements, Chapter Two complicates monocausal explanations for the emergence of the filibuster phenomenon and sheds light on the multiple agents involved in constructing the conditions necessary for Walker and his men to be (temporarily) successful. The following chapter, The Nicaraguan Press and *El Nicaraguense*, is dedicated to the material preconditions that made transnational textual journeys possible. It commences with an analysis of the Nicaraguan press system immediately prior to the filibusters' arrival and then traces the impact the new filibuster publication *El Nicaraguense* had on this system. It investigates routes and agents that stood for a transnational orientation of the Nicaraguan news business and pays special attention to shifts in these "information highways" to and from the isthmian country. As the main point of reference of this study is always the United States, this chapter also discusses the interconnections as well as divergences between Anglo-American models of the newspaper trade and their Nicaraguan counterparts. Chapter Four, Discursive Voyages between the United States and Nicaragua, turns toward the actual texts that traveled between Nicaragua and the United States and investigates which discursive devices were featured in filibuster, US-American and Central American publications alike, and which productive misunderstandings were created when these different national discourses came into play. This chapter shows the central role of travelistic works for the acceptance of US expansionism in general and the filibuster expedition in particular, identifies tropes—such as the construction of Central America as a new frontier, or the equation of Nicaraguan history with a Mediterranean golden past—and discusses the transnational ideological-discursive concepts that provided the most important divergences between the filibusters and the Nicaraguan elite, namely the concepts of masculinities and the intricacies of racism. The fifth

chapter, finally, leaves the nineteenth century proper and investigates the enduring influence of the filibuster representations until the twenty-first century, again in a comparative perspective. Bringing into conjuncture processes of nation-building in the late nineteenth century and collective memories (and oblivions) about the filibuster expedition in both North and Central America complicates nationalist meta-narratives and lacunae that see the agency for this incident exclusively with Anglo-Americans. This examination shows how national narratives of defense and aggrandizement have bestowed quasi-demonic status on William Walker—as the prototypical filibuster—in Nicaragua, while the anti-filibuster campaign has defied easy integration into nationalist narratives in Central America, due to the Nicaraguan elites' initial involvement with the filibusters, Costa Rican unease with their main national protagonist Juan Rafael Mora, and Honduran fixation on Francisco Morazán in their efforts of nation-building. In the United States, the chapter argues, the filibusters quickly changed from historical actors into fictional characters and resurfaced at different occasions, always as comments on renewed US imperial ambitions.

Notes

1. The following account is based on observations made during a research trip in November 2010.
2. John Carlos Rowe, *The New American Studies*, Critical American Studies Series (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), xv.
3. Andrew Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South*, America in the World (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 249.
4. Edward W. Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*, The 1993 Reith Lectures (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994), http://www.scribd.com/doc/20909749/Edward-Said-Representations-of-the-Intellectual
5. These are the ones I am aware of, many of which formed the basis for this study. There surely are sundry others in countries and languages I am oblivious to.
6. José David Saldívar, *Trans-Americanity. Subaltern Modernities, Global Coloniality, and the Cultures of Greater Mexico*, New Americanists (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012); Aims McGuinness, *Path of Empire. Panama and the California Gold Rush*, The United States in the World (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 2008); Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop. Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism*, (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006); Michel Gobat,

Confronting the American Dream. Nicaragua Under U.S. Imperial Rule (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Gretchen Murphy, *Hemispheric Imaginings. The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire*, New Americanists (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

7. Anna Brickhouse, *Transamerican Literary Relations and Nineteenth-Century Public Sphere*, Cambridge Studies in American Literature and Culture 145 (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 16.
8. Frank Kelleter, "Transnationalism: The American Challenge," *Review of International American Studies (RIAS)* 2, no. 3 (2007): 30.
9. The mere wording of this incident is intricate: Calling it an invasion, one would ignore the fact that the filibusters were originally invited into the country and integrated into the ranks of the nominal army on their arrival. Other terms like expedition have to be used with care as well, as they situate the filibusters into a context of scholarly research expeditions so ubiquitous in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thus, I opted to mainly employ the term filibuster presence or filibuster takeover.
10. The official filibuster flag featured the motto: "Five or none."
11. This last attempt was directed against Honduras because the government wanted to incorporate the Caribbean island of Roatán into the national sovereignty, after Great Britain had ceased its control over the island. White English settlers on the island feared that this would strip them of their special status and would place them under the thumb of a black majority. Thus, similar to the Nicaraguan expedition, they invited Walker and whatever men he could muster to help them in their projected armed struggle against the Honduran nation. Walker, however, thought that, once in his possession, Roatán could serve as a base to jumpstart yet another attempt at recapturing Nicaragua. When he could not get a hold on Roatán because authorities had been warned in advance, he opted to attack the fort in Trujillo, the nearest port on the Caribbean coast. He was able to occupy the fort, but then Honduran troops arrived in tandem with British navy forces; they besieged the fort until Walker and his remaining filibusters gave up. All of them were extradited to the United States; all but two: Anthony Rudler, second in command, was held in prison for some weeks, and Walker, after receiving a military trial in which he defended himself, was sentenced to death by firing squad for illegally attacking Honduran territory.
12. Kirsten Silva Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture. The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*, Translation Transnation (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), 2.
13. Ibid., 16.

14. Brickhouse, *Transamerican Literary Relations and Nineteenth-Century Public Sphere*.
15. Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture. The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*, 111.
16. A short note on the term "elite," which I use in various instances throughout this study: I am well aware that sociologists and political scientists (among others) differentiate between shifting forms of elite groups, which depend on situational configurations of different templates of power. In a complex mixture of age, gender, economic prowess, political connections, education, ethnicity, social networks and what Pierre Bourdieu has called *habitus*, "the elite" is a shifting changeling. Yet, as I do not intend to write a study on elites, suffice it to say that throughout this text I mean a small group of people who have accumulated disproportionate power in different areas, like politics or economics. With "disproportionate" I do not pass a moral judgment but rather point to the inequality between the small number of this group and the quantity of influence they command. Throughout this study, I mostly refer to "Nicaraguan elites," by which I mean a small number of men who often had considerable economic power as *latifundistas*, commanded political power by serving in official political functions (like diplomats), could make their opinions heard publicly through their jobs as newspaper editors or contributors as well as possessing influential national and international connections with other members of such groups. It is especially this interconnection between different social functions that qualified these men for the term "elite." On the connections between Latin American and European, especially French, elites, see Robert D Aguirre, *Informal Empire: Mexico and Central America in Victorian Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Alejandra Bottinelli, "Del Progreso Al Orden. Letrados Y Poder En El Origen De Los Estados-Nación, En El Sur Americano," *Forum for Inter-American Research* 5, no. 3 (n.d.) and Xabier Lamikiz, *Trade and Trust in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World. Spanish Merchants and Their Overseas Networks*, Studies in History (London: Royal Historical Society [u.a.], 2010); on the literary and intellectual connections within the "republic of letters" Richard H. Brodhead, *Cultures of Letters. Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. M.B. Debevoise, Convergences (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); François-Xavier Guerra and Annick Lempérière, *Los Espacios Públicos en Iberoamérica. Ambigüedades y Problemas; Siglos XVIII–XIX*, Sección de Obras de Historia (México, D.F.: Centro Francés de Estudios Mexicanos y Centroamericanos, 1998); for a specific view on

the elite relations between Nicaragua and the United States, Gobat, *Confronting the American Dream. Nicaragua under U.S. Imperial Rule.*

17. The paper's name was constantly spelled *Nicaraguense*, that is without the correct trema on the letter u (Spanish: *Nicaragüense*). It is unclear whether that was a deliberate choice (an "Anglicization" of the proper Spanish term) or due to a mechanical deficiency, for example, by a missing printing type. The latter seems more probable, given the fact that the paper was printed on the presses the filibusters encountered in Granada after invading the city.
18. *El Nicaraguense* also offered an annual subscription for US$8, but no reports exist if any individual person or newsagents had ever used this service.
19. In 1856, on the height of the filibuster craze, the *Times* ran 364 articles on filibuster actions (in the United States or Central America) or Nicaraguan affairs connected with Walker and his group. This means that between its morning and late edition, it carried one article on this topic per day.
20. This historical contextualization of story papers is relevant for the United States alone. In Great Britain, the term points to children's (specifically boys') magazines like *Boy's Own Paper*, and enjoyed a much longer popularity. Although similar in their focus on adventure stories, the political, educational and class issues that governed the tradition of story papers in Great Britain make an equation with the US concept troublesome.
21. Ronald J. Zboray, *A Fictive People. Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 128.
22. The permanent exhibition at the Fort Santa Bárbara in Trujillo, which was mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, features a slot on the filibusters' attack on the premises, and the two sketches that accompany the curator's text on the panels are both taken from *Frank Leslie's.*
23. In total, the *Nicaraguense* contained more than 4000 articles written by its staff, 450 official documents, and several thousand copied news items in the two years of the paper's existence, see Alejandro Bolaños Geyer, ed., *El Nicaraguense, 1855–1856. Edición Facsimilar Bilingüe Con Su Guía = Bilingual Facsimile Edition with a Guide* (St. Charles Mo.: A. Bolaños Geyer, 1998: xviii).
24. Many scholars have argued that Walker, an ex-newspaper editor himself, was the only driving force behind the paper. Without question Walker held a dominating influence, and the various editors were clearly obliged to obey his very orders, as all of them were soldiers on his payroll. Yet, with two to four persons regularly working on the paper, and with Walker often away from Granada, the paper seems to have been more of a collaborative enterprise. And with his limited command of Spanish, Walker could not decisively influence the composition of the Spanish part of the paper.

CHAPTER 2

Conceptualizing the Filibuster(o)s

In the 1904 novel *Cabbages and Kings* by William Sidney Porter—better known under his *nom de plume* O. Henry—Clancy, one of the colorful characters of the fictitious Central American republic of Anchuria reminiscences about the time when he tried his hand at "filibustering:" On a New Orleans dock Clancy accidentally stumbled over boxes of guns being loaded onto a ship bound for Guatemala, and imagined that they might form part of a filibustering plot. Enthusiastically, he offered his services as a fellow freedom fighter to the person in charge. As it turned out, the weapons were destined for the supervision of railway workers, who had to labor in slave-like conditions to construct a transisthmian railway. For some time Clancy was stuck in the hellish construction work but eventually managed to escape and take revenge on his tormentor. The remembrance of this adventure, which he started so light-heartedly, is brought back to Clancy when observing the nice weather on a typical Anchurian evening. He concludes his reminiscences with the affectionate remark that "'tis elegant weather for filibusterin'."[1]

With his typical irony, O. Henry depicts filibustering as an enterprise started by adventurous, light-hearted and good-natured US youngsters without much contemplation, something well-meaning Americans became embroiled in but nothing they were responsible for. In a historical-critical perspective, this hardly holds true. Stories such as O. Henry's, written roughly half a century after the filibusters' heydays, perpetuate simple monocausal histories and trajectories. Unfortunately, the same

© The Author(s) 2016

A. Beer, *A Transnational Analysis of Representations of the US Filibusters in Nicaragua, 1855-1857*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-28352-4_2

monocausality persists in quite a few academic studies on the topic. Yet, the US mania of filibustering at the mid-nineteenth century was a complex phenomenon that converged various discourses and actors, which themselves were deeply entangled in the social and (geo-)political situation of the antebellum US. The following paragraphs attempt to delineate these discourses and situations, not to narrow down the myriad reasons for filibustering to one single, overarching explanation, but to analyze how it could happen that William Walker and his men, supported by a cast of many, set sails to Nicaragua in 1855 without resorting simply to meteorological explanations of "elegant weather."

Filibusters and Filibusteros: Transnational Etymological Trajectories

Today, the Anglophone term 'filibuster' designates obstructionist tactics in parliaments in which the voting process is being delayed indefinitively by the uninterrupted speech of parliamentarians. Yet, in the nineteenth century (and still at the beginning of the twentieth, as O. Henry's use of the word exemplifies), the word filibuster carried a far different meaning. Filibusters, according to the historian Robert May, were "persons who, lacking either the explicit or implicit consent of their own governments, planned, abetted or participated in private military invasions or intended invasions of foreign nations or dependencies with which their own countries were at peace."[2] Filibusters were men who tried to invade countries by their own initiative, or supported such invasions by raising funds or supplies. In many instances, they acted as affiliates of Caribbean or Central American revolutionaries but some were also active without local connections.

The term "filibustering" was used in the US from 1850 or 1851 onwards until the beginning of the US Civil War. Although it is always difficult to pinpoint the inception of a socio-cultural phenomenon such as filibustering, Narciso López and attempts to wrest Cuba from Spanish rule must surely be seen as a landmark influence.[3] Even if filibustering events had occurred earlier in US history,[4] after López' invasions and his death—much eulogized in the US expansionist press—expeditions explicitly labeled "filibusters" mushroomed, with veterans of López's campaigns serving as recruiters or leading officers in various other filibustering attempts.

Due to these personal continuities, the filibusters established tight inner-group links as well as circles that acted on a national scale. Robert May even calls them an "antebellum American subculture."[5] Víctor Hugo Acuña Ortega assists this notion, arguing that filibustering was not about "some isolated adventurers, but rather [constituted] a project of certain US sectors and actors within the context of an expansionist fever"[6]; Amy Greenberg also employs metaphors of illness when labeling filibustering "a chronic condition in the years between the Mexican and [US] Civil War,"[7] calling it "a fever for Central America."[8]

Although these metaphors tend to naturalize a social process, they have a point: The sheer number of filibustering expeditions was astonishing. In the 1850s it was "common for two or more US filibustering expeditions to be in some stage of preparation or in actual progress."[9] Target destinations to which expeditions were planned or fitted out included Mexico,[10] Cuba, Ecuador, Venezuela, Peru, Dominica, Haiti and Puerto Rico, yet many of these invasions never left the US, either due to a lack of finances or to interference from US authorities. Although active military participation remained marginal in comparison with the overall US population,[11] support networks were quite extensive, and the number of ideological supporters soared. Many people were fascinated by the filibusters, donated money, supported them in public appearances or when they had to appear in court. Whenever a ship with filibusters left the port of San Francisco, New Orleans or New York (cities that had blossomed into veritable filibuster hot spots), hundreds of onlookers manned the quays and cheered them off.[12]

In the beginning US Americans struggled to describe the new phenomenon, shifting between the terms 'settlers', 'revolutionaries', 'patriots' and 'freedom fighters', or the negative 'pirates' or 'freebooters', with the ambiguous 'adventurers' being most widely used. These terms already indicate the general semantic fields in which the filibusters were situated: 'Settlers' connected their endeavors with the US frontier, likening the conquest of foreign countries with the continental expansion westward. 'Patriots', 'freedom fighters' and 'revolutionaries' all equated the activities of the filibusters with the US War of Independence. Filibuster supporters argued that although many of the countries they had set their eyes on had already gained their formal independence, they still remained under the thumb of a backward, colonial elite, and thus needed another revolution to free them completely. 'Pirates' and 'freebooters', on the other hand,

showed that critical US Americans equaled the filibusters' actions with illegal activities, piracy and looting, with the distinction that the booty was not captured on the high seas but on land. 'Adventurers', finally, was the most ambiguous term: For supporters of filibusterism, 'adventurers' meant that these were young men willing and able to take risks and thus advance both personal and national heroic goals. Additionally, this term signaled that their actions were not dead serious, but mainly boy's follies. This wording facilitated the rendering of filibuster missions as adventure tales, which foreshadowed the filibusters' incorporation into fictional literature. For opponents of filibusterism, though, 'adventurers' were despised exactly because they acted irresponsibly, immature and brought danger to themselves and others—in stark contrast to the patriot or the citizen soldier.

The term 'adventurer' remained in use throughout the filibuster heydays, side by side with the newly coined 'filibuster', which derived from either the Spanish *filibustero* or the French *flibustier*. Starting in the early 1850s, the word rapidly gained currency, and was not only used as a noun, but also frequently as a verb and adjective. The contexts in which it occurred also widened disproportionally, showing that the word was *en vogue* in the US, becoming almost synonymous with territorial expansion. Various politicians arguing for expansion were charged with being filibusters or having 'filibuster designs'. Of course, most of them strongly protested against such associations—as indeed did most filibusters themselves. 'Filibuster' gradually acquired such a negative connotation that most filibuster supporters rejected the term outright.

In Spanish, the term *filibustero* had been in use long before the nineteenth century. Some sources trace it to the late sixteenth century when the Spanish empire used it to refer to land-based plunderers and sea-based pirates roaming their Caribbean settlements. Others, especially Anglophone American dictionaries, establish the Dutch word *vrijbueter* as the original source of the term, which was then Hispanicized. In both cases, it designated essentially pirates, buccaneers or freebooters attacking civilian settlements or company outposts in the Caribbean. These first *filibusteros* constituted a severe challenge to the early colonial powers' claim to the New World[13] because "having been declared enemies by the Spanish colonial authorities, the buccaneers ended up united."[14] This cooperation was successful in attacking ships and harbors, and often evaded colonial authorities. It should be noted that already these *filibusteros* were a motley crew of various nationalities, a truly multinational organization, dominated

by runaways from Great Britain, Spain and France.[15] The *filibusteros* never acquired a romantic status akin to English privateers like Henry Morgan: First, because they operated outside of any legal framework (having no letters of marque like privateers, for example), and second, because the colonists of Hispanic America experienced their raids first hand, unlike the English, who delighted in tales of buccaneers active in faraway waters.[16]

Although from at least the end of the seventeenth century piracy became a minor issue for the Spanish colonial administration,[17] the word *filibustero* had gained widespread currency, and remained in use throughout the Spanish-speaking colonies as a synonym for pirates. Thus, when US citizens started to illegally attack (ex-)Spanish territories, the Latin Americans had an already established concept and linguistic term which they could apply.[18] And in an act of transnational linguistic borrowing, Anglophone America picked it up to describe these apparently new actors.

To dwell so extensively on the semantic history of the term *filibustero/* filibuster seems appropriate, as it not only foreshadows its later oblivion and subsequent re-appropriation in the Anglophone world, but also outlines the semantic fields within which the discussions on filibusters were situated in the 1850s: a fight over the very definition of the activity undertaken by men like Narciso López or William Walker ensued. The connection with the negatively connoted pirate and freebooter lay at the heart of the discursive quarrels which were fought between filibusters' supporters and adversaries.[19]

During the 1850s, the US as a nation was still not clearly imagined by its citizens, its borders in constant flux and its people constantly on the move. It was a time of massive territorial expansion: the westward move continued, new territory was incorporated via purchase (Louisiana and Oregon), the rebellious insistence of its settlers (Texas) or war (Arizona, New Mexico, Utah etc. gained from the war with Mexico), with an enormous influx of gold miners streaming into California from 1848 onwards. This massive incorporation of new land meant that "the boundaries of the still new nation fluctuated dramatically in both fact and thought, so that for much of the nineteenth century no American would have been able to call to mind a clear picture of his or her nation."[20] US citizens at mid-century struggled to make sense of the rapidly changing world around them. Ronald Zboray estimates that "[p]opulation persistence rates for any number of towns or cities could be as low as 40% or 50% for but a decade. By 1860 more than a third of free Americans resided outside the state of their birth [...]."[21] Exploring and incorporating new territory was

regarded as a quintessential part of the 'pioneer nation' and, as noted above, this usually meant a confluence of legal and illegal practices.

The newly independent Latin American countries were viewed with immense interest by US citizens. In typical imperial fashion, they were considered earthly paradises, rich in minerals and fertile soil; yet, their inhabitants uncivilized barbarians. The prove of their lack of civilization was precisely their failure or ignorance (depending on the imperialist's viewpoint) to cultivate their land, to make (capitalistic) use of their god-given resources. Together with widespread anti-Catholic, anti-monarchic and thus ultimately anti-Spanish sentiments this resulted in the belief that these countries were in dire need of some civilized guidance to push their development forward. This also fit into the notion that the whole of the North American hemisphere was divinely bound to fall under the direct control and possession of the US, as Manifest Destiny stipulated. All these discourses created the preconditions for expansionist actions.

Furthermore, with increasing urbanization in the mid-nineteenth century, more and more young men entered a sphere which liberated them from parental oversight. Robert May notes that "Teeming port cities […] provided the anonymity that allowed young men from the country to discover filibustering opportunities without their parents' getting wind of their intentions."[22] Urbanization also influenced a change in national attitude and identity, as Slotkin points out: The vision of a new, an industrial frontier, required "a redefinition of the character of pioneering, in which the operative metaphors are not agrarian but military and industrial."[23] The bleak prospects in the cities[24] left many destitute and, consequently, easy prey for filibusters who promised land, gold, swift promotions or governmental offices. Filibusters played on sentiments that had already worked well in several waves of settlement toward the US west as Patricia Limerick observes: "The pattern [of overstated geographical riches] was common because resource rushes created a mood of such fevered optimism that trust came easily; people wanted so much to believe that their normal skepticism dropped away."[25]

Additionally, new waves of immigration from Europe—fleeing either famines as in the case of the Irish, general economic hardships or the conservative backlash of the European Spring of Nations after 1848—brought a considerable amount of young workers ashore that competed for jobs with US citizens. When feeling the increasing burden of such capitalist processes, dreams of personal aggrandizement via territorial expansion southward constituted one way of handling the situation, very much akin to what Michael Rogin has described for the North American West,

namely as establishing a "heroic American identity transcending the petty transactions of market self-interest."[26]

It is noteworthy that the reasons outlined above fit the ones specified by many historians for the US-Mexican War and the genocide against Native Americans, thus underlining the high dependency—in terms of personal continuity and ideological proliferation—of the filibusters on these two moments of US expansionism.[27]

Constructing Filibuster Histories

Profilibuster advocates mainly used two techniques to move the filibusters away from the smell of the odious Caribbean pirates. The first was to re–situate their activities in another semantic field, that of settlement, i.e. nonviolent Southern extension of the US settlement to the West. The second technique was to historically widen the term filibuster, inscribing it into earlier epochs and thus insinuating that it has been a common activity throughout human history. The usual connection was to recur to the conquests of Hernán Cortés and other Spanish conquistadors, but filibuster advocates also fell back on Napoleon as an example of filibustering: *Frank Leslie's* of December 29, 1855 urged its readers to reconsider their attitude towards Walker and his men by writing that

> It will no longer do to stigmatize the men who have brought about this extraordinary revolution [in Nicaragua], and who at present direct the affairs of Nicaragua, as adventurers and filibusters. Success at once transforms the outlaw into the hero, and General Walker occupies at present almost an analogous position to that of Louis Napoleon after he took forcible possession of the Imperial throne.[28]

The *New York Daily Times* praised Walker by comparing him to both Napoleon and Caesar: "General Walker undoubtedly possesses many of the qualities of a great conqueror […]. He has a truly Napoleonic method [and is] as audacious as Julius Cesar in carrying out his projects."[29] George Washington was also heavily relied on as a filibuster forerunner, as were the Italian Giuseppe Garibaldi[30] and the Marquis de Lafayette, of War of Independence fame. The *Nicaraguense* of November 10, 1855 was highly pleased to quote the following article: "News of the battle at La Virgin had reached New York early in October. On the 4th, the *Herald*, defining a new position for General Walker, couples his name with Lafayette, Kosciusko, Pulaski, Steuben, Byron and Slade. The word Fillibustero

[sic!] has now received a new definition."[31] The affiliation of filibusters with names like Garibaldi or Lafayette is not beyond reason, though: The Italian had been fighting in Brazil and Uruguay before returning to Italy, and the Frenchman—as well as Tadeusz Kościuszko—had not only participated in the US War of Independence, but also in uprisings in his European homeland. The general strategy obviously was to parallel the filibusters' actions with these struggles for national independence, thus modeling Walker and his kin as patriotic freedom fighters, and not booty-hungry pirates. With its mingling in proto-imperial designs on the American hemisphere, the term filibuster could thus be read as a "keyword of empire," according to Rodrigo Lazo.[32] Such linkages with historical personalities point to the muddy waters in which filibusters operated: conquest of foreign locales had indeed always occurred, but at the middle of the nineteenth century, a rudimentary framework of international treaties for the protection of independent nation states had been formed, with the European imperial powers as arbiters. Ahistorical links to Napoleon or Cesar did not help to brush over a fundamental fact: filibusters were first and foremost people who had broken the law.

An article in *El Nicaraguense*, written by "a soldier in company E" and published on January 26, 1856 under the title "Antiquity of Filibusterism" brings together an even more holistic view of current and historical parallels between filibusters, adventurers and nation-builders. It is thus worthy to be quoted at some length:

> Was it the native Saxon or the filibustering Norman who instilled vigor and energy into the English nation? England reposed in barbarism, scarcely known in Europe, until invaded by the Norman adventurers, led by such men as him who to-day leads their descendants in Central America. Was it the primitive occupier or the filibustering Corinthian who brought to the green shores of Erin, the arts and sciences? It was the adventurer. […] Who was the Athenian, the Roman, the Spartan? Adventurers, all. Who raised those imperishable structures of art in Italy and England, which will live to the end of time? Adventurers (or filibusters as they are now designated.) […] Who fought for and gained American independence but adventurers? What is France in Burgundy and Brittany but an adventurer. What is England in the East? An adventurer. So it is in the principle nations of Europe […]. I of Nicaragua am but a representative of the filibusters of the past.[33]

The filibuster writer of this text cleverly oscillates between "adventurer" and "filibuster," between past empires and present colonial powers and thus

widens the term to include almost any form of invasion ever carried out. For him this always yields positive results, in the fields of regeneration ("instilled vigor and energy"), artistic production ("those imperishable structures of art") and independence from subjugation ("gained American independence"). Such eulogies, which placed filibusters in a historical continuum of great statesmen and revolutionaries had emerged as standard fare in the publications of the Cuban filibuster circles in the US.[34]

All these attempts of re-labelling, of course, were limited to the United States; in Central America and the Caribbean, US invaders were called *aventureros* or, most commonly, simply *filibusteros*, clearly linking their endeavors to piratical actions. It is obvious why the filibuster advocates abhorred a term which placed them in a semantic field hovering around fighting and looting for money. The other reason why they attempted to distance themselves from any illegal, mercenary activity was to appease the US administration and US laws.

Filibusters and the US Administration

The stance of various US administrations towards the filibusters, and the filibusters' influence on official US policy has long been a point of debate. Scholars like Tom Ogorzalek, Robert May and others see filibustering in an intimate relationship with official government policies. Especially with regard to Cuba, Thomas McCormick regards successive US administrations to waver between "carrot-and-stick tactics:" repeated attempts to purchase the island from Spain as well as "clandestine support for armed, private mercenaries (filibustering expeditions) to destabilize Spanish rule."[35]

This notion is supported by the fact that during the presidency of Franklin Pierce (1853–1857) many ardent filibuster supporters gained influential government posts: William Marcy became Secretary of State, Caleb Cushing Attorney General, William Cazneau Special Agent to the Dominican Republic[36] and John L. O'Sullivan—who had coined the term Manifest Destiny and had been embroiled in preparations for a Cuban filibuster expedition in 1848—became Charge d'Affairs in (and later minister to) Portugal. Other figures who held political posts also became embroiled in filibuster plots, e.g. Henry A. Crabb, a former California State Senator, who intended to capture Sonora (in Northern Mexico) in 1857, but failed and was beheaded by the Mexicans as a warning to further filibusters.

Even before the 1850s, the equidistance between official US policy and unofficial filibustering was highlighted by the infamous 'Burr Conspiracy.'[37] The controversial Aaron Burr served as Vice President under Thomas Jefferson from 1801 to 1805 but had to leave office after falling into disgrace in the eyes of the US public by killing his political opponent Alexander Hamilton in a duel in 1804. While still serving as Vice President, Burr had established contacts with the British, supposedly offering them parts of newly acquired Louisiana in exchange for supporting a filibuster mission into Mexico. In 1805 Burr apparently changed his plans: He now contemplated to form a separate government within the territory of what is nowadays Louisiana and Texas, plus parts of Northern Mexico. The following year, already out of office, Burr continued to recruit volunteers for his filibuster expedition, but was ultimately arrested and tried for treason. He was acquitted due to insufficient evidence, but source material hints at Burr attempting a genuine filibuster expedition. With James Wilkinson, governor of the Louisiana Territory in 1805 and high-ranking US general, Burr had at least one important government figure in his closest circle. His biographer David Stewart also shows that Burr "drew support from two men who later became President (Andrew Jackson and William Henry Harrison), and from three US senators [and] a former Speaker of the House of Representatives."[38] Like Henry A. Crabb in 1857, Burr had lost his government post, but used his contacts to procure support for a plan that oscillated between legal and illegal measures, between the acknowledged policy of territorial aggrandizement and filibustering.

For his part the Nicaraguan filibuster leader William Walker, could count on the support of the Democratic Party, at least in the year 1856 when his enterprise seemed to stabilize the isthmus. During that year, whenever Walker or other prominent filibusters visited the US, they were invited to speak at political banquets or party conventions,[39] culminating in the official Democratic endorsement of Walker's enterprise.

The ease with which filibusters could sail from US ports without much interference from the US government has also led historians to conclude that filibusters could indirectly count on the administration's support. Tom Ogorzalek claims that filibusters "were sent mixed signals by the US government. Officially outlaws, in fact these adventurers were sometimes supported by the government, sometimes ignored, and only infrequently dealt with in strict accordance with existing statutes and treaties."[40] Men like Burr, López or Walker were only effectively ruled in when a larger conflict

with other colonial powers loomed, especially the British Empire: "When the British particularly complain or are involved, American authorities almost uniformly respond to these diplomatic queries, in order to avoid conflict with Britain."[41] If arrested and charged by a jury, filibusters were often acquitted or given only minor penalties, although the Neutrality Act made clear that it was forbidden for US citizens to attack foreign domains.[42] Janice Thomson, though, reminds us of the Neutrality Act's limitations: "These laws did not prevent a citizen from leaving the country to join a foreign army. Moreover, they did not forbid individuals from inducing others to go abroad in order to enlist in a foreign army, since this would have violated the free speech guarantees of the US Constitution."[43] Therefore, filibusters often relied on formal invitations of rebel groups from foreign countries to legalize their actions. This was an additional incentive to label filibusters 'freedom fighters' with the argument that they had joined an already existing struggle for independence. Without such endorsements, filibusters often pretended to be farmers en route to foreign shores, and only handed out weapons, uniforms and supplies when onboard a ship in international waters.

Additionally, many filibusters received direct or indirect support from local authorities: Local police did not enforce warrants, port officials did not search suspicious ships too eagerly for guns or ammunition. How many such lenient actions were a direct execution of federal orders is unknown; there exists no evidence that official US policymakers openly encouraged such behavior. Especially with regard to the enforcement of existing laws, Washington attempted its best to prohibit filibusters from leaving the US, regularly circulating information about supposed filibuster vessels to port authorities and also regularly sending law enforcement officers and the army after filibusters who had broken the law. Army officers with their reliance or federal paychecks and their professional ethos specifically regarded the filibusters as a serious nuisance. With this attitude, though, the army was a minority; a huge portion of the US population regarded the filibusters as heroes of expansionism.

This public sentiment was also reflected by the administration which regarded "expansion across the continent [as] the central fact of American politics."[44] Such an expansion was the logical consequence of the Jacksonian ideal of democracy centered around 'agrarian democracy', which meant either the acquisition of territory "to guarantee the subsistence of [the farmer] and his family" or the "credible prospect of attaining

that level of economic independence through his labor."[45] Continuous territorial expansion was necessary to give each (male) member of society such an opportunity and to "remain at the happy and virtuous stage of agriculture"[46]—a notion that became the "bedrock of the whole nation" and "a literal, territorial form of economic growth."[47]

The expansion westward on the North American continent, rendered by its apologists in terms of a conflict-free acquisition of uninhabited territory and peaceful cooperation with Native Americans, was in truth a colonial movement. This movement and its intermingled forces and power relations became constitutive for the US nation in dealings with other people they encountered. When it became obvious with the increased settlement of California that westward expansion was limited, eager expansionists began to look southward. This had been one of the reasons for the US-Mexican War of 1846–1848, in which the took almost half of Mexico's territory and gave the US government the same kind of 'safety valve' for ambitious Jacksonians the vanishing Western frontier could no longer provide. Such a 'safety valve' would also be useful to quell the growing unrest in the Black population, both free and enslaved. Conquered territories in the south could be used to settle Blacks.[48] Thus, the idea of territorial expansion was more or less openly declared a national project by subsequent US governments throughout the nineteenth century. In this context, Ian Tyrell reminds us that "in the nineteenth century, empire was not a dirty word but rather a story of the extension of liberty: Jefferson's empire for liberty. Never mind the Indians."[49]

The US-Mexican War served as one of several pivotal points for this discourse. This war played an ambiguous role in the filibustering activities of US citizens: it both inhibited early filibustering and guaranteed its revival. By joining the largely volunteer army, young men could invade foreign domains legally, which stalled their enthusiasm for filibustering; the war's end, though, created a pool of veterans accustomed to military campaigning, and bored by peace-time assignments. Thus, in the long run the war with Mexico did more to foster filibuster inclinations among the US population than to discourage them.[50] The war also made the US-Mexican border even more permeable and further weakened the Mexican central government, thus leaving the US southern neighbor in a bad shape to effectively deal with illegal intrusions into its territory.

The Filibusters and US Geopolitical Designs for a Transisthmian Canal

The Young America movement was the spearhead of a national sentiment that longed for expansion at all costs, including illegal filibuster activities. This group of young representatives and newspaper editors—formally constituted as a faction of the Democratic Party in 1845 and borrowing from European ideological movements like Giovine Italia or Junges Deutschland—urged the US administration to go ahead with expansionist designs, advocating an economically liberal Republican system. While during the 1830s targets for filibustering had included Northern destinations like Canada, the focus of attention in the 1850s was territory south of the US border, particularly on the American isthmus. Apart from sugar and coffee production,[51] especially Nicaragua held great importance for the European colonial powers (primarily France and Great Britain) as well as the emergent overseas ambitions of the United States. Prior to the building of the Panama Canal, Nicaragua's geography with its interconnected waterways of the San Juan River and the big lakes Cocibolca and Xolotlán made it a feasible candidate for constructing an interoceanic canal, a connection across the isthmus of the Americas.[52] Such a canal would not only have benefited the Europeans by allowing quicker access to Australia and the emergent markets of Japan (which was 'opened up' by Commodore Matthew Perry in 1854), but was also in the interest of the United States: In 1848 gold had been found in California, which had led to a huge demand by fortune seekers and businessmen to quickly cross the continent from the eastern seaboard to the west. With the first transcontinental railroad only being finished in 1869, the trek overland was dangerous and burdensome, and a transisthmian crossing would have cut short the time to reach the 'golden land' of California considerably.

Control of Nicaragua, or its incorporation into the Union as a new member state, was thus a vital interest for the US business community. Walker, for his part, could count on Cornelius Vanderbilt. The New York magnate was not only the owner of various steamship companies, but had also founded the Accessory Transit Company in 1849, a business dedicated to offering transportation from the US East Coast to California. After striking a deal with the Nicaraguan government, the line build several ships which made the voyage from New York via Nicaragua to San Francisco on a weekly basis. The trip which included a short overland

trek in Nicaragua was quick but strenuous, and the building of a canal remained a vital interest for passengers and steamship companies. The contract for the construction of a canal through Nicaragua had been elaborated by Ephraim Squier during his visit in 1849 (it was signed in August 1849 and ratified by the Nicaraguan parliament in September of the same year), and was extremely advantageous to the US company[53]: Vanderbilt's firm—at that time another of his subsidiaries called the *American Atlantic and Pacific Ship Canal Company*—received the monopoly for navigation through Nicaraguan lakes and rivers. It also gave Vanderbilt control of a future canal as well as a generous concession of territory adjacent to its proposed route. The land was at the company's disposal and could be used either for the management of the proposed canal, or for prospective North American settlers. The construction materials as well as the workers necessary for the construction of the canal would be offered to the company by the Nicaraguan government—free of charge.[54] With regard to compensation, the contract stipulated that Vanderbilt would only have to pay the meager sum of ten thousand pesos up front, ten thousand more within a year plus finally ten thousand pesos each year until the canal was completed. The contract stipulated a time limit of 12 years for the construction of the canal, starting with its ratification. Once in operation, Vanderbilt would have the right to rake all the money from the ships' transportation toll for the first 85 years, while the Nicaraguans would only receive 20% of all the net value transported through it.

Although several isthmian routes competed for passengers, with the one through Panama being the most obvious contender,[55] Nicaragua was still considered to be the most profitable one, as figures unearthed by James Dunkerley show—the Accessory Transit Company made $1 million of revenues in 1855 alone.[56] Although Vanderbilt had already acquired a huge fortune, the Nicaraguan route made him one of the richest men in the United States, also because he did not pay the Nicaraguans their share. As the company's books were kept in New York, it was easy for him to report to Central America that he made almost no profit. Consequently, from 1851 to 1855, i.e. the year in which William Walker seized the company's property (wharfs, houses and ships) in Nicaragua, Vanderbilt payed the Nicaraguans nothing at all.

These stipulations and the already high demand for transportation made it more feasible for Vanderbilt to concentrate on his steam ship route (and its connected services such as boarding houses) and completely neglect the building of the canal. Throughout the company's tenure in

Nicaragua, no serious effort of construction was ever undertaken. With the aim to emulate Vanderbilt's success and to bar European imperial powers—first and foremost the British—from the possible construction of an interoceanic canal, US companies and the US government watched the isthmus and filibuster expeditions to it attentively. Under the dual paradigms of territorial expansionism and economic liberalism, several US administrations were open to private companies meddling in Central American political affairs, but as the employment of private armed forces (like filibusters) carried the risk of a British response—and generally diplomatic turmoil—no administration openly endorsed such actions. The history of filibuster invasions in Mexico and Cuba, furthermore, had given them reason to be cautious: In an age of nation states that consolidated their powers, private actors seemed to be ever less prone to succeed.

Filibusters and Slavery

Another US geostrategic interest on the American isthmus has been pointed out by Robert May in his study *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire*. He argues that in the 1850s it dawned on the US slave-holding south that the peculiar institution's support in the Senate was waning as more and more free-labor states were represented in that chamber. To turn the tide in their favor would have meant to include new slavery territories to the Union, and a filibuster-orchestrated annexation of Central American countries was just what they were longing for. Accordingly, Walker's move to reintroduce slavery in Nicaragua in 1856 was described by himself as a means to garner southern support: It was "calculated to bind the Southern states to Nicaragua, as if she were one of themselves," he wrote in his memoir *The War in Nicaragua*.[57] Contemplating a division of the Union, several influential southern politicians began to map out a Caribbean slave empire. The fact that slavery had been abolished in all the Central American republics did not detain these enthusiasts.

It became more and more clear that the 'slave problem' could not be solved by simply transporting Blacks to other shores (as attempted by the *American Colonization Society* in Liberia from the 1820s onwards, or proposed by various intellectuals for Central America in the 1850s).[58] Ambitious slave holders in the south reckoned they had to expand the slave-based labor system. Furthermore, the US south still remained in a state of constant vigilance after the Haitian Revolution of 1791 and subsequent slave revolts in the Americas.[59] Annexation seemed to be the

best solution: As US Americans saw themselves as the only people capable of dealing with the 'black menace,' they argued that they better wrestle territory populated with such troublesome people from the decaying European monarchies to administer them as successfully as they already did the in US south. Also, US geostrategic designs would best be served by laying their hands on these territories before the 'degenerated Blacks' could spoil them.

When Spain and Britain began to insistently call for slave emancipation, slave owners in the US south were horrified. The filibusters knew how they had to play their cards to generate support in the slave-holding south. Many young southern slave owners joined their ranks under the impression that they could thus help to ensure the peculiar institution's survival. William Walker's move to re-introduce slavery in Nicaragua—although he had argued for free labor earlier in his career when working as a journalist in New Orleans and San Francisco—was clearly an attempt to garner support from slave-owning quarters. This does not mean that filibustering was merely a southern phenomenon. Quite to the contrary, it was the general appeal the filibusters held that made them so attractive.[60] While Southerns regarded them as aides in securing a 'Caribbean slave empire', Northern liberals saw them as freeing oppressed peoples from the Spanish yoke; this multifacety, though, was gradually diminished in the aftermath of the US Civil War, when the filibusters were associated with the slaveholding South.

When Walker and his men had to return to the US in 1857, they immediately started to organize for another attempt to invade Nicaragua. After only six months they were ready to sail to Nicaragua again but failed due to interferences by the US navy. Walker then alienated a good deal of his followers by putting the sole blame for the fiasco on the commanding navy officer, popular rear admiral Hiram Paulding.[61] Walker mounted three more invasions in the next three years, with ever dwindling support and enthusiasm from US citizens. On his last attempt he was captured, sentenced to death and shot in Trujillo (Honduras) in 1860. At the time of his death, though, the social conditions that had helped kick-start filibustering had already changed considerably, with sectional conflicts over race suppressing imperial expansionist motives.

With the beginning of the US Civil War in 1861 young US men eager to fight for money or glory could do so on their own turf, and Southern slave holders had no time to think about further extending non-free labor. Other political conditions remained unchanged—i.e., the interest in an interoceanic canal—but were now perpetrated via an 'informal

empire'. Despite the acquisitions of Alaska and Hawaii after the Civil War, US Americans sought prosperity within the homeland's confines via the penetration of foreign markets and via procuring investment opportunities abroad—a development that would eventually lead to the "banana republics"-strategy in Central America, in which private companies, backed by the State Department, waged considerable influence in interior affairs of Nicaragua and the other isthmian republics.[62] Thus, most scholars agree that the filibuster heydays ended with the US Civil War; actually, that filibustering "became one of the first casualties of the Civil War."[63] In the end, Walker, López, Crabb and all the other filibusters did not become part of the official US canon because they did not achieve their goals. Central America remained nominally independent (although from the 1870s US banana companies rapidly gained virtual control over isthmian countries, especially Honduras), Cuba was only wrestled from Spanish control in 1898, and other destinations of the filibusters—Venezuela, Ecuador, Mexico—also kept their independence. This, though, does not mean that there were no further privately organized invasions from US territory: Tom Ogorzalek still lists five major filibuster expeditions from 1865 to 1911, all to Mexico.[64]

Opposing the Filibusters

The complex US society with its different strata, classes, religions and ethnic communities meant that not each and every US citizen embraced all forms of territorial aggrandizement at all times. There existed diverse forms of opposition towards expansionism in general and the various filibuster expeditions in particular.

A generally held anxiety about territorial expansion into Latin American countries arose from the racial configurations such a move implied. At a time when the US fashioned itself as a distinctly white, Protestant, Anglo-Saxon nation, a mass incorporation of Latino people would have diluted this notion of a 'pure race' and nation. What would happen with an enormous influx of people that came with another religion, different customs and a darker skin color? Some expansionists solved this problem by propagating the idea that all races would be absorbed peacefully by the white Anglo-Saxons,[65] but in the 1850s and in the aftermath of the enormous territorial gains of the US-Mexican War, the case did not seem to be so clear. The idea of ruling territories without governing its people was discussed, and the advocates of a restrained foreign and military policy often argued

on racialized grounds. Time and again, scholars like Reginald Horsman remind us of the preeminence of race-based ideas in the nineteenth century: "By the 1840s it was common for writers on race to emphasize wide gulfs between different peoples, and many argued that these gulfs were unbridgeable. Such views were not hidden away in obscure publications, for the study of man and his racial divisions was becoming a passion."[66] As in Europe, encounters with foreign people (or people rendered and perceived as foreign) were viewed through the lens of racial hierarchies, and the expansionist US was prone to encounter 'foreign' people they positioned as racially inferior in order to justify their endeavors. By projecting a latent threat of racial amalgamation or a massive influx of foreigners, opponents of the filibusters created the subcutaneous threat that the antebellum search for a unifying US national identity was at stake. In the specific case of Central and Latin America, these inquietudes about race were shot through with strong anti-Catholic sentiments. From the 1840s onwards the United States was adamantly Protestant, but with the huge influx of Irish immigrants this seemed to be threatened. Nativist responses included not only anti-Catholic pamphleteering or xenophobic attacks on Catholic immigrants, but also a strong rejection of expansionism which would infuse even more Catholics into the US.

Apart from the fear of racial re-configurations, the metaphor of the body politic played a part in discussions on expansionism: The institution of democracy was believed to be successful only when contained within limited boundaries, within a political body of manageable size. The inflation of this body beyond the 'natural borders' providence had foreseen for it might lead to a catastrophic end of the democratic experiment in the US. Yet, opponents of filibustering who argued along these lines did not necessary rule out foreign adventures completely: They were only eager to prohibit a growth of the original Union beyond a certain territorial limit (a situational category always in flux), but were not opposed to sending 'emissaries of democracy' abroad. While many filibusters did not qualify for such an activity, the general idea of 'helping' other dependent countries towards a democratic system was regarded as part of the US mission and therefore met with enthusiasm. Only when territory was invaded with the goal of annexing it to the US, this became problematic.

A more general condemnation of filibustering activities on the ground that the whole enterprise was morally or politically corrupt is hard to encounter in the 1850s, except for opinions within the black population. A majority (both free and enslaved) was against the racial implications that

were driving many expansionist projects, and thus also opposed filibustering, but even this was not universal: Walker's filibuster army supposedly counted on the services of at least two black persons.[67] Yet, when Walker re-established slavery in 1856, his few colored supporters quickly abandoned his army.

The Filibusters and the US Press

Filibustering was a mix of hard-headed geopolitical decisions and thousands of individual choices, and the US press played a pivotal part in creating an expansionist mood. In the 1850s, the press was already a major factor of communication in US society.[68] With 50–60 %, literacy rates were sufficiently high to support a press system with roughly 2.000 dailies published throughout the nation, often with morning and evening editions.[69] As socioeconomic factors prohibited many working class people from owning books, newspapers became the reading matter of choice. With increased competition, newspapers had to be attractive for their potential readers, and accounts of filibustering missions were sure scoops. Several papers covered the filibusters' every move when they stayed in the US, and also relied on correspondents to report from foreign locales. Travelogues and autobiographical accounts also played an important role in the creation of a unified discourse on expansion. The contribution of newspapers was much more immediate, as they were often read on a daily basis by a substantial amount of the US population. The introduction of ever more powerful and ever faster printing presses, a decrease in the price of paper and ink, the availability of cheaper means of lighting (for reading after work) and corrective eyeglasses as well as the easier distribution of print products due to an ever widening network of trains and steam ships, ushered in mass media in the US. This "publishing boom"[70] or "explosion of print"[71] made newspapers a major reference point for US citizens' attempts to understand the world. It also meant that the urge to vie for readers increased dramatically, especially in the blooming urban sphere, where "promiscuous reading"[72] had already replaced a reading pattern centered around the repeated consumption of only very few books, predominantly the bible and other holy texts. With party-based papers, almanacs, business publications, story papers and the first representatives of yellow journalism, the press was extremely diversified and constituted, together with oral elements such as town hall meetings and clerical sermons, the main carrier of information for the general public. New forms

of distribution made their impact felt as well: Syndication and the establishment of centralized syndicalization repositories like the *Associated Press* (1848), the German *Wolff Telegraph Agency* (1855) and *Reuters* (1858) facilitated a 'template-ing' of the news as they became standard organs of local, national and international news apparatuses.[73]

At the same time, so-called *story paper* emerged. During a time when the US population preferred local to national news, the story papers attempted to bridge this gap by presenting to the public mainly non-political narratives—thus the "story" in the papers' denomination—that centered around the adventures of historical or current figures, famous or not. Travel narratives, public letters from travelers or excerpts from travelogues also featured heavily in their pages. Story papers where more expensive than their competitors because the texts were accompanied by illustrations—often wood carvings or sketches. If the travelers had been accompanied by artists—as, for example, in the case of Squier and Stephens—story papers provided the only alternative outside of book publishing to make their visual representations of the foreign locales public. If original visual content was lacking, many story papers elaborated their own drawings to accompany the texts. The huge success of the story papers depended on the inclusion of such high quality visual elements. At the time these elements—together with the public exposition of panoramic paintings and dioramas—presented the public with the only opportunity to graphically imagine past events or foreign locales. The filibusters provided fitting examples for the kind of stories the story papers wanted to present, and with the growing availability of sketchings—praised as 'made on the spot' but often freely imagined—story papers such as *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* embraced Walker and his exploits. The US press thus provided a receptive discursive space for the filibusters. Of course, William Walker, by far the most successful of the filibuster bunch, was especially interesting for the press, and the papers converted him into "one of the day's most salient public personalities"[74] and a "key cultural icon of the 1850s."[75] The craze about Walker created hundreds of poems and songs in his support, several stage plays—some satirical in nature, but most hagiographical affairs like "Nicaragua, or General Walker's Victories" or "Siege of Granada"—and even "The Filibuster Polka."[76]

The filibusters themselves, especially William Walker (who had worked as newspaper editor in New Orleans) were media-savvy and knew how to attract attention and support. As professional standards of journalism were

still in development, newspaper editors often had neither the inclination nor the time for fact-checking. In such a situation, filibusters could often claim victories in battle or territorial gains without any protest, thus creating what González de Reufels has called a "fictive reality."[77] In a textual universe which did not distinguish easily between factually-based reporting, fictitious narratives and—as Ottmar Ette would call it—frictional texts, that lived from constant borrowing between publications (which means that most newspapers and story papers read and copied from their colleagues), the filibusters could position their fabricated news about successful campaigns and decisive victories in one or two publications and then be optimistic that they would spread, creating widespread misinformation in the US.[78]

As the ultimate weapon to intervene in the discursive battles surrounding US expansionism, filibusters often created their own newspapers, as Rodrigo Lazo has shown in his study *Writing to Cuba* for the Cuban exiles in the United States. Such transnational newspapers—written in one country, but with audiences in another country in mind—did not promote so much a "shared time" as the dailies, but rather a "shared place" for the cultural subgroup of the filibusters.[79] The Nicaraguan filibusters also started their own newspaper, *El Nicaraguense*, which occupied a privileged position in the transnational circulation of information.

Nicaragua, the Absent Nation

That the filibusters under William Walker were initially invited into Nicaragua is still a sore point for Nicaraguan historians.[80] In spite of attempts to argue for the contrary, William Walker and his initial party of 50-odd filibusters arrived near Realejo in Nicaragua on June 13, 1855 on the explicit invitation of one of the warring parties. It is thus imperative to discuss the conditions that led to this invitation, an invitation that emerged out of distinctively Nicaraguan circumstances and did not rely on US actors alone.

Domestic Conflicts Since Nicaraguan Independence

Nicaragua gained its full independence in steps: First, in 1821 the *Capitanía General de Guatemala*—the Spanish colonial administrative unit including most of Central America—was dissolved and Nicaragua became part of the First Mexican Empire until in 1823 it joined the

República Federal de Centroamérica. In this federation, though, the five Central American republics were engaged in bitter political infighting and sporadic wars against each other,[81] especially during the administration of its last President, Francisco Morazán. The question of this entity's general political direction—either loose alliance of independent nation states or tight administrative union based on the Spanish colonial model—could never be satisfactory answered. These internal rivalries also fostered dominance of the region by outside powers, especially France and Great Britain.

Great Britain had claimed parts of Nicaragua's Atlantic coast—the Mosquitia or "Mosquito Coast"—for over a century, relying on a 'protectorate' they had established with one of the rulers of the native Miskitos in 1740. Although the British retreated after the Convention of London in 1786, they still claimed this protectorate, a claim contested by the Spanish. Without any formal affiliation in late colonial times, the territory again came under British influence during the time of the Central American Republic, as the Republic could not muster the unity necessary to oppose the efforts by British trading companies.

Due to all these troubles, Nicaragua was the first state to leave the *República Federal* on November 05, 1838, becoming an independent nation state. Attempts to re-establish a unified form of government—primarily connected with the name of Francisco Morazán—were met with harsh resistance, especially by Guatemala and Nicaragua. Yet, some voices already realized at the time of the break-up that internal differences would leave the whole region prey to colonial powers: the *grito de reorganización a los pueblos de Centro-América por un Centro-Americano,* a pamphlet published anonymously in 1843 and circulated widely, asked:

> Let us supposed there was a foreign aggression: in which case the dangers, hesitations, expenses and difficulties would be multiplied for a federation of nation states, such as ours. Which army, which navy could we muster in our divided state? Wouldn't we risk that if one state was attacked, the others—induced by flatteries or promises, by fear or reasons of individual advantages, either purposefully or without intention—would evade the sacrifice of offering their own blood, resources and inner peace for the defense of a neighbor. […]? (IHNCA ABG D3G3 0033–01)

The disputes which had ended the experiment of the Central American Federal Republic remained virulent in the Nicaraguan nation state: With the colonial power gone, the isthmian regions strove to become the new dominant actor, basically attempting to compete with traditionally strong

Guatemala. Nicaragua hosted two of these ambitious actors, centered in two cities which had served as political and economic hubs throughout colonial times: León and Granada.[82] León had maintained much closer ties to Guatemala and Madrid than Granada, and the break with these centers prompted it to welcome the idea of achieving Enlightenment via economic liberalization more radically. Furthermore, many foreign merchants settled in León after Nicaragua's independence, which tied the city closer to foreign countries. On the other hand, Granadan elites regarded the city as a center for locally active merchants and landowners. Yet, these differences were of no fundamental character; what basically motivated the feud between the two cities was the struggle for political domination in the newly founded nation state.

Typical for the colonial organization of labor and society, Nicaragua was based on patriarchism, and the two main cities were controlled by two rivaling family clans.[83] The patriachic organization of the Nicaraguan state remained so strong that even the two opposing forces in León and Granada coincided in their interest to leave this model unchanged. These families formed loose organizations which they themselves started to describe as political parties, although the term has to be handled with care. The so-called parties held no meetings, had no formal organization, no statutes and no platforms. Without any internal structure, based hierarchically on the family's patriarch and centered around vague concepts of liberalism and conservatism, they reflected the general lines of post-Independence conflicts in Latin America.[84] The two 'parties' often called themselves *Demócratas* or *Liberales* (León) and *Legitimistas* or *Conservadores* (Granada). It is telling, though, that the most common denominator used in the Nicaraguan press throughout the 1840s and 1850s simply distinguished between *leoneses* and *granadinos*, pinpointing the difference between the two to their local backgrounds, not ideological struggles. After the inception of the Central American Republic, these two powers started a bloody civil war from 1826 to 1829. This war hindered the emergence of a unified nation state as "patriarchs resisted conceding powers to an impersonal and bureaucratic state. The family remained strong partly because the state was weak; the state remained weak partly because the patriarchs failed to come to a political consensus," as Bradford Burns notes.[85]

Another factor for internal unrest was the racial division of Central America inherited from the Spanish Empire, with the few *Peninsulares* at the top, the *Criollos*[86] coming second, then the big group of the *Mestizos*,

and later on several groups of 'mixed origin', like *Zambos*, *Mulattos*, and *Pardos*[87] plus the communities of African descent.[88] The unifying aspect of a common religious faith—Catholicism—was not enough to overcome these differences. All this resulted in the population's tendency to not regard themselves as Nicaraguans, but to think in terms of *patrias chicas*.[89] Especially indigenous people had been so brutally oppressed by Spanish colonial rule that they saw their only way of survival in not integrating into any bigger social structure, like the newly formed nation states. Keeping in mind that the very idea of nation states is a European concept of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century which was transferred to the Americas, its lack of support in the Nicaraguan indigenous communities is not surprising.[90]

Nevertheless, and in stark contrast to most Latin American countries, the Nicaraguan elite attempted to incorporate indigenous people into their concept of citizenship. Frances Kinloch Tijerino argues that the elite's tolerance for indigenous use of communal land in the first half of the nineteenth century can be explained by the limited numbers of the Nicaraguan population. This resulted in a scarcity of labor force and attempts to integrate indigenous people.[91] In spite of this dependency on indigenous labor, indigenous people in Nicaragua, especially those living on the remote Atlantic side of the country (Miskitos, Ramas, Mayangnas), were often discriminated against. Mestizos viewed indigenous people as obstacles in the path of their respective efforts to 'civilize' their country. Mirroring typical Enlightenment beliefs, the Nicaraguan elite—both conservative and liberal, Granadinos and Leones—tried to apply "a mixture of benevolence and rigor" in the "transition from barbarism to civilization" of the indigenous, often regarding them as children for whom "it was right to be educated, even against their will and with repressions, to guide them to the Age of Reason."[92]

Nicaraguan society in 1855, when the filibusters arrived, was thus extremely sectionalized and lacked—although formally an independent nation state—almost any sense of nationhood or a shared national identity. The 'grand tour', the European trip every upper class *Mestizo* was bound to undertake in his youth, was envisioned to foster a fixation on European 'high culture' and counteract nationalist tendencies in the colonies. The young sons of the elite (and it were overwhelmingly male members of societies) were supposed to study in the colonial centers, connect with important actors in politics and science and thus prepare themselves to be incorporated into the circles of the national, Euro-centric elite in Latin America.

Since colonial times, such European sojourns had been common fare for the Nicaraguan land owning class,[93] and worked to reproduce dependencies on the colonial centers, the fixation on Europe as the political model and theoretically also to ensure ideological conformity between the metropolises and their dependencies.[94] Yet, especially around the 1848 Spring of Nations, many of these *Mestizos* came in contact with revolutionary actors or independentist ideas. By and large, Madrid, the old colonial center, was increasingly rejected, and France, but also the United States of America served as new models.[95] The notion of Catholic Spain as an old, declining power further nurtured this shift,[96] while the revolutionary forces in Northern Europe which were mostly Protestant symbolized a new, democratic and more humane era.

When returning to South or Central America, the young Spanish American elites brought along ideas about democratic self-government and liberal Enlightenment. They also brought along books and personal connections with editors or publishers, sometimes even subscriptions to European newspapers which were connected with these democratic, nationalist ideals. "There is also no doubt," Benedict Anderson writes, "that improving trans-Atlantic communications, and the fact that the various Americas shared languages and cultures with their respective metropoles, meant a relatively rapid and easy transmission of the new economic and political doctrines being produced in Western Europe."[97]

After the conservative backlash of 1849 a significant portion of the European democrats had to leave their home countries, and many fled to the Americas, further strengthening nationalist, Republican ideas. Of course, such ideals had already begun to take a firm hold in the minds of the elite. The South American uprisings and subsequent revolutions beginning in 1810 had been noticed in Central America as well, and contributed to the aforementioned local revolts from the 1830s onwards. Core models, obviously, remained the French Revolution as well as the revolution and subsequent independence of the US.

Ideas about revolution and independence were appropriated by Latin Americans to their own situation and they increasingly regarded themselves as distinct from both the Spanish colonial and the French Republican concepts. This also meant reproducing internal colonial dependencies, as Walter Mignolo has argued: "To conceive of themselves as a 'Latin' race [...], Creoles in 'Latin' America had to rearticulate the colonial difference in a new format: to become the internal colonisers vis-à-vis the Indians and Blacks while living an illusion of independence from the logic of

coloniality."[98] Richard Graham concurs that the "idea of race also made it possible, paradoxically, for *Mestizos* and *Mulattoes*—by identifying themselves with white elites as against Indian or black majorities—to accept theories that justified white domination over 'colored' populations."[99] Uncritically, the elites assumed the role of spokespersons for European civilization, which also fostered their mercantile interests.[100] The emergence of a notion of Latin America not merely as an appendix of Europe, but in contrast to it—as well as in contrast to Anglo America as represented by the US and Canada—was a cultural process highly important for future *Criollo* elites. This self-affirmation as a distinct people, unfortunately, did not include a fundamental critique of the racist undertones of European Enlightenment, but simply reproduced its exclusions with different actors. Decolonization did not go hand in hand with a rejection of racist practices, as the *Mestizo* and *Criollo* elite profited from its reconfiguration. "Politically and ideologically, the liberal *Criollo* project involved founding an independent, decolonized American society and culture, while retaining European values and white supremacy," Mary Louise Pratt underlines.[101] Nicaraguan elites—mirroring their South American counterparts—were imbibed to such a degree with European concepts of hierarchical race relations that they employed it to surpress the indigenous populations in their countries.

Democratic participation was highly restricted: Francis Kinloch Tijerino reminds us that "[…] the exertion of political rights was restricted to landowners and professionals, following the argument that only this Enlightened minority was able to understand the Republican principles."[102] Women, indigenous people of both sexes and day laborers without wealth based on soil were excluded and marginalized. The violent uprisings in post-independent Nicaragua—if not stemming from the feud between the two major family-centered power structures—can be regarded as emanating from the fight of excluded others—*Indígenas*, peasants, farm workers—to participate in the new Republican government. Various legal reforms were passed which aimed at centralizing the political power in the hands of the landowners. They did so by establishing economic preconditions for the right to vote and the exertion of political functions which ultimately meant that "only those citizens could vote that had assets of more than two hundred pesos; the candidates for Parliament had to possess at least 400 pesos or an academic title; and to be able to run for President or senator, a minimum capital of two thousand pesos was needed."[103] The practical results of such infringements became obvious in

the elections of 1853 where "only 490 people cast votes (two each—one having to be for a candidate from another district) for a Supreme Director of some 200.000 people."[104] In other terms: The old colonial elite saw to it that they would be the new elite, too. By demanding economic and social capital only they possesed, they effectively excluded other social classes. Recurring allegations of electoral fraud, usually decried in the elections for the *Director Supremo*,[105] further contributed to the sectionalized nature of post-independent Nicaraguan society.

The Transisthmian Travel Route as Catalyst of Change

In contrast to Costa Rica, which since its independence from Spain had been following a path of inclusion into international commerce due to its export-oriented coffee industry, Nicaragua's plantation owners had opted for a more isolationist model until the 1850s. The extremely limited incorporation into international trade relations was reflected by the fact that until mid-century, Nicaragua even lacked a proper national currency: Until 1850 the country had no mint, and as a result of the British hegemony in the Pacific commerce to and from South America, Peruvian coins were widely used along the coast, while in the interior cocoa served as currency.[106]

Gradually, though, the Nicaraguan elites' paradigm changed, in various ways: They were increasingly eager to 'modernize' their country and gradually shifted their attention from the European continent to the US as a model. This shift was fueled by the first transisthmian ship line by Cornelius Vanderbilt's Accessory Transit Company, connecting the US east and west coast via Nicaragua and thus incorporating Nicaragua into the US sphere of interest. Opening an interoceanic canal would have been the next logical step, and the Nicaraguan elites entered into canal negotiations with the US from the 1840s onward. Geopolitical strategies also played a role in the negotiations:

> On March 16, 1849, general José Trinidad Muñoz signed a contract for the interoceanic route with David J. Brown, representative of a New York transport company. Its article 22 reveals the principal object of the Nicaraguan government: To receive financial resources to send a delegation to Washington, which would negotiate for an official treaty of protection and alliance so that Nicaragua could recover the port of San Juan del Norte.[107]

The lingering British influence on Nicaragua's east coast, and the British occupation of San Juan del Norte in 1848 (during the disturbances of the ongoing civil war), thus encouraged the Nicaraguans to look for allies against 'la poderosa Albión'. As late as the 1830s, Nicaragua had entertained a quite monodimensional fixation on Great Britain but the geopolitical emergence of the US as the new antagonist to European imperial mingling in the American hemisphere (embodied by the 1823 Monroe Doctrine) made Nicaragua woe the northern collosus.

While still not knowing how and with whom they would build the proposed canal, the Nicaraguan government gave in to US insistence on opening a transportation route. The company immediately started operations, and the opening of this transportation route was the preeminent factor which ended the elite's protectionist orientation. David Whisnant convincingly points out that Nicaragua had already seen several processes of cultural hybridization and transculturation[108]; yet, while former contacts had been limited, the sheer numbers of US travelers passing through Nicaragua to and fro between New York and San Francisco (the basic US ports of call) were astonishing: According to Burns, by 1854 it counted "more than one thousand passengers a month."[109] The transit route became a powerful cultural intervention with its influx of ideas, languages, religious beliefs, gender roles, imported goods and so on.

These changes were not confined to the Nicaraguan elites, but were played out in various ways: The construction of roads brought the original prospectors of the Transit Company in close contact with local folk, as Nicaraguan laborers were cheaper to hire for Vanderbilt's company than US workers. These jobs dramatically changed the Nicaraguans' work routines, labor management and family structures. This does not imply that the Nicaraguans were passive victims of outer influences; indeed, many of them tried to take advantage of the situation. This was made easy by the Transit Company's dependency on the local labor force, at least in the early stages of the transisthmian route. Already from the start, Vanderbilt and his local managers attempted to outwit and circumvent the weak Nicaraguan central government by striking deals with local strongmen or individuals they temporarily depended on, as Herrera Cuarezma analyzes in his micro-study of local fishermen at the San Juan river:

> [...] the company did not spare any effort, and counted on the relations it had established in the areas in which it already worked without trouble, in many instances ignoring the proper local authorities. The Transit Company

worked on these relations by granting favors, thus creating a network of dependencies with local authorities and with *caudillos* that where opposed to the central government.[110]

The passengers of the transit route also created new demand for inns, hotels, and eateries, which changed consumer habits of the local population, too. Offering food and accommodation represented the most widespread forms for Nicaraguans to interact with the transit passengers. In a country in which few people had traveled, and those who did usually depended on family ties for such services, providing food and shelter for foreign passengers was indeed a novelty. To offer such services, one first had to possess a spare room which was attractive enough for foreigners to sleep in, or the economic means to produce more food than necessary for the family's own consumption. This meant that these *negocios* remained the privilege of the better-off. Additionally, these interactions put many Nicaraguans in a subaltern position with regard to their foreign guests: The US travelers owned the money, and were free to chose where to spend it, with the Transit Company vying to provide an 'all inclusive' package to their passengers. The tendency of the Nicaraguan merchants to shy away from forming alliances or bigger companies and to operate individually undermined their negotiating position with Vanderbilt's firm. While the Transit Company officials, thus, maintained contact with Nicaraguans (buying foodstuff, arranging road works, contracting room maids etc.), the already existing gulf between travelers and local Nicaraguan laborers and merchants widened.

From the beginning there had been little interaction between these groups, often due to the language barrier: US Americans usually could not speak or understand Spanish, Nicaraguans outside of the elite circles were unable to converse in English. Gradually, thus, the transit route became "an enclave unintegrated into and increasingly unrelated to Nicaragua."[111] After some years the percentage of Nicaraguans servicing the route declined because the company became better in managing the several legs of the trip effectively, coordinating the ocean-going vessels with the departure times of the river boats and these with the land-bound carriers. This resulted in passengers spending less time in the country, interacting on fewer occasions with Nicaraguans and doing almost no business with them. Furthermore, many rural Nicaraguans were not used to have business deals based on formal contracts, which often ended in them being cheated by their US counterparts.[112] Such a development gave many Nicaraguans second thoughts

about the route, which they had perceived as offering riches by simply settling close to it. The existing route, regarded as a precursor for the building of an actual canal, was not seen anymore as placing the country at the nexus of international trade, but as "an opening through which waves of immoral, violent and haughty foreigners flooded [the] country."[113] For some, the US Americans changed from models of modernity and progress to becoming a frightening force that threatened the national idea they were supposed to help promoting.

Such disenchanted voices, though, were a minority; most Nicaraguans, and especially the powerful elite, still stood with the US Americans and the ideals they represented, favoring broad-scale immigration of 'civilized people' into Nicaragua. Such an immigration process was the logical consequence of the racism underlying the Nicaraguan idea of progress. By following racist conceptions of progress coupled with whiteness, and by identifying the indigenous population of Nicaragua as being racially (read: permanently) unable to participate in a civilizatory movement, inviting outsiders to help Nicaragua become 'modern' had been an indispensable source for advancing the path of progress since the country's independence.[114] After a while, when the transit route was fully operational, and in an act of racial subversion, many of the petty *Criollo* and *Mestizo* landowners along the route's trajectory resorted to subcontracting (mostly white) US Americans who were on their way to California on this very route. Many of these travelers were prospective gold searchers, often in dire straits and therefore bound to jump on whatever occasion presented itself to make money.

The turmoil into which Nicaragua descended further with each civil war strengthened the urge to look abroad for the solution of the young Republic's problems. For Nicaraguan Criollos and Mestizos this solution meant to substitute a part of the population by foreigners. As neighboring Costa Rica did as well, Nicaragua wanted to promote immigration to consolidate its nationality, unite sectionalized powers and destroy vices in the constitutional and administrative framework. Immigration was regarded as a panacea by a large part of the Nicaraguan elite, especially as they focused on the influx of agricultural laborers, craftsmen and petty merchants, i.e. classes that would not threaten their land-monopoly.

This positive reliance on foreigners was also discernible in the common strategy of contracting foreign aid, i.e. often mercenaries in conflict situations. Such a reasoning was not exclusive to Nicaragua; the South American independence movement had made many positive experiences with contracted British soldiers. Simón Bolívar himself had acquired soldiers

and weapons in England. Even before the almost constant upheavals of the 1840s and 1850s, the Nicaraguan colonial and early independent governments had authorized British companies operating in Nicaragua to recruit private militias to enforce the national tobacco monopoly. For Latin American states it was thus common to recruit mercenaries, and Nicaragua made no exception. Without a revolution to fight, but with manifold uprisings during the 1840s and 1850s, the two Nicaraguan parties often sought foreign military muscle. US citizens emerged as the main profiteers of this search for exterior help, partly because of the idealization of their supposed superiority and partly simply because they were the dominant group of foreigners present in Nicaragua. British and US Americans were regarded as good fighters and superior marksmen, and therefore in high demand.[115] At one occasion, the Democrats issued a decree allowing soldiers to stay in Nicaragua as settlers after the conflict, thus combining the short-term need to finding fighters with the long-term aim of changing Nicaragua's population structure. Even in the civil war which would ultimately lead to Walker's invitation, US Americans had already been enlisted in the Democratic forces prior to the filibusters' arrival.

Notes

1. O. Henry, *Cabbages and Kings* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1946), 96.
2. Robert E. May, "Manifest Destiny's Filibusters," in *Manifest Destiny and Empire*, ed. Sam W. Haynes and Christopher Morris (Arlington: University of Texas Press, 1997), 148–149; Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld. Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).
3. Narciso López (1797–1851) was a Venezuelan who served the Spanish imperial administration in Madrid and on Cuba. On the Caribbean island, though, he became disenfranchised with Spanish rule and started to support Cuban revolutionaries. When he had to flee Cuba in 1848, he went to New York and began to organize different *juntas,* aimed at supporting the revolutionaries on the island and trying to set up a group that would sail for Cuba and liberate it from Spanish rule. López contacted several well-known US intellectuals from the 'Young America'-circle (e.g. John L. O'Sullivan) and high-ranking army officers (Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee and others), asking them to join his group (see Anna Brickhouse, *Transamerican Literary Relations and Nineteenth-Century Public Sphere*, Cambridge Studies in American Literature and

Culture 145 (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 151). Although all would eventually decline, López managed to enlist the financial and organizational support of John Quitman, influential governor of Mississippi (Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 173). His first expedition, though, never reached Cuba's shores: His ships were detained in New Orleans and New York by order of President Zachary Taylor in 1849. In 1850 López had better luck, managed to land on the island but had to retreat almost immediately because the local population joined the Spanish to fight López. After returning to the US, López faced trial for violating the Neutrality Acts. This did not stop him from trying to filibuster again: In 1851 he invaded Cuba, this time was captured by the Spanish authorities and executed together with the majority of his men.

4. Robert May notes that "Americans since the birth of the republic had been in the habit of conducting private military invasions into foreign lands […]," e.g. directed at Canada in 1776 and 1837/8, or several others to the Spanish colonies in the years 1810–1824 (May, *Manifest Destiny and Empire*, 150). These included Texas and Florida, but also single cities, such as Galveston in 1816.
5. Ibid., 111.
6. Víctor Hugo Acuña Ortega, *La Campaña Nacional: Memorias Comparadas*, ed. Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría, 11 de Abril Cuadernos de Cultura 16 (Alajuela (Costa Rica): Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría, 2009), 56.
7. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*, 33.
8. Ibid., 55.
9. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld. Filibustering in Antebellum America*, 20.
10. Due to its proximity to the United States, its weak central government and the mineral riches presumed to exist in the country's soil, Mexico became the foremost target of filibuster expeditions. Apart from William Walker, who attempted a filibuster invasion to Baja California in 1853–1854, two other persons stand out from the many who tried their hand at Mexico: The French count Gaston de Raousset-Boulbon, who between 1852 and 1854 led three different expeditions into Sonora, and the Mexican-born José María Jesús Carbajal, who also attempted to wrest areas along the Rio Grande from Mexico.
11. When filibusters set sails to foreign locales, they usually numbered between 50 and 300 men. Robert May gives the total of men who joined Walker throughout his Nicaraguan sojourn as roughly 2.500 (*Underworld* 49), while Karl Berman and Amy Greenberg estimate 5.400 (71–72, *Manhood* 29). On the other hand, Alejandro Bolaños Geyer (*La Guerra*

Nacional 53) writes of no more than 1.500 filibusters in Nicaragua, but seems to refer only to the number present in the country at any given time, not the total of arriving, leaving and dying.

12. US newspapers regularly reported on filibuster activities in the 1850s, sending reporters to the wharf when ships sailed for filibuster expeditions or were bound to return. The reports frequently mentioned "crowds," "immense crowds," "hundreds of people" or "multitudes" who bade the filibusters a cheerful farewell (see, for example, "Three Hundred Filibusters Off for Nicaragua," *New York Daily Times*, February 11, 1856).
13. Luis Martínez Fernández, *Torn Between Empires. Economy, Society, and Patterns of Political Thought in the Hispanic Caribbean, 1840–1878* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 11.
14. Falia González Díaz and Pilar La Lázaro Escosura, eds., *Mare Clausum Mare Liberum. La Piratería en la América Española ; Exposición Noviembre de 2009 a Mayo de 2010*, (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 2009), 105.
15. See Jaime Incer Barquero, *Piratas y Aventureros en las Costas de Nicaragua. Crónicas de Fuentes Originales*, Colección Cultural de Centro América Serie Cronistas (Managua: Fundación Vida, 2003) for a specifically Nicaraguan perspective on early filibustering.
16. In recent studies pirates have been analyzed in a more positive light, countering their century-long vilification. Many scholars have pointed to the democratic environment that held reign on pirate ships, which stood in stark contrast to the subhuman conditions under which sailors had to work on merchant or naval vessels in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Linebaugh and Rediker, who describe pirate ships as being "multinational, multicultural and multiracial" (Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Buford Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra. Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2003), 164), point out why many mariners were drawn towards their illegally operating brethren: "The prospect of plunder and ready money, the food and the drink, the camaraderie, the equality and justice and the promise of care for the injured—all these must have been appealing" Ibid., 168.
17. Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra. Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, 164.
18. Joseph Stout notes that "[i]n diplomatic discussions with the US after 1848, the Mexican government referred to any expedition formed in the United States as filibustering groups" (Joseph Allen Stout Jr., *Schemers and Dreamers. Filibustering in Mexico 1848–1921.* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 2002), iii).
19. See Rodrigo Lazo, *Writing to Cuba. Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States.* Envisioning Cuba. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of

North Carolina Press, 2005), 22–25 for an assessment of the battles fought within the Cuban exile community with regard to Narciso López.

20. Anne Baker, *Heartless Immensity*, Literature, Culture and Geography in Antebellum America. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 1.
21. Ronald J. Zboray, *A Fictive People. Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 111.
22. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld. Filibustering in Antebellum America*, 94–95.
23. Richard Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment. The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800–1890* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 220.
24. Traditional craftsmen had trouble surviving in an environment that increasingly began to industrialize. They could take fewer apprentices, thus closing one possible career path for young men.
25. Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest. The Unbroken Past of the American West*, (New York: Norton, 2006), 44.
26. Michael Paul Rogin, *Fathers and Children. Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian*, 3. printing (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 13.
27. James Carson Jamison, a veteran of the US-Mexican War who fought with the filibusters in Nicaragua and later on published an account of his time under the title *With Walker in Nicaragua*, mentions that "[m]ost of the officers [in the filibuster army] wore the uniform of their rank in the United States army, many bringing their uniforms with them to Nicaragua" (J. C. Jamison, "General William Walker in Nicaragua. Unwritten Leaf of Reminiscences," *McMaster's Weekly Magazine VL—Vol. 9, No. 24*, June 23, 1898, 119, ABG D3G3 0193–01, IHNCA (Instituto de Historia de Nicargua y Centroamérica). These uniforms were often given to the volunteers that had joined the US army, and were mustered out of service after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
28. "The Central American Question," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, December 29, 1855.
29. N. N., "The Napoleon of Nicaragua," *New York Daily Times*, March 15, 1856.
30. That this was not only a rhetorical equation but could actually yield practical consequences became visible in 1850, when Narciso López asked Garibaldi, who was in New York City to procure a ship to sail to Italy and fight against the counter-revolution, to lead a filibuster expedition to Cuba. The Italian leader of the *risorgimento* quickly declined this offer David Luis-Brown, "An 1848 for the Americas. The Black Atlantic, 'el Negro Martir,' and Cuban Exile Anticolonialism in New York City," *American Literary History*, no. 12.3 (2009): 437; Lazo, *Writing to Cuba. Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States*, 132–133.

31. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "N.A." *El Nicaraguense*, November 10, 1855, 2.
32. Lazo, *Writing to Cuba. Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States*, 22.
33. N. N, "Antiquity of Filibusterism," *El Nicaraguense* (January 26, 1856): 1.
34. Lazo, *Writing to Cuba. Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States*, 109.
35. Thomas McCormick, "From Old Empire to New. The Changing Dynamics and Tactics of American Empire," in *The Colonial Crucible*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco Antonio Scarano (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 65.
36. Cazneau worked hard to interest Pierce's administration in an annexation of the Dominican Republic, claiming several times that the local government had insinuated it was waiting for such a move. See Martínez Fernández, *Torn Between Empires. Economy, Society, and Patterns of Political Thought in the Hispanic Caribbean, 1840–1878* for an overview of nineteenth century US interventions on Dominica.
37. Many details of this conspiracy are still hotly debated. The account given here follows the biography by David Stewart.
38. David O. Stewart, *American Emperor. Aaron Burr's Challenge to Jefferson's America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011), 9.
39. Robert May, though, regards 1858, when Walker toured the US South to raise money for yet another Nicaraguan filibuster expedition, as his "banner year." His tour included "a ten-gun salute and large crowds [that] greeted his arrival at the Mobile wharf; in Aberdeen, Mississippi, enthusiasts pledged ten thousand dollars to his cause; the Southern Commercial Convention of 1858 in Montgomery granted him a seat and twenty delegates attended a special speech by the adventurer" (*Southern Dream* 126).
40. Tom Ogorzalek, "Filibuster Vigilantly. The Liminal State and Nineteenth Century U.S. Expansion" (Columbia Mini-American Political Science Association Conference, Columbia University, 2011), 4.
41. Ibid., 32.
42. Passed in 1794, the act has been amended several times (with some legal scholars pointing out that therefore it should be the "Neutrality Acts" rather than the singular), and states in its main clause: "If any person shall within the territory or jurisdiction of the United States begin or set on foot or provide or prepare the means for any military expedition or enterprise […] against the territory or dominions of any foreign prince or state of whom the United States was at peace that person would be guilty of a misdemeanour." That this act is still of importance today can be seen by its invocation in 2015 against individuals immersed in the attempted coup

d'état in The Gambia, see Andrew Rice, "The Reckless Plot to Overthrow Africa's Most Absurd Dictator." *The Guardian*, July 21, 2015.

43. Janice E. Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates and Sovereigns. State-Building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe*, Princeton Studies in International History and Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 78–79.
44. Rogin, *Fathers and Children. Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian*, 3; see also Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny. The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 85.
45. Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment. The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800–1890* 110.
46. Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest. The Unbroken Past of the American West*, 58.
47. Ibid., 27.
48. For Lewis Cass, Democratic senator, distinguished army officer, presidential candidate and fervent expansionist, the "safety valve" could offer a space to relocate social elements from the urban sphere so that the depredation that Cass saw in European cities during his time as ambassador to France would not reach the United States (qtd. in Tomas R. Hietala, "'This Splendid Juggernaut.' Westward a Nation and Its People," in *Manifest Destiny and Empire*, ed. Sam W. Haynes and Christopher Morris (Arlington: University of Texas Press, 1997), 58.
49. Ian Tyrell, "Empire in American History," in *The Colonial Crucible*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco Antonio Scarano (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 544.
50. With hindsight, it is therefore no surprise that the very phrase 'Manifest Destiny', which was so often employed by filibusters to explain their actions, had been coined with regard to the annexation of Texas, which had led to the war with Mexico. The imminent conflict with Mexico seems to have made it possible to articulate political concepts with a new clarity.
51. This coffee production realm included Costa Rica (see Sancho, Eugenio. *Costa Rica. Aspectos Económicos y Sociales de un Periodo de Transición al Capitalismo Agrario, 1850–1860.* 11 de Abril, Cuadernos de Cultura ; No. 7. (Alajuela, Costa Rica: Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría, 1984) and Iván Molina Jiménez, ed. *Industria y Sobria. Costa Rica en los Días de la Campaña Nacional* (1856–1857). (South Woodstock, Vermont: Plumsock Mesoamerican Studies, 2007). Costa Rican economic links were especially developed with Great Britain at the time of the filibuster threat, which led to the British helping the Costa Ricans to modernize their weaponry and to employ British mercenaries in the Costa Rican forces, effectively discouraging US filibustering, see Raúl Aguilar Piedra

and Werner Korte Núñez, "La Campaña del Tránsito, los Diarios de Campaña y la Memoria Histórica Costarricense." In *Filibusterismo y Destino Manifiesto en las Américas*, edited by Víctor Hugo Acuña Ortega, 239–57. (San José, Costa Rica: Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría, 2010), 251–254 and Molina Jiménez (24).

52. Silvia Gruesz notes that "the Colombian government considered a request for a canal concession as early as 1821, while the US Atlantic and Pacific Canal Company began plotting a Nicaraguan route in 1825" (see Kirsten Silva Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture. The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*. Translation Transnation. (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), 12.
53. The following account is based on Kinloch Tijerino (see Frances Kinloch Tijerino, *Nicaragua, Identidad y Cultura Política (1821–1858)*. (Managua: Banco Central de Nicaragua, 1999), 206–211 and footnotes 27 and 28). Most US Americans regarded this contract as a great achievement and a milestone in their expansionist policy on the isthmus.
54. The Nicaraguans planned to use prisoners ("delinquents") for this work.
55. Aims McGuinness, *Path of Empire. Panama and the California Gold Rush*, The United States in the World (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 7.
56. James Dunkerley, *Americana. The Americas in the World, around 1850 (or "Seeing the Elephant" as the Theme for an Imaginary Western)* (London/New York, NY: Verso, 2000), 579.
57. William Walker, *The War in Nicaragua* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985), 166.
58. These included, for example, well-known black writer, journalist and abolitionist Martin Delaney (*Blake: Or, the Huts of America*), who, in *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States, Politically Considered* (1852), advocated the founding of a new nation for Blacks and set his sight on several possible locations: Africa, the West Indies or South America. Ultimately, he selected Nicaragua because it was close, had a healthy climate and was protected by the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty against aggressions from both the United States and Great Britain.
59. Matthew Pratt Guterl, "An American Mediterranean. Haiti, Cuba and the American South," in *Hemispheric American Studies*, ed. Caroline Field Levander and Robert Steven Levine (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 110.
60. Based on an analysis of Walker's army register and work done by Bolaños Geyer, Amy Greenberg gives the following description of the typical filibuster that went to Nicaragua: Their average age was slightly over 26 years, the vast majority listed some form of skilled labor for their occupa-

tion, and very few listed an occupation that could be considered white collar. Between 28% (in 1860) and 59% (in 1857) of the men were born in Northern states. Although the race of individuals was not listed, complexion was. Most were described as 'fair'. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*, 150, footnote 33.

61. Walker's rage, though, had a good deal of legal ground to its credit. Paulding and his marines apprehended the filibusters after having arrived on Nicaraguan soil, thus sparking questions of the detention's legality. Paulding had to take the brunt of the attacks and was relieved of his command by President James Buchanan, who thus effectively forced him into retirement. He would later resurface under Lincoln's presidency in the US Civil War.
62. Lester D. Langley, *The Banana Wars. United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898–1934*, 2nd ed., Latin American Silhouettes (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2002); Lester D. Langley and Thomas D. Schoonover, *The Banana Men: American Mercenaries and Entrepreneurs in Central America 1880–1930* (University Press of Kentucky, 1995).
63. Robert E. May, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854–1861*, 2. paperback. ed., New Perspectives on the History of the South (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2002), 247.
64. Ogorzalek, "Filibuster Vigilantly. The Liminal State and 19th Century U.S. Expansion," 17.
65. How this absorption would take place was a topic not often considered in detail. While most authors remained on a metaphysical level for their explanations, a few were quite open: It meant the marriage of Anglo-Saxon men with Latin American women. Eventually, these authors held, the male 'superior blood' would prevail, but others begged to differ: As travel writers frequently pointed out, children of families with mixed ethnic backgrounds did not seem to have inherited any favorable traits from their Anglo-Saxon fathers.
66. Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny. The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*, 59.
67. Julius Froebel, "The Nicaragua Question," *New York Daily Times*, March 07, 1856, 2.
68. Benedict Anderson has pointed to the importance of what he calls 'print capitalism' for the emergence of the modern nation state-based notion of imagined communities (65, 140). Although he focuses mainly on Asia, the US provides a fitting example for his argument. More specifically on the US case, see Slotkin (*Regeneration* 6), see Michael Newbury, *Figuring Authorship in Antebellum America*. (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997), 175 and William G. Rowland, *Literature and the Marketplace. Romantic Writers and Their Audiences in Great Britain and the United*

States. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997). The latter argues that in the antebellum US the press entered into a first stage of mass production and circulation (xi) and therefore the "reading public was larger, better educated and better provided with books, newspapers and magazines than contemporary publics in England and Europe" (9).

69. See Cathy N. Davidson, ed. *Reading in America. Literature & Social History*. (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997) for a problematization of the wide gap that existed between official numbers of literacy in the United States (which frequently hovered around 90%) and evidence that literate people might not have been so ubiquitous. Harvey Graff finds that "[p]rior to 1850, nearly 40% of army enlistees were illiterate" (342) and black people continued to be almost completely illiterate, due to the racist system of education that refused to incorporate them. Harvey J. Graff, *The Legacies of Literacy. Continuities and Contradictions in Western Culture and Society*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).
70. Silva Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture. The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*, 16.
71. Graff, *The Legacies of Literacy. Continuities and Contradictions in Western Culture and Society*, 352.
72. Ronald J. Zboray, "Antebellum Reading and the Ironies of Technological Innovation," in *Reading in America*, ed. Cathy N. Davidson (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 195.
73. Nirmal Trivedi, "Staging Unincorporated Power: Richard Harding Davis and the Critique of Imperial News," *The Journal of Transnational American Studies* 3, no. 2 (n.d.): 4.
74. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld. Filibustering in Antebellum America*, 69.
75. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*, 135; concurring also Brady Harrison, *Agent of Empire. William Walker and the Imperial Self in American Literature* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 55.
76. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld. Filibustering in Antebellum America*, 71–74; David E. Whisnant, *Rascally Signs in Sacred Places. The Politics of Culture in Nicaragua*, H. Eugene and Lillian Youngs Lehman Series (Chapel Hill, NC/London: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 79.
77. Delia González Reufels, *Siedler und Filibuster in Sonora. Eine mexikanische Region im Interesse ausländischer Abenteurer und Mächte; (1821–1860)*, Lateinamerikanische Forschungen vol. 31, (Köln: Böhlau, 2003), 261.
78. Ottmar Ette, *TransArea : eine literarische Globalisierungsgeschichte*, Berlin, Boston: de Gruyter, 2012.

79. Lazo, *Writing to Cuba. Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States*, 69.
80. During the twentieth century, nationalist Nicaraguan historiography went to some lengths to be as little specific about the beginnings of the filibuster expedition as possible. The attempt of the official historiography to use the struggle against Nicaragua as a model for other anti-imperial battles could, of course, be seriously hampered by pointing out the invitation.
81. Carlos Granados shows that in Central America the colonial European powers "created one of the most politically fractured regions of the world," (Carlos Granados, "Geopolítica, Destino Manifiesto y Filibusterismo en Centroamérica," in *Filibusterismo y Destino Manifiesto en las Américas*, ed. Víctor Hugo Acuña Ortega (San José, Costa Rica: Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría, 2010), 14), which has clearly been one of the major hindrances for isthmian cooperation ever since the end of Spain's colonial regime.
82. Kinloch Tijerino, *Nicaragua, Identidad y Cultura Política (1821–1858)*, 25.
83. The elites of these two cities, of course, never completely cut off the ties that connected them. Regular interchange between the two towns and family bonds (including intermarriage) existed. There were several liminal figures and go-betweens, mostly in the economic sphere. José Trinidad Muñoz Fernández, one of the principal military officers fighting against Walker (and the Nicaraguan who signed the original contract for the construction of a transisthmian canal), was born in León, yet mostly served as general under Granadino Presidents.
84. Edelberto Torres-Rivas, *La Piel de Centroamérica (una Visión Epidérmica de Setenta y Cinco Años de su Historia)*, 1a ed (San Salvador, El Salvador: FLACSO El Salvador, 2007), 19.
85. Bradford E. Burns, *Patriarch and Folk. The Emergence of Nicaragua 1798–1858* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 81.
86. In English this is often translated into *creole*, which creates some tension with conceptions of creole people and languages that do not have any connection with the Spanish colonial system. Therefore, I use the Spanish term *Criollo*. Ralph Bauer points to the multi-layered position the *Criollos* occupied throughout Latin America, "neither colonized nor colonizers but rather colonials" (Ralph Bauer, *The Cultural Geography of Colonial American Literatures: Empire, Travel, Modernity*, Cambridge Studies in American Literature and Culture 136 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 5), and also to the term's problematic genealogy: It was first used to "distinguish slaves of African descent born in the Americas from those born in Africa" (Ibid., 25) and remained a pejorative term for a long time, until empowered, independentist *Criollo* elites

adopted it—a process quite uneven throughout Latin America that left the term open for ambiguity to this very day.

87. All these terms were (and often continue to be) tinged with negative resentments. Assignment to one of these groups was not as scientific as nineteenth century racists would like to have it: As the classification was based on the 'mixture of blood,' the terms were—within limits—open to differentiation. Manners, behavior, clothes, sociolects, education, family background and other social factors could help to 'whiten' dark people or to 'blacken' white ones.
88. In 1811 the Spanish Empire had abolished slavery at home and in all its colonies except for Cuba, Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico. The *República Federal de Centroamérica* had reiterated that decision in 1824. Therefore, in the 1850s there were no black slaves in Central America, although the social status of most Blacks was everywhere inferior to those of people with lighter skins, including most people with mixed ethnic backgrounds.
89. Frances Kinloch Tijerino, "El Primer Encuentro con los Filibusteros: Antecedentes y Contexto," in *Revista de Historia*, ed. IHNCA, vol. 20, 21 (Managua: Editorial de la UCA, 2006), 24.
90. I cannot enter into a broad discussion of the concept of nation states. Suffice it to say, therefore, that in this text its usage is based on ideas popularized by Benedict Anderson, namely that a nation is an imagined community, and that this sense of community is made possible by "a half-fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communication (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity" (Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2003), 42–43.) The time line for the evolution of nation states basically follows Eric Hobsbawm's argument of the 'long nineteenth century', beginning with the French Revolution in 1789.
91. Kinloch Tijerino, *Nicaragua, Identidad y Cultura Política (1821–1858)*, 141.
92. Ibid., 31.
93. This included the religious elite, that was partly educated in Rome or traveled through Europe.
94. Miguel Ayerdis, with a view to newspaper discourses, notes that almost all social idea(l)s and concepts discussed in nineteenth century Nicaragua were "models structured by the European and North American societies" Miguel Ayerdis, *Publicaciones Periódicas, Formas de Sociabilidad y Procesos Culturales en Managua (1884–1926)*. (Managua: Banco Central de Nicaragua, 2005), 59.
95. Many historians of Nicaragua (both US and Central American) use the language of passive copying. While this thesis also makes a strong point

of the Nicaraguan elites' infatuation with Europe and, later on, the US, it has to be kept in mind that the Nicaraguan adoption of US customs and institutions (which would become even stronger from the 1890s onwards) was not plain mimicry, but an act of transculturization, a process in which certain traits of the models were copied, many others changed or mixed and still others rejected. See Michel Gobat, *Confronting the American Dream. Nicaragua under U.S. Imperial Rule*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

96. Entwined in this view was the Black Legend or *leyenda negra*, which derived from sixteenth and seventeenth century attacks of Spain's commercial foes on the successful nation. Controversely, Kirsten Mahlke (13) argues that one of the first histories of the New World, de Bry's *Historia Americae* was already influenced by the Black Legend.
97. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 51.
98. Walter D. Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*, Blackwell Manifestos (Malden: Blackwell, 2006), 86.
99. Richard Graham, ed., *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870–1940*, Critical Reflections on Latin America Series (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 1.
100. Alejandra Bottinelli, "Del Progreso al Orden. Letrados y Poder en el Origen de los Estados-Nación, en el Sur Americano," *Forum for Inter-American Research* 5, no. 3 (n.d.): 1.
101. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 13. ed. (London: Routledge, 1992), 175.
102. Kinloch Tijerino, *Nicaragua, Identidad y Cultura Política (1821–1858)*, 47.
103. Ibid., 108.
104. Burns, *Patriarch and Folk*, 591.
105. Elected every two years, prior to 1855 the highest office in Nicaragua was called the *Director Supremo del Estado de Nicaragua*. In its original intention the *Director Supremo* was supposed to be a *primus inter pares* of a junta—the *Directorio*—which represented both Nicaraguan factions. In reality, though, the President always exercised his power with few limitations.
106. Miguel Angel Herrera Cuarezma, *Bongos, Bogas, Vapores y Marinos. Historia de los "Marineros" en el Río San Juan; 1849–1855*, (Managua: Centro Nicaragüense de Escritores, 1999), 81.
107. Kinloch Tijerino, *Nicaragua, Identidad y Cultura Política (1821–1858)*, 203.
108. Whisnant, *Rascally Signs in Sacred Places. The Politics of Culture in Nicaragua*, 63 and *passim*.

109. Burns, *Patriarch and Folk*, 182.
110. Herrera Cuarezma, *Bongos, Bogas, Vapores Y Marinos. Historia De Los "Marineros" En El Río San Juan; 1849–1855*, 65.
111. Burns, *Patriarch and Folk*, 182.
112. This became especially relevant when it came to buying land, which the company needed to construct new buildings and transportation infrastructure. Often no written documents existed which established the ownership of a particular area, so that the company could easily get in touch with local strongmen who would vouch for being the owners, then transferred the land to the company and also helped to protect it if protests occurred.
113. Burns, *Patriarch and Folk*, 179.
114. The idea of importing modernity was widespread in Latin America at the time: Many ex-Spanish colonies attempted to rush 'modernization' by inviting foreigners they deemed superior—i.e. mostly whites—to their countries. Cuba was on the forefront of such *blanqueamiento* experiments.
115. The supposed superiority of foreign fighters was not only due to the better weapons they brought along, but also because Nicaraguan troops consisted of peasants forced into service. These people logically had little inclination to fight for a cause they did not consider their own, and thus often fell back when attacked, or deserted whenever possible to go back to the field work necessary to feed their families.

CHAPTER 3

The Nicaraguan Press and *El Nicaraguense*

In his hugely successful and widely read travel narrative *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatán* from 1841, John Lloyd Stephens describes how his arrival in Granada, Nicaragua, was greeted with enthusiasm, and how he was congratulated on his recent "escape from prison" in San Salvador. In fact, this was a rather minor affair: On his way to the ruins of Copán, in what is today Honduras, Stephens and his accompanying artist Frederick Catherwood were prevented from leaving their lodgings in the village of Copán for one night when a young Honduran officer questioned the validity of their passports. Stephens then wrote a message to the passport issuer, their benefactor General Cascara, and shortly afterward the whole issue was resolved. Stephens, though, related to his readers that he was flabbergasted that the news of his little adventure with Honduran authorities had already reached Granada prior to his arrival (in a way he "did not know how"), obviously traveling faster than he did.[1]

His amazement was fed by the notion of US Americans that Nicaragua was a country lagging behind in all terms of 'civilization', which, among other factors, comprised fast transportation and quick and reliable communication over vast territories. Steamships and railways represented the first, telegraphs, a tightly-knit network of post offices and the availability of newspapers made up the second ingredient. And Nicaragua was perceived in lacking all of these. Thus it was not only Stephens who was surprised that the Central Americans could relate information

© The Author(s) 2016

A. Beer, *A Transnational Analysis of Representations of the US Filibusters in Nicaragua, 1855-1857*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-28352-4_3

so quickly in the 1840s, but also his even more famous fellow traveler Ephraim George Squier, who visited Nicaragua almost a decade later, and who repeatedly remarked that dignities of various cities had already prepared an official reception on his arrival, knowing that he was coming. Such information was not only related by advance guards of Squier's travel companions, but also by a well-established communication network most outsiders were unaware of. Indeed, the very news of Squier's appointment and his supposed travel route had been known in Nicaragua before he even set foot on the isthmus.[2] Such communication channels—often involving traveling market people, doctors and clergy—are hard to reconstruct, but in spite of negative perceptions of the US travelers, Nicaragua maintained a wide network of communication channels with foreign countries. Contacts with Guatemala—first capital and dominant province within the *República Federal de Centroamérica*—and neighboring Costa Rica were especially well developed, as were connections with France and colonial Great Britain. Diplomatic dispatches arrived via Mexico and Guatemala, by way of El Viejo and León, or on overland routes traveling through Honduras. Overland journeys were dangerous, tiresome and extremely slow processes, given that in Nicaragua decent roads for fast riding (let alone for carriages) only existed between Granada and León. Furthermore, despite carrying letters of reference, private travellers were sometimes detained or could not contact the appropriate person for their purposes and thus had to abort their journeys, or return empty-handed. Correspondence not transported on the British fleet traveled slowly, as Squier realized:

> My despatches [sic!] had arrived that afternoon, with three months' later dates […]. It was seldom that dispatches ever reached the American officers in this country, and then only long after date. I got bushels of letters, papers and documents, all directed to my predecessor, at eight, twelve and even eighteen months after they were despatched [sic!] from Washington. The English agents were never thirty days behind hand.[3]

The circulation of news and newspapers relied on personal networks and was often linked to business affairs, with 'correspondents' being merchants or businessmen active in the foreign locales, who wrote regular letters to the editors. These letters usually contained a mix of business-related news (e.g. prices of raw material at the local market), political developments (often compiled from local newspapers, not from

direct observation) and society (or court) gossip. The Nicaraguan form of news gathering from foreign countries thus followed established practices at the time, with the difference that due to the country's small and inward-oriented elite, the newspaper editors possessed only a limited network of contacts living abroad. In comparison with the US, therefore, the country seemed backward, but when analyzing the sporadic data carefully, one can discern that the 1840s and early 1850s saw major changes in the infrastructure as well as context of news production in Nicaragua. And when the filibusters arrived, they brought even more upheaval into the sphere of the press.

In Nicaragua, as throughout the Spanish-American ex-colonies, independence was distinctly an elite project, and this elite was founded on racial and social hierarchies. A highly important distinguishing factor was education. Bradford Burns explains that "[e]ducation divided rather than consolidated Nicaragua. [...L]iteracy distinguished the patriarchs from the folk, as it later separated the ruling class from those they dominated."[4] The limitation of formal education to male members of the elite resulted in a very limited number of literate people.[5] Higher education, thus, "mirrored the dual society and, what was more, contributed to widening the cleavages among the patriarchal elites and between them and the folk."[6] In contrast to the United States, were literacy was high at the mid-nineteenth century, Nicaragua can be identified as a primarily oral culture.[7] No contemporary studies exist to present precise numbers of literacy for Nicaragua, but anecdotal evidence suggests what also historian Miguel Ayerdis underlines, namely that until the 1890s, the literacy rate can be estimated to hover around 10–13% at best.[8] As this was after the reforms of the Liberal era of the 1870s, with its surge in educational activities, it seems prudent to assume that in the 1850s the number was even lower. In a country with roughly 250.000 inhabitants, the number of 1890 meant that around (probably less than) 25.000 people could write and read.

Books were almost always private property as public libraries did not exist, except for the one at the university of León. When books were to be had, they were often from Mexico, Guatemala or the US, and surprisingly often travel accounts about Nicaragua: Jorge Arellano points out that John Lloyd Stephens's travel accounts, for example, were not only bestsellers in the US—with seven editions between 1847 and 1862—but also some of the few books that could be found in Nicaragua, in three different translations from Mexico and at least one from Guatemala.[9]

The most common artifacts of knowledge were, thus, pamphlets and newspapers. The contemporary account of Levy notices this preference:

> Literature written in Nicaragua is almost non-existent; the few people who undertake the task of writing for the public, do so only in newspapers, and if not, in the form of little pamphlets or one-pagers, which are distributed free of charge. The articles are almost always written anonymously or signed with a pseudonym, and generally have as their subject some kind of polemic, usually of politics, and it is rare that these texts do not quickly degenerate into personal offenses.[10]

According to Jorge Arellano, the first newspapers of the country were handwritten, often consisting of a single page and a single opinionated article, thus being almost identical to the widespread pamphlets.[11] Arellano traces the very first (handwritten) Nicaraguan newspaper to a priest who published *La Loca* in 1826.[12] After this inception, handwritten papers were produced in the principal towns and distributed in the halls of secondary schools. The often mediocre quality of these papers and the lack of public libraries meant that today virtually none survives. Handwritten newspapers were in use for a long time because printed Nicaraguan press products were hardly available. This was due to the lack of printing material—ink, paper—and the limited availability of printing presses. The first printing press was transported to the country, according to Arellano, by a diplomat in 1824, 169 years after the first press had been introduced to Guatemala, the old colonial center.[13] It went operational as *Imprenta del Gobierno* in January 1830.

The importance pamphlets had in and with relation to Nicaraguan papers relates back to the configuration of the emerging journalistic field at the time. In Nicaragua much more than in the US, pamphlets formed an integral part of the circulation of knowledge: They were cheap to produce and could be printed quickly. The concentration of literate people in only two cities and the concentration of the printing presses in the hands of the two political parties meant that these one-pagers were mostly used by the parties as quick means for spreading political propaganda and were frequently slid under the doors of the urbanites in Granada, León (and sometimes Masaya) in the 1840s and 1850s. They were often written in a satirical tone, criticizing the opponent political faction. Because of their opinionated style, they commanded careful reading and considerable commenting and thus played exactly the role Jürgen Habermas and others

have ascribed to the modern newspaper.[14] Pamphlets are ephemeral objects, and knowledge about many of them only survived via Nicaraguan newspapers that paraphrased or quoted them. Pamphlets were important enough to dedicate considerable newspaper space to contest them, and to do so almost immediately. With the advent of fast transport, the clergy also saw to it that their sermons were distributed in pamphlet form. An example can be found in the *Boletín Oficial de León*: a reproduction of a public letter by various bishops from different isthmian countries which urged their compatriots to take up the fight against the filibusters, as these endangered the "traditional religion" of Central America. The letter was preceded by the following remarks from editor Sebastián Salinas:

> All Central Americans have seen the pastoral letters of these illustrious señores, the arch bishops of Guatemala and the bishops of San Salvador and Honduras, and soon they will also see the letter by the vicar of this parish, who has been prevented from sending it along with the others by his grave illness.
>
> These pastoral letters are directed to the clergy and the parishes of their respective dioceses to show the dangers which the invasion of the foreign adventurers that today oppress a good deal of our republic mean for our religion. These documents, says the Gaceta de Guatemala No. 79, fully reflect the feelings of their respective authors […].[15]

Tracking the route of the pastoral letters reveals a transnational operation of quite considerable organizational coordination: The Guatemalan archbishop and the bishops of San Salvador and Honduras all wrote epistles and sent them to Guatemala where they were then published together in the government newspaper, thus facilitating the letters' distribution throughout Central America. The stringent coordination between the media of the oral sermon, the pastoral letter and newspapers enabled the Catholic Church to connect with urban elites throughout Central America.

Throughout Latin America, the shift from discussing scientific developments to commenting and arguing on the political situation in their societies helped South American newspapers to become motors of change in the sense of Jürgen Habermas's 'public sphere' at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[16] The revolutionary governments who came to power during the 1820s in South America considered the newspaper both a fundamental prerequisite and an expression of Enlightenment, and when in power actively encouraged

the press. Often they even took out subscriptions to help ailing papers.[17] All this Republican activism was missing in Nicaragua, and thus few newspapers existed. To take the example of Chile, François-Xavier Guerra and Annick Lempérière note that in the late 1820s there had already been "about 15 different papers" in Santiago de Chile alone.[18] In Nicaragua, on the other hand, there only existed one government paper with alternating titles, and from time to time some short-lived opposition publications. The aforementioned press remained the only one in the country; only for a few years existed two presses. This duplication was a result of the war between the two family-parties that necessitated one press each to print their pamphlets and official organs. Consequently, one press was kept running in Granada, the other one in León, both being intimately connected with the local universities. From time to time, extremely short-lived papers outside of this dualistic party scheme were published—e.g. the satirical *Las Avispas*—but mostly Nicaraguan print products reflected the bipolarization of the country. Apart from the official government organ, all other papers had to face the aforementioned severe material shortcomings. Additionally, the paper's staff was extremely limited, often consisting solely of the editor. Thus, publication was infrequent, often limited to not more than two pages in size and quite introspective: The papers of the 1830s and 1840s worked much like pamphlets in the sense that they mostly existed to rebuke an earlier publication by the enemy camp. Most newspapers solely ran one long editorial article which either discussed more or less recent political events or commented on the socio-political situation of Nicaragua in an often moralizing tone. Sometimes this major article was accompanied by short snippets of news, taken from foreign newspapers. Yet, as the papers appeared so infrequently, they did not serve to describe day-to-day events. Rather, they functioned as tools for international governmental communication: As the *boletines oficiales* or *partes oficiales* of the various Latin American republics were official state organs, directed by the government, they published official statements and declarations. A careful reading of these press releases was thus important for governmental, especially exterior, affairs.

An important feature of Nicaraguan newspapers was the editors' eagerness to include short poems—sometimes in a satirical, but more often in a patriotic or moral tone—in their columns.[19] Poems reflected the elitist focus of the Nicaraguan newspapers, as it were these circles in which knowledge of poetry—and own attempts at this art—were regarded as substantial contributions to the elites' 'civilizing' efforts. Poetry was

common fare in nineteenth-century newspapers from the colonial centers, and by using the same practice, Nicaraguans inscribed themselves into this transnational elite discussions.

As the papers were not geared towards a wider public, they lacked advertisements, invitations to public events or any kind of news that was situated outside of the elites' sphere. For the members of this circle, pamphleteering or the publication of public letters provided the means to participate in a network of inner-class communication. In the same way as books, newspapers were clearly a means of communication for a tight-knit network of *letrados*, monopolizing cultural functions and excluding the majority of the Nicaraguan population.[20]

Most material that was sent to newspapers was not written in the form of neutral reports, but rather followed the form of the personal, often highly opinionated letter. Editors, on the other hand, did not hesitate to insert private correspondence in their pages if the writer or deliverer of the material was deemed trustworthy. This could generate considerable agitation as people active in the field of politics or business who felt that a report or public letter went against their interests, perceived such articles as unjust or outright slander and had to contest immediately. Letters could generate considerable agitation. In 1855, John ("Juan") Priest, US consul in San Juan del Sur, wrote a letter to the *Boletín Oficial* informing the Nicaraguans that "in one of the US newspapers appears an extract of a letter I have written to my father in Philadelphia. It was not intended for the public. In it, I complain about the unjust and illegal treatment I have been subjected to because of a mistake by Colonel Xatruch in San Juan del Sur."[21] The leaked letter seems to have been so unfavorable to the Nicaraguan government that Priest felt obliged to inform the *Boletín Oficial* (and thus the Nicaraguan government) that "this letter had been written under the impression of the moment and in an agitated state" and additionally "has been interpreted incorrectly" by the US press, leaving Priest to assure that he has "no complaint whatsoever against the legitimate government of this republic." Yet, very often letters were intended to be published and served the same function as press releases do today. The growing availability of fast steamship transportation made a quick reply mandatory, and facilitated the distribution of public letters and their responses to a large audience. This was intensified by the lack of editorial control and impartial (or at least disinterested) correspondents, i.e. by the still incomplete formation of the journalistic field. Newspapers were often regarded as a prolongation of

political or commercial interests, not as independent fourth estate. This was especially true for Nicaragua, where the few papers that existed were controlled by the two major political parties, and their editorial stance a mere parroting of the respective party line.

From the 1840s onward, more and more urban *Mestizo* families subscribed to newspapers and occasionally magazines delivered via steamship companies that would not only bring European, but also US press products to Nicaragua. The growing importance of the US and its steamship lines is traceable in the circulation patterns of Nicaraguan newspapers. Such connections usually went out from New York or Panama, favoring the availability of newspapers from these port cities. On the Pacific side, the famous Pacific Mail Steamship Company made its way from California to Valparaíso in Chile via Mexico and Peru, delivering newspaper subscriptions along the way, and making available several papers from these countries in Nicaragua. Obviously, these were the same routes along which also US newspapers received their information about Central and South America. The English-language *Aspinwall Courier* and the *Panama Star and Herald* played the role of gate-keepers for US American newspapers, gathering information from Spanish-language sources and then translating them into English articles. The *Aspinwall Courier* even ran an English-language digest of Latin American articles on a regular basis and published special editions in connection with events they deemed interesting for US Americans. Nicaraguan papers sometimes also quoted from these papers, especially from the *Panama Star and Herald*. Its digestive constituted by far the most important such for the US press. Although it would have been possible to receive South and Central American papers in California and at the US eastern seaboard, the *Courier* and *Star and Herald* were used instead, due to the convenience they offered by already presenting their information in English. One example is *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*: Virtually all articles on Central America mentioned the same ships and way points: "The steamer Emilie had returned to Panama from an interesting cruise along the coast of Central America, with news from Guatemala to the 16th, San Salvador to the 28th Jan., and Costa Rica to the 2d ult," the article "Central America" of March 08, 1856 reads, while "Central America" of August 30, 1856 relates that "[t]he foregoing intelligence is derived from the Panama Star and Herald, and it is confirmed by the Daniel Webster […]," and "Central America" of September 13, 1856 reads: "Our files form New Granada are dated at Panama and Aspinwall, on the 19th of August."

The beginning shift of political dominance in the circum-Caribbean from Great Britain to the US in the 1850s further cemented the distinct geography of power for the circulation of goods, people and knowledge, in which port cities played a vital part. Especially New York, San Francisco and New Orleans became the new hubs for the circulation of knowledge.[22] New York City in particular, with its vibrant Cuban exile community, was both a transport hub and a hotbed of filibuster activity. As one of the traditional centers of printing and publishing in the US, New York City also hosted a multifarious string of newspapers, including several in Spanish. New Orleans, though, was "the undisputed capital of Hispanophone print production" prior to the US Civil War,[23] with an impressive total of at least 23 Spanish-language periodicals published in the city. Thanks to a well-connected network of continuously traveling Latin writers, publishers and business men, the New Orleans papers could often publish news on Central and Latin America before any other paper, which earned them the respect of the New York-based industry. Before the regular scheduled trips of US steamships, though, such connections were irregular, resulting in intervals of silence between the US and the isthmus. Such obstacles bogged down the availability of news from the isthmus in the US, and of the US in Nicaragua.

Nicaragua also had ambassadors in Europe and the US, and these diplomats enclosed newspapers from their host countries with the overseas mail. The official Nicaraguan government paper ran infrequent sections called "Esterior" or "Noticias del esterior," which often relied on a mixture of newspaper articles and personal correspondence. The *Registro Oficial* of June 14, 1845 quoted from various ambassadors' letters, but also from an eight month-old article published in the *Constitucional de Paris*, the *Redactor Oficial de Honduras* and "varios periódicos que se publican en Paris" to give its readers an overview of the diplomatic reactions after the British occupation of Bluefields in Nicaragua. The *Registro* also occasionally featured a summary overview of "algunos periodicos franceses", for example "la revista política" and "el constitucional" (April 11, 1845) or the "Debates de Paris" (November 14, 1846). The article copied from the *Debates* in this instance was ten months old.

The same newspaper reported on the latest developments in Mexico and the then newly constituted Texan republic as "by way of steamship communication, which arrived at San Juan on the twentieth of October, we received overseas news as well as some articles from the *Presse* (a French paper) that bring us up to the date of 14 September on the questions which

are pressing between Mexico and the new republic of Texas" ("Méjico", December 27, 1845). In its following issue of January 24, 1846, the *Registro Oficial* continued its assessment of the new situation in Texas under the heading "Continuan las Noticias de Méjico y Tejas," as it had received the *London Times*, arriving via steamship from Liverpool. That the news circulated along the steamship lines—in the 1840s owned by the European colonial powers—thus repeatedly resulted in the bizarre situation that printed news from Central American neighbors were received in Nicaragua only after some months and via a detour to Europe.

News from South America also arrived faster in Nicaragua when they took the detour via Europe. In typical colonial fashion, the main cities of Latin America were best connected with the ports of the colonial centers, i.e. France, Great Britain and especially Spain. Communication between the Latin American countries, on the contrary, was so poor that the double trip across the Atlantic provided for faster circulation than the route on horse or mule back between the nations. Additionally, as still some of the most important political decisions were discussed and decided in the European metropolises, news from London, Madrid and Paris were in high demand. With better steam engines travel times shortened immensely in the 1850s: Now most steamships needed roughly a week to travel between the two continents.

El Mentor Nicaragüense of November 20, 1841, for example, mentions a "noticioso de ambos mundos" which included articles from the *New Orleans Bee*, an important bilingual English-French paper. The "noticioso" is actually the French *Revue des Deux Mondes*, a highly successful Paris magazine. The trajectory of the news was thus doubly transatlantic: first from New Orleans, one of the new hubs of Central American and Caribbean commerce, to Paris, and from there back to the Americas, this time to Nicaragua.

In the 1850s, this power relation became common place, although sometimes was reversed Papers like the *Correo de Ultramar*, which was published in Paris but written in Spanish and having as its audience the educated Latin American public, underline the quintessential role the French capital played for the circulation of knowledge in the nineteenth century; a circulation that was clearly monodirectional: The possibilities of Latin American perspectives, ideas or grievances to be published in the *Correo de Ultramar* or other papers was close to zero. The *Boletín Oficial de León* ran a series of articles under the headline "La cuestion de Centro-América," in which it summarized the ongoing discussions

between the US and Great Britain about the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty. On October 24, 1856 the *Boletín* published an article that had already appeared in the *London Times*. Yet, it is not taken from the original but from an already edited and commented version which had appeared in the *New Orleans Picayune*. This version was then copied by the *Gaceta de Guatemala*, where the editors of the *Boletín* read and reproduced it. From England, an old European colonial power to the up-and-coming US, to the old colonial hub Guatemala to Nicaragua: The way of the article from the *London Times* clearly indicates the latter's marginal role.

In many instances the *Gaceta de Guatemala* played the same role of gate-keeper for Nicaraguan media the *Panama Star and Herald* and the *Aspinwall Courier* played for the US press. The *Gaceta* had a regular supply of US newspapers and constantly translated, summarized and commented on their articles. Thanks to the regular overland connections between Guatemala and Nicaragua, the *Gaceta* arrived in León and Granada, where local editors further worked on the US articles, amending new comments and mixing them with other pieces of information they had received in the meantime: an amazing transnational process of news production.

The opening of Cornelius Vanderbilt's transisthmian transportation route from New York to San Francisco via Nicaragua on July 14, 1851 did not so much revolutionize as stabilize and fasten the circulation of knowledge for Nicaraguans. With the opening of the transisthmian line, the Nicaraguan port cities of San Juan del Norte, San Juan del Sur and the way points along the transisthmian route Rivas and La Virgen gradually acquired the status of secondary hubs in the flow of information. The opening of regular steamship communication and the highly increased number of passengers passing through Nicaragua (although often only spending some hours or days at a port), widened the possibilities for the circulation of both written and oral communication with the exterior. It also facilitated the possibility to directly interact with the passengers; The regular steamship service facilitated shorter, yet more frequent updates.[24] Sometimes newspaper editors or reporters in both the United States and Nicaragua not only waited in their offices for letters or passengers sharing their insights to arrive, but engaged in conversations with travellers directly at the pier. Often, though, the passengers most disposed to talk to newspaper editers were filibusters themselves.

El Nicaraguense *and the Upheaval of the Nicaraguan Press*

The establishment of *El Nicaraguense*, the official filibuster paper, was an important step for the group under William Walker to influence the channels of communication between the US, Nicaragua and other Latin American countries. Its transnational nature—produced by Cubans and *yankees*, written for Nicaraguans and US Americans, and circulated between different locales—gave it a unique position in the circulation of information to and from Nicaragua.

In the early days of the filibuster presence in Nicaragua, US papers came to Granada thanks to the personal efforts of newspaper agents: "We must apologise to Mr. Edward Cooper, Newspaper Agent in San Francisco, for not returning our thanks for the constant and copious supplies of Eastern papers which we continue to receive at his hands," the filibusters acknowledged.[25] On October 25, 1855, they again thanked their benefactor, this time situating him in New York: "Mr. Edward Cooper, of New York City, will please accept our thanks for the favor of sending us the latest papers by the last mail. The courtesies he has heretofore extended to us lay us under many obligations to him."[26] Examples abound in the first issues of *El Nicaraguense* in which the editors thank friends and acquaintances for forwarding papers from the US. For Central American matters, this reliance on personal networks is also obvious: In an untitled article of January 26, 1856, the editors informed their readers that "[b]y a gentleman who arrived in this city on Thursday, from Costa Rica, we learn that all is quiet at present in that State" while one month later, on February 23, 1856, news from Guatemala arrived "[b]y private and reliable advices."[27] On another occasion, it was a filibuster officer who forwarded a Honduran paper on his return to Granada, which then was used for further reports on that country.[28] And the announcement that a new paper would be published in El Salvador reached the *Nicaraguense* via a prospectus forwarded to them by acquaintances.[29] Furthermore, thanks to the steamship line that connected Peru with Mexico, and on which several newspapers were forwarded, South American papers, especially from Peru, regularly were mentioned in the Spanish-language columns of *El Nicaraguense*. The *Nicaraguense,* although criticizing the Nicaraguan press for being backward, thus resorted to the same techniques of information-gathering as its counterparts in the beginning.

Recruiting offices in New York and San Francisco actively promoted Walker's cause and served as communication centers for the filibusters as well as editors reporting on them. The *New York Daily Times* of April 09, 1856 identified the St. Charles Saloon on Broadway as "the headquarters of the fillibusters [sic!]" where they gathered, recruited new men and also interchanged the latest intelligence from Nicaragua on the Nicaragua Bulletin, a public wooden board onto which news items were pinned.[30] There was a constant to and fro of filibusters between Nicaragua and the US: Officers were granted leave, some wounded recuperated with their families, etc. Returning from these trips, many brought along the latest US newspaper. And, of course, ordinary passengers helped as well. "We are indebted to Capt. Swift, who came passenger on the San Carlos from San Juan del Norte, for files of the *Panama Star and Herald* and *Aspinwall Courier*," the *Nicaraguense* editors announced on December 08, 1855.[31] And the filibusters were lucky to count some frequent passengers between the US and Nicaragua amongst their sympathizers: Miss Pellet, the wife of a deceased filibuster, fervent advocate of filibusterism and "a lady of many friends in Nicaragua"[32] repeatedly traveled between the two countries and gave well-attended lectures about the filibusters' progress in several cities with information she had collected on various travels through the country.[33] When she was in the States, the *Nicaraguense* followed her exploits in the US papers, and on her return she herself was interviewed, and the news she brought over from the US used for articles.[34]

With the passage of time, the circulation between Nicaragua and the US became more and more professional: Subscriptions to newspapers were taken out and the steamship captains reserved some papers on their trips for the filibusters.[35] Additionally, Walker made several attempts to invest into his paper's infrastructure: Joseph Malè, one of the editors of *El Nicaraguense*, was specifically sent back to the US to procure printing material in New York.[36]

A first zenith of this professionalization was the opening of a newspaper agency in Granada, which had US papers on offer. It was announced in *El Nicaraguense* of March 08, 1856:

> By an advertisment [sic!] in another column, it will be seen that an agency for the sale of New Orleans papers has been established in this city, where the *Weekly Crescent* and also the *True Delta* can be purchased or subscribed for. The *New Orleans Delta* will always be found at the office of *El Nicaraguense*.

> It is to be hoped in time this agency will grow into a regular Literary Depot, where all kinds of books, papers and stationary can be supplied.[37]

This agency—the office of Wines and Co., which also served as the post office—presented, small as it was, an important embodiment of the filibusters' connections with the US. Not only were the major (Southern US) papers available there, but the agency also provided US papers for the *Nicaraguense* and vice versa.[38] In a *Nicaraguense* article titled "Harper's Magazine/ Late Papers" of May 21, 1856 the editors urge their readers to take advantage of the subscription service. How many filibusters did so is unknown; given their constant movement throughout the country as well as the dire financial situation of most of them, it can be presumed that the success of the agency was limited. The same article also shows the ever increasing number of publications at the filibusters' disposal: Wines and Co. did not only circulate *Harper's*, but also "late papers from California, the Atlantic States, and all portions of the Central American States—Guatemala, Honduras and San Salvador—and also […] files of the Cronica, published in New York."[39]

When *El Nicaraguense* was safely established in Nicaragua in 1856, the editors informed their readers that they had "appointed Mr. Fisher, of San Francisco, as our agent in California. Persons wishing to subscribe for *El Nicaraguense*, or to advertise in the same, can do so by calling at the agency of Mr. Fisher, in the iron building opposite the express office of Wells, Fargo & Co."[40] This was a huge step towards an increasing professionalization of *El Nicaraguense's* international availability as with this office a steady flow of forwarded news and the *Nicaraguense's* distribution in the San Francisco area as well as along the Wells and Fargo transportation routes was guaranteed. The filibusters early on had bragged about the *Nicaraguense's* circulation: "Wines & Co. inform us that at least fifteen hundred issues of El Nicaraguense were sent to the Eastern States by the last express. […] Besides these, one thousand copies were forwarded to different parts of the Republic and the neighboring States." The editors concluded the article on their own paper with the smug remark: "Pretty good circulation for a new paper."[41]

Later, the *Nicaraguense* editors also sent the paper directly to influential US politicians and publications: An article in the *Boletín Oficial de León*—copied from the Costa Rican *Album Semanal de Costa-rica n. 67*—mentions that the filibusters had sent 413 issues of *El Nicaraguense* to the US, "396 of those to newspaper editors, 12 to politicians and the

rest to government ministers in Washington."[42] This focused effort to increase the circulation of the paper and get it into the hands of decision makers might well have been a lesson learned from the Cuban exiles, who had edited Spanish-language newspapers in the US since the early 1840s, and who started to realize in the mid-1850s that their target audiences (the supposedly revolutionary population in Cuba) did not receive their publications, as Spanish colonial authorities destroyed copies wherever they could find them.

At a time when the huge demand for information about Nicaragua was growing with every (real or fictitious) victory of Walker's forces, the availability of an English language paper situated supposedly straight at the horse's mouth was more than welcome. It is little known, though, that this was not the first English-language paper edited in Nicaragua: During the heydays of the California Gold Rush, the *Nicaragua Flag* had been published, and possibly another one called *American Flag*. Jorge Arellano mentions that the *Nicaragua Flag* had been published for the first time on July 26, 1851,[43] but does not hint at the duration of its publication or its contents. If the *American Flag* has ever existed is even more doubtful, as the only reference for it is a *San Francisco Herald* article of September 23, 1851.

Even during the filibusters' presence in Nicaragua, there existed a rival English-language paper: Henry L. Kinney and James Fabens, during their attempt to establish a colony in San Juan del Norte, began publishing a newspaper called *Central American* on September 15, 1855, one month prior to *El Nicaraguense*. The distribution of this publication was much more limited than the Walker paper because Kinney's colony encountered huge logistical problems, making the publication extremely irregular. The filibusters or some of their Nicaraguan collaborators published another newspaper in Masaya under the title *Masaya Herald*. *El Nicaraguense* mentioned this paper a few times throughout the months of August and September 1856, but it seems to have ceased publication shortly thereafter. Additionally, *El Nicaraguense* of May 03, 1856 informs its readers about an English language paper called the *Nicaragua True Delta*, supposedly published in New Orleans and "printed expressly for circulation in Central America." The filibuster paper's assumption that the enterprise "is well timed and popular, and should the proprietor continue the project, no doubt it will pay well" seems to have been over-enthusiastic, as no mentioning of a successive issue followed.

In spite of these publications, from the beginning *El Nicaraguense* was regarded as the only authoritative English-language voice from Nicaragua.

Its position in Granada, one of the two major cities in the country, and directly next to La Virgen, the port every isthmus-crossing passenger had to pass through, made it a central publication from the central site in the country. Also, obviously, it was the official organ of the de facto administration first indirectly and then directly run by the filibusters. The filibusters capitalized on their unique position with regard to information, their exclusive position to depict the true situation in Nicaragua. Already in the first issue of *El Nicaraguense*, an article under the heading of "Progres [sic!] of Gen. Walker's Expedition in Nicaragua" made clear that only this paper could give a trustworthy account of their campaign, with others relying on second-hand information.[44] The next issue reiterated this. The article "General Walker" argued:

> We who witnessed the stirring scenes and taken part with [Walker] in the exciting drama […] know something more about the real merits of the man and his cause, and of his position at different periods in the history of his participation in the war […] than passengers from California, or gossipping quid-nuncs writing from Greytown or Pier No.3, North River.[45]

The last sentence of the article mentions an alternative source of information for the US press: interviews with passengers on the interoceanic route passing through Nicaragua. *El Nicaraguense* was especially eager to position itself against accounts by these travelers, which—as mentioned—were frequently interviewed on arrival. Although in its majority Californian gold-seekers, these travelers often expressed criticism towards the filibusters, and were the only ones that could counter the filibusters' claim of exclusive eye-witnesses to the Nicaraguan situation.

In its initial editorial, the paper presumptuously boasted that with its publication "a new era in the history of the press of Central America" would begin.[46] In its second issue, the editors gave a detailed depiction of the state they perceived Nicaraguan society and the press to be in, and the part they and their paper hoped to play in its development:

> The liberty social, political and religious of any people must always, to a great extent depend upon an entire emancipation from improper control of that medium of conveying their opinions and ideas—the public print. Hence we see no nation, however extended its resources, however intelligent its people, whose prosperity and advancement in the scale of civilization cannot be directly attributed to their freedom of speech, and through this, to their

> means of acquiring information. In Nicaragua, more especially, are we about to perceive the change to be wrought.[47]

The freer the press, the higher a nation's position on the scale of civilization, with the US providing the yard stick for measurement. The paper meant to 'open up' Nicaraguan journalism in much the same way as the filibusters wanted to 'open up' the country in general. In the beginning, though, the *Nicaraguense* did not have sufficient personnel to even cover their own activities: For the "Speech of Gen. Walker," which the *Nicaraguense* published on June 07, 1856, the filibusters had to resort to the *New York Herald* to obtain it ("All of our army subscribers have solicited us often to publish the speech delivered by Gen. Walker, at Rivas on the occasion of the general review of the troops after the receipt of the news of Schlesinger's defeat. We find it in the New York Herald").[48]

The editors were quite blunt about the filibuster paper; they declared it to be primarily "an advertising medium, [...] an exponent of the capabilities and resources of the country."[49] And as every advertising medium, it needed wide circulation. Walker's soldiers were thus actively encouraged to send the newspaper to their friends and relatives in the United States to attract new recruits. This propaganda effort also predetermined the focus of many articles in the *Nicaraguense*: It served to gather information on the supposedly unknown territory of Nicaragua and to transmit such information in a way that would recruit ever more US citizens. Articles thus often highlighted the need for exploration and settlement and reported on (invariably successful) expeditions in search of valuable minerals. All Nicaraguan citizens sympathetic to the filibusters and all the passengers passing through the country were called upon to contribute whatever information they could offer as the editors wanted to do "everything we can to make our paper both interesting and informative" and therefore expected "everybody who knows something interesting, be it about the resources of this country, about its products or something else of public interest, to forward us his ideas in written form."[50] The urgency of this message was underlined by the fact that it was one of the few articles which was translated from English into Spanish in the initial issue.

Walker himself ordered several expeditions to the mountainous region of Chontales, where gold was suspected to exist, and members of these scouting parties repeatedly reported on their endeavors in the *Nicaraguense*. The first such article appeared in issue number nine of

November 22, 1855, and already announced in its title "Gold in Nicaragua!" It was written by government minister and filibuster collaborator Fermín Ferrer,[51] who reported that "[o]n the 3rd. of the present month, I went to the district of Chontales, with the object of visiting the village of Juigalpa, and also to look at some minerals, recently discovered, by some neighbors."[52] Of course, the minerals turned out to be gold, and the article plunges into the predictable euphoric narrative of the country's opportunities. On January 26, 1856, the filibuster paper announced "Diamonds in Nicaragua," and reported on a poor filibuster who had traveled in the Chontales region and found diamonds by "accidentally" breaking them out of stones with his machete. Follow-up expeditions were fitted out, and their findings given a prominent place in the *Nicaraguense*: On February 23, 1856, "News from the Mines" arrived which detailed how to get to the region; the following week—on March 01, 1856—the paper sported the motivational article "Ho! For Chontales!" On May 03, 1856, *El Nicaraguense* dedicated one and a half pages to the summary of another expedition to Chontales.[53] This time an abridged version was translated in the Spanish section. Afterwards, the region around León was visited, which resulted in two articles on "Topographical and Geographical Notices of the Departement of León" in *El Nicaraguense* on August 09, 1856 and August 16, 1856, respectively. According to these articles, León was blessed with a different kind of natural riches: The author viewed the region mainly under the prospect of interoceanic communication. In the first of these articles, he discussed the possibilities of Realejo to serve as a harbor, while in the second he described the department of León's future perspective within such a prospected canal.

These articles, in their composition, tone and focus, mirrored typical nineteenth century travel accounts by Stephens, Squier and others, in a style Amy Greenberg has called "boaster literature": mountains rich with minerals, water easily to be had, rich farm lands, abundant wild life. Such articles of (real or imagined) exploration trips were vital for the creation of a 'fictive reality,' as they constituted one of the unique features of the filibuster paper. Other US papers could not boast such detailed reports from the country. That all reporters from Nicaragua were filibusters themselves becomes obvious in various instances; yet, did never provoke other US papers to question their authority.

US newspapers jumped on the opportunity to gain first hand information from Nicaragua, often quoting the filibuster publication at

length and without discussing its trustworthiness, especially when news favored expansionist designs. The *New York Daily Times* of January 14, 1856, for example, reprinted a *Nicaraguense* article about the discovery of gold in Chontales and included a letter titled “Additional from Nicaragua” which noted that a follow-up expedition was already being fitted out. This information was based on an *El Nicaraguense* article that was not quoted. The *Daily Times* often copied *verbatim* between three and five articles from *El Nicaraguense* whenever the paper was available. “Two Weeks Later from California” of January 30, 1856 and “News from Nicaragua,” of February 14, 1856 consist exclusively of reprints from *El Nicaraguense*, although only for half of the articles this source is indicated. The articles “Important from Nicaragua” and “The Nicaragua News,” both published on February 29, 1856, contain six copies of various articles from *El Nicaraguense,* “Important from Nicaragua” of March 14, 1856 is made up of four *Nicaraguense* articles. “Highly important from Nicaragua” of April 03, 1856 about the commencement of war between Costa Rica and Nicaragua is based entirely on information from the *Nicaraguense*, in effect copying five articles from the paper.

Also weekly publications like *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* were prone to reproduce whatever the filibusters offered. Articles such as “General Walker as Political Mentor” in *Leslie's* of February 09, 1856, confirms that the editors received and read *El Nicaraguense:*

> One of the things that will contribute most to confirm the favorable opinion which the American public is beginning to entertain of General Walker's character and ability is the article in which through the columns of his official organ, *El Nicaraguense*, he reviews the conduct of our government in regard to Col. French.[54]

Editors were thus aware that the *Nicaraguense* was the filibusters' “official organ,” but did not regard that as a problem for impartiality. “Central America” of December 06, 1856 also quotes the *Nicaraguense* approvingly and accepts its claim that “within the last fourteen months [Walker] has received from the United States a little over 4,100 recruits.” Their trust reached so far that they doubted the defeat of Louis Schlesinger at the hands of the Costa Ricans.[55] *Nicaraguense* reports denying the routing of the filibusters were taken at face-value, even in the face of contradictory

evidence.[56] Whatever was reported by the *Nicaraguense* was accepted so that *Leslie's* repeatedly doubted contrary reports from other media.

US editors using *El Nicaraguense* rarely hinted at the partisanship of their source or questioned the information they received. One of the rare occasions when this happened occurred in the *Daily Times* of March 15, 1856: Commenting on the confiscation of Vanderbilt's company by the filibusters, the paper doubts information coming from the *Nicaraguense*: "The article [of *El Nicaraguense*] appears to be shaped, in temper and argument, to produce the impression that the Accessory Transit Company has actually and forever ceased to exist […]. Yet, on a close reading of the grant to Randolph and his associates, it will be found that a voluntary surrender of the grant […] is provided for […]."[57] On April 03, 1856, the editors even noted: "it would not seem that the relations between [Costa Rica and Nicaragua] are as friendly as *El Nicaraguense* would wish us to believe"[58] and on April 22, 1856 they argued that statements from Walker's paper "are not to be held as conclusive against the official reports published in the Costa Rica papers."[59] Apparently, the *Times* editors began to distrust Walker's official paper, but had to resort to it as it was the only one reaching New York City with information about Nicaragua in English. In the well-connected world of US antebellum newspapers, the *Times* editors constituted a minority: Most other editors stayed put with the filibusters and their version of events, also because some personally knew staff of the *Nicaraguense*.

The filibusters were connected in multiple ways with the publishing industry in the United States. A majority of its editors had worked with English or Spanish language titles in New York City, New Orleans or San Francisco, and could thus benefit from their old colleagues' support. In 1855, the editorial Harper's and Brothers granted the paper permission to print parts of Ephraim Squier's upcoming book on Nicaragua prior to its official publication—an impressive scoop. The editorial reasoned that Squier's book "contains, with the reports appended, more reliable information than can readily be obtained elsewhere and will, doubtless, be of interest to the numerous parties in the country who contemplate an early visit of exploration to the mines."[60] And *El Nicaraguense* constituted the nexus for people looking for information on Nicaragua in the US, even if imported from the isthmus. If Harper's and Brothers wanted to promote Squier's book, *El Nicaraguense* was the perfect place.

Partial Correspondents and Commissioned Pictures

El Nicaraguense's influence in the US was, as mentioned, to a huge degree based on the absence of correspondents from other US papers in Nicaragua. Reporters visited Nicaragua from time to time; yet not for long. Laurence Greene mentions that "[t]he *New York Herald*, the *New Orleans Picayune* and the San Francisco *Alta California* were among the papers which sent correspondents to Nicaragua,"[61] but reading their texts it seems that the so-called reporters were themselves members of the filibuster forces which had sent their reports to the paper. In late 1855 and early 1856, the *New York Daily Times* received several letters signed with "Edmund H. Bowly" which assured their readers that the writer was a neutral traveler.[62] Nevertheless, the letters showed a clear inclination towards the filibusters, discarding critical news from other papers. In a letter published on January 11, 1856, Edmund H. Bowly reveals that he was indeed in cahoots with the filibusters when he informs his readers that he made contact with the native population to ascertain the latest moves of the enemy and then brought "to Gen. Walker the latest news" he had just obtained.[63] After Bowly's letters ceased, the *New York Daily Times* featured several "special correspondence" letters from a certain "E.H."[64] under the recurring headline "Nicaragua and the Fillibusters [sic!];" when E.H. wrote on March 03, 1856 that "towards the close of the year 1855, your correspondent landed at San Juan del Norte, for the purpose of joining that illustrious emulator of Avila, General William Walker," we can see once more that reports about Nicaragua popping up in US papers were often written by filibusters.[65]

Alias "E.H." was also the first one who wrote about the legend of the 'gray-eyed man.' Initially started by an article in *El Nicaraguense,* the story quickly spread throughout the US press, appearing first in the *New York Daily Times* on March 03, 1856 with a letter from E.H. who wrote, "There is a strange tradition current among the Indians of this country, which they say has been handed down to them through generations. [...] And they believe, too, that the prophecy is fulfilled. The Gray-eyed Man has come."[66] That article was re-published less than two weeks later in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* on March 15, 1856.[67] The article describes Walker's lodgings in Granada (accompanied by a drawing "sketched on the spot by our own artist"), and por-

trayes Walker as the "gray-eyed man of destiny." The description of Walker's house was new, but the segment about the supposed native legend remained identical. *Leslie's*, though, did not bother to give any indications as to who the correspondent (and supposedly the artist) was, creating the appearance that they had an independent reporter in Granada ("our own artist").

While until early 1856 *Leslie's* relied heavily on articles from *El Nicaraguense*, the issue of April 12, 1856 marked an important shift. In the article "The Nicaraguan Question," *Leslie's* reported the following:

> We publish elsewhere a carefully prepared letter furnishing full details of the interesting and exciting events which have been lately transpiring in Nicaragua. Our correspondent brings up the events of each day to the departure of the steamer. Our artist-correspondent, Mr. Douglass E. Jerold, has also sent us several illustrations.
>
> Our arrangements are such that we shall be prepared to publish interesting letters by every mail, with accurate illustrations, and as our artist and correspondent are both connected with government offices, we shall be able to furnish our readers with the freshest and most reliable news.[68]

This arrangement started off a long succession of articles and accompanying drawings made by filibusters: "Captain J Egbert Farnham's Quarters," of May 03, 1856, a sort of filibuster home story—its accompanying sketch "literal in every particular; in fact, it enables our readers to look in upon the snug quarters of a professed filibuster"—"was made by second Lieutenant Kyle;"[69] the description and depiction of a castle near the Cocibolca were done by "[o]ur artist-correspondent, Capt. A.J. Morrison."[70] Sketches like "The Convent of San Francisco," a scene of "Repose after Battle," the "Battle of Rivas," the "Naval Battle" between the filibuster ship *Granada* and the Costa Rican *Once de Abril* (depicting "the vessels as they appeared at the decisive moment of action"),[71] the "Explosion of the J.N. Scott" and numerous others were supposedly drawn in the following months by "artist-correspondents," all undoubtedly filibusters. *Leslie's*, though, never again hinted at this fact. Drawings and sketchings were one of the outstanding features of Frank Leslie's aptly titled *Illustrated* newspaper. In the 1850s, newspaper sketchings were one of the few possibilities for constructing a visual imagery of Nicaragua in the US, and *Leslie's* occupied a central role in this realm. Contrary to Nicaraguan newspapers, which did not feature any visual material beyond

the most rudimentary level, US papers like *Leslie's* constituted an important tool in the filibusters' attempt to gain the visual high ground over their critics.

The drawing of the aforementioned scenes did not only serve to accompany and illustrate the articles but also to sublimely foster collective images about imperial power relations between the US and Nicaragua. The depiction of superiority and inferiority with regard to the indigenous population in market scenes—indigenous people, small of statue, idly passing their time taking siestas, with white US Americans towering over them—was a recurrent pattern. The visual content of newspapers or *story papers* was important for the incorporation of Nicaragua into the US realm, and the filibusters succeeded to an astonishing degree in dominating the production and circulation of imagery of Nicaragua in US papers between 1855 and 1857.

Leslie's was one of the more obvious examples for the influence filibuster correspondents exercised on the US media, but other examples abound: The *New Orleans Picayune* of April 10, 1856 ran a message from their "special correspondent, writing from San Juan del Norte," but at the same time mentioned that the paper was "indebted to Capt. D. W. Thorpe, of the Nicaraguan Army, who recently arrived on the Charles Morgan, for the following version of the late defeat of Walker's men under Schlesinger." Their correspondent was indeed the filibuster officer Thorpe, who placed his messages (written in San Juan del Norte) at the paper's disposal. The article was later reprinted in the *New York Daily Times* of May 01, 1856, mentioning the *Picayune* as source, but not Thorpe, only vaguely stating that "[p]rivate advices here represent Walker as badly defeated in Nicaragua, and predict his speedy downfall."[72] Thorpe's report also served for an article in *Leslie's Illustrated* on May 03, 1856, basically repeating the *Picayune/Times* article, with some elaborations of Thorpe's role in the encounter. *Leslie's* did not mention any of the previous sources.[73] The *Picayune* had another regular contributor from Nicaragua, who signed his reports with "C.C." and whose texts were frequently copied in other papers, e.g., the *New York Daily Times* and *Leslie's*. This person was Charles Callahan, of whom we will hear more soon.

Critical reporting was almost impossible from within Nicaragua. Even staunchly filibuster-friendly *Leslie's* had to acknowledge that the filibusters censored their own men: "All letters and correspondence of the soldiers to their friends and families in the States are intercepted by Gen. Walker's official, and the contents examined; if anything is found in them deroga-

tory to the government the letters are stopped."[74] Some critical articles by transisthmian passengers were published, though: "Walker's Recruits" in the *Daily Times*, published on February 27, 1856, was penned by a passenger en route from San Francisco to New York. He remarked negatively about filibusters he encountered on the ship, and his letter was published only when he had left Walker's sphere of influence and had safely landed in New York City. A reporter of the *New York Daily Times* on April 17, 1856 mentioned the shooting of prisoners by the filibusters after a battle against the Costa Ricans ("The names of the killed and wounded are not given. Private letters state that many prisoners have since been taken in the woods, and that they all have been shot") and displayed a general rejection of the filibuster adventure—but could only do so because he was writing from Panama.[75] On the other hand, his location impeded him from witnessing anything in Nicaragua personally, and he had to rely on private letters, hearsay and, of course, newspapers: "Owing to the irregularity of communication, your correspondent is more an observer than a chronicler of events" he bemoans in another article, which was also sent from Panama.[76] Such critical articles were a rarity in the US press, as most correspondents did not reflect on their lack of independence from Walker's government organ. When independent correspondents passed through Nicaragua, they often stayed only a few days, making it easy for the filibuster administration to carefully provide them only with that kind of information they wanted to see distributed. Visiting reporters could not move around freely, as a passport, signed by Walker, was required to leave Granada.[77] Furthermore, most of the few correspondents who arrived in Nicaragua harbored strong sympathies for the filibusters. Some had even known Walker from his time as a newspaper editor: One of the first long and unabashedly enthusiastic portraits of him in *Leslie's Illustrated,* for example, was written by a correspondent who "remember[ed] distinctly the first time we saw [Walker] and was attracted by his delicate person […]" while working together at the *New Orleans Crescent*. On April 26, 1856, in an article titled "Personal," the *Nicaraguense* informed its readers about the arrival of two more, very sympathetic reporters:

> We have had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. Chas. Callahan, a gentleman connected with the *New Orleans Picayune*, and at present in this State on business of that office. The staunch adherence given by the newspaper with which Mr. Callahan is connected should recommend him to the favor of the *Nicaraguense* more than any word we can utter.

> Mr. Duffy, the correspondent of the *New York Tribune* is in town, and has also favored us with a call. The latter gentleman is very much prepossessed in favor of this country, and we shall no doubt have soon a just and favorable advocate in letters to the widely circulated paper of which he is the correspondent. The *Tribune* has indulged in a very fair judgement of the present movement, and we hope to see its columns arrayed in favor of the rapid settlement of Nicaragua.[78]

"Mr. Cha[rle]s. Callahan" arrived as a reporter for the *Picayune*, but quickly abandoned his job, became a customs collector for the filibusters and rose to certain prominence before being killed in the battle of San Jacinto on September 14, 1856.[79] While working for the filibusters he went on to report from Nicaragua for his former employer under the cipher "C.C." That he had taken up official responsibilities for the filibuster regime was never related by the *Picayune*.

Just one month prior another reporter, "Mr. George Wilkes, a gentleman of world-wide literary reputation," and "connected with the *New York Herald*" had arrived in Granada and planned to stay "several months."[80] Wilkes's "excellent health" was a qualification his colleague of the *New York Tribune* did not share: Already on June 07, 1856, slightly one month after his arrival in Nicaragua, *El Nicaraguense* had to report that Mr. Duffy had passed away.[81] It is unknown if the *Tribune* sent another reporter to Nicaragua to replace the unfortunate Duffy, and it seems likely that after two months, the *Tribune* had to resort again to the *Nicaraguense* for information gathering.[82]

Reports and letters published in US papers by travelers or disgruntled ex-filibusters describing the hardships suffered under Walker were extremely damaging to the filibusters, as they were the only contestants they had in the field of first hand experience. Due to the sympathies the filibusters enjoyed with many newspaper editors, they could count on their help to dismiss such criticism as biased.

The Spanish part of *El Nicaraguense* was overseen by its own editor, whose name was given as José Argüello Estrada,[83] one of the Cuban revolutionaries[84] who had joined Walker's army with Domingo Goicuría. David Luis-Brown, though, unearthed that this person was Francisco Agüero Estrada,[85] an important Cuban revolutionary and editor of transnational publications.[86] Being fluent in Spanish and English he translated articles from Spanish-language papers into English, and was crucial for Walker's plans to present himself to both Nicaragua and the US with his paper. Walker, being only able to communicate in rudimentary Spanish, could

not control the Spanish section of the paper as tightly as the English one, and seems to have been rather uninterested in its composition. Agüero Estrada was the sole person working on the Spanish section, which resulted in many delays and repetitions: Articles were repeated after a few weeks, and the few translations from the English section took between one and three weeks. This resulted in a style that mimicked Latin American official organs: It mostly printed government decrees and official correspondence with other Latin American nations.

Cross-fertilization between the sections failed: Almost no Spanish language articles were translated into English. The English section would sometimes contain a summary or hint to an article in the Spanish department, e.g. "Our Affairs with Honduras" on February 02, 1856, a summary of a letter written by the Honduran legate and published in Spanish the week prior. On the other hand, one is hard pressed to find a Spanish hint at (let alone a translation of) English articles, except when pointing to speeches or proclamations by Walker. A number of programmatic English-language articles was never translated. Agüero Estrada followed and intervened into Central American papers and their debates rather than the English section of *El Nicaraguense*. Thus, the two sections remained separated both content-wise and in form: travelogues formed a mainstay of the English section, but were virtually absent from the Spanish, official letters by Central American presidents were published in the Spanish department, but at the utmost hinted at in the English. While this does not mean that *El Nicaraguense* were two papers rolled into one, it can nevertheless be said that the two compartments reflected the two major member groups of the filibusters, divided by language and cultural background: the Anglophones (mostly US Americans) and the Spanish Americans.

As US filibusters could not read Spanish, their network of information gathering was distinct from that of the Cuban filibusters and the few Nicaraguan collaborators, resulting in completely different newspapers they consulted and different news items that were featured in the two sections of *El Nicaraguense*. This also fostered the distinct spheres of filibusters and Nicaraguans: Although the filibusters attempted to participate in the social life of Granada, they were very often left out in the cold. They staged horse races and theater plays and founded social clubs, like the "Young American Pioneer Club of Nicaragua," a jockey club and even a lodge of Freemasons. Yet, all these activities were limited to the filibuster circles; only a tiny faction of Nicaraguans participated in these pastimes. *El Nicaraguense* frequently mentioned banquets or festive dances which

took place at the houses of Nicaraguans, but as the paper diligently lists all the guests present at these events, it is easy to see that all of them were members of the filibuster administration. After the paper had offered the following message in its issue of October 20, 1855: “We beg to suggest to the citizens of Granada that our columns are open for their advertisements, which will be inserted on moderate terms—in both the English or Spanish department,”[87] only English-speaking entrepreneurs—mostly directly connected to the filibusters—followed, and eventually only the pages of the English section sported advertisements. That Walker and his group (and thus also their newspaper) were out of touch with life in Granada—let alone the rest of the country—was revealed by an article titled “El Baptismo,” published on February 02, 1856. The article—written in English despite its Spanish title—relates the following event:

> On Tuesday evening last, surprised at the unusual clangor of the bells from every tower in town, we hurried to the Cathedral, on the Plaza, where an immense crowd were assembled, to learn the meaning of the commotion. We there learned that the lady of Don Francisco Calonje, having recently presented her liege lord with a son and heir, was undergoing the solemn rites of baptism.[88]

Being uninformed about the baptism of one of the city’s leading personalities, underlines the schism between the filibusters circles and the rest of the Nicaraguan population, duly reflected in the *Nicaraguense’s* pages. The Nicaraguan elite of Granada did not collaborate much in the production of the paper.

Control of the press was intimately connected to controlling the isthmus; press coverage was regarded as another embattled field which had to be won. As they attempted to use the international press to their advantage, the filibusters were eager to counter any articles they perceived as misrepresenting their actions. The many newspapers the filibusters opened broadsides against reflect the geographical range in which *El Nicaraguense* was read on the isthmus. Already in issue six, on December 01, 1855 and under the heading “Remitido—Alusion,” the filibusters took issue with what they called the “Boletinero de Costarica” and its outspoken condemnation of the filibuster presence in Nicaragua.[89] On December 15, 1856, the filibusters dedicated another article to counter Costa Rican accusations against their involvement with the Democratic army in Nicaragua.[90] Costa Rican periodicals were especially scorned by the filibusters for their

constant rallying cries against the US usurpers. When Costa Rica finally entered into war against Walker's men, *El Nicaraguense* drew a straight line between hostile press reports and the isthmian citizens' hostility towards them:

> The war now existing between this State and Costa Rica, with all its present terrible disasters and future consequences to the Government and people of the latter, is the immediate and direct result of a prostituted servile press in that State. During the past six months, we have carefully perused the journals from San José which have fallen into our hands, and we have never yet taken up a single number of the *Boletin Oficial* or *the Album de la Paz*, in which we have not found, in almost every column, falsehoods without number, and slander and abuse the most obscene and insulting to the people of Nicaragua, whenever affairs in this State were the subject of discussion.[91]

In the same issue the editors also reproached the official Salvadorian newspaper for its anti-filibuster sentiments.[92] The Salvadoran *Gaceta* had earned the filibusters' ire before, when on January 26, 1856, the *Nicaraguense* editors wrote a "Remitido" because "in the *Gaceta de Guatemala* of the fourth of last month, in the article titled 'chronicle of events' we read the most stupid, infamous and unfounded critic" of their presence in Nicaragua.[93] That this article was written in Spanish indicates that the Cuban filibusters assisted the Anglophones in their shared journalistic battles against the Central American opinion.

After the split between the filibusters and the Nicaraguan Liberals, the *Boletín Oficial,* controlled by the latter, quickly joined the chorus of protests on the isthmus, and on December 02, 1856 published an open letter seven disgruntled ex-filibusters had written in which they accused their former commander of strategic and tactical incompetence and reported that Walker had forced them to write letters to California, "informing their friends that they have had two great victories, that they had taken an incredible amount of booty [...]. Finally, that they needed more men to transport all these riches to the USA," all under the telling headline "Walker judged by his own."[94] The original article had appeared on the front page of the *Courrier des États Unis*—a respected French-language newspaper published in New York City since 1828—on August 19, 1856 under the headline "Walker juge par les seins" and had already created some uproar in filibuster circles. It seems that the *Boletín's* editor Sebastián Salinas had received this article through some personal connection from New York City and decided to published in a *verbatim* translation.

In the face of all this hostility, the *Nicaraguense's* editors were highly delighted when copying favorable articles, mostly by US newspapers, which they did whenever possible: "The *Leader*, published at Oakland, California, contains the following leading editorial, which contrasts so favorably with the comments of some of the opposition Press, that we take pleasure in adding to its circulation," an article read in early 1856.[95] *The New York Herald*, also strongly sympathetic to the filibusters, was a steady source for praise. In 1856, the *Nicaraguense* copied a series of articles spanning several weeks about the "Crisis Política" in Nicaragua prior to the US arrival, first published in the Salvadoran *El Sol*, that was highly positive toward the filibuster presence in Central America, "fully approving the [present] condition of the Republic of Nicaragua."[96] The praise delighted the editors so much that they took the unusual step to hint to the Spanish article in the English section of *El Nicaraguense*. These rare instances, though, cannot obscure the fact that most Central American editors had nothing but disdain for the filibuster paper. Therefore *El Nicaraguense* was not available outside of Central America, and the Spanish section never gained the importance of its English-language counterpart. It was used by Costa Rican, Guatemalan or Honduran editors to gather information on Walker's (and initially also Rivas') administration, but failed to convince Central Americans with its hagiographic depictions of Walker and the filibusters' benevolent influence in Nicaragua. As the Central Americans had other sources for information on current Nicaraguan affairs, the *Nicaraguense* did not command such an influence as in the US.

In spite of their reluctance to seriously consider *El Nicaraguense*, the filibusters' adversaries had to resort to this newspaper for information on the government actions under the Rivas-Walker administration, and even when Rivas broke with Walker, many Central American countries took note of the *Nicaraguense* to fulminate against it. The filibuster publication was the fastest way to receive information on areas controlled by them, even for a paper like the *Boletín Oficial* which was published in León. Yet, Central American newspapers minced no words in their criticism of the *Nicaraguense*.

In the last days of the filibuster presence in Nicaragua, two publications saw the light of day: *El Telégrafo Septentrional* was printed with the charred presses that Walker had left in Granada after burning down the city. No issue survived but it seems to have been a Conservative publication and was published—as far as information could be gathered—from the end of 1856, possibly until 1857. The second one was called *El Centro-Americano*,

which, too, is only known by secondary references.[97] It seems to have been a bilingual paper (Spanish—English) and to have been published from the beginning until mid-1857. Its editor was the well-known Nicaraguan intellectual Anselmo H. Rivas. If the bilingual direction of the paper was a reaction to the filibusters' *Nicaraguense* or a continuation of *El Correo del Istmo de Nicaragua,* which had also published English material from time to time, is hard to say. During that period, it became obvious that the filibusters and their attempts to 'Americanize' Nicaragua and to "revolutionize the press" in the country had clearly failed. The *Telégrafo* and the *Centro-Americano* did not emulate the *Nicaraguense* with its advertisements, mixture of journalistic forms (report, opinion editorial, jokes), or its larger format, but sold as a typical official mouthpieces of the respective Nicaraguan family-parties. After the filibusters were ousted, the post-Walker bipartisan government started a new official newspaper, the *Gaceta Oficial de Nicaragua*.[98] When the filibusters had to leave Nicaragua, the publication of the *Nicaraguense* also ceased. Additionally, and more importantly, the interoceanic route, which had been cut off in the last few weeks of fighting between the filibusters and the Allied forces, needed some time to resume operations. The regular passage of ships through Nicaragua was only taken up again in 1864.[99]

Due to the closure of the transit route, the channels of circulation shifted back to a strong dependence on Guatemala, and the *Gaceta* had a renewed focus on Nicaraguan and Central American affairs. The conditions for Nicaragua's press remained as dire as before the US invasion: Few people were literate, the country had to cope with the destruction of yet another civil war and the majority of the people remained materially poor and without democratic representation. It would take more than twenty years, until the liberal period of the 1870s, until a segment of the population economically strong enough to purchase newspapers emerged.[100] When conceptualizing the publication of newspapers as intimately intertwined with a functioning nation state—as a representation and an embodiment of a unified space of public discourse—the example of Nicaragua shows that until the late 1870s, a Nicaraguan nation did not exist. Although clearly not in the interest of the Nicaraguans, *El Nicaraguense* represented the model of such a 'modern' newspaper. When the filibusters were defeated and disgraced, so was their vision of a new press system and an improved network of news circulation. Thus, ironically, it were the filibusters' imperial designs which prevented a change toward a 'modern' press in Nicaragua—a change the filibusters' mouthpiece *El Nicaraguense* had so preposterously announced in its very first issue.

Notes

1. John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America: Chiapas and Yucatan*, 12th ed. (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1842), 422.
2. Frances Kinloch Tijerino, *Nicaragua, Identidad y Cultura Política (1821–1858)*. (Managua: Banco Central de Nicaragua, 1999), 204.
3. Ephraim George Squier, *Nicaragua: Its People, Scenery, Monuments, Resources, Condition and Proposed Canal*, Revised edition (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1860), 523.
4. Bradford E. Burns, *Patriarch and Folk. The Emergence of Nicaragua 1798–1858* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 94.
5. Ralph Bauer draws attention to the fact that the social practice of reading and writing enjoyed high respect in Latin America, as its actors were usually bound closely to the Spanish royal authorities (Ralph Bauer, *The Cultural Geography of Colonial American Literatures: Empire, Travel, Modernity*, Cambridge Studies in American Literature and Culture 136 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 22)
6. Ibid.
7. Which does not mean that in the United States, on the other hand, oral culture was not alive as well. Harvey Graff argues for the working classes and black communities that many infrequent readers or nonreaders "had access to print through hearing oral reading of the contents of written or print media. Reading was still a social activity; […] the written word and the spoken word remained inseparable" (Harvey J. Graff, *The Legacies of Literacy. Continuities and Contradictions in Western Culture and Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 355).
8. Miguel Ayerdis, *Publicaciones Periódicas, Formas de Sociabilidad y Procesos Culturales en Managua (1884–1926)* (Managua: Banco Central de Nicaragua, 2005), 16.
9. Jorge Eduardo Arellano, ed., *Nicaragua en el Siglo XIX. Testimonios de Funcionarios, Diplomáticos y Viajeros*, Colección Cultural de Centro América Serie Viajeros vol. 6, (Managua: Fundación UNO, 2005), 111.
10. Pablo Levy, *Notas Geográficas sobre la República de Nicaragua*, Fondo de Promoción Cultural Banco de América (Managua: Talleres de Editorial San José, 1976), 237.
11. This is one of the reasons why Ayerdis only begins his study *Publicaciones Periódicas* in the 1880s, considering all earlier forms of publications not newspapers. Arellano, on the other hand, starts his *Catálogo de Periódicos y Revistas de Nicaragua* with independence in 1821.

12. Jorge Eduardo Arellano, *Catálogo de Periódicos y Revistas de Nicaragua (1830–1930)*, ed. Instituto Nicaragüense de Cultura Biblioteca Nacional "Rubén Darío" (Managua, 1992), 12.
13. Ibid., 13.
14. Here I am following Jürgen Habermas's characterization of the emergence of bourgeois society in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in Europe, see Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft; Mit einem Vorwort zur Neuauflage 1990*, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2010): The public sphere became increasingly secularized, people turned their attention away from simply receiving court circulars and towards creating a forum of critical debate between citizens (this group itself having been recently minted in the aftermath of the French Revolution). Participation became one of the main components of citizenship and the media for this debate and participation were newspapers and periodicals, increasingly in private ownership. See also Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2003); Timothy Brennan, "The National Longing for Form," in *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 2002), 48.
15. Sebastián Salinas, "No Oficial," *Boletín Oficial León* 1, no. 24 (November 14, 1856): 1–2.
16. François-Xavier Guerra and Annick Lempérière, *Los Espacios Públicos en Iberoamérica. Ambigüedades y Problemas; Siglos XVIII–XIX*, Sección de Obras de Historia (México, DF: Centro Francés de Estudios Mexicanos y Centroamericanos, 1998), 103.
17. Ibid., 279.
18. Ibid., 275.
19. These often narrative poems constitute an important historical source as well; Dunkerley quips that "it is a mark of both the strength of [Nicaragua's poetic] tradition and the weakness of orthodox historiography in Nicaragua that the country's past is best known through the pens of its poets and politicians" (James Dunkerley, *Americana. The Americas in the World, around 1850 (or "Seeing the Elephant" as the Theme for an Imaginary Western)* (London, New York, NY: Verso, 2000), 551). See also Ana Rodríguez's conceptualization of literature (and especially poetry) as a transnational medium par excellence on the isthmus, which "transect[s] and transcend[s] national political boundaries and traverse[s] the entire region, destabilizing not only insular and isolationist notions of national literatures, but [functions] also [as] integrative and holistic readings of the Central American region and its cultures and peoples" (Ana Patricia Rodríguez, *Dividing the Isthmus. Central American Transnational Histories, Literatures, and Cultures* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 3).

20. Alejandra Bottinelli, “Del Progreso al Orden. Letrados y Poder en el Origen de los Estados-Nación, en el Sur Americano.” *Forum for Inter-American Research* 5, no. 3 (n.d.): 3.
21. Juan Priest, “Esplicación Dada Por el Sr. Don Juan Priest,” *Boletín Oficial*, February 06, 1855.
22. See the studies by Silvia Gruesz for the hemispheric interdependencies of Central American Caribbean port towns with the US south, in particular with New Orleans.
23. Kirsten Silva Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture. The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*, Translation Transnation (Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), 111.
24. The effects of the new modes of transportation in the nineteenth century (railroads and steamships) on the conceptions of time and space have been dealt with in various studies. James Dunkerley, for example, dedicates the entire first section of his excellent study on *Americana* to “a little time (and space),” underlining the importance of the shrinking of distances and the compartmentalization of time which led human measurements away from natural harvesting rhythms and to a mechanized, standardized time and work regime.
25. John Tabor, “Eastern Papers,” *El Nicaraguense* (November 10, 1856): 4.
26. John Tabor, “Late Papers,” *El Nicaraguense* (October 25, 1856): 4.
27. Joseph R. Malè and John Tabor, “From Guatemala,” *El Nicaraguense*, February 23, 1856.
28. John Tabor, “Honduras,” *El Nicaraguense* (April 26, 1856): 1.
29. John Tabor, “A New Paper,” *El Nicaraguense* (May 24, 1856): 4.
30. “Departure of the Orizaba,” *New York Daily Times*, April 05, 1856, 1.
31. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, “From the South Pacific,” *El Nicaraguense*, August 12, 1855.
32. John Tabor, “Another Advocate,” *El Nicaraguense* (April 26, 1856): 4.
33. Joseph R. Malè and John Tabor, “Miss Pellet,” *El Nicaraguense*, September 02, 1856.
34. As one of the few women who found their way into *El Nicaraguense's* pages, the editors were quite infatuated with Miss Pellet (whose first name was never mentioned). In the issue of April 26, 1856 the filibusters quoted the *New Orleans Bee* which reported that “Miss Pellet intended to give the proceeds of her Lecture in that city to the Military Hospital of this city.” The editors proceeded to praise her actions: “If she only knew how the army is of her daring, she would feel that it is in truth some thing [sic!] to be a fillibuster [sic!]” and concluded the article with the presumptuous “We have added her to the list of manifest destiny names and feel perfectly satisfied she will accept the position” (John Tabor, “Miss Pellet's Charity,” *El Nicaraguense* (April 26, 1856): 4)

35. According to a letter by José de Marcoleta, reprinted in *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,* many captains of military and commercial vessels entertained strong sympathies for the filibusters, "The United States steamer Massachusetts remained at anchor in San Juan del Sur; and it is worthy of notice that her commander and three of her officers had been to Granada and remained three days, fraternizing with the adventurer, and had extended the same favors to several persons who arrived at the port with the intention of joining Walker" ("Central and South America," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, January 19, 1856).
36. Joseph R. Malè, the *Nicaraguense* editor, was sent to New York repeatedly to regain his health and to buy new printing presses. On his first trip he did not seem to have been successful, mostly due to his ill health ("Three Hundred Filibusters Off for Nicaragua," *New York Daily Times*, February 11, 1856, 4; N. N, "Filibusters Off," *New York Daily Times*, January 10, 1856, 5). On his second trip, though, he returned with the new presses which led to faster printing and a change in the format of *El Nicaraguense*. Guerra/ Lempérière and their important study on *Los Espacios Públicos en Iberoamérica* concur that most printing presses and other material for publishing papers in South and Central America was imported from the US after the region's independence. The first Chilean printing press in 1811, for example, also stemmed from North America (Guerra and Lempérière, *Los Espacios Públicos en Iberoamérica. Ambigüedades y Problemas; Siglos XVIII–XIX*, (274). The technical development of the *Nicaraguense* is thus representative for Latin America.
37. Joseph R. Malè and John Tabor, "New Orleans Papers," *El Nicaraguense*, August 08, 1856.
38. The "News from Nicaragua" in the *New York Daily Times* of February 14, 1856 mention the helpfulness of Wines and Co. for procuring newspapers from the isthmus, as does "Important from Nicaragua" of April 30, 1856 in the same paper.
39. John Tabor, "Harper's Magazine/ Late Papers," *El Nicaraguense* (May 21, 1856): 4.
40. John Tabor, "Agency in San Francisco," *El Nicaraguense* (August 23, 1856): 4.
41. John Tabor, "El Nicaraguense," *El Nicaraguense* (March 03, 1856): 3.
42. Sebastián Salinas, "Del Album Semanal de Costa-Rica N. 67 Copiamos el Artículo Siguiente: Correspondencia Interceptada," *Boletín Oficial León* 1, no. 33 (January 16, 1857): 3.
43. Arellano, *Catálogo de Periódicos y Revistas de Nicaragua (1830–1930),* 17.

44. Joseph R. Malè and George Cook, “Progres [sic!] of Gen. Walker’s Expedition in Nicaragua,” *El Nicaraguense*, October 20, 1855.
45. Joseph R. Malè and George Cook, “General Walker,” *El Nicaraguense*, October 27, 1855.
46. Joseph R. Malè and George Cook, “Introductory,” *El Nicaraguense*, October 20, 1855.
47. Joseph R. Malè and George Cook, “The Press in Nicaragua,” *El Nicaraguense*, October 27, 1855.
48. John Tabor, “Speech of Gen. Walker,” *El Nicaraguense* 1, no. 31 (July 06, 1856): 4.
49. Malè and Cook, “The Press in Nicaragua,” *El Nicaraguense.*
50. Joseph R. Malè and George Cook, “Aviso,” *El Nicaraguense*, October 20, 1855.
51. Fermín Ferrer (1823–1897) was a Nicaraguan career politician and lawyer. Although member of the Legitimist Party, he joined the Rivas administration as Minister of Treasury (Ministro de Hacienda), and when Rivas turned against Walker, stayed with the latter and served as interim President until Walker held his fraudulent elections. Ferrer then served as Minister of Foreign Affairs under the filibusters, and in this position also visited the US and met his second wife there. When the filibusters were overthrown, he fled to the US and died in New York City in relative obscurity and poverty since his haciendas in Nicaragua had been confiscated (see the obituary “Don Fermin Ferrer Dead—His Romantic and Adventurous Career,” *New York Times,* March 18, 1897).
52. Fermín Ferrer, “Gold in Nicaragua,” *El Nicaraguense*, November 22, 1855.
53. Maximiluin Sounenstern, “Topographical and Geographical Notices of the Department of Chontales,” *El Nicaraguense*, March 05, 1856.
54. “General Walker as Political Mentor,” *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, February 09, 1856.
55. Louis Schlesinger (sometimes also “Luis Schlessinger”) was a Hungarian revolutionary and mercenary who had fought in Hungary against Austrian rule, then fled to the US, where he became a much publicized filibuster activist, mingling with Narciso López’s various Cuban filibuster missions. After López’s death, he joined Walker’s Nicaragua mission and was one of the most prominent names in the filibuster army, occupying the position of colonel (Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny’s Underworld. Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 98–99). In March 1856, he commanded a squad of filibusters that invaded Costa Rica and was routed by Costa Rican troops (in what would be the first of a

string of victories for the Central Americans) near the hacienda Santa Rosa. Schlesinger escaped with his life, but was court-martialled by the filibuster command. He was found guilty and sentenced to be shot, but had already left Nicaragua in direction of Honduras. He turned himself in for protection to a Salvadorian general, stayed in El Salvador for the next few years and married into a rich family. In the 1870s, he went to Guatemala to participate in the Costa Rican-led construction of a railway line.

56. "The Defeat of Schlessinger at Santa Rosa," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 10, 1856.
57. "Commercial Affairs," *New York Daily Times*, March 15, 1856, 8.
58. "The Nicaraguan News," *New York Daily Times*, April 03, 1856, 4.
59. "Walker's Prospects," *New York Daily Times*, April 22, 1856, 1.
60. J. W. Fabens, "Public Letter," *El Nicaraguense*, November 24, 1855.
61. Laurence Greene, *The Filibuster. The Career of William Walker* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merril Co., 1937).
62. A certain 'Edmund Bowley' [sic!] also appeared around the same time writing in *El Nicaraguense,* for the first time in the issue of December 15, 1855. He was introduced as "a gentleman of high respectability" in the paper and was commissioned by the filibusters to write a report on mining possibilities in Nicaragua.
63. Edmund Bowly, "Nicaragua," *New York Daily Times*, January 11, 1856.
64. Note the similarity of this abbreviation to Bowl(e)y's name, Edmund H. Yet, it cannot be ascertained if the two letter writers were one and the same person.
65. E.H, "Nicaragua and the Fillibusters [sic!]," *New York Daily Times*, March 03, 1856, 2.
66. Ibid.
67. "Reception Room of Gen. Walker in the President's House, City of Granada," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, March 15, 1856.
68. "The Nicaraguan Question," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 12, 1856.
69. "Captain J Egbert Farnham's Quarters," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 03, 1856.
70. "Castillo," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 17, 1856.
71. "Naval Battle," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 18, 1857.
72. "Latest Intelligence," *New York Daily Times*, May 01, 1856, 1.
73. "Nicaragua," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 03, 1856.
74. "Central America," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, July 12, 1856.
75. "Highly Important from Central America," *New York Daily Times*, April 17, 1856, 1.
76. "Important from Nicaragua," *New York Daily Times*, April 30, 1856.

77. After the Nicaragua campaign, this was frequently mentioned by ex-filibusters as the major obstacle which had prevented them from leaving the country. See “The Experience of Samuel Absalom, Filibuster,” in *Atlantic Monthly* Vol. IV, No. XXVI (December 1859), online at: http://www.encyclopaedia.com/pdfs/5/919.pdf
78. John Tabor, “Personal,” *El Nicaraguense* (April 26, 1856): 1.
79. He served as one of the organizers of the festivities surrounding Walker’s inauguration as President (“Inauguration of William Walker as President,” *El Nicaraguense,* July 16, 1856).
80. Joseph R. Malè and John Tabor, “Personal,” *El Nicaraguense*, March 22, 1856.
81. John Tabor, “Peace to the Dead,” *El Nicaraguense* (July 06, 1856): 2.
82. Alejandro Bolaños Geyer claims that the Owen Duffy who became co-editor of *El Nicaraguense* from number 50 onward was indeed “Mr. Duffy, correspondent of the *New York Tribune*” Alejandro Bolaños Geyer, ed., *El Nicaraguense, 1855–1856. Edición Facsimilar Bilingüe con su Guía = Bilingual Facsimile Edition with a Guide* (St. Charles Mo.: A. Bolaños Geyer, 1998), 306-b).As he does not give any source for his claim, I interpreted the above obituary as announcing Duffy’s death; the *Nicaraguense* editor thus must have been some other Duffy. If Bolaños Geyer were correct, Charles Callahan would not have been the only reporter changing sides.
83. The fact that the English-language editors were mentioned on the masthead of the paper, but the Spanish not shows the focus on the English section. Actually, the paper only revealed Agüero Estrada as its editor in a short announcement on May 10, 1856, more than 20 issues after the first publication of Spanish articles: “We have neglected for a long time to congratulate our readers on the acquisition of Señor José Arguello [sic!] Estrada as the editor of the Spanish Department of *El Nicaraguense*” (John Tabor, “Spanish Editorials,” *El Nicaraguense* (October 05, 1856): 4). Agüero Estrada resigned as editor of *El Nicaraguense* in May 1856, and his successor is unknown. Usually Spanish articles either went unsigned or were underwritten with LL EE (‘los editores’).
84. *El Nicaraguense* of August 16, 1856 mentions a total of 32 Cubans in Walker’s forces (John Tabor, “From the Latest Mail,” *El Nicaraguense* (August 16, 1856): 4–5). See Michel Gobat’s article for a general assessment of the importance of the Cuban faction within the filibuster group (Michel Gobat, “Reflexiones sobre el Encuentro Nicaragüense con el Régimen Filibustero de William Waker, 1855–1856,” in *Revista de Historia*, ed. IHNCA (Managua: Editorial de la UCA, 2006), 71–89. For Gobat, the Cubans played “an important part for propagating a pro-

gressive and democratic image of the filibuster force in the Nicaraguan society" because "they spoke Spanish, were Catholic and understood [...] the Nicaraguan mentality" (Ibid., 80). South Americans had joined as well, though in smaller numbers: The article "Act of Clemency" reports on a trial of "two soldiers, one a German and the other a Chileno, [who] were caught asleep on their posts." The trial ends with a pardon for both because the Chilean "was one of the original eighty [sic!] who first came into Granada with General Walker" (Joseph R. Malè and John Tabor, "Act of Clemency," *El Nicaraguense*, April 12, 1856.

85. David Luis-Brown, "An 1848 for the Americas. The Black Atlantic, 'el Negro Martir,' and Cuban Exile Anticolonialism in New York City," *American Literary History*, no. 12.3 (2009): 452.
86. Fleeing the Caribbean island after having participated in a Camagüey-based movement that was discovered by colonial authorities in 1851 with his cousin Joaquín Agüero (now regarded a hero of Cuban independence), Agüero Estrada escaped into exile in New York City in 1852, while Joaquín was executed. In New York, José contributed to and edited *El Mulato* and *El Pueblo*, two influential Spanish-language newspapers that advocated filibustering expeditions to Cuba.
87. Joseph R. Malè and George Cook, "N.A." *El Nicaraguense*, October 20, 1855.
88. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "El Baptismo," *El Nicaraguense*, February 02, 1856.
89. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "Remitido—Alusion," *El Nicaraguense*, December 01, 1855.
90. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "El Boletín Oficial y el Album de La Paz," *El Nicaraguense*, December 15, 1855.
91. John Tabor, "The Power of the Press," *El Nicaraguense* (May 17, 1856): 4.
92. John Tabor, "A La Gaceta del Salvador," *El Nicaraguense* (May 17, 1856): 7.
93. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "Remitido," *El Nicaraguense*, January 26, 1856.
94. Sebastián Salinas, "Walker Juzgado por los Suyos," *Boletín Oficial*, no. 27 (December 02, 1856): 3.
95. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "Speculations on Nicaragua," *El Nicaraguense*, January 26, 1856.
96. Joseph R. Malè and John Tabor, "Position of San Salvador," *El Nicaraguense*, March 08, 1856.
97. See Arellano, *Catálogo de Periódicos y Revistas de Nicaragua (1830–1930)*; Carlos Meléndez Chaverri, "Fichero Del Periodismo Antiguo de Nicaragua," *Revista Conservadora del Pensamiento Centroamericano* 24, no. 116 (1970): 17–46.

98. In most catalogs and original sources, the name is shortened to *Gaceta Oficial*. See Meléndez Chaverri, "Fichero del Periodismo Antiguo de Nicaragua,", 37.
99. It would later be shut down permanently because Cornelius Vanderbilt, now back in charge with the Accessory Transit Company, struck a deal with the company operating the Panama line, its main rival. As throughout the 1850s Panama had always remained the main route for Californian Forty Niners, Vanderbilt felt that Nicaragua, although geographically in the better position, ultimately would lose, and therefore accepted several cash payments in exchange for terminating the Nicaraguan line.
100. Ayerdis, *Publicaciones Periódicas, Formas de Sociabilidad y Procesos Culturales en Managua (1884–1926)*, 25–83.

CHAPTER 4

Discursive Voyages Between the United States and Nicaragua

Travel Narratives as Imperialist Devices in US-Latin American Relations

When the filibusters arrived in Nicaragua in mid-1855 and rapidly began to establish themselves, the country had already reaped headlines in US media for a number of years. The majority of these accounts was produced in the form of travel narratives. Most travel accounts of the 1840s and 1850s—from the bestsellers by John Lloyd Stephens and Ephraim George Squier to lesser-known examples like Karl von Scherzer and Moritz Wagner[1]—often took a rather formulaic approach toward their subjects: The structural limitations inherent in the travel writing genre often predetermined what the writers included in their reports.

Typically, a nineteenth-century travel narrative started with the general description of geographical, historical and commercial conditions of the visited country from sources already known to the public, often noting their perceived shortcomings or faults. After that, the personal narrative commenced with a scene of departure from the "known world," that is, usually from a European or US harbor, then an account of the (often hazardous) voyage, which was followed by the initiation into the unknown location on arrival. From this point onward, the author usually observed flora, fauna and people, underlining the perceived backwardness and moral depravity of the lower social classes she or he encountered on the trip.

© The Author(s) 2016

A. Beer, *A Transnational Analysis of Representations of the US Filibusters in Nicaragua, 1855-1857*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-28352-4_4

The sojourn in the country varied according to the goal of the overall voyage: Some travelers passed through a country en route to their final destination (as did many transisthmian passengers passing through Nicaragua on their way to California), others stayed months to do business. If travelers stayed for longer, the high point of their narrative was often either an archaeological excursion, the participation in a folklorist or even an indigenous activity or the meeting of a distinguished personality, such as a revolutionary. The narrative commonly ended with the writer returning to his or her home country and reflecting on the future of the visited region. The narrative interwove both physical and social landscapes and therefore ordered the foreignness according to the traveler's own point of view, which was often an urban, middle or upper class one. By relying on equally urban and upper class peers in the guest countries, the reports of the travelers were often tilted with regard to labor issues, the representation of indigenous people, the inclusion and rights of women, and so on. The travel narratives nevertheless succeeded in portraying this very limited extract of the country as the only viewpoint to its readers. For the writers, travel accounts constituted an important tool "to extend to the 'trackless' forests and prairies the order that [...] the 'civilized' traveler [...] sustained within himself."[2] In the face of what travel writers described as a vast cultural and geographical blankness, colonization was regarded as "a form of self-inscription" onto the lives of a people who were conceived of as a simple extension of the landscape.[3] The indigenous peoples' lack of inscription into the landscape became "the sign of [...] failure—the failure to mark the difference between nature and its others, between present and past, between presence and absence,"[4] in short, the failure of 'civilization.'

Alexander von Humboldt's travel narratives constituted the most important role models for the nineteenth-century travel writers; von Humboldt's attempt to mix scientific descriptions with accessible prose made his books bestsellers, especially when becoming available in cheaper editions. John Lloyd Stephens, Ephraim George Squier and their peers saw themselves as following in Humboldt's steps often combining elements of both scientific and popular writing techniques.

Links between travellers, explorers and imperialists were not confined to a textual level: From the beginning of the nineteenth century onward, travelers from Europe and the United States increasingly became professional explorers. With a surge of interest in the natural sciences during the nineteenth century, travel writing became one of the most widely

read genres in the antebellum United States. Although travel accounts of merchants, diplomats, settlers and soldiers continued to be published, the most sought-after works were produced by professional 'explorers,' who mixed adventurous tales with discourses of science, exploration and development. Such discourses aimed at constituting a radical other, an inferior subject to be dominated by the self-proclaimed scientifically advanced and culturally superior Europeans and North Americans.[5] Under the guise of scientific exploration, travel narratives on both sides of the Atlantic worked to include 'unknown' territories into an ever-expanding national space of science. Yet, this inclusion did not mean that the people who inhabited these territories would be included as well. The distinction between territory and people on the basis of racist ideologies served to dishevel the explorer's tendency to examine, comment on and valorize both the body of others and the landscape they lived in. Although the new landscapes were mostly seen as being equal or even superior to familiar ones, their inhabitants almost always were put into a position that could be easily dominated by supposedly advanced European and US explorers.

Ultimately, though, the discourse of travel narratives worked dialectically: If imperial domination meant not outright extinction or displacement, but rather the incorporation—in a subaltern position—of the radical others into the expanding national realm, these others had to be rendered capable of assimilation. Travel writing therefore attempted "not to establish a radical opposition between the colonizer and the colonized" but sought "to dominate by inclusion and domestication rather than by a confrontation which recognizes the independent identity of the Other."[6] The power of the travel writing genre cannot be overestimated when looking at the relationship between the United States and Latin America: It made the unknown comprehensible to the audience that stayed at home, thus helping to organize a view of the world which would ultimately position the newly discovered territories (and people) into a matrix of power relations that called for its domination and exploitation.

Travel writers attempted to make the new locales comprehensible to their compatriots and thus help the audience to incorporate the new lands and people, the foreign customs and alien social orders into a pre-existing, familiar framework. Travel writing always meant to reflect about the country of origin. "Motivated by the need to understand the social, racial and political experiments of the 'new republics',"

Ricardo Salvatore argues about US voyages to South America, "writers used the region's social landscapes as 'evidence' to validate 'theories' about the functioning of North America."[7] The alien could thus be made familiar, and the otherness of the Latin Americans was constantly under negotiation: Their liminal state allowed them to be constructed either as complete others, but also as (often extreme) varieties of the home society. In both cases, though, acceptance was generated by comparison and conjuncture, not by engaging in discussions with South or Central Americans. The accounts of the travelers ultimately created a "cultural logic of desire and repulsion, of projection and rejection, toward Latin America."[8] "That logic revolved around 'Spanishness', 'Indianness' and related general notions of aristocracy, Catholicism, civilization, free will and self-possession, heteronormative visions of the national family and the integrity (or lack of integrity) of racial categories" (*Ambassadors* xi). These stereotypes also constituted the backdrop of the filibusters' portrayal of Nicaragua.

Travel writing could only work if the landscapes and people were regarded as unknown. Therefore, still in the mid-1850s and more than 10 years after E.G. Squier had started to extensively publish accounts on Nicaragua, this country and the whole of Central America were repeatedly associated with a lack of knowledge by travel writers, the filibusters and others in the United States who eyed for imperial domination on the isthmus. While before the independence of most Latin American countries, the Spanish empire only allowed very few and select travelers (like Alexander von Humboldt) to visit its colonies, in the 1850s, these countries—including the isthmus—had seen a constant flux of travelers for 20 odd years. Nevertheless, the notion of unknown territory prevailed. Central America in particular was imagined as being discovered only there and then by the US American writers and filibusters. Almost every travel narrative showed Nicaragua or parts of it as blank spots. *Leslie's Illustrated* of December 22, 1855, for example, ran an article in which the town of San Juan was described (and depicted) in detail.[9] The unsigned writer chose to open his article with the observation that "[f]or nearly three hundred years, San Juan Nicaragua, beyond a small number of Spaniards, was literally unknown to the world."[10] In spite of the author's claim, the town was the country's fourth largest city and most important Atlantic seaport, and had been described by Squier as "well-known" throughout his travel account.

The initial editorial of *El Nicaraguense* also followed this strategy. In its very first paragraph the editors wrote that "the objects of the *Nicaraguense* will be the diffusion of information in regard to the position and resources of this State. The natural wealth of Nicaragua is almost unknown, not only among foreign nations, but even among the inhabitants of this country."[11] Completely ignoring all former accounts, of which the filibuster newspaper would print several during the next year (giving special prominence to Squier's texts in a multi-week installment), *El Nicaraguense* imagined the Central American country as uncharted territory and its social landscape as equally unknown. The filibusters could thus describe themselves as explorers and—eventually—settlers, a strategy they also employed when working for other papers.

One example is the article "Trip to the Gold Mines of Nicaragua" by the already mentioned George H. Bowly, a multi-page narrative including several sketches that was published in *Leslie's* on July 26, 1857.[12] The writer claimed to have undertaken the trip as a businessman in 1854, but given the circumstances of the newspaper's involvement with the filibusters, this is highly doubtful. Bowly's narrative rendered Nicaragua a blank spot on the map. Traveling through the country, its riches were quickly discovered. Bowly "found a belt of quartz, bearing gold […], which yielded from one hundred and fifty dollars and upwards to the ton […] and plainly cropping out on the point of the hill, but it had been hardly opened, as the natives are very poor miners." Even more was to come: "Having pulverized a small of the quartz, I was clearing it up, when a boy came and dug in the sides of the stream. Collecting a horn-full of the earth, he washed it out, when there remained in the bottom a small pinch of fine gold, which satisfied me that gold was disseminated throughout the whole soil." Nursing the excitement of the Californian gold rush, Bowly closes his account with the words: "For a short time I indulged in the pleasures of the country—roamed, fished, shot and bathed, and I only left determined to revisit this scene, with a power whose iron jaws should grind out my share of the wealth embedded in these romantic mountains." An industrious *yankee* like Bowly would obviously not let such a chance for personal gain pass. Typically for expansionist boaster literature, the text concludes with an appeal to Bowly's fellow Americans to partake in these riches, framed in the simple yet evocative question: "Who will follow?"

Another article, "Nicaragua—Its Resources" of October 20, 1855 in *El Nicaraguense* peppered its eulogy of the country's natural richness with the

observation that Nicaragua "has always been regarded with great and constantly increasing interest, and this interest its people have now an opportunity to turn to practical account" by working together with Walker and his men.[13] A perceived neglect of soil cultivation was a discursive element used by travel writers to construct Latin Americans as others, as this "mystery of subsistence and non-accumulative lifeways" threatened the capitalist dynamics of US expansionism.[14] Known already from descriptions of the US Frontier, this argumentation made it possible to label Nicaraguans as Native Americans and filibusters as new settlers. *El Nicaraguense* frequently published articles that sang the praise of Nicaragua's riches, and pointed out that the lazy inhabitants of the country were unable to make use of its opportunities. In the article "Nicaragua—Its Probabilities," the filibuster editors marveled at the natural resources they found in the isthmian country:

> Among the things which attain an unrivalled excellence here may be mentioned corn, cotton, cocoa, rice, sugar, tobacco, coffee, wheat, barley and beans. In fruits we have the orange, banana, pine-apple, lime, sweet lemon, musk-melon, lemon, sapote, mango, guavo [sic!], fig, tamarind and pomegranate. These fruits grow here to perfection, and there are many others which we might mention that are not so well known out of the country. The woods abound with game; our inland waters are alive with fish; and without stopping to enumerate, we can say that there is scarcely a thing at present used for a man's comfort or necessities that may not be obtained here in the most lavish abundance.[15]

Fruits, vegetables, corn and game were not only plentiful, but "unrivalled," grew "to perfection" and existed in "the most lavish abundance" to attract readers to emigrate to Nicaragua. Mirroring the filibusters' goal of recruiting volunteers, the article ended on the same note as Bowly's piece, by urging US Americans to travel to Nicaragua and take possession of these riches: "And when this is the case in its present backward state, we cannot even guess what it may be in the hand of an industrious and intelligent race of men."[16] This did not only play at the racist undergirding of US expansionism but also gestured toward the aforementioned anxiety of young men to acquire farm land and thus to participate in the Jacksonian ideal of agrarian democracy. The availability of fertile soil—neglected by Latin Americans—would

provide a basis for this dream in the hands of "industrious and intelligent" settlers-cum-filibusters.

Fermín Ferrer, one of the Nicaraguans most involved with the filibusters, also contributed to the discourse of an unknown, rich country with travel narratives from expeditions to Chontales[17] which underlined that "there exist hidden treasures that put our [the Nicaraguans'] negligence to shame" and can "only […] be properly described in poetry."[18] Both the filibusters and their Nicaraguan collaborators were sure that the indigenous population (as well as the Nicaraguan conservatives) were too ignorant to make use of its country's riches. Fermín Ferrer's assertion of being overwhelmed by his own discovery and lacking the rhetorical capabilities to adequately describe it left the territory in a representational void: Ferrer had been there, he had seen the riches, but his words were insufficient to render the discovery comprehensible. Thus, others had to follow, had to describe the landscape adequately and had to take possession in words and in actions. It was a staple in almost all travelogues to boast of the unsurpassed fertility and richness of the region, stimulating colonial desire. The power of description thus served as the first step in the enterprise of colonization and imperial dominance.

The Anglo filibusters contributed their share of romantic discovery narratives with regard to Nicaragua. In an article in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* of April 12, 1856, the writer, a filibuster, describes his first view of the city of León:

> When I tell you, far away people, that this is indeed a wonderful land, how you will stare! As one single example take the plain of Leon alone, and you have one of the most extraordinary visions of agricultural resource ever opened to human eyes upon this earth. Its capabilities in this respect, apart from its mere scenic beauties seem almost incredible. The plain itself would support in luxurious abundance a population of millions; and the old city, what a sight![19]

The gesture of breathless excitement and the struggle to describe these wonders of nature for the benefit of the "far away people" inscribes the article into a long succession of imperial travel narratives with the Frontier as a major archive.

Frontier Characteristics and Nicaraguans as New Indians

Many scholars have described the US Western Frontier as the "most popular origin myth" of the United States precisely because of its easy adaptability to new geographical locales and historical circumstances. For Michael Rogin, all foreigners that US Americans encountered during their various imperialist ventures abroad can be subsumed under the term "fantasy Indians," continuously updating old stereotypes and metaphors of the Frontier.[20] As Kirsten Silva Gruesz has pointed out in her study *Ambassadors of Culture*, the territorial expansion of the United States was accompanied by a translation of its "imperial language."[21] The shift of the Frontier went hand in hand with an incorporation of Nicaragua and its people into an established framework of discursive domination, translating Nicaragua as the new West, and Nicaraguans as the new Indians. The key to overcoming the blatant differences between the US Frontier and its update on the isthmus lay in this racial equation: All Latin Americans were depicted as indigenous people, and as indigenous people they shared racial similitudes with the native population of North America. This shocked Latin American *Mestizo* elites, who saw their social standing in the "pigmentocracy" threatened by people they regarded as delegates of modernity and progress.[22] The racial juxtaposition between a unified body of white men against a homogeneous mass of indigenous underlings also explains the confusing terminology employed by the filibusters to refer to their allies, mostly *Criollos* and *Mestizos* which they supposedly met on eye level. Because of this racial translation to Central America, it was possible to construct an explanation of the filibusters as new settlers on a new Frontier, following their Manifest Destiny.

The Frontier marked the fault line between the binary opposites of civilization and nature, and the idea of progress including a transformation from nature to civilization. Civilization was the self-description of the white Frontier man, a mixture of advanced technology and social refinement, with the people living on the other side of the border being equaled with nature. This stock arsenal of bipolarity had been popularized by travel narratives for centuries, and the filibusters made ample use of it.

As Fredrick Pike has shown in his classic study *The United States and Latin America: Myths and Stereotypes of Civilization and Nature*, "ambiva-

lent myths and stereotypes of civilization and nature seem to lie at the heart of American attitudes toward Latin Americans."[23] These stereotypes were not carved out at the time when US citizens came in ever closer contact with Latin Americans, but already "arose out of the attitudes of British settlers toward Indians and imported African slaves."[24] Richard Slotkin, who in his seminal trilogy on the US Frontier (*Regeneration Through Violence* [1973], *The Fatal Environment* [1985], and *Gunfighter Nation* of 1992) also describes the Frontier as the liminal cultural, social and political space in which the constant struggle between civilization and nature was imagined, explains that "the colonists' own need to affirm—for themselves and for the home folks—that they had not deserted European civilization for American savagery" created a preoccupation "with defining, for themselves and for others, the precise nature of their constantly changing relationship to wilderness."[25] The first settlers experienced their new life as governed by the "wildness of the land, its blending of unmitigated harshness and tremendous potential fertility; the absence of strong European cultures on the borders; and the eternal presence of the native people of the woods."[26]

The "wildness of the land" was extended to its native inhabitants and connected to their lack of initiative to cultivate it: European settlers time and again rendered Indians as living comfortably off their land without producing surplus, not trading with livestock or fruit beyond very rudimentary levels. That Native Americans did engage in trading goods was generally suppressed as it formed one of the basic tenets of the civilization–nature divide. As Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker have shown in *The Many-Headed Hydra*, many Europeans arriving at the New World would have been delighted to live off the land in the same way as the native communities, and actively sought to establish enclaves which would not follow the logic of profit maximization and privatization of communal lands. For the Puritans, such a 'waste' of land, such unfulfilled possibilities to follow the bible's call for subduing the earth bordered on sin. Redeeming themselves by cultivating and exploiting natural resources, the Puritans constructed not only a mythical narrative of America's purpose in the world, but also a stark dichotomy between themselves and the native population. The border of this dichotomy was marked by the Frontier, and over time, US citizens ventured to employ the same binary opposition based on the use and non-use of soil to Latin Americans as well.

The article "San Juan de Nicaragua" in *Frank Leslie's* of December 22, 1855 provides an example. The text describes the bay of San Juan at Nicaragua's Atlantic coast, where the battle between nature and civilization was supposedly carried out by white US Americans and Miskitos, the indigenous people living in the region who "live on alligators and other disgusting amphibious animals." The sketches accompanying the article show "the buildings belonging to the Transit Company, consisting of offices, a machine shop, and a large thatched building." The contrast is evocative: While the Miskitos remain so much part of nature that they actually feed on it, the US Americans occupy the same geographical space, but are represented by very different artifacts: offices and machine shops, as synonyms for an industrialized modernity. The same dichotomy was even more pronounced in the visuals of the article "Transit Company's Buildings at Greytown" in *Frank Leslie's* of April 19, 1856. The first of the two pictures showed offices and other administrative buildings of the Transit Company, in clear, lean lines. The second depicted a house of the "natives," bent and crooked on top of a small hill, with a group of four persons in the foreground, and another barely distinguishable figure lurking under a tree to their left. The contrast between the industrial surroundings of the US company, and the 'uncivilized' Natives also worked on the level of absence and presence of human agents: The Transit Company seems to work thanks to machines alone, while the Natives' sphere revolves around the activity (or inactivity, in the case of the man under the tree) of humans (Figs. 4.1 and 4.2).

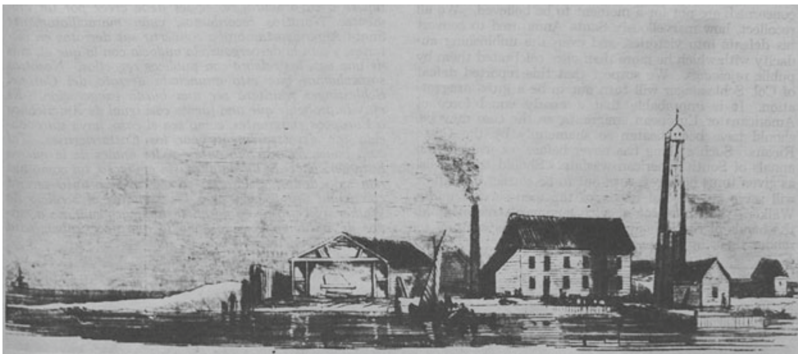

Fig. 4.1 "Transit Company's Buildings at Greytown," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 19, 1855

Fig. 4.2 "Transit Company's Buildings at Greytown," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 19, 1855

'Civilization' also included the capacity to organize; consequently, the filibusters depicted themselves as orderly soldiers, in contrast with the picturesque, yet hotchpotch Nicaraguan fighters. Numerous sketches show them parading, marching or passing muster in orderly lines, while their Nicaraguan allies are always in disarray (Fig. 4.3).

Nudity or semi-nudity constituted another marker of the civilizational bipolarity, and the filibusters, as many other travel writers before them, never failed to comment on this practice which at the same time outraged and fascinated them. Nudity was linked with nature and sexual availability, a trope well known from descriptions of Native Americans. The male gaze of the filibusters especially dwelled on females. In the article "Examining a Squad at Virgin Bay" of *Frank Leslie's* of April 19, 1846, two sketches are pictured: One shows an orderly line of neatly dressed, uniformed filibusters receiving orders at their camp at Virgin Bay; the other the Nicaraguan inhabitants of the area, "faithfully represented in their seminude costume," bathing, fishing and enjoying the water, in stark contrast to the military discipline of the filibusters. The lines of soldiers (in this and in the above image) correspond to the orderly lines of the buildings in the first image and are contrasted with the asymmetrical formations of the native Nicaraguans, which 'invade' the filibuster representation via the huts and curious

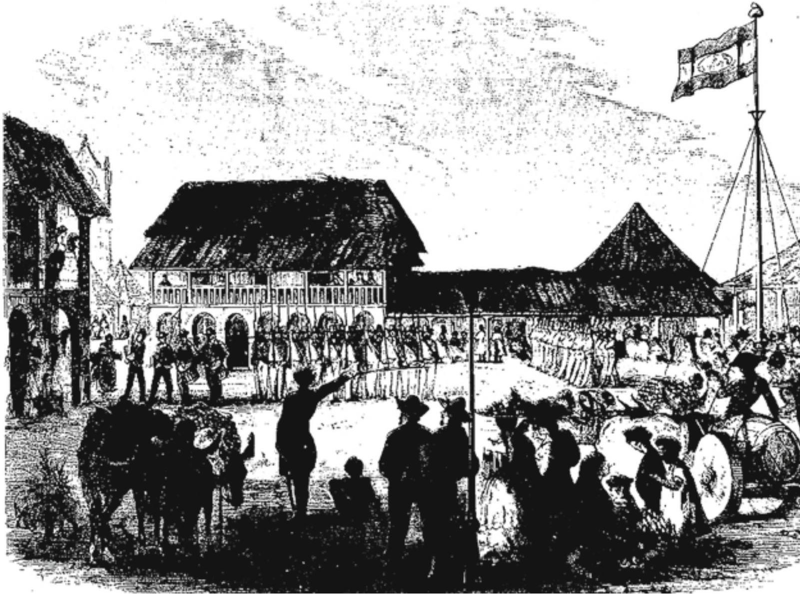

Fig. 4.3 "Grand Plaza and Market, Granada, Nicaragua," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 21, 1856

onlookers on the side and at the background of the filibuster lines. The focal point in the image of the bathing people is the naked male figure's back in its center, but the viewer's line of sight quickly rests on the nude female figure to its right. Such depictions of indigenous life erased the *Mestizos* and *Criollos* that made up the major part of the Nicaraguan population with which the filibusters dealt; and this obliteration made it possible to construct a bipolarity between 'savage' and 'civilized' that transformed all Nicaraguans into new Indians (Figs. 4.4 and 4.5).

The comparison of Nicaraguans with Native Americans also incorporated social values like honor, with Nicaraguans being depicted as committing atrocities clearly reminiscent of tales of Indian slaughter. When during the fights for the city of Granada a US citizen (claimed to have been a neutral merchant) was killed, *El Nicaraguense* reported the incident in the following terms:

> It is an action so far beyond the pale of all civilized customs as to render it impossible for justification. [...] As if to add to the atrocity, they [the

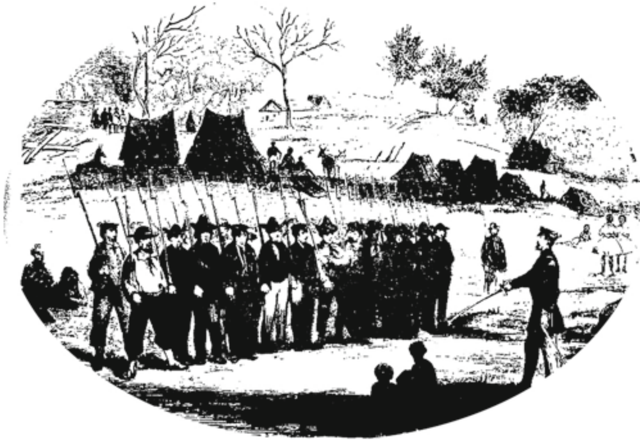

Fig. 4.4 "Examining a Squad at Virgin Bay," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* April 19, 1856

Fig. 4.5 "Examining a Squad at Virgin Bay," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* April 19, 1856

> Central American soldiers] were not content with taking his [Mr. Lawless's] life. Being an American citizen, instead of protecting him while living, was the cause of a continuance of the outrage upon his remains after death! Seven bayonets were thrust through his body after he had been shot.
>
> The thought of how these fiends danced about their victim, and, in their hellish glee at having deprived an American citizen of life, becoming so intoxicated with fury as to continue to thrust their bayonets into him, is heart-sickening.[27]

The dance around the corpse and the "hellish glee" in the perpetrators' eyes link the Central American soldiers to stereotypes of Native Americans rampant in US literature, which underlines Amy Kaplan's dictum that for imperialists subaltern subjects become interchangeable.[28] Intimately linked to the notion of Nicaraguans as new Indians was a gendered, father–son relationship between the two opponents. Native Americans had been depicted as being stuck in an adolescent age, while Europeans had already reached young manhood. As most profoundly examined by Michael Rogin in his study *Fathers and Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian*, white US Americans were keen to render themselves as fathers to the 'red children,' who were portrayed as lacking the intelligence of grown-ups. Europeans could therefore represent Natives both as "the ancestors of the civilized and […] the children they had outgrown and would paternally protect."[29] As with children, they had to be supervised and guided to achieve full adulthood. The progress of civilizing the others on the Frontier was thus rendered as a coming-of-age story, with the whites in the dominant, patriarchal position.

The red children, lacking civilized restraint, were also prone to commit oedipal aggressions against their 'mothers,' which were both the actual women accompanying the settlers (wives, sisters and daughters) and, on an abstract level, civilization itself. In cases when Native Americans killed or were believed to kill women, the grand-scale murder of Native Americans that often followed was rendered as punishment for unruly children, rebelling against the divine order of family affairs. The head of the family was the brotherhood of white men, so that massacres against Native Americans fostered intra-ethnic solidarity and helped forestall questions about socio-economic differences. "Jacksonian nationalism sacrificed Indians to unite white brothers. It succeeded against Indians, and it joined the North and

South for a time," Rogin writes.[30] The fratricidal conflict already developing during Andrew Jackson's presidency had reached its climax in the 1850s, and would only be solved with the Civil War of 1861–1865. A filibuster expedition to Latin America, in which typically men from both the North and South participated, was able to forge a bond of camaraderie transcending political scissures. The shared experience of a new Western Frontier worked to develop a group identity that centered on a unified national self and a racially homogeneous United States.

As Ricardo Salvatore has argued, the main attempt of US travel narratives of both Central and South America was the need of their writers to bring order to the perceived chaotic conditions of these countries. Furthermore, coming from a racial background which placed dark(er)-skinned people at the lower end of social hierarchy, the high position many *Criollos* and *Mestizos* occupied in Latin American societies unsettled travel writers. The ambiguous position of women, who often did not conform to Anglo standards of feminine behavior, added a gender uncertainty which complicated US attempts of categorizations.

In light of all this confusing new intake, most travelers and explorers first "ordered South American nations and peoples [...] as a precondition for establishing differences between these diverse objects of observation and the identity of the narrators."[31] The categories for this attempt at ordering were translated from the United States: race (i.e. skin color), gender and, to a lesser extent, class. This ordering led to a unified view of a homogeneous 'Latin' America in opposition to an 'Anglo' America. Traveling to foreign locales was thus ultimately a goal to better describe the country of origin. By being translated into Latin America, "anxieties and tensions in American culture could be re-assessed and presented more effectively" Salvatore argues.[32] The article "Nicaragua—Its Resources" on the first page of the very first issue of *El Nicaraguense* is exemplary in this respect: Eager to relate the importance and economic potential of Nicaragua's main cities to its readers, the editors chose a comparison to US cities: "[Nicaragua] has in Granada a nucleus for a second Philadelphia, in Leon a second Cincinnati, in Realejo a San Francisco, and in San Juan del Norte a mart of the same comparative importance as New York."[33] It seems as if the Nicaraguan experience could only be made understandable by explicitly comparing it to US social geographies, thus also envisioning the cities' futures: Realejo could only end up as a new San Francisco, San Juan del Norte had to

convert into another New York. An independent way of development seemed impossible.

In the end, these ordering processes culminated in a clear distinction between two bloc entities: a monolithic Anglo America and a unified Latin America, which could not account for the differences between various independent republics.

The discursive subjugation of Latin Americans allowed some disadvantaged groups within the United States, e.g. Irish Americans, to improve their social status. The Irish Great Famine, dire economic situations in Germany and Eastern Europe or anti-democratic oppression in Europe added new, often poor, and badly educated people to the stream of immigration into the US in the 1840s. Because of their lack of education and perceived ethnic differences, these newcomers experienced severe discrimination. Most of them stayed for some time in the cities with transatlantic steam ship connections to which they had arrived—predominantly New York, but also Philadelphia or Boston—where filibusters were especially active in their search for new recruits. And the newcomers often accepted their offers to join expeditions, as new frontiers provided some of the few occasions for escaping discrimination. The processes of othering, though, also talked back to the United States. Travelers' and filibusters' discourses on the indolence, ignorance, intemperance, or criminality of Latin Americans mirrored the repertoire used against the Irish and other 'undeserved poor' in the United States, thus permeating the strict dichotomy between insiders and outsiders: Latin America could ultimately be found in the homeland as well.[34]

Expansionist arguments gradually intertwined with geopolitical desires: As Latin Americans were children, they were unable to form stable and democratic governments, and this shortcoming necessitated US intervention, both officially or unofficially in the form of filibuster expeditions. The absence of stable governments was regarded partly as a danger to the United States but also as a danger to Latin Americans themselves, a danger so overwhelming that Anglos had to come to the 'children's' rescue. The new Frontier also served as a space of regeneration for a supposedly decaying civilization. Adherents of this idea pointed out that US society had constantly to renew its history of struggle against barbarian hordes in the wilderness that had begun with the war of US independence. According to politicians and pamphleteers, the beginning urbanization made young men weak and society on the whole 'old,' that is, risk-averse and compla-

cent. To immerse themselves in the battle with Indians (original or new ones) formed an intrinsic component of the civilizing process.

Nicaraguan publications repeated European notions of a *terra incognita* in Central America because for the Eurocentric Nicaraguan elites this accurately reflected their own perception: They considered themselves travelers in their own country, rooted more in Europe (especially France) than on the isthmus. The *Mestizo* elites of Granada and León were actors in their own right, and used the available discursive offers on nationhood and civilization to exclude other 'others' within their nation. Yet, the idea of a frontier, both in a physical and a metaphorical sense, did not take hold with the Nicaraguan elites. Nicaraguan society was too intermingled in racial terms to draw such clear boundaries. The Mosquitia region was considered to be backward, but with slavery abolished and indigenous people needed for work on the hacienda system, they could not be excluded to such an extent as Native Americans in the United States. The notion of a distinct Frontier which could be used to distinguish the others was absent in Nicaragua. If we follow Eric Wertheimer, who argues that national identity "originates at the frontier because it demands definition between absolutes: one side marking the latest development in the linear spread of modernity (civilization), and the other signifying the absence, or incipient logic, of modernity," the absence of a Frontier in Nicaragua can be linked to the absence of a national identity in the nineteenth century: Without it, no others were needed.[35]

Between National and Natural Borders: Manifest Destiny and US Expansionism

Intimately linked to the concept of the Frontier was the ideology of Manifest Destiny, an influence that cannot be overestimated in the US stance toward Central America in general and Nicaragua in particular.[36] Manifest Destiny was a mix of various ideological-discursive formations (to use Norman Fairclough's terminology) that transcended boundaries of class and gender, emanating from late Enlightenment beliefs and nineteenth-century racist patterns of human development. This mix consisted of "metaphysical dogmas of a providential mission and quasi-scientific 'laws' of national development, conceptions of national right and ideals of social duty, legal rationalizations and appeals to 'the higher law, aims of extending freedom and designs of extending benevolent

absolutism" as Albert Weinberg defines it in his classic study.[37] In short, it constituted a "psychological mixture of predestination, religion, optimism and exaggerated nationalism."[38] The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 and its pan-Americanism under US hegemony, its anti-European stance and heightened nationalism also played a significant part in the emergence of the concept. The basic principle of Manifest Destiny was formulated by John L. O'Sullivan in his often quoted article "Annexation," published in the *Democratic Review* of August 1845[39]: Arguing for the annexation of Texas, O'Sullivan saw the Anglo-Americans' "manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of [their] yearly multiplying millions."

That Manifest Destiny was not only a governing principle of expansion on the North American continent, but expanded southward, was the result of the dogma of 'natural borders': According to expansionists, Providence had designed the American double-continent in such a manner that nature delineated the nation's final borders. Territory south of the Rio Grande was thus rendered as naturally connected to the US homeland. Underlining topographic similarities, these soils were depicted as part of one natural space, and therefore open for imperialist domination by the United States. Whenever national borders inhibited expansion, the argument of the natural connection provided an excuse for expansionists. According to this view Americans had a right to a water boundary to the south as well as to the east and west. As Amy Greenberg has pointed out, "by claiming a 'natural' connection where a national one was so clearly lacking, expansionists justified the flouting of international law in the name of a higher law, or natural destiny."[40] Such a thesis, which may be called the doctrine of the natural barrier, assumes that a state "should have as boundary a topographical feature serving as a barrier or natural line of separation."[41] With this barrier missing in the south of the United States, the nation had not only the right, but also the 'natural' obligation to expand until it reached a shore which would stall its expansion, as had done the Pacific in the West.[42] Providence had become manifest in nature, and the geographical and topological features of landscapes were open to be interpreted as the will of the almighty. For expansionists, the argumentation of Manifest Destiny revolved around the amalgamation of natural conditions with man-made agency. Providence—via nature—had already provided the *telos* of nationalist endeavors, but human agents played a pivotal part in extending and redefining these 'natural' borders.

For the filibusters, Nicaragua formed part of the natural-national space of the United States. One of many examples for this argumentation can be found in a series of five articles written in 1856 by the German revolutionary, editor and ex-member of the Frankfurt Parliament Julius Fröbel in the *New York Daily Times,* titled "The Nicaragua Question." In the second part of the series, Fröbel argued that

> the interference of Anglo-Americans in the political affairs of Nicaragua is a natural consequence of the course of Central American history […]. Central America is favored in a degree which has not been fully appreciated […]. Among all the natural conditions of culture and historical influence, geographical position is the first and principal one—the basis of all the rest.[43]

Nature, in Fröbel's article, is all-encompassing: It pre-conditions the path of Nicaragua's history by giving the country geostrategic importance for the United States and Europe via its "geographical position." Fröbel denies Nicaraguan agency, the idea that the Nicaraguan people themselves could turn their country's geographical position to their advantage, or the possibility that the country could have an independent future, a destiny not linked to United States or European interests. In *El Nicaraguense*, the filibusters also repeatedly equated Nicaragua's geographical position with its divine destiny. Right on the first page of the initial issue, the filibuster editors argued that "Nicaragua, though a small spot on the map of the American hemisphere," had always been "great in its geographical position and its manifest destiny," and was therefore "regarded with great and constantly increasing interest."[44] Of course, the filibusters were eager to portray themselves as the instruments that would fulfill Nicaragua's inherent destiny. In the article "To our Contemporaries" in *El Nicaraguense,* the filibusters envisioned the evaluation of their role by future historians and felt they could be confident:

> We know that all to whom this shall come will hail the natal day of Nicaragua freedom, and rejoice in her deliverance from opression [sic!] by the hands of good men and true, whose firm belief in the inspiration of the Monroe doctrine, and the manifest destiny of all the Americas, has brought them through much tribulation to the gates which once opened will show an astonished world that eastern passage to the Spice Islands for which it has so long sighed.[45]

The text interweaves economic liberalism, an abstract notion of freedom and democracy with a hemispheric drive for Manifest Destiny.

Agency is bestowed on destiny, with filibusters being mere instruments in a teleological interpretation of history. William Walker was rendered as an instrument of destiny in various articles in the *Nicaraguense*, especially in its Spanish-language pages. In a “Remitido” of March 01, 1856, he is portrayed as a savior-figure, “who has arrived guided by the finger of Providence to establish peace in Nicaragua, it is him who has arrived to lift up our country, giving us respectability in the exterior.”[46] These personalizations of destiny were based on another important component of the US variant of Manifest Destiny: the belief that white, Anglo-Saxon Americans were chosen by Providence to lead the way for the rest of humankind. Anglo-Americans believed that their Republican system was evidence they were favored by Providence, as Weinberg reminds us:

> The fundamental premise of the mission idea was that, as John Lay said in 1777, Americans were the first people favored by Providence with the opportunity of choosing rationally their forms of government and thus of constructing them upon the respect for the ‘great and equal rights of human nature’. While this assumption perhaps oversimplified history if not theology, it gave a specious basis to the conception of Americans that in the order of Providence they were special champions of the rights of all men. America’s cause seemed, as the humanitarian Paine said, ‘the cause of all mankind’. Providence itself, Franklin proudly asserted, had called America to a post of honor in the struggle for the dignity and happiness of human nature.[47]

Democracy as Providence’s greatest gift had been bestowed on the United States exclusively, expansionists argued, and consequently its people had to lead the way for other nations to achieve this *telos*. This gave Manifest Destiny’s followers a notion of non-reciprocity: Only chosen people had the right to annexation, the right to lecture other nations on the virtues of a certain form of government, the right to intervene on behalf of the assumed hemispheric (or general) good.

Finally, and maybe most basically, Manifest Destiny reserved Anglo-Saxons the right of a “rapid multiplication” of their numbers, in order to “cover the whole northern, if not the southern continent, with a people speaking the same language, governed in similar forms, and by similar laws,” as Thomas Jefferson had envisioned in his letter to James Monroe in 1801. This harked back to a racial purity. Anglo Americans could not “contemplate with satisfaction either blot or mixture on that surface,” as Jefferson had continued. Manifest Destiny was thus a discourse that ulti-

mately urged extinction of non-Anglo people, both in its westward and southward movement. Surprisingly, though, Manifest Destiny was not an exclusively Anglo-American discourse—Nicaraguan elites employed it as well.

The Nicaraguan *Criollo* and *Mestizo* elites (of both political parties) used the concept of *destino manifiesto* to explain their increasing political thrust toward economic liberalism. For them, quite similar to the US Americans, Nicaragua had received its geographical position by Providence, and would only fulfill its inherent destiny if an interoceanic canal between the Atlantic and the Pacific was built. The country's whole political development had thus to be geared toward this infrastructural project. The elites lamented the civil war because as long as it lasted they could not start this national project. Consequently, the Democrats invited the filibusters as agents who would bring peace to the country and therefore enable it to proceed on its way toward the fulfillment of its destiny. Nicaraguan newspaper articles of the 1840s and 1850s oscillated between content calmness about the country's future, and hectic alarm about its present condition which threatened to deteriorate its future prospects. The feeling that nature (Providence) had blessed the region with natural abundance gave self-confidence, but the competitiveness with other nations led to anxiety. David Spurr has noted that the "combination of moral goodness and material wealth, together with the emphasis on navigation and commerce with other nations" became a distinctly US American understanding of civilization,[48] and the more elite Nicaraguans believed that civilization meant economic strength, the more they felt threatened by the United States, even more so than by the dominant colonial force of the nineteenth century, the British Empire.

For the *Mestizos*, the proof that their country lacked civilization and modernity was the prevalence of nature in their midst. Civilization, as they had learned on their travels to the imperial centers, was explicitly geared toward converting nature into surplus value. Every conversion of natural riches into mechanized resources (e.g. the country's waterways into a transisthmian canal) was therefore applauded. "The first and most important advancement" the construction of a canal would bring Nicaragua "is civilization," an untitled article in the *Correo del Istmo* affirmed, as civilization "is born out of economic activity and the combination of demand and the spirit of industry."[49] *El Istmo de Nicaragua,* in an editorial of 1849 aptly titled "Hope," underlines the prominence of these ideas:

> This small belt [of the Americas] which until recently has been seen as simple and without art, presents itself nowadays richly gilded by the various tones of industry and culture: Our huts are converted into palaces, our cities raise their heads up, our formerly unserviceable lakes show a great and agitated face; this country, all in all, which until recently was regarded as a jungle without culture already attracts the attention of the whole world, commerce considers it as its center, Enlightenment takes hold in it. In short: the delights of human felicity are received spontaneously by the blessed inhabitants of this earthly paradise.[50]

The idea that Nicaragua was destined to be the site of a transoceanic canal was not simply a mid-nineteenth-century fad, but reached back to the times of Spanish colonial administration. Later, Simón Bolívar became a vocal supporter of the canal project, which he thought would convert Nicaragua into the "emporium of the world" and "bring that happy region tribute from the four quarters of the globe. […] Perhaps someday the capital of the world may be located there, just as Constantine claimed Byzantium was the capital of the ancient world," as he envisioned it in his famous Letter from Jamaica. The term "emporium" (conveying notions of commerce as well as imperial power) was a mainstay in the discourse on the Nicaraguan canal. Other notable figures of independent Central America, like the Honduran José Cecilio del Valle or the Nicaraguan Fruto Chamorro concurred in their enthusiasm for the canal, often citing Bolívar. Squier, too, noted in his *Nicaragua*-book that "in respect of geographical position, [the country] almost realizes the ancient idea of the center of the world," reflecting Bolívar's terminology.[51] More than Bolívar, though, Squier copied John Lloyd Stephens, who had mused "that the time is not far distant when the attention of the whole civilized and mercantile world" would be directed toward Nicaragua; actually, that it would be the "highway of nations," connecting the whole world via steamboats passing through the canal: "To men of leisure and fortune, jaded with rambling over the ruins of the Old World, a new country will be opened. After a journey on the Nile, a day in Petra, and a bath in the Euphrates, English and American travelers will be bitten by moschetoes [sic!] on the Lake of Nicaragua, and drink Champagne and Burton ale on the desolate shores of San Juan on the Pacific."[52]

In the 1850s, with the construction of the Panama Canal still a half-century away, the idea of a canal through Nicaragua was far from absurd. Yet, the canal had always been envisioned as a project serving external

forces, attempting to connect either the European colonial centers with the emerging markets in Australia and East Asia, or to connect the US east coast with its western seaboard during the California Gold Rush. Nicaragua's geography was reduced to a commercial connection across the isthmus of the Americas, placing the geographically tiny country at the navel of the (colonial) world, converting it not into the (political, cultural or administrative) "capital" of the world, but only into its "highway."

Elite Nicaraguans were convinced that, when the canal would be ready and the country's destiny fulfilled, every citizen would benefit from it. Francis Kinloch Tijerino described the notion that simply settling near the finished canal would transfer future riches to all of them.[53] Destiny in Nicaragua was linked to the territory, not to an ethnic-cultural community. In other words: The concept of *destino manifiesto* was not centered around race—as the US Manifest Destiny—but around geographical proximity. This is surprising given the racial segmentation of Nicaraguan society. The idea of the canal was the only project of a national imaginary which otherwise was absent. In a country marked by the bitter rivalry between Granada and León and the British influence on the Mosquitia, the destiny of the canal was unifying. Even large parts of the non-elite population were outspoken admirers of such a canal, as Gobat shows with reference to rural *caudillos*,[54] and Burns analyzes for the class of the small merchants.[55] Squier in his travel account relates an episode in which an elderly Nicaraguan woman had clearly mastered the intricacies about the capitalist mechanisms of such construction projects: When during his voyage he rested at a plateau, she approached him, asking if he wanted to buy the terrain because she had heard that "[t]he Norte Americanos were building a canal, and in a few months Buena Vista would be worth four times the money."[56] The Nicaraguan *Destino Manifiesto* was a territory-based narrative of unity, and the elusion of agency was the complete opposite of the US race-based Manifest Destiny. This elusion also meant that it remained unclear who would construct the canal. Nicaraguans were aware that they did not have the financial resources necessary for its construction. Urban Nicaraguans, although increasingly outward-oriented, underestimated, or misunderstood, the mechanisms of the international trade system by propagating a canal as the country's panacea without including a discussion on its beneficiaries. This showed the incoherent logic and ideological blindness of the *destino manifiesto* discourse; economy simply did not matter. In their search for outside help in the construction of the

canal, the Democratic Party could boast of their invitation of the filibusters by parading them as the keys for fulfilling Nicaragua's national destiny.

Prior to the 1850s, the term *destino manifiesto* did not emerge in the Nicaraguan discourse. This term was indeed the result of a contact situation which let the Nicaraguans shape their long-held convictions into a form that was understandable to the US Americans. The idea of a *destino manifiesto*/Manifest Destiny is thus a transnational exchange process par excellence, facilitated by the widening of connections between Nicaragua and the United States. Nevertheless, in direct encounters, both sides realized that they were not using the same concept, but two slightly differing versions. This became problematic when the filibusters started to confiscate Nicaraguan land from hacienda owners. After Walker had declared himself President, he announced that he would expropriate enemies of the state (i.e. Nicaraguans fighting against him) and sell this land to US settlers under a so-called Americanization program. This earned the filibusters the ire of elite Nicaraguans, whose power was based on land ownership. As long as the land that had to be used for the canal project belonged to them, they were sure to profit from it. When they realized that the filibusters attempted to deprive them of their land, they turned against them. The article "Venta de terrenos en Matagalpa por Guillermo Walker" in the *Boletín Oficial de León* of August 21, 1856 informed its readers about the confiscation of territory by filibusters and called it "the ruin of our race."[57] "Un chontaleño," an unnamed writer, felt compelled to publish the following song "to the allied forces of Central America in Nicaragua" in 1856 which lamented the initial invitation of the filibusters and ends:

> As liberals we offered the world
> our rich fields and our lake
> and today the Yankees pay us
> with destruction, plunder and invasion.[58]

The "yankees" wanted to take away control of the two things that constituted the elites' power base: the "fertile fields" and "the lake," the very foundations of the country's soil-based *destino manifiesto*: fertile grounds to produce agricultural goods which could then be shipped out via the canal. The territorial integrity of Nicaragua was the one and only prerequisite that Nicaraguans valued. The canal had to be constructed in Nicaragua, meaning: on soil belonging to Nicaraguans.

Manifest Destiny/*destino manifiesto* as a constitutive element of two different national discourses thus provided a common denominator for the Nicaraguans to comprehend the North Americans' plans for their country—both prior to and during the filibuster expedition to their country. The shared discursive background constituted a mutual benefit facilitating initial cooperation. Nevertheless, in the daily practices of the contact situation, the Nicaraguan elites realized that this denominator provided a point of divergence, a transnational misunderstanding. Although themselves deeply entrenched in discourses on racial hierarchies, the Nicaraguans understood *destino manifiesto* not in a racial sense, which formed the nucleus of the Anglo-American perspective.

Human and National Bodies: Race as a Homogenizer and Regenerator

Both the experience of the Frontier and the US version of Manifest Destiny were shot through with the stratum of racial configurations. Race was not only a core issue of collective identification processes and othering for US Americans, but—within different categorizations—for Nicaraguans as well: "la obsesión con la raza," as Ricardo Salvatore has called it.[59] Facing the "inevitable chaos of intensive and extensive national development,"[60] US Americans had to conceptualize their rapid national growth which brought them into intimate (as Ann Stoler would call it) contact with people they positioned in a European-based framework of races.

Johann Friedrich Blumenbach had declared in his *Über die natürlichen Verschiedenheiten im Menschengeschlechte* (Latin 1775, German 1798) that mankind was divided into five races, thereby laying the base for European concepts of race. While Blumenbach counted the Caucasian (white), the Ethiopian (black), the Mongolian (yellow), the Malayan (brown) and the American (red) race, upholding that there existed a wide array of interior varieties within these categories, and that none was necessarily inferior or superior to any other, European notions of racism by the 1850s generally followed Arthur de Gobineau's *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (1853–1855). De Gobineau chopped down Blumenbach's taxonomy to only three races—Aryans, blacks, and the yellow race—and established a clear hierarchy: Blacks were the most inferior, then came the yellow race, and the Aryans (also called Nordic or Germanic race) ruled over both of them. Whereas Blumenbach had intended his categories of human races

to illustrate amalgamations and crossings, de Gobineau and his followers believed that precisely such mixtures were the greatest dangers to the master race, as its superiority depended on purity. De Gobineau's doctrine of purity and hierarchization found fruitful ground in European and US expansionism. Manifest Destiny mirrored these beliefs in its focus on one single race chosen by Providence. As the nation state became the ultimate political form during the nineteenth century, the idea of a homogeneous nation "possessing its own Volksgeist, its own special national spirit, fell on fertile ground among English-speaking people [in North America] who had long traced their institutions to a glorious Anglo-Saxon past and were seeking to explain their success in the modern era," Reginald Horsman explains.[61] Race—together with a national, unified language—was regarded as the prerequisite for any nation state.

Concepts of purity and growth resulted in a new focus on the human body as physical embodiment of racial ideas. If races could deteriorate or improve, then one had to change its bodies; if races were stable entities, then one had to measure and analyze its bodies to determine their position within the rigid system of races. Racism, via biopower and biopolitics (as Michel Foucault has called these techniques), thus formed part of the governmental apparatus of the modern nation state.

These concepts also entailed a renewed interest in the conflation of the nation state with the human body, in what since Plato has been called the 'body politic'. In the United States, the young nation was equated with a human body, born out of the successful revolution of 1776, entering adolescence at the nineteenth century. Opponents of expansion usually argued that the incorporation of new territories constituted a threat to the healthy body politic. Attaching new defective 'limbs' to this body might harm it, precisely by further diluting its racial setup.

Practiced on a national scale, racism became the basis for an extraordinary process of homogenization in the United States. Race annihilated social classes, and unified an imagined community—to use Benedict Anderson's concept—of white males behind a single goal: The success of the nation state, first and foremost on the Northern American continent, but eventually in the rest of the hemisphere as well. Subscribing to de Gobineau's concept of the existence of only three races and rejecting Blumenbach, who integrated Native Americans in his "American race," white US Americans established race categories which would account for the inclusion of, first, Native Americans, and later on, when turning their attention to Mexico and further South, for *Mestizos* and Amerindian peo-

ple into a possible nation state. US Americans were adamant in excluding non-whites from their understanding of "American," thus putting Latin American *Mestizos* into the category of blacks. Latin American *Mestizos* were regarded as 'mongrel race.' If this 'mongrel race' was unable to be civilized or if actively resisting such an endeavor, it had to face extinction. This discourse of extincting foreign races connected to experiences on the Frontier, where Native Americans had been massacred under the same premises. Gail Bederman points out that the Frontier was constructed "as a site of origins of the American race, whose manhood and national worth were proven by their ability to stamp out competing, savage races."[63] Expansionists oscillated between such dreams of extinction and the possibility to uplift these inferiors by mixing with superior races, e.g. themselves. The filibusters were no exception, and attempted to improve their strategic situation by marrying into Nicaraguan elite families. Michel Gobat indicates that about twelve filibusters married Nicaraguan women,[64] all in and from Granada.[65] "One thing is certain," a filibuster boasted in *El Nicaraguense,* "we are filling up here with the white race quite fast enough to enable us to protect ourselves in whatever direction we may chose to spread."[66] "Filling up" meant both the immigration of Anglo filibusters and the 'whitening' of the Nicaraguan population by intermarriages. Since the US–Mexican War, such sexual unions of 'vigorous' Anglo men with racially inferior women were regarded as panacea for the incorporation of a supposedly inferior race.

Race was a mix of ethnic, perceived cultural and social issues, obfuscating the latter category. Social class, for most US expansionists, was superseded by a complex, dynamic mingling of race and gender, and therefore class did not figure prominently in the filibusters' agenda. Race was the grand homogenizer used to bind together an imagined community that was otherwise showing more and more social fissures. Class fissures only popped up subcutaneously; for example, in a public letter William Walker addressed to US President James Buchanan after his return: "The Americans," he wrote, "have always maintained the faith and honor of their race, in the midst of falsehood and treachery on the part of their enemies […]. We fight for the right of our race which have [sic!] been denied us by an ungrateful and degraded aristocracy" ("Letter to US-Pres. James Buchanan" 1858, ABG D4G1 0448-01, IHNCA). Elements normally erased by the catch-all concept race center around the word "aristocracy," a term that could transport both class distinctions and a rejection of monarchical forms of government. The over-emphasis the filibusters

gave to their supposedly shared race was the glue that held together a variety of men, which in their homeland were sectionalized, and rarely met: unemployed Irish immigrants, struggling urban workers, employed middle-class men (like William Walker) and upper-class southern gentry. As a cross-sectional category, whiteness was always a social, not a racial category and the result of a complex process of intersectional negotiations, as can be seen in the example of Irish immigrants.

The influx of people from Ireland increased enormously from the 1820s onward. In the 1830s, Irish accounted for one of the biggest immigrant groups in a decade which saw more immigration to the United States than ever before. The Irish were fleeing "caste oppression and a system of landlordism that made the material conditions of the Irish peasant comparable to those of an American slave," Noel Ignatiev analyzed in his study *How the Irish became White*.[67] The Irish were also lured to the United States by prospects of work, especially in the field of infrastructure construction during the westward expansion: Irish were employed in canal and railroad works, in lumbering or milling. The Great Famine, which started in 1845 and had repercussions in emigration patterns well into the 1850s, meant that Irish immigration skyrocketed again in the late 1840s.[68] Arriving in the United States, many Irish encountered hostility: The mood was turning nationalist, with nativism in its first full bloom, and the Irish were seen as outsiders due to two factors: religion and race. Irish were predominantly Catholic, and mid-nineteenth-century white US Americans harbored staunchly anti-Catholic sentiments.[69] Yet, the perception of Irish as being racially different, weighted even more: Frequently Irish were referred to as "niggers turned inside out."[70] This process of mixing two subaltern groups had a double direction: While Irish were "niggers turned inside out," black people became "smoked Irish."[71] It also brought Irish into proximity with the trope of immaturity: Caricatures often showed Irishmen and women not only with suspiciously black faces (consummating ethnic interchangeability on a visual level), but very often also as midget-like creatures that had to be guided by adults. Although their skin color theoretically made the Irish "eligible for membership in the white race, it did not guarantee their admission; they had to earn it," Ignatiev concludes.[72] And this meant social ascendency, the accumulation of wealth, ceasing to "stay Green," and becoming completely "white." In these processes of identification, though, the decision of what white was, and who belonged to this favored category, always stayed with the Anglo-Saxon, male US population.

A fairly large number of Irish attempted to "earn" their whiteness by joining filibuster missions, fighting a Nicaraguan counterpart depicted as even further distanced from whiteness than they were. In Walker's forces numerous Irish names can be found on the muster roll.[73] That the Anglo-Saxon filibusters nevertheless looked down on them can be inferred from the regular inserting of jokes about Irishmen in *El Nicaraguense* (e.g. in the issues of December 29, 1855, February 09, 1856 and July 05, 1856).

Even more than the Irish, the *Mestizo* faction of the filibusters and their Nicaraguan associates occupied a liminal position within this racist mindset. Were they part of us or them? This question was solved by singling them out as special specimen, not touched by the usual degradation of their race. A typical rhetorical strategy can be found in the article "Don Fermín Ferrer, Ex-President of Nicaragua" in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* of June 27, 1857. "Don Fermin Ferrer was born in the village of Viejo, in the beautiful province of Leon, Nicaragua," where "the inhabitants are among the most upright and industrious people of the country," the article explains thereby setting Ferrer, who was one of the staunchest filibuster allies in Nicaragua, apart from his fellow Nicaraguans. The text goes on exceptionalizing him: "With broader views of nation policy than is general to his countrymen, Don Fermin has always encouraged the emigration of American citizens into Nicaragua, as a means of introducing a spirit of enterprise and the example of education into the Republic." Throughout the article, the writer hails Ferrer for being different from the average Nicaraguan, whitening him in the process. The accompanying ambrotype shows a *Mestizo* whose attire and skin color does not differ at all from Anglo-Saxon filibusters like C.L. Fayssoux, J.T. Waters, or William Walker, who were portrayed in the same issue. Such exceptions only served to underline the wide gulf between the ordinary mass of inferior people and the supposedly homogeneously superior whites.

The conviction of white superiority was hard to adjust to reality as the Central American armies won more and more victories in battle. One way that reflected Anglo superiority was success in battle, and when the filibusters experienced their first major defeats, *Frank Leslie's* cautioned against the trustworthiness of such news:

> These South American half breeds are terrible liars, and where their own prowess is concerned, are not for a moment to be believed. [...] It is improbable that a nearly equal force of Americans or European emigrants, as the case may be, should have been beaten so shamefully by the Costa Ricans.[74]

Superiority of race was so essential to the filibusters that a defeat in battle was hard to comprehend. This was reinforced by their Latin American allies who viewed Anglos as great marksmen, enduring fighters and thus generally successful in combat situations. When routings became routine, the filibusters usually put their misery down to two facts: Either incompetence of the leaders or treachery and vileness of the Latin American forces.

Nineteenth-century racism adopted from Blumenbach his notion that the origin of the human species and civilization were to be found in Asia, and that mankind had steadily moved westward on its way of racial development. Already, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel had claimed—in his *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*—that "World History travels from East to West; for Europe is the absolute end of history, just as Asia is the beginning."[75] For Hegel, history followed the *Weltgeist* in a linear movement, meaning that neither Africa nor Latin America (which lay to the south of the movement) formed part of world history. While Asian races were hailed as the birth of civilization, African and American indigenous people were considered to be without proper history and thus without importance for World History. Some US expansionists consequently saw themselves as the descendants of an Aryan *Urvolk,* a people "sweeping westward out of Asia" "to revitalize the Roman Empire and eventually dominate the world."[76] The successful Puritan settlement, the triumph of Republicanism in the War of Independence, the extensive material prosperity and the rapid territorial growth after the 1820s seemed to favor this ideology. It seemed logical that 'inferior races' would ask Anglos for help and filibusters "appropriated manifest destiny's racialist codes, by arguing that their expeditions would rescue invaded peoples from stagnation, reactionary Catholicism and barbarism."[77] Filibusters portrayed Nicaraguans and other Latin Americans as victims of their own worst impulses (which had led them to civil war), with their body politic degenerate, now in need for an 'infusion' of superior elements, both into the body politic (via a revolution) and into actual human bodies (via intermarriages). *Frank Leslie's* ran many articles on the positive change the 'infusion' of whites had brought to Nicaragua, for example: "The Americans, who were now crowding in, on their way to California, soon obtained a predominating influence, and from a sleepy tropical Spanish town, [San Juan] became infused with the vivacity of a thriving Yankee village."[78] "We are waking up this ancient city of Granada with a vengeance about these times," an enthusiastic fili-

buster wrote in "Central America" on April 12, 1856, and then went on to breathlessly gallop through the changes already noticeable:

> I can easily imagine the moss-grown hoary cathedral towers blinking and staring in half-aroused wonder upon the bustling streets beneath, thronging with the representatives of 'Young America' […]. Such a blaze of scarlet ribbon, hat-bands, breast-knots and scarfs fluttering in the brisk lake breeze—blue coats, gold shoulder straps and shining buttons—brazen sabres—and the dull steely shine of revolvers in patent leather belts—bayonets and gleaming rifle barrels—all, with the eager hurried tread of the 'pale-faces' rushing past the shrinking groups of tawny, half-clad natives, picturesque in the gay color and gossamer texture of their semi-costumes.[79]

The dichotomies between the old and new (moss-grown cathedral towers vs. shiny blazes of scarfs and weapons) as well as sleepiness versus "bustles" and "rushes" transports notions of reanimation.

The article "General Walker of New Granada" plays on the perception of decadence in various instances: It depicts Walker's decision to "turn his attention to Nicaragua" to the fact that the country had been held victim by a "decaying government," and "the withering influence of decayed dynasties."[80] Walker and the filibusters argued that "the fairest portion of the world, the transit between two great oceans, the highway connecting our Atlantic and Pacific ports, must be in the hands of a vigorous race."[81] An article in *Leslie's* underlines that the object of the filibusters in Nicaragua was "to relieve it from misrule and misery by introducing the energy, capital and industrial skill of the North into the fertile but unoccupied wastes of that magnificent land of perpetual spring."[82] In *El Nicaraguense*, time and again, the country's fortune was linked to the influx of the "vigorous white" race: "Nicaragua is in need of a stable, honest and industrious population," the filibusters wrote in "An Appeal to the People of the United States."[83] The lack of vigor and energy, the sleepiness, and sluggishness of the Latin Americans was a staple in travel narratives, novels, poems or newspaper articles, providing a ready rationalization for expansionist interventions.

Configuring Whiteness in Nicaragua

Shelley Streeby reminds us that US aversions against Latin Americans had been simmering at least since Texan independence, and had been boosted both by the US–Mexican War and the California Gold Rush—all

instances in which US Americans had territorial and economic interests which put them in conflict with Latin Americans. US bickering about Latin American 'greasers' had been a constant for some 20 years when filibusters headed out toward Central America and the Caribbean. The Nicaraguan elites, though, had preferred to turn a blind eye to such racism, as Francis Kinloch Tijerino shows.[84] This was contrary to the Cuban exile community in New York, which repeatedly questioned US ascendancy to an imperial position in the hemisphere as well as the southern slave system.[85] Even the war against Mexico scarcely made the headlines in the Nicaraguan papers, and if reported, the Mexicans were blamed for their "erroneous conduct" with regard to the United States, which was continued to be hailed for its potency.[86] *Mestizo* and *Criollo* Nicaraguans had already experimented with the introduction of white settlers into their territory to hasten the progress associated with whites. This strategy mirrored that of other countries like Cuba or Argentina.

In Nicaragua, characterized by interethnic mixing, race was even more consciously the result of social negotiations than in the United States. The Nicaraguan elite was much more inclined to negotiate race in a process of social constructions than to view it as a fixed result of natural selection. In South America and Mexico, progressive Latin American *Mestizos* started to realize that they and their societies did not fit into the bipolar racist categories of de Gobineau. Consequently, they attempted to position Latin America as a space outside of European categorizations, and Latin American as a new ethnic category "defined not by blood or skin color but by marginal status."[87] Nicaragua differed from this trend, as *Mestizo* and *Criollo* Nicaraguans had fully subscribed to European racism à la Gobineau that equated whiteness with civilization. The Nicaraguan elites were sure they formed part of the civilized (and civilizing) race. That Walker and his men mixed them together with inferior races uprooted their belief that Anglos would regard them as equals because of their European education and cultural inclinations. This shock had strong repercussions for the encounters between Nicaraguans and filibusters, and was a major source of discontent within an otherwise consensual beginning. With the filibusters' arrival, the Nicaraguans could no longer presume that always the others, for example, the Mexicans, were to blame if US Americans started to annex territory. Yet, the *Mestizos*, even when opposed to the domination brought about by the filibusters, perpetuated the racial discourses of the North Americans. When the allied Central American army was finally able to dethrone Walker and his men, Nicaraguan elites were eager to down-

play their involvement, which resulted in putting the blame on Walker as a devilish pirate. The filibusters were portrayed as the few bad apples of their race that unluckily ended up on the isthmus. This implied that the rest of the Anglo-Americans could still be regarded as superior and a possible ally in the civilizing effort. Nicaraguan conceptions of race did not change at all after the filibuster trauma. The Nicaraguan *Mestizos* and *Criollos* still strove to emulate European concepts as European racism was hard-coded into Nicaraguan elite circle's ideologies and would survive even a profound disillusionment like the filibuster invasion.

Gender, Masculinity and the Filibusters

Discussions of territorial expansion were shot through with discourses of masculinity (see Amy Greenberg's *Martial Manhood*), and the debate about filibusters also involved a discussion about the nexus between masculinities and the nation state. Following R.W. Connell, I regard masculinities as fluid, processual and basically socially constructed categorizations. Gender and consequently masculinities are fundamental elements of identity construction, being constructed through, among others, discursive strategies of othering. The ultimate other in this respect is the social construction of femininity, but all forms of deviant masculinities can be constructed as other. Thus, in writing on masculinities, femininity always plays the role of the ghost in the machine. Studying masculinities offers the possibility to engage various constructions of hegemonic, complicit and marginalized masculinities, which otherwise would run the danger of disappearing in examining gender in general. Constructions of masculinity are not restricted to the individual, but have to be (re-)searched on a collective level. Defining the nation state—as has been common since Benedict Anderson's pathbreaking study *Imagined Communities*—as an abstract community of individuals, constructed on discourses that bind together the insiders (citizens and patriots) against the outsiders (foreigners, others and enemies) shows that masculinities play an important role in the imagination and image of the nation (see also Todd Reeser's *Masculinities in Theory*). Reeser as well as Joane Nagel, among others, underline the importance of a gendered base in Western European nationalism.[88] It relies on the intrinsic link between (hyper-)masculinity and power (i.e. social agency), an obvious link in patriarchal societies. Concurrently, I am interested in masculinities as results or way points of (national) processes and struggles between competing social agents within the framework of

the nation state. Such struggles—of both physical and discursive nature—include strategies of domination and marginalization, ultimately competing over establishing one single form of masculinity as the hegemonic model within the confines of the nation state. Hegemony does not imply that all male persons possess or strive for the attributes connected with hegemonic masculinity, or that this masculinity is available to males alone. It simply consists of a set of attributes which constitutes the culturally normative model for males in various social roles and on various levels, for example, with regard to behavior, clothing, speech patterns, and so on, and which exists in interrelations with non-hegemonic (i.e. complicit or marginalized) masculinities.

Brady Harrison has pointedly argued in *Agent of Empire* that through the debates surrounding the filibusters in general and William Walker's group in particular ran "many of the major currents of his [Walker's] day—Jacksonianism, expansionism, Young Americanism, annexationism, idealism, evolutionism, Puritanism rewritten as American exceptionalism and more."[89] One of these "mores" was masculinity, the idea that the male body was not only constitutive but also emblematic of the nation state.

Although the metaphor of the 'birth of the nation' hints at a feminine conception of the nation state, the corporal patterns employed in US discourse in the mid-nineteenth century evoked a masculine image[90]: The 'appetite' of the young nation for growth was exteriorized, and the only way to satisfy this appetite was territorial expansion.[91] This aggressive, energetic, outward-looking virility was widely perceived as quintessentially male and linked to the hegemonic idea(l) of masculinity: It was the masculinity of the (scientific) explorer, settler and pioneer, the invader and conqueror. As Senator Stephen A. Douglas said in one of his speeches, "[y]ou cannot fix bounds to the onward march of this great and growing country. You cannot fetter the limbs of the young giant. He will burst all your chains. He will expand and grow and increase and extend civilization, Christianity and liberal principles."[92] The sphere outside of the family was exclusively the realm of males, defining their masculinity by conquering, domesticating, and civilizing the savage parts of the world. The building of the nation was an exclusively male domain, while the nation's management (e.g. on the level of reproductive labor) involved female agents as well. The nation and its hegemonic masculinity ideal—Amy Greenberg has dubbed it "martial manhood"—are thus paradigmatically discernible in the discussions surrounding expansionism.

Other nations were depicted as females or their governments as effete. Among other forms of differentiation—Protestant versus Catholic, 'free' (i.e. Republican) versus 'subservient'—gendered tropes were among the most widely used. With the trope of the masculine US nation, power relations between states were enunciated as relationships between males and females: Virile young men, embodying the nation, went out into the world to conquer females, both in the form of territories and its inhabitants of both sexes. Anglo-Saxon American expansionists were often depicted as being made of hardwood or iron, their expeditions as masculine penetration into virgin lands.[93] Discourses on territorial conquest thus went hand in hand with metaphors of sexual conquest, with Manifest Destiny prescribing clearly defined gender roles. It was the male's part to "overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions," as John L. O'Sullivan had written in his article, with the female body being infringed in domestic environments. Men turned to them for moral guidance and to provide the domestic stability indispensable for expansionist conquest. Michael Newbury notes that in the middle of the nineteenth century, women of the emerging middle class increasingly "abandoned the domestic production prominent during the republican years and took on the role of moral arbiter and guardian of the private, domestic domain."[94]

Annette Kolodny has argued that the geography of the Americas was perceived as a female entity by the first European explorers and settlers and that this notion of America as both a caring mother and a fertile young girl survives until the present day. Such metaphors of America as a woman available to the male gaze contributed to a passive role of actual American women in the patriarchal society. Brady Harrison, in analyzing romantic novels of the time, found that women were depicted as passive, and that "men take to the field to battle it out among themselves, women must be around to be, at the outset, spectators, and then collateral damage."[95] Accordingly, nations were depicted as 'mistresses in distress,' which had to be saved by the manly, chivalric US Americans.[96] The aforementioned apology for intervention—that Latin Americans were unfit for self-government—was therefore not only based on race, but also on notions of masculinity.

The chivalric quest had to end in a symbolic marriage, a permanent union between the territory and the 'knight-invaders.' This was often not only consummated on the symbolic level, but also quite literally: Anglo men were fascinated by the 'luscious Latina.' The success of Anglo

men in 'annexing' Latinas ultimately reflected the nation's geopolitical annexation of foreign countries. Anglo men were supposed to prevail, and "Latin Americans, regardless of gender, were stereotyped as feminine and destined by nature to satisfy Yankee lust."[97] Such "international race romances," to borrow a term from Shelley Streeby, were subject to white male agency alone; Latin American men remained passive bystanders against which Anglo-Saxons could develop their superiority. Latin Americans were never considered a serious match for Anglos in the conquest of the adorable Latina, rendering them invisible in narratives of personal and territorial annexation. Amy Greenberg argued that "[e]very quality that the American man found lacking in the Latin American man—bravery, hard work, intelligence and strength—reflected a quality that he claimed for himself, and one that was becoming increasingly difficult to prove at home."[98] By projecting onto Latin American men all they feared or disliked in themselves, Americans "reassured themselves about their own masculine virtues" because in mid-nineteenth century, these virtues faced serious obstacles from changing social conditions.[99] With accelerating industrialization and urbanization, the increased competition on the labor market due to massive (mostly European) immigration and the obvious finiteness of settlement on the North American landmass after reaching the Pacific coast, many men did not see a chance to fulfill their ideal of masculinity in the United States and looked with enthusiasm to expansionist projects.

Many articles in the US press catered to this dream by portraying the filibusters as daredevil adventurers, depicting their lives as a succession of adventurous escapades. *El Nicaraguense* was on the forefront of this trend with its regular series "Scenes from my Knapsack and Hammock," by one Corporal Pipeclay.[100] *Frank Leslie's* also featured various articles, accompanied by drawings "made on the spot by our artist-correspondent" to depict the adventurous life of the filibusters. The article and accompanying sketch "Interior of the Convent, Repose after Battle" showed a scene of a dozen wild-looking males, some in hammocks, some shaving, some playing cards, all obviously enjoying themselves in an intimate depiction of male camaraderie. With their composition overflowing with details, such pictures invited hours of study and enjoyed huge popularity among young men (Fig. 4.6).[101]

Throughout May 1856 *El Nicaraguense* brimmed with articles about the battles between the filibusters and Costa Ricans, with long articles and sketches reporting victories for Walker's men. "Battle of Rivas," for exam-

Fig. 4.6 "Repose after Battle," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 03, 1856

ple, showed three groups of filibusters engaging the enemy. All three were portrayed as bearded, without uniforms, discipline or order. All groups were engaging the enemy; the prominent group in the foreground in a hand-to-hand combat with a group of Costa Ricans, showing one centrally positioned filibuster grabbing an unarmed person at his hair while swinging a long knife toward his head, in a motion reminiscent of scalping (Fig. 4.7).[102]

The article repeated the same tropes of bravado and daredevil spirit present in the image: In the various encounters throughout the day, the Costa Ricans by far outnumbered the filibusters, but because of the latter's superior marksmanship and courage, they carried off the day. This was achieved because "the Costa Ricans shun the open fight" and thus some "gallant" volunteers, "with a whoop and a yell," repeatedly confronted barricaded enemies, and although with some casualties "the fearless and undaunted forces of the democracy" ultimately prevailed. The whole military encounter was thus broken down into tales of individual heroism, of distinguished men confronting and subjugating masses of weak foes. Such depictions of a rough-and-ready, virile and martial masculinity catered to the

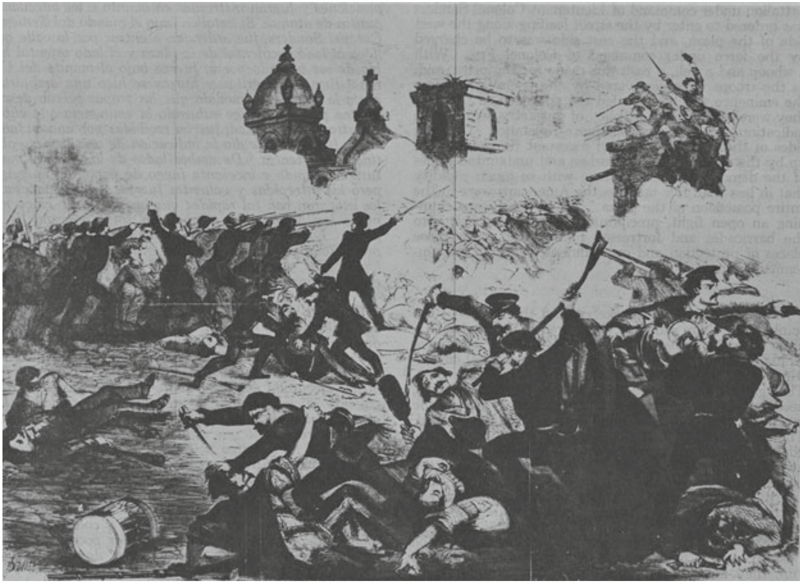

Fig. 4.7 "Battle of Rivas," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 17, 1856

large group of young men who were eager to ascertain their masculinity abroad. Martial masculinity served as a fundamental watershed, an organizer of dichotomies based on inclusions and exclusions of people.

Critics of the filibusters did not only attack the notion of expansionism as such by warning against the potential dangers for the body politic, but also contested the martial masculinity propagated by leading expansionists as outdated. William Walker was regarded as a "hero in another epoch" but now an "anachronism," belonging to an "antiquated epoch of violence and aggression already left behind."[103] The widespread positive equation of the filibusters with US settlers and pioneers was challenged by their critics with comparisons to the Spanish conquistadors. They used Hernán Cortés as negative projection, comparing Walker and his men with the blood-thirsty Spaniard, thus countering the positive narratives of Cortés and his fellow conquistadors in US historiography since the books by William Hickling Prescott from the late 1830s and 1840s. The vision of masculinity these critics offered young US men was what Amy Greenberg has called Restrained Manhood.[104] Men were encouraged to

follow Puritan values of hard work, physical and mental self-control, and a general development of their character. The incentive to work hard and build a career was diametrically opposed to notions of masculinity which saw the traditional mechanic's workshop as a treadmill, the factory as an infringement of male freedom, and thus focused completely on the conquest, settlement and urbanization of territory. The call for self-control meant a control of the dual urges of conquering territory and women. The restrained man was supposed to provide for his family not by going out into the world, but by staying home with his loved ones. The filibuster opponents paralleled their ideal of restrained men with their preferred notion of the US nation state: The latter, too, should be inward-oriented and restrained, it should concentrate on advancing the capitalist reorganization of the United States, ultimately breaking with the ideal of land proprietorship in favor of a liberal market economy. Thus, opponents of expansionism also conflated notions of individual male bodies with political conceptions of the nation state. Advocates of restrained manhood also concurred in the portrayal of Latin American men as feminized others, weaklings unable to govern themselves. The difference to supporters of expansionism was that the anti-expansionists preferred to give an example to the feminized others by the example of the economic development of the United States, not by invading external territories, thus anticipating key positions of the 1890s debate between supporters of direct and indirect US hegemony in the Americas.

This seems to result in a stark dichotomy between filibusters and a martial masculinity on one hand, and their opponents and a competing model of restrained masculinity on the other, both being guided by a common discursive practice which modeled heterosexual white men as embodiments of the nation state. Yet, the division was not so clear-cut. The Nicaraguan filibusters incorporated ambiguous roles with regard to masculinity, especially William Walker. With Walker a male media star, he set the standards for the hegemonic masculinity of his peers—and these were of a decidedly contradictory nature. In almost all articles, poems and other depictions published during Walker's fame, his physical appearance formed part of the portrayal. One of the first longer articles on Walker was published in *Frank Leslie's* on January 05, 1856 under the heading "General Walker of New Granada." A daguerreotype of Walker accompanied the article, showing a slender, immaculately dressed young man. The article briefly mentioned Walker's origin and academic background. And relating that Walker started to work in the newspaper business, the biographical nar-

rative suddenly discontinues and Walker's physical appearance becomes the focus of attention. The author recalls the moment when he first met Walker while working with him in New Orleans, "attracted by his delicate person, pale freckled face, light blue eye, and thoughtful expression." This description stands in stark contrast to the usual configurations of manly expansionists or settlers, who were hailed as examples of hyper-masculinity thanks to their enormous corporeal dimensions. Walker's body attracted attention for being delicate, for having almost feminine qualities. The rest of the article returns to common ground, portraying Walker as an ever-energetic military leader, following his filibuster career from his decision to invade Mexico to his triumphs in Nicaragua, culminating in the assertion that Walker "is evidently destined to be one of the most marked men of the present day."

The *Frank Leslie's* article "Reception Room of Gen. Walker in the President's House, City of Granada" also dwells on Walker's outer appearance: "In person, he is rather below the medium height, very spare in figure, but with a well-developed chest and shoulders; his hair is yellow, very thin, and worn extremely short. His complexion is light, or what would be termed sandy [...]."[105] As commander-in-chief of the filibuster troops he "sleeps but little, labors incessantly, and at the table, appears to be too abstemious."[106] These Protestant work ethics and restrained manners mark a stark difference from his fellow filibusters, who were portrayed some two months later, in the "Repose After Battle"–article quoted above as "indulg[ing] themselves to their hearts' content."[107] Even in that scene of merry consumption, though, Walker ultimately appears and imposes a more restrained behavior: "The day of revelry, however, came to an end, and General Walker, himself never self-indulgent, called into being the stern discipline of military life, and restored to his army, order [...] (Fig. 4.8)."[108]

Frank Leslie's of June 27, 1857—one month after Walker and his followers were defeated in Nicaragua and had to return to the United States—included several long articles on different filibuster personalities, including Walker. His article was accompanied by a large ambrotype that showed him in his hotel room. It shows a distinguished, slender and shy-looking man in a tuxedo and bow tie. The article dedicated to him was divided into two parts, the first titled "A Visit to General Walker and Suite; Early Reminiscence of Walker" and the second "Walker's Personal Appearance," underlining the importance of Walker's body for the press.[109] Even the first part of the article, though, dedicates some paragraphs to Walker's feminine appearance and character traits: Again remembering Walker's

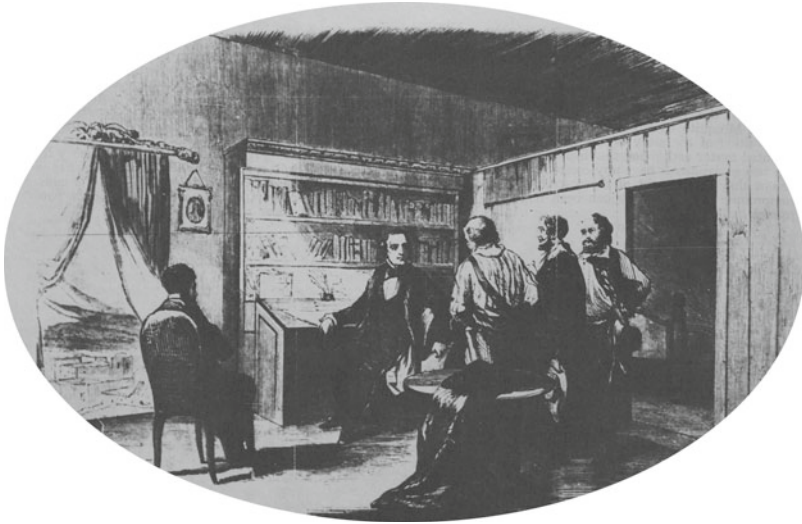

Fig. 4.8 "Reception Room of Gen. Walker in the President's House, City of Granada," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,* March 15, 1856

stint as editor in New Orleans, the writer describes him as "slender in person to effeminacy, taciturn almost as a statue, and as modest and retiring as a girl." As an editor, he "never mixed himself up with the duels and fashionable quarrels with which he was surrounded […] (Fig. 4.9)."

The part about Walker's "personal appearance" underlines these traits. It expressively dismisses expectations of a "model filibuster," "a man with bloody hands, gigantic in proportions […]." Instead, "Gen. Walker possesses a delicate person, has a hand small and white enough for a lady, speaks in a low tone of voice, and seems in company timid and oppressed." Walker's face had "nothing remarkable […] except his eye," which was described as "large, blue, gray, or light hazel. […] The mind that is behind it is not visible through its operations as in others, but seems to lay in wait behind the pupil […]." Again, a perfect composure, a sign of restrained masculinity, and a nod to the filibuser-fabricated myth of the "gray-eyed man of destiny" carried the impression that Walker was an aloof filibuster, decorated by hints of aristocracy.

Tropes of a frugal life, disciplined (and disciplining) character and a weak, almost feminine body with an enchanting eye linked Walker with

Fig. 4.9 "A Visit to General Walker and Suite; Early Reminiscence of Walker," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 27, 1857

depictions of European aristocracy, often depicted as suffering from an 'excess of culture' and refinement which left their bodies weak and prostrate.

Thus, in the case of Walker the clear dichotomy between martial and restrained masculinity became porous: It were precisely Walker's restrained

character traits, coupled with his almost feminine outer appearance which gave the filibusters their appeal with US audiences. The Nicaraguan filibuster expedition, portrayed and perceived as a hotbed for the breeding of martial men, was led by a man who was the embodiment of a marginalized, restrained manhood. The battles between different types of masculinity were thus united in the band between the filibuster leader and his followers. As social conditions in the United States were changing fast in the 1850s, the martial filibusters attempted to portray themselves as being led by an embodiment of restrained manhood: William Walker, the disciplined, soft-faced pseudo-aristocrat, reigning over a horde of wild, hard, fearless adventurers. The filibusters thus tried to cater to two different, competing masculinities: presenting themselves as martial daredevils to attract young men, and paint their leader in terms of a restrained domesticity, thus trying to vie for widespread recognition and political support.

After the US Civil War, martial masculinity lost its appeal in a traumatized country. The fault lines between martial and restrained men only returned when the United States entered into another openly expansionist phase: The 1890s and the turn of the century were the heyday of Theodore Roosevelt, his Rough Riders and the strenuous life. Roosevelt's ideal of masculinity comprised the same ingredients as its predecessor: an enormous physical and moral energy, a concentration on the male body, hardened by outdoor activities, the adventurous life on the Frontier, and male camaraderie.[110] Many historians have analyzed this conjuncture of expansionism and martial masculinity as a first-time incident in the US history, especially Gail Bederman in *Manliness and Civilization* and Kristin Hoganson in her groundbreaking study *Fighting for American Manhood*. Both lucidly show that discourses surrounding the US–Philippines War and the US–(Cuban)–Spanish War in 1898 hovered around an aggressive, expansionist masculinity as a prerequisite for social participation as full citizen. Yet, both authors only trace these gender roles back to the US Civil War.[111] Examining the 1850s and the filibusters, though, clearly show that such discussions have a much longer trajectory.

As for many other sociological and sociohistorical topics, the data on Nicaraguan perceptions of gender is scarce. Iván Molina Jiménez's account *La Campaña Nacional: Una Vision desde el Siglo XXI* which dedicates a short chapter (aptly titled "Invisibility and Oblivion") to the social, organizational and financial contribution of women to the campaign of neigh-

boring Costa Rica, is the closest approximation so far. The differences in the political and economic situation of the two countries do not preclude a cautious comparison of their similarities and difficulties on sociocultural topics such as gender. This shows that the Nicaraguan elite supported a very similar notion of paternalism as the filibusters. Politics and war were regarded as male domains, and the management of social life centered around the *hacienda* ruled by men, while women were supposed to remain within the limits of the family and were assigned a passive part in society. This passivity was underlined by the absence of voting rights for women in Nicaragua, mirroring the situation in the United States, where women gained nationwide suffrage only in 1920, while Nicaraguan women were discriminated against until 1955.

In spite of this, at least some women were present in the Democratic army, predominantly nursing the wounded after battles, not participating directly in attacks. After a skirmish, the *Defensor del Orden* on September 15, 1854 printed a report which noted: "I was also informed that some of the women, who always follow this kind of perverts [the Democrats], were gravely injured."[112] To single out the female presence in the short description shows the impact this sight had on the Conservative Nicaraguan. Another "Nota sobre una acción militar en Rivas" by two Costa Rican commanders reveals a profound indignation by the soldiers fighting the filibusters in Rivas: "[The filibusters] brought their nefariousness to an extreme by introducing women into the sacred temple. The maniples and stoles were profaned as they used them to tend to their wounds."[113] When the filibusters had gained a footing in Granada in 1856, some of them brought along their wives, who stayed with them till 1857, thus further increasing female visibility.[114] The presence of women was depicted as a sign of normality, although, unfortunate for filibuster propaganda, quite a few of the female flock died during their stay in Nicaragua.[115] These women were active in the small social sphere in Granada, gave parties, and acted as nurses during hostilities. As with the Central American females, none of these women seems to have fought or have held a post in the filibuster administration. They did not attract the attention of the Nicaraguans (either friend or foe) to such an extent as did the *Mestizas* for the US Americans.

Interestingly, the sexual connotation of expansion, that is, the subcurrent of US men conquering *Mestizas* from male Nicaraguans, was almost non-existent in Nicaraguan texts of the time. Only a few exceptions can be found, for example, in the Conservative paper *Defensor del*

Orden of June 11, 1855 in which the editor lamented the invitation of the filibusters by the Democrats, which brought to Nicaragua "hostile people that will wrestle from us our religion and our race, will take away our women, will rape our daughters, and will expel us from the fields we have cultivated with our own sweat." Notions of Nicaragua as a motherland in danger were repeatedly evoked in Nicaraguan newspapers, thus attempting to urge men—the sons of the territorial mother—to defend her. Such overtones were clearly present in the articles of the *Defensor del Orden* which attempted to shame the Democrats. On August 09, 1855, just a few days after the filibusters' arrival the paper exclaimed: "Some of her [the motherland's] ignoble and condemnable sons threw a horde of filibusters on her, so that they could take possession of the country, absorb her nationality, cut her institutions into pieces, usurp her properties and convert her citizens into slaves."[116] Leading foreigners onto the body of the motherland to take possession of her was only the beginning of a slippery slope that ended with enslavement. Yet, while such gendered metaphorical use of language was a commonplace in nineteenth-century patriotic literature in Europe and the United States, it only registered a fleeting presence during the filibusters' presence in Nicaragua. The reason for this rather secondary use of gender metaphors can be explained with the social situation in 1850s Nicaragua. As argued, Nicaraguans did not regard themselves as citizens of a unified nation state, but rather as members of smaller, local communities. This also prevented them from identifying with the pleas of the (centralist) motherland. The political situation in Nicaragua thus did not provide a context for gendered argumentations when confronting the filibusters. Although gender was a constitutive part of Nicaraguan society, the fault lines of the discourse into which the filibusters were integrated moved along the lines of independence and enslavement, not sexual conquest and possession. With the absence of a (feminized) nation state, one of the major discursive strands to render its or her defense in terms of masculinity was missing. As the martial filibusters were regarded as equals by the patriarchal *Mestizos* and their initial prowess on the battlefield seemed to underline their manliness, the Nicaraguans refrained from entering into a battle of manhood with the North Americans. This does not mean that *Leoneses* and *Granadinos* did not perceive the filibusters as a threat, but rather that they articulated their contempt via other metaphors.

Measuring Time and People

In his editorial to the November 1839 issue of the *United States Democratic Review*, John L. O'Sullivan remarked with regard to the United States that "our national birth was the beginning of a new history […] which separates us from the past and connects us with the future only," thus creating "the great nation of futurity."[117] O'Sullivan supported his claim with the argument that the United States had developed the perfect political system—democracy—unemcumbered by elements of the past associated with aristocracy or monarchy. Oblivious to the genocidal removal of Native Americans, O'Sullivan saw the country's "unparalleled glory" in the fact "that we have [neither] reminiscences of battle fields" nor "annals [that] describe […] scenes of horrid carnage," but simply "patriots to defend our homes, our liberties."[118] In short, O'Sullivan proclaimed: "We have no interest in the scenes of antiquity, only as lessons of avoidance of nearly all their examples. The expansive future is our arena."[119] The United States was not only facing the "far-reaching, the boundless future,"[120] it was inherently constructed to embody this future.[121] Menacingly, O'Sullivan demanded to know, "who will, what can, set limits to our onward march? Providence is with us, and no earthly power can."[122] Although later manifestations of Manifest Destiny would tie the notion of providential superiority to race, in this text O'Sullivan linked his vision to a special perception of space and time.

The United States was a "nation of many nations,"[123] held together by the Providential gift of marching toward the future. All other nations were deficient as they were ruled by an aristocracy or monarchy (i.e. not free), were instable or dominated by a race that was stuck in the past. For most expansionists human history followed a linear route from a rural, agrarian society to trade-based urban nation states, and the proliferation of agriculture in Nicaragua tied the country to the past.

By subsuming Latin Americans under the category of Spanish race, US Americans drew on European discussions that conceived Spain as an old, dying empire, with France and Great Britain representing the new era of humankind. María de Guzmán's study *Spain's Long Shadow* underlines the importance of Spain as a temporal and civilizational other for the United States. De Guzmán argues that "from colonial times to the present, figures of Spain and Spaniards have occupied, in the process of 'American' identity formation, a position as important as that of Britain

and France,"[124] serving both as a "totem" (a reference to the own past) and a living alterity, an "alter ego."[125] In its form as an unalterable totem in US imagination, Spain was the "white Catholic Christian conquistador and colonizer,"[126] an entity stuck in the past, "quintessentially 'Old World' in the antimodern, primitivizing sense of the word."[127] Spain was therefore not only geographically distant but also temporally detached. Equating Latin American societies with Spain made the former as backward as the dying empire was in the eyes of most US citizens. In all these notions, a collusion between the otherness of space and time occurred. Crossing territorial borders thus also included crossing borders in time or, to be more precise, regress into an unpleasant past. David Lowenthal's famous claim that the past is a foreign country was an enormously influential trope in the nineteenth-century United States, especially for the perception of Latin America.[128] The United States and Nicaragua became entangled in the very issue of the *Democratic Review* in which O'Sullivan published his article on futurity. Preceding O'Sullivan's text was the second part of the article "The Projected Ship Canal to Connect the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean," which compared Panama and Nicaragua for their respective benefits for an interoceanic canal. Readers of the *Review* could easily relate O'Sullivan's text with the canal article: It was commercial liberalization, represented by the canal that would set Nicaragua on the tracks toward the future and lift it out of its past.

The role of Latin America in the US imaginary of the nineteenth century was that of a complex changeling: The region was perceived as being situated both in a precise instance of the past and of having no history (and therefore no specific time) at all. The latter notion was especially pronounced in the travel literature that 're-discovered' Latin America after its independence from Spain. By canonizing images of nature as the core ingredient of South and Central American descriptions, Humboldt and his followers described the continent and isthmus as "a primal world of nature, an unclaimed and timeless space occupied by plants and creatures (some of them human), but not organized by societies and economies; a world whose only history was the one about to begin,"[129] thus opposing it to the US claim as a "nation of futurity" whose history—although only beginning with the revolution of 1776—was approaching the final stage of history. Central America was linked to an agrarian past and not a future centered on interrelations among people in a complex society. The equation of Latin American societies with nature also facilitated the rendering

of Latin Americans as children because childhood was regarded as the human state of nature before achieving the civilized state of adulthood. Associating Latin America with nature turned its inhabitants into children, akin to the Native American population on the North American continent. To situate Nicaragua and other Latin American nations in a distant past was therefore an important precondition for the imperial domination of its people.

During the US–Mexican War, the US army was often depicted as new conquistadors, led by a new Cortés in the form of Zachary Taylor, fighting against Moctezuma in the guise of Antonio López Santa Anna. Eminent in these comparisons was William Hickling Prescott. In his study *To the Halls of the Montezumas*, Robert Johannsen shows that the immense popularity of his *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, published just two and a half years before the war,

> had turned public attention toward Mexico, stimulated interest in that country and familiarized countless Americans with the titanic struggle between Cortez and Montezuma. When relations between the United States and Mexico reached their nadir, the example of sixteenth century Spain's conquest of Mexico, with all its romance and drama, was fresh in the American mind. […] Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Mexico* encouraged the enlistment of volunteers who hoped to find in Mexico some of the glory and romance they found in its pages.[130]

Prescott's influence in creating the imaginary that accompanied the US invasion of Mexico can be measured by the fact that his works formed part of the field library of the US forces, and General Winfield Scott deliberately followed Cortés's itinerary (as depicted by Prescott) toward Mexico City after landing in Veracruz. The filibusters, of course, happily linked their actions with the imagery created by Prescott, repeatedly selling Walker as a second Cortés and the Nicaraguans as Aztecs or Mayas.

Just as the Mayan and Aztec empires had declined from their cultural apex when Cortés arrived (according to Prescott's description), Nicaraguan culture and society were moribund and therefore waited for a new Cortés to revive them. The expansionists envisioned Nicaragua as having been left in a state of coma for more than 300 years since the *conquista* of 1518–1519. This trope was a mainstay in travel narratives of Latin America, and US newspapers made similar claims. In an article of the *New York Daily Times*, titled "Nicaragua and the Fillibusters [sic!],"

well-known filibuster admirer "E.H." described the current situation in the country by referring to the first encounter between conquistadors and native Nicaraguans:

> Three hundred and thirty-three years ago, Gil Gonzales de Avila, a Spanish adventurer, first opened to discovery that rich and fertile tract of land, situated between San Juan del Norte, on the Atlantic, and Realejo on the Pacific Ocean. A war-like tribe of Indians then inhabited that territory, which it was necessary for him not only to subdue, but, in fact, to exterminate, before he could obtain possession of their land.[131]

The date opens a temporal space which links the actions of Ávila to the situation of the filibusters in the country, who at that point were in a full-out war against Central Americans to finally "obtain possession" of the land and thus consummate the country's historical trajectory initiated with the original Spanish conquistador.

The widespread, and often positive, comparisons between Walker and Cortés in US newspapers were also taken up by Nicaraguan editors, especially Conservatives. Logically, they had a different vision of the Spanish conquistador, using him primarily to point out the barbarism of the filibusters. The Spanish conquistador was responsible for the centuries-long foreign domination of Nicaragua, a danger that was looming again with the filibusters. An untitled article in *El Defensor del Orden* of July 10, 1855 started a flow of articles to counter Walker's growing influence in Nicaragua. It bashed the Democrats for inviting the filibusters and warned its compatriots by relying on tropes connected to the original conquistadors:

> Compatriots! Look well at those who sell you without shame to foreign people who do not have either religion nor humanity and who, to satisfy their insatiable greed for gold and always more gold are capable of destroying like barbarians the guts of the very [earth] which allows them to exist in the first place.[132]

A later article made the comparison between filibusters and conquistadors even more openly when vitriolically stating that

> Those who today are called filibusters were given the pretentious name of 'conquistadors' in other times. The only difference between them is this: in former times they marched at the front of the phalanx of invasion, of

> crowned heads and men of great genius; today every villain simply has to unite with some hundred others like him to disturb the peace of a nation, and maybe even to invade her.[133]

The article went on to underline that the current situation was reminiscent of the European past: "When civilization had illuminated Europe, the people realized the injustice of the *Conquista*, and the spirit of the invasion vanished from the Old World, just to take refuge in the New, where a nascent nation appeared on the political horizon." This is an ironic twist: US attempts of conquest in the Americas are not seen as processes of civilization but rather as remainders of an era that already had enough of such nonsense. The United States is not regarded as the future of Nicaraguan civilization, but as a copy of civilized Europe's old follies.

Walter Mignolo underlines the ambiguities *Criollo* elites in Latin America faced when they attempted to establish their societies as independent nation states. He points to the temporal dimension of the nature versus civilization debate:

> The *Criollos* used the 'nature' versus 'civilization' paradigm to define the Creole elite against the 'barbarian' indigenous inhabitants of South America. […] However, the Creole elites were simultaneously self-colonizing by taking on a French idea of themselves as 'Latin', which opposed them to the Anglo, who represented civilization, and located them more on the side of 'nature'. At the same time, intellectuals […] were articulating an opposition between 'nature' and civilized man that put all of America on the 'nature' side of the opposition. These debates saw the New World as younger and immature; therefore, the American population was expected to evolve accordingly to a state of civilization.[134]

Latin Americans were trapped in discourses of temporality, which connoted Latin America with immaturity or—worse—decline. In the 1850s, civilization for both the filibusters and their Nicaraguan allies and foes was an entity with both a geographical and a temporal dimension—and the latter always worked to Latin America's disadvantage. By adhering to this concept, it was almost impossible for the *Mestizos* to develop new discursive strategies to make it easier to position themselves against the filibuster invasion. A more serious incorporation of indigenous concepts of time might have given the *Criollos* and *Mestizos* a first stepping stone to rethink dominant linear concepts of time. Such cyclical models were present in ideas that circulated in both the United States and Nicaragua;

yet, the Nicaraguan *Criollos* neglected indigenous concepts and adhered to European ideas of time and temporality—a case of discursive hegemony that worked to the filibusters' advantage.

The supposedly static nature of Nicaraguan society was taken up by another article in *Frank Leslie's* only a month later, which I have already mentioned in another context. It contained a sketch showing Walker inspecting his troops, a scene framed by some native Nicaraguans staring at the US citizens. The accompanying caption explained: "The natives are faithfully represented in their seminude costume, and they must have regarded the soldiers of the new Republic in much the same light as the aborigines did the followers of Columbus or Cortez."[135] *Frank Leslie's* came back to this analogy in the drawing and article "Market Place, City of Granada, Capital of Nicaragua." "The Indians," the article reads, "maintain in a remarkable degree the habits and personal appearance of their ancestors, and now sit in the market of Granada, just as they sat under the reign of Montezuma in Mexico, not advanced, but probably retarded in civilization."[136] In yet another example, *El Nicaraguense* exclaimed that "Central America was, before the discovery of gold in California, about three hundred years behind the most advanced nations"[137] ("Nicaragua—its Probabilities") and the Californian Gold Rush had brought US Americans (and ultimately the filibusters) to catapult the isthmus into the nineteenth century. The dualistic temporality of the nation of futurity had drawn up its conquerable other: a Nicaragua stuck in the early sixteenth century. The development of a unilingual, democratic nation state in the tradition of Enlightened France and Great Britain was regarded as the best form of human organization and an important step toward the goal of civilization. Human history, this secularized eschatology stated, would end when this final stage of development had been reached. This concept allowed for a spatialization of time, with different anthropological times existent at different places.[138] European colonial powers and the expansionist United States viewed themselves as already having progressed on the road to the end of history, with people from their colonial possessions (or from areas they held a geopolitical interest in) being much less advanced. This notion of a historical necessity with regard to human development was tightly linked with notions of racism: 'Ignorant races' and their communities remained in a state that 'nobler races' had already overcome. "What makes the savage significant […]," anthropologist Johannes Fabian concludes, "is that he lives in another time."[139]

On some occasions, Nicaragua was situated in another era than that of the *conquista*, but always in a time period linked to the European past. An article in the *New York Daily Times* of June 07, 1856 (copied from the British *London Times*), which analyzes the rivalry between Great Britain and the United States on the isthmus, described Nicaragua in the following terms:

> Already, to the eye of the commercial prophet, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, and the other States of Central America were, under the sunshine of an active and peaceful commerce, growing into important and prosperous communities, and Greytown, at the mouth of the San Juan, the Atlantic, and of the new canal, rivaled the Hanseatic Cities of the Old World.[140]

On the path of progress, this article implied, the Central American republics had already left the age of the *conquista* and had arrived at the Hanseatic age. The unidirectionality of progress was nevertheless maintained. The same is true for the article "A future Venice in Nicaragua" in *El Nicaraguense* in which the prospects of Granada were envisioned:

> At no great distance from the city of Granada are situate [sic!] a cluster of the most beautiful and fertile islands it is possible to conceive. […] The northern part of the bay is bounded by the cluster known as the 'Thousand Islands', each one of which, to our mind, is in a short time destined to be full of houses, stores and commercial ware-rooms, and where vessels of considerable tonnage can move from one depot to another with more ease than ox-carts now used in Granada move from one street to another. […] Here canals will occupy the place of streets, and light fairy-like pleasure boats will supercede [sic!] horses. Here, instead of a Wall street, we will have a Rialto; here will be seen and heard señores and señoritas in their gondoles [sic!] singing love songs in the starlight […].[141]

The vision of an economic future based on trade leads straight back into the past: a romantic version of the Italian Renaissance, with Venice as the *locus magico* of a bygone age. It might not come as a surprise that this article appealed so much to the editors of *Frank Leslie's* that they decided to reprint it in their issue of November 15, 1856.

For the filibusters' notion of themselves, this meant that they had to confront 'archaic' realities on a daily basis. *El Nicaraguense* formulated

these contrasts resorting to a pattern of efficiency coupled with political partisanship:

> Wherever we look about us in this State, the glance is occupied with contrasts. Here an improvement, and there an ancient form; here a labor saving machine, and there a labor wasting piece of furniture. The Democratic party, impelled by the progressive spirit of the age, has sought to introduce the works of modern utility; but the aristocratic element as [sic] continually shut them out, fearful least the people might become enlightened and consequently powerful. […] But the time is changing, and all Nicaragua will soon learn that modern science and American enterprise has done nothing to injure the human race.[142]

"Modern science and American enterprise" combined indeed formed the dual ingredients for progress as defined by the filibusters and by most of their Nicaraguan collaborators.

The filibusters' idea of practicality meant that the transformation of Nicaragua should mimic the United States for both ideological and practical reasons. The construction of an interoceanic canal would profit from a social reality that mimicked one US companies were familiar with. Thus, after Walker had declared himself President, he immediately launched an Americanization program. He declared English Nicaragua's second official language, making it easier for US companies to do business in the country and for Anglo settlers to buy land, as all documentation could now be filed in their mother tongue. He copied the legislation of his home state Tennessee, thereby legalizing indentured servitude and chattel slavery and instituting vagrancy laws which were aimed at forcing traveling artisans and poor *campesinos* into low-paying jobs connected with the future canal.

The filibusters did not dwell on theoretical discussions of progress, but concentrated on the practical aspects of 'civilizing' the isthmus. The *Nicaraguense* article "Progress of Improvements" marveled: "As an item of […] advancing the progress of affairs in the city, we take pleasure in communicating the fact that a water cart has been chartered, and will hereafter furnish the citizens with water, after the San Fransisco [sic!] fashion. Hurrah for progress!"[143] "Americanism in Nicaragua is but the genius of Anglo-Saxonism reduced down to practice," another article in *El Nicaraguense* summarized.[144] The writer already claimed positive effects after one year's presence: "Without hesitation, or exaggeration we can say

that we are the only practical missionaries of the gospel since the days of St. Paul, or St. Patrick; and we have already done more for the cause of civilization in Central America, than all the preaching that has been done here since the days of Columbus."[145]

Frequently, the Nicaraguan elite also resorted to comparisons with a (European) past to conceptualize their present situation. The *Boletín Oficial* of May 12, 1855 reprinted a speech held by President Fruto Chamorro who, after an (unsuccessful) attack of the Democrats on Granada, claimed that "you can see right there the uncanny ruins which show us the barbarism of the fifth century. The new Huns, led by the modern Atila, came to this city on 02 of this sad month of May." When describing the carnage during battle, Chamorro eulogized that "Granada's main square was transformed into another Roman capitol for the salvation of our society [...]."[146] He thus did not only evoke references to the eternal fight of barbarism against civilization but also expressed his conviction that the current civil war compared with struggles already fought (and of course: won) by civilization in European history. When the filibusters arrived and began to fight on the Democrats' side, the Legitimists extended their enraged rhetoric to them, thus ironically subverting their own comparison: Now US Americans fought on the side of barbarism and parts of Nicaragua represented Rome, that is, civilization.

An Aztec Antiquity? Nicaragua and the US Search for a New Mediterranean

Kevin Starr has argued in his study *Americans and the California Dream*, that in the 1850s California and the Caribbean regions of Mexico were perceived as an American version of the Mediterranean by US citizens.[147] Starr showed that comparisons of the San Francisco area with the South of France or Italy were made frequently, and he argued that "Mediterraneanism," as he called it, "was neither a process nor a program" but an "analogy and [...] a metaphor:" "Mediterraneanism arose from a cluster of stable influences—landscape, climate and the Hispanic past being among the most convincing."[148]

The Mediterranean (both as region and as cipher) was important for the US conception of civilization as it was regarded as the early high point of pre-modern human progress, with which the filibusters concurred. In the article "Panslavism and Americanism," the editors of *El Nicaraguense*

explained the wide-held belief that civilization moved in space, had found an apex in the European Mediterranean and must be recreated in the American hemisphere:

> All conquest comes from the North Southward, and will retain that direction until the mission of humanity is complete. North the fetus of modern life was conceived, though it only reached its full and glorious proportions when it was transferred to the sunny shores of the Mediterranean. [...] Just as surely the current of America life [sic!] will set Southwards and Westward until the resting place and palace of the sun are attained. [...] The impulse of extension comes from the North [...] and its reality must be achieved through the South. Thither flows the never ceasing tide of humanity from the ice-bergs and snow drifts to the pomegranate and the palm—from the hardy misery of Arctic life to the luxurious indolence and intellectual epicurianism of the Southern climes.[149]

In Europe, the Mediterranean was the final point of the civilizational voyage; while in the New World, Central America took the place of the "epicurian Southern climes," with the Caribbean as the new Mediterranean.

This quest had not only a spatial, but also a temporal dimension, a dimension Gesa Mackenthun has called the conquest of antiquity.[150] Attempting to position their nation on eye level with European powers, US Americans longed for some "New World past." After the initial proud assurance of a radical break with the 'old continent,' in the nineteenth-century US efforts of nation-building were founded on the creation of a distinct past, with Mesoamerican artifacts and peoples at its center:

> Even as the United States turned away from Europe and the mother country, it turned to another country, Mexico, to stage its romantic primitivism and in the process generated an alternative literary and national narrative that placed the legacy of the Spanish conquest of Mexico strangely at the heart of the historical emergence of the United States

Jesse Alemán argues.[151] Concomitant with Mexico, the whole of Central America became a target for US efforts of establishing its own antiquity. If the Caribbean was the American Mediterranean, Central America (beginning at the south of Mexico) with its rich archaeological structures was rendered as a new Egypt. Erich Wertheimer, in analyzing Prescott's fascination with Mexico and the isthmus, concludes that Prescott saw "the semicivilized South Americans [as] the United States' own encoded, ancient civilization

in need of decipherment, paralleling Europe's (France's, in particular) relationship with Egypt—an imperialism that implied the necessary rearticulation of historical logic."[152] Pre-*conquista* artifacts were vital for this quest, and therefore Nicaragua, with its few remainders of Mesoamerican origin, was not considered to hold any special importance for the United States. The filibusters nevertheless tried their best to incorporate it into the realm of an American antiquity. One attempt consisted in expanding Stephens's findings on Mayas and even Aztecs to Nicaragua. In the article "A Ruined City in Chontales," a filibuster muses about the civilizatory backwardness of the Nicaraguan population and ends:

> We have been led into this train of remark by the description of a ruined city, just given us by an old explorer in the Chontales district. The picture he drew for us, of this forgotten place, buried in the wilderness, brought to our mind Stevens' [sic!] eloquent descriptions of Copan, Palenque, and Uxmal, the latter of which our friend had himself, visited—cities, built by a people the name of whom, even, has died out of the memory of man.[153]

Invoking John Lloyd Stephens draws a parallel between the Maya ruins he popularized after his visits to Honduras and Southern Mexico and the Nicaraguan past. Nicaragua was further linked to the United States by similarities in the description of its landscape. Ricardo Salvatore notes that these comparisons were ubiquitous in all forms of US travel literature and thereby "'worked back' in a South-North direction."[154]

On the Nicaraguan side—at least for *Criollos* and *Mestizos*—a similar discourse prevailed. Progress was perceived as a linear development accumulated with the passage of time. Letting time pass without progressing was thus a waste of possibilities to enhance civilization. And the Nicaraguans blamed themselves and their enduring civil wars for this waste. The article "Quince de septiembre," commemorating the country's independence in the *Boletín Oficial de León,* lamented, "Today have passed 35 years since we gained our independence from the ancient metropolis: 35 years badly spent: 35 years in which we should have counted with civilization and progress: and of which we do not remember anything but bad decisions, errors and misery."[155] Nicaragua, because of its own insolence, had been left behind while the ongoing civil wars continued to hold it back. The same chord had already been struck in an article written by Mateo Mayorga in the *Defensor del Orden* on July 02, 1854: "The image painted by the revolutions is really miserable: our country stalls in

its march of progress and sometimes even falls back: the public and private moral sink; and even our homes, which are our asylums, are agitated, pressured and persecuted […]."[156]

Economic Liberalism and Civilization

In the same vein as the US West, expansionists regarded Nicaragua as a 'locked up' territory, held hostage by people unable to turn into a profit the natural riches their countries offered. 'Opening up' these soils was imperative, and achieved in two steps: first by settlers, miners, and cattle herders, who 'opened up' the treasure trove of natural resources; and second by entrepreneurs, making these resources available to the wider world. As a result, the economic measures for Nicaragua were copied from the economic approach at the Frontier: Constructing infrastructure for exportation (especially railroads and canals), and privatizing communal land. An article in the *Nicaraguense* trumpeted that "[t]he enlightenment of the age vindicates the position of Gen. Walker by acknowledging the benefits he has conferred on this country, by promoting peace: and on the world, by opening up Central America to its proper commercial importance,"[157] intimating a primate of the economy over humanist notions that showcases the prerogative of capitalism in the nineteenth-century ideas of progress and civilization.[158]

Elite Nicaraguans concurred with the filibusters: The presumed virtues of 'Yankee enterprise,' in contrast to the perceived laziness of the indigenous people in their own country were held up as a model which had to be emulated. The contrast between a so-called spirit of progress and anti-entrepreneurial attitudes that supposedly prevailed among the Nicaraguans and especially the poor ignored a variety of reasons for the successful developments in the US,[159] the dependence on slave labor among them. Furthermore, this relation was not without ambiguities: The very enterprising spirit that fascinated most of the Nicaraguan elites endangered their own social position. The amount of hope initially connected with the filibusters' arrival is vividly presented in a sermon delivered by the Granada-based Padre Augustín Vijil—a staunch filibuster supporter and ultimately Walker's envoy to Washington—delivered in honor of the filibusters' entrance into the city:

> And thus, when a new sun will shine, not over cemeteries but over cultivated lands, not over cities in dispute but over cities linked in better under-

> standing, which have a better understanding of each other and entertain profitable relations, commerce and the free transit of goods, without any hindrances, will extent throughout the republic.[160]

The Nicaraguan priest constructs a vision of the future which follows the familiar narrative of liberal commerce as a panacea. And this panacea had to be brought into the Nicaraguan society by outside forces, US American, to be precise:

> General Walker has arrived from this great republic that was blessed by God […], that has had the luck to be organized by real citizens, by modest patriots of the likes of Washington and Franklin.

And with these Americans will arrive others because it has to be the United States that will construct the communication between the two oceans. It will take Nicaragua by the hand and lead it to the grand position it considers its destiny due to its continental position and its natural resources. It will obtain for us important relations with the civilized world, thanks to its ships and its stores which will lie in the heart of our territories.

The path from "cemeteries" to "cultivated lands" (in the double sense of the term) that Vijil praised was the path of economic liberalism and trade-based capitalism, a driving ideological principle on both sides of the Conservative–Liberal chasm in Nicaragua. Free trade formed an integral part of the project of modernity, which regarded the nation state as its most sublime materialization. Elite Nicaraguans desired support in the realization of this economic progress from the US filibusters. This was a basis for the filibusters to connect first with the Democratic Party, and then reach out to other sectors of the Nicaraguan society. Apart from the clear military advantage they offered the embattled Democrats, Walker "had an idea to sell," as Carlos Granados puts it, "the idea of progress. And this could be achieved only by economic liberalism."[161]

In the aforementioned programmatic article "Nicaragua—Its Resources," published in *El Nicaraguense's* first number, the filibusters positioned Nicaragua at the center of world trade: "[Nicaragua] presents 'that short and easy passage to the Indies' which Columbus sought and which has become the great commercial desideratum and necessity of the present day," the article affirmed, and then predicted, "[t]he treasures of the Indies must pass via Realejo or via San Francisco to the Atlantic. The

manufactures of Europe and the United States must find their way to Asia to supply the increasing wants of its vast population […]. […] The whole civilized world demands a prompt, short and reliable communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific," the article detailed.[162] Nicaraguans were situated in a subaltern position, left to obey external demands. The necessity of the "civilized world" demanded change in Nicaragua, not the Nicaraguans themselves. The already quoted article "Sentiment in the U States" further underlined Nicaragua's position in a wider matrix of trade relations: "The world is in want of provisions, the pauper population of Europe desires homes, commerce asks an ally in bringing closer together the opposite extremes of its trade, and civilization demands a new subject."[163]

Apart from commerce, the Nicaraguans hoped the filibusters would also bring peace. In his welcoming sermon, Padre Augustín Vijil had rendered Walker a savior of the Nicaraguan fatherland, bringing peace and reconciliation:

> [He] will be the emissary of Providence to cure our wounds and reconcile the Nicaraguan family which others have divided because he will be the instrument of peace, he will put an end to all these cruel hostilities. He is worth of all the praise this country has to offer; a country that had been tormented by the worst of all disgraces: the civil war.

In most newspaper articles of the late 1840s and early 1850s, Nicaraguan editors referred to the war as an endless malediction, preventing the country from realizing its *destino manifiesto*. Fruto Chamorro, in an article in the *Mentor Nicaragüense* of December 11, 1841 wrote about the "furias infernales" that plagued the country: "They inhibit that [Nicaragua's] merit could take the place that corresponds to it; they serve as the vehicle for ruin […]. With its absence, good luck would rain on this *pueblo* […]."[164] The war(s) were considered a force of nature, for example, in a speech by conservative President José Maria Estrada, which—shortly before the filibusters arrived in 1855—diagnosed that a "terrible storm […] threatens to push the young republic into an abyss of disgrace" and a "fearful eclipse […] wraps the political horizon of our fatherland into an impenetrable night."[165] None of the warring parties accepted responsibility for the situation. Neither the Democrats nor the Conservatives wanted to realize that both of them were primarily to blame for the long,

agonizing feuds. When Walker and his men finally arrived in Realejo on July 16, 1855, they were seen on one hand as part of the Democratic forces, but on the other as the decisive element that would fight the ultimate battle to end the Nicaraguan civil wars. The filibusters' initial successes on the battlefield did much to strengthen this notion, and when they were able to take the Conservative stronghold Granada, Augustín Vijil delivered the already quoted sermon, dedicating a substantial part to the North Americans' role as peacebringers:

> In the last few years Nicaragua has bled more than ever without any honorable results. […] I hope that the current situation will change for the better through the harmony between the Nicaraguans. You already know that thanks to the conditions brought about by General Walker—an Enlightened man of much talent—security for the person, the homestead and the workplace have been promised, by which a satisfactory mutual understanding between the factions could be procured. If General Walker has a mind for such laudable propositions, if he retains his high standing with the men he commands, making himself acceptable to our brothers of the Legitimate Party and those of León as a necessity of these times, then he will have gained the ultimate victory […]. [Walker] would be the one sent by Providence to heal our wounds and reconcile the Nicaraguan family that others have divided because being the instrument of peace and ending these cruel hostilities makes him worthy of the thankfulness of this country, which has been afflicted by the worst of all disgraces: civil war.

The deep chasm between the Legitimists and the Democrats led Vijil and others to hope for a decisive victory of the filibusters that would enable a truce between the two parties. When Walker reached an agreement between the cornered Conservatives and the Democrats to form a joint government under the auspices of Patricio Rivas, many Nicaraguans thought that national political unity had been achieved by the help of outsiders.

However, Walker's plan always relied on the control of all five isthmian states and the subsequent incorporation of the whole region into the United States, symbolized by five red stars on the filibusters banner, and Walker's motto "five or none."[166] This would have always included a prolongation of armed hostilities, which was congruent with the filibusters' notion that the isthmus constituted a new form of the Frontier. The Nicaraguan elites did not initially realize Walker's agenda. When the majority turned against him after the fraudulent elections of 1856 and

the first steps of land redistribution, the war that ensued was once again a civil war—some Nicaraguans, mostly local *caudillos,* stayed at the filibusters' side, while other Nicaraguans took up arms and fought against them. The hopes of the Nicaraguans, who had called for peace, had been disappointed and now Walker and his forces became untrusted outsiders and war-mongers in the Nicaraguan press. This was an attempt to create a united Nicaraguan national identity against foreign invaders, and worked to the extent that both the Democrats and the Conservatives formed a united front. On this occasion, a jubilant Patricio Rivas exclaimed "Today civilization triumphed!"[167] In another pamphlet from the city of Chinandega (where he and his cabinet had fled after breaking their ties with Walker) Rivas wrote that "for more than two years now we repeated the names Legitimists and Democrats [...] but now there should be no more than two groups. There should be no more than these two names: Central Americans and *Walkeristas.* I will hold the flag of the first ones; and those under its shadow will all be considered our friends"[168]

After the filibusters' defeat, the elites in Nicaragua continued to demonize the filibusters, and especially Walker, as the personification of evil: The *Gaceta Oficial de Nicaragua,* the new official organ of the bipartisan government, used their first numbers almost exclusively to denounce Walker as a pirate, an "assassin," a "thug"—in short, a war monger who was already planning new invasions.[169] This served as a strategic maneuver to disguise their own responsibility. The filibusters as outer enemies could serve as perfect scapegoats for Nicaragua's stagnation. This demonization of the filibusters—and of Walker in particular—also set the tone for a mythical narration of a unified Nicaraguan struggle against the *yankee* invasion, an ideological element which would figure prominently in Nicaragua's national historiography and popular collective remembrance.

In addition, the new official organ urged peace between the Leoneses and Granadinos. On August 04, 1857, the editor of the *Gaceta Oficial de Nicaragua* asked in an article, "If Providence has situated us in this delicious soil, if our lives consist of only a few days, if all Nicaraguans are brothers: Why are we so eager to kill our brothers [...]?"[170] This pacifist stance, though, was not backed by actions. Factitious infighting plagued the new bipartisan government from the start, and before long the Conservatives would emerge as the dominant force in Nicaraguan politics for the next two decades. The shirking away of the Nicaraguan elites from their own

involvement in the filibuster catastrophe—mostly driven forward by the Democratic Party, but also by the Conservatives' repeated rebuttal of a peaceful solution—meant that they could not easily construct a common political space which would allow for a fresh start that discarded war.

Notes

1. I specifically mention the Austrian von Scherzer (often referred to in English-language texts as Carl Scherzer) and his Bavarian companion Moritz Wagner to show that also European travelers repeatedly visited the isthmus and published extensively on their voyages. As Amy Greenberg notes, both British and US magazines and newspapers reported on the duo's journey to Nicaragua in 1854, and also translated parts of Scherzer's *Reisen in Nordamerika* (1854), *Die Republik Costarica (1856)*—both together with Wagner—and later his *Wanderungen durch mittelamerikanische Freistaaten* (1857); see Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 68.
2. Bruce Greenfield, *Narrating Discourse. The Romantic Explorer in American Literature 1790–1855* (Oxford, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 18.
3. David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire. Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration*, 5. printing, Post-Contemporary Interventions (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 7.
4. Ibid., 99.
5. That supposedly only Europeans had developed 'science' and were thus the only ones who could send out explorers beyond Western Europe, was regarded as a self-evident sign of superiority by most eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europeans. Consequently, there exist no travel accounts to Western European regions, only to the 'rest of the world,' as the scientific gaze was always directed outwards. By granting only Europeans a voice to describe both physical and social landscapes, the medium of travel writing was at its core a colonial endeavor (see Jack Goody, *The Theft of History* [Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press], 2006).
6. Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire. Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration*, 32.
7. Ricardo Donato Salvatore, "North American Travel Narratives and the Ordering/Othering of South America (c.1810-1860)," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 9, no. 1 (1996): 93.

8. Kirsten Silva Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture. The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*, Translation Transnation (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), xi.
9. "San Juan de Nicaragua," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, December 22, 1855.
10. Ibid.
11. Joseph R. Malè and George Cook, "Introductory." *El Nicaraguense*, October 20, 1855.
12. George H. Bowly, "Trip to the Gold Mines of Nicaragua," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, July 26, 1857.
13. Joseph R. Malè and George Cook, "Nicaragua—Its Resources," *El Nicaraguense*, October 20, 1855.
14. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 13. ed. (London: Routledge, 1992), 151.
15. John Tabor, "Nicaragua—Its Probabilities," *El Nicaraguense* (July 26, 1856): 2.
16. Ibid.
17. The department of Chontales, bordering the Cocibolca to the northeast, emerged as the favorite destination for fictitious expeditions in the filibuster press. Other regions like the Atlantic coast seem to have been too inaccessible. Chontales was easily reachable, which increased its popularity with prospective settlers. In addition, the mountainous region was one of the few candidates where discovery of gold, silver or diamonds seemed probable.
18. Fermín Ferrer, "Gold in Nicaragua." *El Nicaraguense*, November 22, 1855.
19. "Central America," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 12, 1856.
20. Michael Paul Rogin, *Fathers and Children. Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian*, 3. printing (New Brunswick: Transaction Publ., 2000), XVIII.
21. Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture. The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*, 2.
22. Fredrick B. Pike, *The United States and Latin America. Myths and Stereotypes of Civilization and Nature*, third paperback printing (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), 107.
23. Ibid., xiii.
24. Ibid.
25. Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence. The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600–1860*, Univ. of Oklahoma Press ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 15.
26. Ibid., 18.

27. John Tabor, "The Late Insult to the U.S. Flag: Murder of American Citizens by the Allied Army of Guatemala and San Salvador," *El Nicaraguense* (October 25, 1856): 2.
28. Amy Kaplan, "Black and Blue on San Juan Hill," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, ed. Anne Kaplan and Donald Pease (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 228.
29. Rogin, *Fathers and Children. Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian*, XVI.
30. Ibid., 296–297.
31. Salvatore, "North American Travel Narratives and the Ordering/Othering of South America (c.1810–1860)," 106.
32. Ibid., 100–101.
33. Malè and Cook, "Nicaragua—Its Resources."
34. The same might be said about the imperialist politics of the United States in 1898: Techniques and discourses used in the Indian Wars of the 1870s and 1880s were reappropriated in Cuba and the Philippines. At the same time, discourses and techniques used in these encounters (e.g. military tactics) were transferred back to the homeland.
35. Eric Wertheimer, *Imagined Empires. Incas, Aztecs, and the New World of American Literature, 1771–1876*, Cambridge Studies in American Literature and Culture (Cambridge, UK, New York, NY, Melbourne, Australia: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 13.
36. From the enormous body of literature on Manifest Destiny, suffice it to hint only at some works of reference here: Albert Weinberg's classic *Manifest Destiny. A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, Thomas Hietala's *Manifest Design*, Sam Haynes and Christopher Morris's *Manifest Destiny and Empire* and, for the specific connections between filibusterism and Manifest Destiny, Robert May's *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*. For the importance of race in Manifest Destiny, see Reginald Horsman's *Race and Manifest Destiny*, and for a discussion of gender related to Manifest Destiny Amy Greenberg's *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*. Most US scholars still do not consider Latin American accounts on this topic, which means that neither María Rodríguez Díaz's *El Destino Manifiesto en el Discurso Político Norteamericano* nor Víctor Acuña Ortega's volume *Filibusterismo y Destino Manifiesto en las Américas* have received the attention they merit.
37. Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny. A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 6th ed. (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1963), 2.
38. John J. Johnson, *Latin America in Caricature*, Texas Pan American Series (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980), 14.

39. While John L. O'Sullivan is usually credited with coining the term, Linda Hudson argues that it was actually Jane McManus—better known by her full name Jane McManus Storm Cazneau—who wrote the article in which the term was used for the first time. Hudson's claim is disputable, but has the merit of drawing attention to the contributions of McManus, who for a long time was overlooked as one of the driving forces of expansionism in the United States, and would go on to become one of the first female war correspondents in US history. Also see Rodrigo Lazo's study for her connections to the Cuban filibusters' publishing circle in New York, where she—as the only women of the lot—edited *La Verdad* (Rodrigo Lazo, *Writing to Cuba. Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States*, Envisioning Cuba (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 83–84).
40. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*, 71.
41. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny. A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 49.
42. Interestingly, no one argued for a water boundary in the north. It was clear that Canada, a British dominion and one of the main theaters of the devastating War of 1812, should not be attacked again, and thus Manifest Destiny expansionists quietly accepted the status quo.
43. Julius Froebel, "The Nicaragua Question," *New York Daily Times*, February 16, 1856.
44. Malè and Cook, "Introductory."
45. Joseph R. Malè and George Cook, "To Our Contemporaries," *El Nicaraguense*, October 20, 1855.
46. Joseph R. Malè and John Tabor, "Remitido," *El Nicaraguense*, March 01, 1856.
47. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny. A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 17.
48. Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire. Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration*, 117.
49. N.N, "Sin Título," *Correo Del Istmo*, no. 54 (October 24, 1850): 1.
50. N.N., "La Esperanza," *El Istmo de Nicaragua*, June 01, 1849.
51. Ephraim George Squier, *Nicaragua: Its People, Scenery, Monuments, Resources, Condition and Proposed Canal*, Revised edition (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1860), 11.
52. John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America: Chiapas and Yucatan*, 12th ed. (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1842), 418–419.

53. Frances Kinloch Tijerino, *Nicaragua, Identidad y Cultura Política (1821–1858)* (Managua: Banco Central de Nicaragua, 1999), 210.
54. Michel Gobat, "Reflexiones sobre el Encuentro Nicaragüense con el Régimen Filibustero de William Waker, 1855–1856," in *Revista de Historia*, ed. IHNCA (Managua: Editorial de la UCA, 2006), 78.
55. Bradford E. Burns, *Patriarch and Folk. The Emergence of Nicaragua 1798–1858* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 101–102.
56. Squier, *Nicaragua: Its People, Scenery, Monuments, Resources, Condition and Proposed Canal*, Chapter XVI, 8.
57. Sebastián Salinas, "Venta de Terrenos En Matagalpa Por Guillermo Walker," *Boletín Oficial León* 1, no. 12 (August 21, 1856): 4.
58. Un Chontaleño, "Hymn Against the Yankees and Their Racial Snobism and to the Allied Army of Central America," *Boletín Oficial,* September 23, 1856. Reprinted in: *Revista de la Academia de Geografía e Historia de Nicaragua 1978*, 139–140).
59. Ricardo Donato Salvatore, *Imágenes de un Imperio. Estados Unidos y las Formas de Representación de América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2006), 175.
60. Ronald J. Zboray, *A Fictive People. Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), xv–xvi.
61. Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny. The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 25–26.
62. See Todd W. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory. An Introduction* (Chichester, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 174.
63. Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization. A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917*, Women in Culture and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 178.
64. Gobat, "Reflexiones sobre el Encuentro Nicaragüense con el Régimen Filibustero de William Waker, 1855–1856," 81–83.
65. These women were among the few Nicaraguans evacuated from the city of Rivas during the filibusters' capitulation. The article "The reason why Walker surrendered" in *Frank Leslie's* reported that on the "23d of April he [Walker] had accepted the offer of Capt. Davis to remove the women and children, under safeguard of the American flag, to San Juan; and seventy American and native women and children (inclusive of many native women detained as spies) left Rivas" (N.N., "The Reason Why Walker Surrendered," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 06, 1857.
66. "Central America," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 12, 1856.
67. Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White*, Routledge Classics (London: Routledge, 2008), 2.

68. It should be noted that the Great Famine actually was no famine, but the result of a genocidal distribution policy by the British colonial administration. From 1845 to 1852, the time that is usually considered as the Great Famine, Ireland produced sufficient potato crops and had enough cattle to keep the majority of its people alive (see Joel Mokyr, *Why Ireland Starved. A Quantitative and Analytical History of the Irish Economy, 1800–1850* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1985). Nevertheless, the Irish suffered *an Gorta Mór* (the Great Hunger) because the British administration insisted on fulfilling export quotas.
69. Protestantism was regarded as the appropriate religion for free people and democratic institutions; and with the United States as the only Protestant nation in the hemisphere (Canada was Anglican and the Latin American republics Catholic), US nationalists constructed a dichotomy between a Catholic Old World, and a Protestant new one.
70. Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White*, Routledge Classics, 49.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid., 70.
73. The first muster roll was published in *El Nicaraguense* of November 17, 1855, and then at irregular intervals.
74. "Transit Company's Buildings at Greytown," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 26, 1856.
75. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction, Reason in History*, Cambridge Studies in the History and Theory of Politics (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 197.
76. Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny. The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*, 35–36.
77. Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld. Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 115.
78. "San Juan de Nicaragua," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, December 22, 1855.
79. "Central America," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 12, 1856.
80. "General Walker of New Granada," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, January 05, 1856.
81. Ibid.
82. "Portrait of a Filibuster," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 18, 1856.
83. Joseph R. Malè and John Tabor, "An Appeal to the People of the United States," *El Nicaraguense*, March 01, 1856.

84. Frances Kinloch Tijerino, “El Primer Encuentro con los Filibusteros: Antecedentes y Contexto,” in *Revista de Historia*, ed. IHNCA, vol. 20, 21 (Managua: Editorial de la UCA, 2006), 34.
85. Lazo, *Writing to Cuba. Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States*, 5.
86. *El Correo del Istmo*, March 07, 1850, qtd. in Kinloch Tijerino, “El Primer Encuentro con los Filibusteros: Antecedentes y Contexto,” 34.
87. Walter D. Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*, Blackwell Manifestos (Malden: Blackwell, 2006), 72–73.
88. Reeser, *Masculinities in Theory. An Introduction*, 171–200; Joane Nagel, “Masculinity and Nationalism. Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21, no. 2 (1998): 243, 251.
89. Brady Harrison, *Agent of Empire. William Walker and the Imperial Self in American Literature* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 12–13.
90. Used only sporadically, the image of Miss Columbia (as a female allegory of the United States) was not prominent in the 1850s. It would momentarily pick up popularity after the Chicago World Fair of 1893.
91. Paul Rogin gives various examples of metaphors of hunger, digestion and the corporal act of swallowing enemies in the rhetoric of US Manifest Destiny.
92. Qtd. in Robert W. Johannsen, “The Meaning of Manifest Destiny,” in *Manifest Destiny and Empire*, ed. Sam W. Haynes and Christopher Morris (Arlington: University of Texas Press, 1997), 16.
93. See also Anne Baker’s study which, with regard to Westward expansion, shows how the bodily size of the settlers was depicted as gigantic in both visual art and language. A famous example is Whitman’s poem “I sing the body eclectic,” which in its second stanza hails a farmer “six feet tall,” as well as his “massive” sons (106).
94. Michael Newbury, *Figuring Authorship in Antebellum America* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997), 125.
95. Harrison, *Agent of Empire. William Walker and the Imperial Self in American Literature*, 190.
96. See Johannsen for an evaluation of the importance of the trope of knight errantry on the imagination of young expansionists in the 1840s (Robert Walter Johannsen, *To the Halls of the Montezumas. The Mexican War in the American Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 245–246.
97. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*, 22.
98. Ibid., 108.

99. Ibid.
100. On August 16, 1856, the *Nicaraguense* announced the death of its contributor and lifted the pseudonym: J.W. De Frewer was the name of the man behind it. De Frewer, a professional musician, also set up a Blackface Minstrel show in Nicaragua, and staged at least two shows in Granada (John Tabor, "Corporal Pipeclay Dead," *El Nicaraguense* (August 16, 1856: 4.) For Pipeclay's column, see the articles in *El Nicaraguense* of February 02, February 09, and February 16, 1856 as well as Alejandro Bolaños Geyer, ed., *El Nicaraguense, 1855–1856. Edición Facsimilar Bilingüe con su Guía = Bilingual Facsimile Edition with a Guide* (St. Charles Mo.: A. Bolaños Geyer, 1998), 46-b.
101. "Interior of the Convent. Repose after Battle," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 03, 1856.
102. "Battle of Rivas," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 17, 1856.
103. Amy S. Greenberg, "Soldado o Don Nadie," in *Filibusterismo y Destino Manifiesto en las Américas*, ed. Víctor Hugo Acuña Ortega (San José, Costa Rica: Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría, 2010), 228–229.
104. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*, 11–12.
105. "Reception Room of Gen. Walker in the President's House, City of Granada," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, March 15, 1856.
106. Ibid.
107. "Interior of the Convent. Repose after Battle."
108. Ibid.
109. "A Visit to General Walker and Suite; Early Reminiscence of Walker," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 27, 1857.
110. See Sarah Watts, *Rough Rider in the White House. Theodore Roosevelt and the Politics of Desire*, Paperback ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006) for an overview of Roosevelt's self-image as well as Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization. A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917*, 107–133.
111. Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood. How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*, Yale Historical Publications (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 22; Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization. A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917*, 5.
112. Felipe Espinoza, "Public Letter," *El Defensor del Orden*, September 15, 1854.
113. Raimundo Mora and Francisco Calvo, "Nota sobre una Acción Militar en Rivas," *Boletín Oficial de Costa Rica*, (April 13, 1856).

114. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "N/A," *El Nicaraguense*, January 19, 1856, Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "Arrival of Ladies," *El Nicaraguense*, February 09, 1856, John Tabor, "Ladies," *El Nicaraguense* (October 11, 1856): Three featured articles, all about the arrival of either US "families" or explicitly "wives," "ladies," or "women" in Granada. Bolaños Geyer traced the arrival of 13 women and 5 children in New York in one evacuation transport from Nicaragua (Alejandro Bolaños Geyer, *William Walker: El Predestinado de los Ojos Grises. Tomo V: Trujillo*, vol. 5 (Saint Charles, Missouri: Impresión privada, 1994, 41). How many women had been in Nicaragua in total cannot be ascertained.
115. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "Died," *El Nicaraguense*, January 26, 1856; John Tabor, "Orbituary," *El Nicaraguense* (July 19, 1856): 3.
116. Mateo Mayorga, "N/A," *El Defensor del Orden* (August 09, 1855): 1.
117. John L. O'Sullivan, "The Great Nation of Futurity," *United States Democratic Review*, November 1839, 426.
118. Ibid., 427.
119. Ibid.
120. Ibid.
121. Although this notion of a radical break with the past is especially pronounced in US history, the independence of the United States has been regarded as a new beginning in other geographical regions as well. See, for example, Johann Wolfgang Goethe's 1831 poem "Amerika, du hast es besser/ als unser Continent, das alte/ hast keine verfallenen Schlösser/ und keine Basalte./ Dich stört nicht im Innern/ zu lebendiger Zeit/ unnützes Erinnern/ und vergeblicher Streit." In a similar vein as O'Sullivan, Goethe praises the new continent for its possibility of a fresh, unencumbered historical start. Another, maybe even more influential source is Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, who declared in *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte* (1830): "In der elementaren Rücksicht ist Amerika noch nicht fertig. […] Amerika ist somit das Land der Zukunft" (Anhang 2, 199–200).
122. O'Sullivan, "The Great Nation of Futurity," 426.
123. Ibid.
124. María DeGuzmán, *Spain's Long Shadow. The Black Legend, Off-Whiteness, and Anglo-American Empire* (Minneapolis, Minn: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), xii.
125. Ibid., xv.
126. Ibid., xxv.
127. Ibid., xxxiii.

128. David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
129. Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 126.
130. Johannsen, *To the Halls of the Montezumas. The Mexican War in the American Imagination*, 245–246.
131. E.H., "Nicaragua and the Fillibusters [sic!]," *New York Daily Times*, March 03, 1856.
132. Mateo Mayorga, "N/A," *El Defensor del Orden* (July 10, 1855): 1.
133. Fabio, "La Independencia de Centro-América Está En Inminente Peligro," *Boletín Oficial de León*, December 06, 1856.
134. Mignolo, *Idea of Latin America*, xvi.
135. "Examining a Squad at Virgin Bay," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 19, 1856.
136. "Market Place, City of Granada, Capital of Nicaragua," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, November 22, 1856.
137. Tabor, "Nicaragua—Its Probabilities," 2.
138. Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other. How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2002), 15–16.
139. Ibid., 27.
140. N.N., "England and the United States," *New York Daily Times*, June 07, 1856.
141. John Tabor, "A Future Venice in Nicaragua," *El Nicaraguense* (September 20, 1856): 2.
142. John Tabor, "American Enterprise," *El Nicaraguense* 1, no. 28 (May 17, 1856): 2.
143. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "Progress of Improvements," *El Nicaraguense*, February 02, 1856.
144. John Tabor, "What We Are Striving For," *El Nicaraguense* (October 11, 1856): 3.
145. Ibid.
146. José Maria Estrada, "Discurso del Excelentísimo Sr. Diputado Presidente de la República," *Boletín Oficial*, May 12, 1855.
147. Kevin Starr, *Americans and the California Dream*, 1850–1915 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 365–366.
148. Ibid., 413.
149. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "Panslavism and Americanism," *El Nicaraguense*, January 05, 1856.
150. Gesa Mackenthun, "The Conquest of Antiquity: Territorial Expansion and Romantic Scientific Discourse in the US," in *American Travel and Empire* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), 99–128.

151. Jesse Alemán, "The Other Country. Mexico, the United States and the Gothic History of Conquest," in *Hemispheric American Studies*, ed. Caroline Field Levander and Robert Steven Levine (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 77.
152. Wertheimer, *Imagined Empires. Incas, Aztecs, and the New World of American Literature, 1771–1876*, 128–129.
153. Joseph R. Malè and Charles T. Cutler, "A Ruined City in Chontales," *El Nicaraguense*, December 22, 1855.
154. Salvatore, "North American Travel Narratives and the Ordering/Othering of South America (c.1810–1860)," 105.
155. Sebastián Salinas, "Quince de Septiembre," *Boletín Oficial León* 1, no. 16 (September 20, 1856): 4.
156. Mateo Mayorga, "N/A," *El Defensor del Orden* (July 02, 1854): 1.
157. Joseph R. Malè and John Tabor, "Sentiment in the U States," *El Nicaraguense*, February 16, 1856.
158. Alejandra Bottinelli, "Del Progreso al Orden. Letrados y Poder en el Origen de los Estados-Nación, en el Sur Americano," *Forum for Inter-American Research* 5, no. 3 (n.d.): 7.
159. See Gobat, "Reflexiones sobre el Encuentro Nicaragüense con el Régimen Filibustero de William Waker, 1855–1856," 74.
160. Qtd. in: Antonio Esgueva Gómez, ed., *Taller de Historia. Nicaragua en los Documentos 1523–1857*, vol. 10 (Managua, 2006), 114.
161. Carlos Granados, "Geopolítica, Destino Manifiesto y Filibusterismo en Centroamérica," in *Filibusterismo y Destino Manifiesto en las Américas*, ed. Víctor Hugo Acuña Ortega (San José, Costa Rica: Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría, 2010), 12.
162. Malè and Cook, "Nicaragua—Its Resources."
163. Malè and Tabor, "Sentiment in the U States."
164. Fruto Chamorro, "N/A," *Mentor Nicaragüense*, December 11, 1841.
165. Maria Estrada, "Discurso del Excelentísimo Sr. Diputado Presidente de la República."
166. His flag did not enjoy the success of another filibuster, Narciso López, whose banner—carried on all his filibuster missions to liberate Cuba from Spanish colonial administration—would become the official flag of the Caribbean nation.
167. Patricio Rivas, "El Presidente Provisorio a los Nicaragüenses," *Boletín Oficial León*, September 20, 1856.

168. Qtd. in: Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, Ramón Romero, and Modesto Armio, eds., *Revista de la Academia de Geografía e Historia 1937–1938*, vol. 2 (Managua, 1937), 94–95.
169. N.N, “Remitido,” *Gaceta Oficial de Nicaragua*, no. 8 (August 22, 1857): 3–4.
170. N.N, “Sin Título,” *Gaceta Oficial de Nicaragua*, August 04, 1857, 1–2.

CHAPTER 5

Between Omnipresence and Oblivion. The Filibusters in Transnational Collective Memories and Nationalist Historiographies

Since its inception, the Nicaraguan post-war official organ *Gaceta Oficial* published articles demonizing Walker and his filibusters. In an article of August 04, 1857, they are described as coming over the country like a disease: "as a consequence of the war [of the 1850s] the cholera arrived and massacred our people, and as another consequence Walker arrived who was even worse than this horrible disease."[1] Just a few weeks later, when the Nicaraguans became aware of Walker's attempt to set sail to Central America again to regain his power, the *Gaceta* described Walker as the one "who has recently attempted to take away our independence and liberty; the same one who everywhere is known as the assassin, the arsonist and the most hardened criminal, he is the one who figures as the principal leader in the new enterprise to subdue Central America."[2] This tactic, which should deflect criticism from the Democrats for their early connection with the filibusters, was supported by their new allies, the Conservatives. Both parties were eager to vilify Walker as an outsider to strengthen Nicaraguan unity and attempt to construct a sense of national pride—an attempt quickly aided by specially commissioned history books.

Newspapers, both Central and US American, had long personalized the anti-filibuster campaign, focusing on William Walker, and pitting him against the Costa Rican President Juan Rafael Mora. This tendency found its way into the first Central American history books as editors often doubled as historians, for example, José Dolores Gámez or Jerónimo Pérez. The small

© The Author(s) 2016

A. Beer, *A Transnational Analysis of Representations of the US Filibusters in Nicaragua, 1855-1857*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-28352-4_5

circle of *letrados* in Nicaraguan society meant that newspaper editors often served as government ministers, and the accounts they wrote in the 1860s and 1870s quickly became canonized and formed part of the official national historiography.[3] As the Costa Rican historian Víctor Acuña Ortega has noted: "Many of the Central American history books on the war against the filibusters were written on orders of the governments of the countries involved or with some kind of official support. Maybe only after the 1956 centenary [of Costa Rica's entrance into the war], books without official support were published."[4] From the 1870s onward, governments on the isthmus refocused their efforts to build a modern nation state, and consequently every country constructed its own history of anti-filibuster glory, successively relegating the role of the unified Central American army to the backbenches. Nicaraguan national(ist) historians, in particular, vilified Walker to whitewash their country's history of partial collaboration. To serve this end, they and Costa Ricans integrated their respective national heroes into the narrative of the anti-filibuster campaign: Andrés Castro in the former, Juan Santamaría in the latter country. Both narratives surrounding these national heroes share some similarities. The myth surrounding Castro has it that during the Battle of San Jacinto this simple *campesino* ran out of ammunition for his rifle, but in patriotic fervor picked up a stone, jumped out of his defensive position and killed one filibuster by throwing his stone right into the enemy's face, thus encouraging his fellow soldiers to go into the offensive. Santamaría is said to have been the only one following his general's call for volunteers when during the Costa Rican advance on Nicaragua in April 1856, the filibusters had barricaded themselves up in a building in Rivas. Without being able to oust them, General José María Cañas had asked for soldiers to sneak up to the occupied house and set it on fire. Santamaría volunteered and achieved this aim, but died in the action. The stories of both men are thus constructed around individual acts of heroism—although the burning of a building with men inside might be questionable—that not only decided one single battle, but supposedly stand as exemplary for the general mood of the population, a unified population that was defending its attacked motherland.

Yet, as Frances Kinloch Tijerino observed, the *guerra nacional* did not translate into an immediate affirmation of Nicaraguan national unity[5]: Elite Nicaraguans remained infatuated with the United States as a model of civilization and modernity, and many Nicaraguans still remembered their politicians' complicity in the arrival of the filibusters. Throughout

the 1860s, and especially in the liberal period of the 1870s, though, the discourse of a united anti-filibuster struggle gained momentum. This way of using Walker as a scapegoat to construct a stratified national *Mestizo* identity and thus foster national unity has been a major objective of the Nicaraguan elites (including historians) from the end of 1857 until today. A mythical unified front of Nicaraguans—leveling all racial and social differences—constituted the basis of the nation-building attempt.

As Central America gained its independence without an actual war of independence, nationalist historians jumped at the opportunity of the anti-filibuster campaign to envision their nation's birth as a unifying struggle against a common enemy. Nicaraguan scholars regarded the fight against Walker to be the "most important episode of nineteenth century Central American history"[6] and the "root [...] from which all the following North American invasions in Central America, as well as the Sandinista revolution of the twentieth century have grown."[7] The fight against the filibusters became a belated war of independence, and thus could claim a pivotal position in the national historiographies of both Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Both countries share a complicated and often hostile history as direct neighbors, but with regard to the incorporation of the anti-filibuster campaigns into national historiography, both had an almost identical time line. The *ticos*, too, began to use the memory of the war against the filibusters (which they call their *campaña nacional*) from the 1870s onward to foster national unity.[8] Up to that point it had been secondary because Costa Rica's major protagonist in that campaign, President Juan Rafael Mora, had fallen into disgrace shortly after his victory. With attempts to foster a sense of national unity in the late nineteenth century, the country's contributions in the Allied Central American anti-filibuster war became a corner stone of national identity.[9]

For US works on the filibusters, historian Víctor Acuña Ortega analyzed that in the 1860s and up to the 1890s, former filibusters dominated the public discourse with their testimonials and articles. Best-known in their day were Walker and his autobiographical account *The War in Nicaragua* of 1860, followed by the accounts by James C. Jamison (*With Walker in Nicaragua Or Reminiscences of an Officer of the American Phalanx*, 1857) and Charles W. Doubleday's *Reminiscences of the 'Filibuster' War in Nicaragua*, 1889. Filibusters thus basically constructed their own history, and many Central American history books were written as direct responses to the claims made in the filibuster testimonial literature.[10] One of the standard works, *Walker en Centroamérica* (1888) by the

Guatemalan historian Lorenzo Montúfar, was written on the orders of the Costa Rican government,[11] and also relied on heavy personalization, pitting Walker and Mora in a battle of giants. This personalization continued when in the 1960s many scholars—including Alejandro Bolaños Geyer—started to focus on a psychological explanation of Walker's personality.[12] This perpetuated the conviction that filibusterism was driven by strong, isolated, yet "deranged" individuals,[13] a tendency that de-politicized and de-historicized the events.[14]

As a nation-building process, this enterprise enjoyed overwhelming success in Nicaragua. Most Nicaraguan citizens nowadays remember nothing of their elites' complicity in the arrival of the filibusters. They know Walker as the bloodthirsty *yankee* who wanted to ruin their nation, and official historiography dedicates one of two national holidays (September 14) to the Battle of San Jacinto, the military action in which Nicaraguans—together with other Central Americans—gained their first decisive victory over the filibuster forces.[15] Andrés Castro is one of the three main national heroes besides writer Rubén Darío and guerrilla fighter Augusto Sandino,[16] in a panorama of national collective remembering increasingly dominated by the Sandinista revolution, and by the Sandinista political leadership centered on Daniel Ortega Saavedra.[17] With this panorama as a background, scholars in Nicaraguan history find it difficult to emancipate their work from the political field. In a small, economically extremely poor country[18] with a highly interconnected elite, these actors have continued to alternate between—and to dominate—different social fields (literature, history, politics, economy and religion),[19] which resulted in political logics often infringing an independent, critical historiography.

Often though it is literature that complicates and outright challenges clear nationalist notions[20]: The 1952 epic poem "Con Walker en Nicaragua" by Nicaragua's foremost poet, Ernesto Cardenal, is written in the voice of an ex-filibuster who had been "with Walker in Nicaragua." The poem recounts the narrator's motivations to invade the country, his disappointment at the abysmal conditions in which the filibuster force had to survive, his growing dissatisfaction with the whole enterprise and finally his return to the United States. Cardenal's poem enters—not only in its title—in an exchange with the well-known poem "With Walker in Nicaragua" by James C. Jamison as Cardenal depicts a similar young, light-hearted protagonist who joins the expedition without much reflection. Yet, the poem also depicts the socioeconomic reasons that brought mid-nineteenth-century US males to Central America. With this background and the focus on

the hardships of the filibuster rank-and-file, Cardenal de-demonizes the filibusters, and attempts to move away from a fixation on Walker's deeds and character alone. Ernesto Cardenal would return to the filibusters two more times, in his poems "Los Filibusteros" and "Greytown," both following the same strand of argumentation. Yet, not even Cardenal dares to talk about Nicaraguan collaboration in these poetic historizications.

Although Central Americans vilified Walker (and to a lesser extent his fellow filibusters), they were prone to use material provided by them, especially the newspaper articles discussed in this study.[21] This keen interest in US-authored source material on such a contentious event was mainly a result of the lack of Central American sources: In societies where the possibilities of archiving were severely hampered by economic shortcomings, the privatization of education and tropical climate, many Central American sources on the anti-filibuster war vanished rapidly. While most Central American historians remained skeptical about *El Nicaraguense's* valor as a trustworthy source, they were unaware of the impact the filibusters had had on other US papers, like *Frank Leslie's*. The visual material included in *Leslie's* went uncontested, as no Central American sketches or drawings from the era seem to exist. As a result, many authors, both Central American and US, continued to accompany their texts by drawings made by filibusters, often without engaging the material critically: Frederic Rosengarten's 1976 *Freebooters Must Die!*, Craig Dozier's 1985 *Nicaragua's Mosquito Shore*, the 1991 study *Costa Rica y la Guerra contra los Filibusteros* by Rafael Obregón Loría, Iván Molina Jiménez's 2000 *La Campaña Nacional* or Antonio Esgueva Gómez's 2006 textbook *Taller de Historia* all reproduce the same set of sketches. The power of this visual archive perpetuates the position of the filibusters as one of the foremost producers of source material on the filibuster campaign in Nicaragua. The cultural domination the United States exercises over Nicaragua—a country that was repeatedly occupied by US military forces in the early twentieth century and which is locked in an uneasy love–hate relationship to the *yankees*—has long influenced the uncritical importance Nicaraguan scholars bestow on US sources. Together with the still widespread racism toward native and Creole Nicaraguans, sources of the nineteenth century are thus often uncritically reproduced and converted into source material without a discussion of its limitations. An extreme example is the novel *Waikna, or Adventures on the Mosquito Shore* by Ephraim George Squier (written under the pseudonym Samuel A. Bard) in 1855, which was published for

the first time in Spanish by the Colección Cultural de Centro América of the Banco de América in 2005. Squier never visited the country's Atlantic ("Mosquito") coast, and his novel relies on racist stereotyping of Afro-Caribbean people, but the editorial introduction to *Waikna* only makes fleeting reference to a "certain racism" (XIII) that can be found in Squier's novel. Apart from that it eulogizes his superior imagination which allowed him to accurately depict the Mosquitia.[22] That this book is published by a Nicaraguan historian in a collection dedicated to reproducing historical documents blurs the limits between fictional and fact-based sources. Apart from such examples, many Nicaraguan historians have to resort to sources in and from foreign countries due to a lack of domestic material. Ironically, thus, the process of nation building in Nicaragua was and continues to be based on documents from non-Nicaraguan material, often *El Nicaraguense*. The filibusters, although they failed in their attempt to dominate the circulation of information with *El Nicaraguense* in their day, obtained a late victory with the influence their publication holds over national memories of the filibuster invasion.

In the 1860s, the United States saw a surge of filibuster memoirs, but with the death of Walker the movement lost its figurehead and after the US Civil War, critical voices increasingly questioned the sanctity of the filibusters' motives. In the Reconstruction Era, the filibusters became "skeleton[s] in the closet"; they did not "fit in the pantheon of Founding Fathers, Pioneers and Captains of Industry" on whom US historiography increasingly relied to narrate the nation.[23] Yet, Walker and his fellow filibusters had been too popular to simply be forgotten. Time and again, they kept resurfacing: In December 1878, the *New Orleans Democrat* ran an article titled "Wm. Walker's Buried Treasure. Fact and Fiction Concerning the Dictator of Nicaragua," which set out to debunk the "errors and mistakes" that had previously appeared in another newspaper. This paper had claimed William Walker had buried the spoils of his Nicaraguan reign somewhere on the isthmus and that now a former filibuster would undertake an expedition to unearth the riches.[24] The *Democrat* argued firmly against this pirate tale: Walker had been a gentleman, "no vulgar freebooter or filibuster" and would never have depraved the Nicaraguan people of any riches for personal gain. Only four days later, the *Cincinnati Commercial* ran the article "Hidden Treasure Sought. Looking for the Filibuster William Walker's Loot," which informed its readers that Walker had not buried his riches in Nicaragua but on the Cuban isle of Pines and at the time of his death had drawn a map of the exact spot.[25] The author—

who claimed to possess the map—wanted to fit out an expedition and searched for accomplices. The article ended with an appraisal of Walker and the author's lament that memories of the filibuster leader have been "buried in oblivion by the passing away of a few years of time." This article generated enough momentum to partially resurrect interest in Walker, if not filibusterism in general. Two more articles appeared in December 1878, "Walker's Last Expedition. The Adventures of the Great Filibuster and His Followers in Central America" in the *New Orleans Democrat*[26] and "Walker's Gold. A Californian Who Claims to Know All About the Spoils of Twenty Churches" in the *Los Angeles Express*,[27] underlining the fact that Walker became the content of pirate narratives and quests for treasures. This shift was facilitated by the way in which the filibusters had long been portrayed in US magazines like *Leslie's*: Stories about adventurers and piratical derring-do lend themselves to include the filibusters into young boys' stories. The self-mythologization of the filibusters had proofed successful, and they were received "by many journalistic media, popular melodramatists and popular historians in just the romantic terms [they] preferred."[28] Yet, these "romantic terms" meant that Walker and the filibusters had been firmly inscribed in the semantic field of piracy and treasure hunts, thus finally arriving at the meaning of the term filibuster they had so strongly opposed in the 1850s. At least, though, this semantic field secured their enduring popularity during the late nineteenth century. The popular writer Bret Harte, for example, explicitly referred to filibuster characters in his short story "Peter Schroeder" (1875) and his novel *The Crusade of the Excelsior* (1887), while Joaquín Miller penned the hagiographical poem "With Walker in Nicaragua" in 1871. Like a ghost in the imperial machine, Walker went mostly dormant from the 1860s to the 1890s, when the geopolitical situation in the United States changed to isolationism; but when expansionism returned with a vengeance, he was one of the first reference points resurrected from a popular amnesia that had never been complete. The main reason why the filibusters never served easily as imperial role models was the failure of their enterprise. Central America remained nominally independent (although from the 1870s US banana companies rapidly gained virtual control over isthmian countries, especially Honduras), Cuba was only wrestled from Spanish control in 1898, and other destinations of the filibusters—Venezuela, Ecuador and Mexico—also kept their independence. Despite these unimpressive results, during the jingoistic expansionism of the 1890s the filibusters returned into the limelight. Roughly 30 years after the carnage of

the US Civil War, the imperial movement of 1898 achieved the annexation of the Philippines, Guam, Puerto Rico and the de facto hegemony over Cuba—and filibusterism formed an often unacknowledged part of this imperial history.

In the wake of these events the filibusters rose again; yet, not in US historiography, but in the literary field, as is exemplified by the works of Richard Harding Davis (1864–1916).[29] Almost forgotten today, Harding Davis's fame began as a prolific war journalist and intimate friend of Theodore Roosevelt (e.g. he wrote the exclusive report on the latter's charge on San Juan Hill),[30] as well as his reputation for being an epitome of masculinity.[31] The best-selling novel of his career, though, was the romantic mercenary tale *Soldiers of Fortune* of 1897, whose main characters referred to filibuster-like reasoning for overstepping their roles as hired guns and attempting to conquer foreign locales.[32] In the 1902 potboiler *Captain Macklin, His Memoirs*, filibusters played an even more central role.[33] The novel's eponymous protagonist, after having been expelled from West Point Military Academy, is confused about what to do in his life. He decides to look for his fortune abroad because "perhaps there are other countries less difficult to please" than the United States and their army (43). Scanning newspapers for places to go, he encounters an article about a civil war in Honduras, and decides to go there. The fictional Honduras is marred by the same trouble with a US-controlled isthmian transportation line as mid-1850s Nicaragua, and it also has to cope with two political family factions. One of them contracts Macklin and he joins an international regiment led by a famous French mercenary. In several instances, mercenaries evoke William Walker and the Nicaraguan filibusters as examples for the positive US influence in Latin America. Webster, one of the regiment's members, "an old man, who as a boy had invaded Central America with William Walker's expedition, and who ever since had lived in Honduras," is one of the staunchest supporters of filibustering.[34] When the regiment begins to turn against their contractors and contemplates installing their French commander—who answers to the speaking name of Laguerre—in the Presidential palace, it is Webster who most fervently advocates such a move: "'One strong man, if he is an honest man, can conquer and hold Central America. William Walker was such a man. I was with him when he ruled the best part of this [!] country for two years. He governed all Nicaragua with two hundred white men, and never before or since have [sic!] the pueblo known such peace and justice and prosperity as Walker gave them'."[35] The final push for his comrades to abandon

their Honduran allies and opt for Laguerre as President is brought about by Webster evoking Walker's old dream of a Central American union under US control: "Our motto shall be Walker's motto, 'Five or none', and when we have taken this Republic we shall take the other four, and [Laguerre] will be President of the United States of Central America."[36] Harding Davis can rely on Walker as a household name to contextualize Macklin's and Webster's actions in fictitious Honduras, as could Gore Vidal, who in his 1950 novel *Dark Green, Bright Red* narrated the story of a failed coup d'état in an unnamed Central American country. One of Vidal's protagonists, Peter Nelson (the only US American on the side of the conspirators) repeatedly invokes William Walker when fantasizing about his own possibilities to become President.

To regard US American history from the point of view of the earlier filibuster episodes complicates the still influential view that 1898 was a singular threshold, the first moment in US history the country attempted to conquer non-domestic territories. The position of William Walker in the expansionist imaginary brings to the fore the long trajectory of expansionist designs in the US history. He pops up when "contemporary events help call him back to mind, and he briefly appears to say what most often remains unthinkable and unsayable; he then disappears just as quickly as the forces of containment and repression work to return imperial desires to obscurity," as Brady Harrison has argued.[37] When the United States returned to a more indirect method of yielding power in its American backyard, in the 1930s Walker returned to the closet of a "collective public amnesia,"[38] and US historiography only slowly started to take hold of him. Till the 1960s and 1970s, most academic studies on Walker and the filibusters were written by amateur enthusiasts and uncritically recounted the personalized, adventurous story of Walker established by the filibusters themselves in the 1870s.[39] The one big exception is William Scroggs's 1916 study *Filibusters and Financiers*, which places the filibusters in a historical context of US economic desires on the isthmus and investigates Vanderbilt's role in Walker's early successes and later downfall.

Walker returned in the 1960s and 1970s, at a time when critique toward US policy in both Southeast Asia and Latin America was endemic. The 1969 motion picture *Queimada* (engl. *Burn!*)—directed by Gillo Pontecorvo and starring Marlon Brando in the title role—recasts the filibuster expedition to Nicaragua as an attempt to capture a fictional Portuguese island, and is unequivocally anti-imperialist Walker and the filibusters were also

increasingly incorporated into critical accounts of US history,[40] and the first critical academic studies devoted exclusively to the filibusters appeared at that time (e.g. Albert Carr's *The World and William Walker* in 1963), with Robert May emerging as the preeminent US historian on filibustering with the publication of *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire* in 1973. 1980 saw the publication of Charles Brown's *Agents of Manifest Destiny*. The author's neglect of non-US sources, though, limited his scope of research. In total, academic studies on the filibusters were few, and Walker remained firmly in the field of popular culture. Joan Didion's *A Book of Common Prayer* (1977), Robert Stone's *A Flag for Sunrise* (1981), Cormac McCarthy's Western *Blood Meridian* (1985), and especially Robert Houston's 1984 novel *The Nation Thief* use the filibusters as either implicit or explicit historical touchstones. The US policy against the elected government of Nicaragua in the 1980s not only inspired novelists, but also British filmmaker and Sandinista sympathizer Alex Cox, who in 1987 directed the motion picture *Walker*. Financed with roughly US$6 million, and filmed on location in revolutionary Nicaragua, the film was a strong anti-interventionist (and sometimes blatantly anti-US) postmodern historical tour-de-force.[41] One of the latest writers to take up the Nicaraguan filibusters as adventure story is the Breton novelist Patrick Deville. Having visited Nicaragua in the 1990s, his novel *Pura Vida*[42] brings Walker's biography into play with that of other revolutionaries, mercenaries and adventurers who had followed romantic impulses to inscribe themselves into (mostly Latin American) history: Simón Bolívar, Francisco Morazán and Ernesto "Che" Guevara, but also Lord Byron. Deville's collage is impressive and entertaining, but follows the aforementioned trend to obfuscate historical contextualizations and focuses on personality as an explanation of revolutionary agency. From the 1990s onward, such postmodern appropriations of the filibusters as demons of imperialism paved the way for their gradual inclusion into US cultural studies. This stands in a notable contrast to the historical studies in which the filibusters are discussed in Central America.

Even critical US (cultural) studies of the filibusters from the 1960s onward, though, have remained stuck in an exceptionalist framework that focused exclusively on US citizens as historical agents. Such agents included the erstwhile partner-turned-antagonist Cornelius Vanderbilt as well as several filibuster supporters in different US administrations, but usually no Central Americans.[43] Such lopsided analyses grew out of an exclusive focus on sources available in US archives, mostly US newspapers and magazines. US academic exceptionalism meant that research from Central America

was systematically ignored, a tendency sharply criticized by Víctor Acuña Ortega and other Central American scholars.[44] Latin American Studies also ignored these sources. The discipline, as Mark Berger has analyzed, had as its main objective "the creation and maintenance of the institutions, organizations, inter-state relations, and politico-economic structures that reinforce and underpin the US hegemonic position in the Americas."[45] The initial ideal of the Good Neighborhood Policy and the pivotal importance of economic liberalism for this academic discipline—as for many other area studies—meant that scholars refrained from diving into historical examples that might threaten the mutual fight against communism.[46] Another reason for neglect was the conception of area studies, which subsumed Central America under the larger entity of Latin America, thus blurring its peculiarities. This is especially troublesome as the absence of a war of independence in Central America played an important role in the search for a pivotal event in the process of nation building. In addition, US politics in Central America relied more extensively on direct military intervention than in South America, as Ricardo Salvatore has convincingly argued.[47]

The area studies' primate of the political also resulted in a focus on the politico-economic dimension of US–Latin American relations, long ignoring culture as a pivotal component of academic research.[48] The anthology *Close Encounters of Empire* in 1998 marked a watershed in this regard, as a group of Latin American scholars powerfully argued for a cultural turn in their discipline. Nowadays, the subordination of scholarly work on Latin America under the auspices of political necessities has been very much reversed, but the ignorance of Latin American source material, Latin American studies and Latin American scholars continues. The result is that many US scholars are under the impression that Central America does not hold any archival material of interest (at least not prior to the 1930s) and therefore do not feel inclined to travel to the isthmus and do research in situ. Nicaraguan scholars, however, are impeded from sharing their findings by financial limitations: Research trips or attendances at international conferences are simply out of the question in a country that has all but the most rudimentary funds for tertiary education.[49] As mentioned, the focus of Nicaraguan historians too, is often national(ist) or at best regional, and therefore their interest in connecting with North American scholars is limited. The two regionalisms thus reinforce each other. In the United States, additionally, we might perceive a case of what Ann Stoler has pointedly called the "politics of comparison," that is, the institutional underworld of "scholarly commitments, historiographic con-

ventions and political investments" that "dissuade or encourage" lines of research and ways of teaching.[50] And the small, politically and economically insignificant isthmian countries do not have a lot of academic backing at the moment (it would be interesting to speculate if this stance changes when—or better, if—one day the prospective Nicaraguan transisthmian canal is finished).

Walker's omnipresence in Costa Rica and Nicaragua has produced lacunae as well. The role of Sylvanus Spencer—a mercenary sent by Cornelius Vanderbilt to help the Costa Rican war efforts, who proved to be essential in wresting control of the transisthmian route from Walker—has been relegated to the backbenches of research by scholars anxious to prove their own country's contributions.[51] Only with growing transnational forays in the field of history, with a genuine effort—on personal and institutional levels—to suture different linguistic, national and regional crossings and connections into our understanding of historical events, these limitations can eventually be overcome. So far, though, such endeavors remain desiderata.

Notes

1. N.N. "N/A" *Gaceta Oficial de Nicaragua*, April 08, 1857, 1–2.
2. N.N. "Remitido." *Gaceta Oficial de Nicaragua*, no. 8 (August 22, 1857): 3–4.
3. With differences, though. The narratives of the anti-filibuster campaign between Nicaraguans and Costa Ricans differ in some important points: For the latter, it is not called the *Guerra* but rather the *Campaña Nacional*, and did only start in 1856, with the first Costa Rican attack on filibuster-occupied Nicaragua. Such distinct (hi)stories inhibit a transnational cooperation between historians from the two countries.
4. Víctor Hugo Acuña Ortega, *La Campaña Nacional: Memorias Comparadas*, ed. Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría, 11 de Abril Cuadernos de Cultura 16 (Alajuela [Costa Rica]: Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría, 2009), 17.
5. Frances Kinloch Tijerino, *Nicaragua, Identidad y Cultura Política (1821–1858)* (Managua: Banco Central de Nicaragua, 1999), 9.
6. Acuña Ortega, *La Campaña Nacional: Memorias Comparadas*, 11.
7. Alejandro Bolaños Geyer, *William Walker: El Predestinado ee kos Ojos Grises: Tomo IV: La Guerra Nacional*, vol. 4 (Saint Charles, Missouri: Impresión privada, 1994), 14.
8. Ibid., 54.
9. See Patricia Fumero Vargas, *El Monumento Nacional. Fiesta y Develización, Septiembre de 1895* (Alajuela: Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría,

1998) for a case study of the inauguration of the national monument to the anti-filibuster struggle in the capital San José in 1895, and connected efforts to create a national identity around this symbol. Today, Costa Rica boasts an enormous amount of lieux de mémoire, from the national airport, which was named after Juan Santamaría and sports a huge statue of the nation's hero, to several restored battle sites and museums.

10. Acuña Ortega, *Campaña Nacional*, 30.
11. The book formed part of his seven-volume opus magnum *Reseña Histórica de Centroamérica* (1878–1888). The whole series was paid for by the Guatemalan Liberal government, but for the last volume, which would be reissued separately under the title *Walker en Centroamérica*, Montúfar received additional payment from Costa Rica.
12. A focusation on personalization is also discernible in US studies, see, for example, Brady Harrison who depicts Walker as a "deadly automaton" devoid of humanity: Brady Harrison, *Agent of Empire. William Walker and the Imperial Self in American Literature* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 2004, 9). Other famous examples include Eduardo Galeano, who wrote about Walker in the second volume of his *Memoria del Fuego* (Eduardo Galeano, *Memoria del Fuego*, La Creación Literaria [Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno de España Ed., 1992], 219–220) and also briefly touched on the filibusters (with many factual errors) in his book *Las Venas Abiertas de América Latina* (Eduardo Galeano, *Las Venas Abiertas de América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno de España Ed., 2004), 141–142) as well as the German (later US American) historical writer Alfred Neumann, who became fascinated with Walker's personal story during his exile in Los Angeles and in 1949 wrote *Der Pakt* (The Pact). It examines Walker as a psychologically troubled individual who was brought to extreme measures by the death of his beloved. The book was originally published by distinguished German exile editorial Pazifische Presse (version used here: Alfred Neumann, *Der Pakt* (München: Droemer/Knaur, 1964).
13. Especially Walker's sexuality was analyzed, with a reported unhappy love affair in New Orleans serving as the starting point of a libidinal oppression that would be externalized by brutal actions of war (see Bolaños Geyer's studies as examples). In the first volume of his study *William Walker: El Predestinado de los Ojos Grises*, Bolaños Geyer attempts a psychological reading of Walker's personality, and comes to the questionable conclusion that Walker suffered from "a psychological structure that included multiple personalities, due to a severe Oedipus complex" (Alejandro Bolaños Geyer, *William Walker: El Predestinado de Ios Ojos Grises. Tomo I: La Ciudad Medialuna*, vol. 1 (Lake San Louis, Missouri: Impresión privada, 1989), 6). Other authors speculated about Walker's homosexuality and the filibusters' homosocial bonding in general.

14. One example from the prestigious *Revista Consevadora de Pensamiento Centroamericano* might stand exemplary for the tone of personalization that ruled Nicaraguan historiography with regard to the filibusters. A review of the study *Los Filibusteros en Nicaragua 1855–1856–1857* (1966) by professor of history Miguel Ángel Álvarez approvingly quotes the following passage: "Walker's physiognomy reflects his soul. Below a wide forehead, which should contain distinguished thoughts, glare two brilliantly blue eyes, half opened, like a viper on the look-out, ready for the attack. In these eyes lies the origin of his flashes of audacity and of the coldness of his crimes" Miguel Angel Alvarez, "Los Filibusteros en Nicaragua 1855-1856-1857," ed. Joaquin Zavala Urtecho, *Revista Conservadora Del Pensamiento Centroamericano* 73 (1966): 16.
15. The second national holiday is celebrated the next day: September 15, marks the country's independence from Spain.
16. Augusto Sandino has repeatedly referred to Walker and the filibusters as prototype US invaders and "descendants of William Walker" (qtd. In: James Dunkerley, *Americana. The Americas in the World, around 1850 (or "Seeing the Elephant" as the Theme for an Imaginary Western)* [London, New York, NY: Verso, 2000], 551).
17. In a country divided along supporters and opponents of the 1979 Sandinista Revolution, key figures of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN) are revered by some Nicaraguans as national heroes, first and foremost the FSLN's founder Carlos Fonseca Amador. It is noteworthy that in the 2011 Presidential elections, incumbent president and eventual winner Daniel Ortega chose campaign posters that showed him as the end point of a time line composed of Andrés Castro, Rubén Darío, and Augusto Sandino. In this visual language Nicaragua's national history begins with Castro's act of defiance against the US invaders, continues via the poetic cosmopolitanism and modernism of Darío, references the anti-US American struggle of Sandino and culminates in Ortega's participation in the 1979 Sandinista revolution against the Somoza dictatorship.
18. The *CIA World Fact Book* of 2015 lists Nicaragua as the second poorest country in the hemisphere, behind Haiti, with a GDP that puts its population in position 119 of a total of 229 countries and territories. See: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2001rank.html?countryName=Nicaragua&countryCode=nu®ionCode=cam&rank=119#nu
19. Nicaraguan scholar Leonel Delgado Aburto points out that investigations into links between intellectual and political power are still a taboo in Nicaragua (Leonel Delgado Aburto, *Márgenes Recorridos. Apuntes sobre Procesos Culturales y Literatura Nicaragüense del Siglo XX*, [Managua: Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica, 2002], 51, footnote 2).

20. In Nicaragua, what Doris Sommer has called "national novels," is conspicuously absent (see Doris Sommer, *Foundational Fictions. The National Romances of Latin America*, Latin American Literature and Culture 8 (Oxford, Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 7; historical events are mostly examined, discussed and—sometimes—disputed in the genre of poetry.
21. An exception, at least to some extent, is José Dolores Gámez 1889 *La Guerra Nacional,* which uses few US sources.
22. Squier-Bard, though, from the beginning of the book, plays with the uncertainty of his voyage. *Waikna* begins with a short dialogue between a "Mosquito man" and a "yankee," of which the narrative voice comments, "Now such a dialogue took place, or might have taken place, on the Mosquito Shore. For all artistic purposes, it did take place [...]."
23. Karl Bermann, *Under the Big Stick. Nicaragua and the United States since 1848* (Boston: South End Press, 1986), 51.
24. N.N., "Wm. Walker's Buried Treasure. Fact and Fiction Concerning the Dictator of Nicaragua. the Errors and Mistakes of a Northern Newspaper Corrected," *New Orleans Democrat*, December 08, 1878.
25. N.N., "Hidden Treasure Sought. Looking for the Filibuster William Walker's Loot," *Cincinnati Commercial*, December 12, 1878.
26. N.N., "Walker's Last Expedition. The Adventures of the Great Filibuster and his Followers in Central America," *New Orleans Democrat*, December 29, 1878.
27. N.N., "Walker's Gold. A Californian who Claims to Know all about the Spoils of Twenty Churches," *Los Angeles Express*, 1878.
28. Richard Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment. The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800–1890* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 261.
29. The following account is based on Arthur Lubow, *The Reporter Who Would Be King. A Biography of Richard Harding Davis* (New York, Toronto, New York: Maxwell Macmillan, 1992); and Nirmal Trivedi, "Staging Unincorporated Power: Richard Harding Davis and the Critique of Imperial News," *The Journal of Transnational American Studies* 3, no. 2. In a letter to a female relative of Walker, Harding Davis wrote in 1909 that he had "always admired Gen Walker" and was thinking about writing a book about him if she would provide him with further information (IHNCA, Fondo Bolaños Geyer, ABG D3G4 0367–01). Three years prior, he had published an autobiographical sketch of Walker in a collection titled *Real Soldiers of Fortune*, together with a stub on Winston Churchill.

30. For Harding Davis's widely read reports, which helped create the myth of the Rough Riders, Roosevelt personally made him an honorary member of the Riders.
31. Magazine illustrator Charles Dana Gibson, based his model alpha malethe "Gibson man," who accompanied the more famous "Gibson Girl" directly on sketches of Harding Davis.
32. Richard Harding Davis, *Soldiers of Fortune* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904).
33. Richard Harding Davis, *Captain Macklin: His Memoirs* (Amsterdam: Fredonia Books, 2001).
34. Ibid., 144.
35. Ibid., 199.
36. Ibid., 200.
37. Harrison, *Agent of Empire. William Walker and the Imperial Self in American Literature*, 193.
38. Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld. Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 293.
39. This can also be said for his Mexican exploits, see Delia González Reufels, *Siedler und Filibuster in Sonora. Eine mexikanische Region im Interesse ausländischer Abenteurer und Mächte; (1821–1860)*, Lateinamerikanische Forschungen vol. 31 (Köln: Böhlau, 2003), 16–17.
40. For example, Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*, 1492 till Present (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005), 154–155.
41. Its political stance proved too radical for the distributors, so it was released without promotion. Although *Walker* competed in the German Berlinale of 1988 and became the most widely viewed film in Nicaraguan history, US audiences did not take much notice.
42. Patrick Deville, *Pura Vida: Vie & Mort de William Walker* (Paris: Seuil, 2004).
43. Robert May's impressive study *Manifest Destiny's Underworld* is a case in point. He analyzes the social, political, and cultural preconditions for filibustering in the United States on more than 290 pages, but completely ignores Central American contexts. While he reflects on the filibusters' invisibility in US historiography on several occasions, he all but ignores their importance for Central America, mentioning it only *en passant* on the book's last two pages (294–296).
44. Acuña Ortega, *Campaña Nacional*, 27; Víctor Hugo Acuña Ortega, "Introducción," in *Filibusterismo y Destino Manifiesto en las Américas* (San José, Costa Rica: Museo Histórico Cultural Juan Santamaría, 2010), 1; Víctor Hugo Acuña Ortega, "Destino Manifiesto, Filibusterismo y Representaciones de Desigualdad Etnico-Racial en las Relaciones entre los Estados Unidos y Centroamérica," ed. DesiguALdades Research Network, *DesiguALdades Working Paper Series*, no. 6 (2011): 34.

45. Mark T. Berger, *Under Northern Eyes. Latin American Studies and US Hegemony in the Americas 1898–1990*, Caribbean and Latin American Studies (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press, 1995), 2.
46. Ibid., 12.
47. Ricardo Donato Salvatore, *Imágenes de un Imperio. Estados Unidos y las Formas de Representación de América Latina*. (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2006).
48. Amy Kaplan, “Left Alone with America,” in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, ed. Anne Kaplan and Donald Pease (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 11.
49. In the case of Nicaragua even the transfer of academic knowledge via publications in international journals is problematic, as the country does not count with an academic editorial that has the ability to produce and distribute journals on an international scale.
50. Ann Laura Stoler, “Intimidations of Empire,” in *Haunted by Empire*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 1.
51. The little that is known about this mercenary can be found in Bolaños Geyer, *William Walker: El Predestinado de los Ojos Grises: Tomo IV: La Guerra Nacional*, vol. 4 (Saint Charles, Missouri: Impresión privada, 1994), 144–145. Acuña Ortega has called for a stronger focus on this transnational figure, and has shown how he was written out of Costa Rican history to attribute the laurels of his contribution to general Máximo Blanco (Acuña Ortega, *La Campaña Nacional: Memorias Comparadas*, 61. As mentioned, this was not the only mercenary in the Costa Rican army; another one was a Frenchman called Pierre (“Pedro”) Barillier, who proved vital in the taking of the town of Rivas, see Alejandro Bolaños Geyer, *William Walker: El Predestinado de los Ojos Grises. Tomo III: Nicaragua*, vol. 3 (Saint Charles, Missouri: Impresión privada, 1993), 376–377.

CHAPTER 6

In Lieu of a Conclusion

The present study aimed at critically examining the transnational representations of the filibuster expedition to Nicaragua in the years 1855–1857 as well as this incident's historical context and the repercussions these representations have enjoyed. Putting the filibuster publication *El Nicaraguense* into the spotlight also provided a possibility to transcend national paradigms in the analysis of this unique episode. But what has this analysis yielded? How did a transnational approach to this historical event change, amplify or contest our knowledge on antebellum America, transnational newspaper publications, hemispheric exchange processes in the Americas or the historical impact of nineteenth century sources on contemporary historiography? As the title of this section already indicates, final answers are hard to find, but the study hopefully can present important advancements researching the questions mentioned above. Starting with the impact of the filibusters' presence and the founding of their newspaper in Nicaragua, one can assert that the filibusters did not revolutionize the Central American press; rather, they attempted to impose a newspaper style they knew from the United States in Central America—a project that enjoyed very limited success on the isthmus, but worked extremely well in the homeland. To found a newspaper in the midst of a civil war seems absurd only at first glance. Such "imperial selves," as Brady Harrison has called actors who via "his or her voice, his or her ability to persuade others, to use language to reshape the world," con-

© The Author(s) 2016

A. Beer, *A Transnational Analysis of Representations of the US Filibusters in Nicaragua, 1855-1857*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-28352-4_6

structed their personae not only in the material world, but also in the textual universe of speeches, newspaper articles, pamphlets or sermons.[1] And filibusters saw themselves as "masters of eloquence for whom language served as one of the most important weapons in the imperialist's arsenal."[2] Bearing these characteristics of the era of Manifest Destiny in mind, it is no surprise that the filibusters coupled their expansionist drive with the urge to establish a medium that could further their proposed mission to "uplift" the Nicaraguan population into a progressive modernity. The "pronounced relationship" between filibustering and publishing activities noted by Rodrigo Lazo for the Cuban filibusters is thus also clearly present in the Nicaraguan case.[3] Contrary to Cuba, though, Walker's men could actually count with a physical presence in the territory they wanted to annex, and this tilted the possibilities of transnational circulation in their favor. With the *Nicaraguense*, the filibusters could quickly establish a journalistic voice that often went uncontested when reporting from Nicaragua, although the function of the paper as William Walker's mouthpiece was not unknown in the United States. Yet, lacking alternative English-language sources, US editors chose the *Nicaraguense* to cater to an ever-increasing demand for news on the filibusters, a demand that was articulated by a population overwhelmingly sympathetic to the filibusters' expansionist designs.

For Nicaraguans and other Central Americans, the filibuster paper was an important tool to gather information on the Rivas (and later the Walker) administration. Yet their rejection of the US presence in Nicaragua led to a rejection of the publication, while for US Americans, the filibuster organ gradually became indispensable: Its dominant position resulted from the only sporadic presence of non-filibuster English-language correspondents, the paper's good availability, thanks to the massive distribution efforts of the filibusters, and also the limited number of US editors who could read Spanish and thus use alternative sources. Furthermore, many filibusters had personal connections with publishers in the United States: Tabor, Malè, Cook and Agüero Estrada, that is, most of the *Nicaraguense's* editors had worked as editors for US newspapers before, as had several of the regular contributors. These networks proved vital to position the highly partisan filibuster paper as a newspaper of record for Nicaraguan affairs.

Within a working system of information circulation and accumulation in Nicaragua, the advent of the filibusters marked a qualitative development

in the country's press organization. The establishment of a distinct geography of power within this circulation of information through the growing network between US port cities and the Nicaraguan way points along the transisthmian route made it possible for the filibusters to resort to many more sources for their paper than the Nicaraguan editors had had at their disposal before. *El Nicaraguense* was the first paper to take full advantage of the stream of passengers and the speed of steamships. It followed established practices of journalism of the time, which focused on the analysis and reproduction of other newspaper articles, public letters and official correspondence. Quite identical to Nicaraguan papers, the filibusters always struggled with scant resources (printing presses, tools and paper), but were able to procure technical support in the United States, which gave them an advantage over Nicaraguan press products. *El Nicaraguense's* structure—with one part in Spanish and another in English—reflected its dual approach: With its Spanish section the paper strove to inform literate, urban Nicaraguans about the activities of the filibuster administration, singing its praise and deriding its enemies. The *Nicaraguense's* English section, on the other side, was aimed completely at the United States, serving as a marketing tool for the recruitment of new filibusters. The filibusters' ability to pose as neutral correspondents for US papers, and the editors' widespread negligence to acknowledge their correspondents' partiality led to highly partisan articles which often went uncontested. As many of the articles in the US press were published unsigned—as was usual at that time—only a close textual analysis reveals filibusters as the authors of articles in a variety of US press products. The line between filibuster and reporter was blurred further by journalists who became filibusters (as in the case of Charles Callahan), or ex-filibusters who took to writing articles. This resulted in a concerted presence of anonymous filibuster writings in a variety of unconnected, often even rival US publications.

This testifies to the surprising, often hidden impact *El Nicaraguense* had not only in the United States, but also in Central America, as many editors there also had to take views of the filibuster paper into consideration (if only to refute them). This importance of the *Nicaraguense* is intimately linked to the emergent hegemonic position of the United States: The trajectories in the circulation and distribution of the paper mirror a social reality in which Nicaragua shifted from domination by one imperial power (Great Britain) to an emerging one—the United States.

A second observation concerns the discursive devices, the metaphors and narrative forms that the filibusters used to contextualize their presence on the isthmus both for US Americans and Central Americans. For US Americans, the task of the filibusters was to inscribe the isthmus, its natural environments, societies, and people into a narrative that was familiar to their audience, a narrative of settlement, expansion, and imperial subjugation. The established narrative that fitted best was that of the US Frontier. For the filibusters, the Frontier constituted a major category for mentally ordering their Nicaraguan experience. It was also an easily available framework through which imperial domination of the isthmian country could be imagined and narrated back to the homeland. The simple ideological dichotomies the Frontier provided—civilized settlers against savages, men against females and feminized men, technology against nature, Christians against heathens, progress against backwardness, whites against reds, us against them—were transferred to Central America to justify its subordination under Anglo-American control. This process of translation was essential for the acceptance of the filibuster incursions into Central America, although this study has argued that "the empire" did not simply take its way southward, as one might have guessed following a logic exemplified by Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze's famous painting from 1861. Rather, this study has shown that the discourse of "the empire" was already present on the isthmus, as the Nicaraguan elites had long employed a discourse similar to that of US Americans. This was not surprising, given the influence of Western Europe on their education. The Nicaraguan elites (Liberals as well as Conservatives) were immersed in a worldview centered on economic liberalism, civilization-via-trade, and processes of nation building founded on the racist structuring of societies. Yet, this does not mean that Nicaraguans did passively consume the imported idea(l)s, but were actively intervening into them. Quite contrary to models which argue that in such contact situations the dominant group effectively silences the inferior one(s), the example of *Destino Manifiesto*/Manifest Destiny shows that the Nicaraguans—at least the literate ones—"talked back" to hegemonic discourses by appropriating and altering them. This is precisely what sociologist Shmuel Eisenstadt has famously called "multiple modernities": a historical trajectory in which non-European societies "developed distinctly modern dynamics and modes of interpretation, for which the original Western project constituted the crucial (and usually ambivalent) reference point."[4]

These shared worldviews constituted the initial impetus for the invitation of the filibusters and their early successes (both military and political) in Nicaragua. Obviously, the Nicaraguan Liberals were interested in concrete military gains when they asked for help from Walker and his force, but during the initial stages of the filibusters' presence, many members of the elite also assumed that the objectives of the filibusters would be congruent with their own. In the end, conflicts over race turned out to be the major obstacle for the continued cooperation with the filibusters: Incorporating Mestizos into the ranks of inferior ethnic groups and regarding them as uncivilized others was a crucial point of division. As this entailed a disenfranchisement of the Mestizos' territorial possessions—and thus a deprivation with a view to the construction of the interoceanic canal—the Nicaraguan elites had to face the fact that albeit congruent in many aspects, their own *destino manifiesto* differed in some crucial points from the Anglo-American Manifest Destiny.

This study, finally, also discussed the repercussions the filibuster representations had long after Walker and his men had been ousted from Nicaragua. Due to their impressive influence on the US press, these repercussions proved highly influential. Starting with autobiographical reports—most famously Walker's own account—the filibusters, even after losing their fight with their (metaphorical) swords, strove to carry it on with their pens. While the US Civil War cooled the expansionist fervor, the filibusters were converted into romantic adventurers, epigones of daredevil virility akin to the Southern confederates that imagined their struggle as the "Lost Cause." This reading of their expeditions, though, also meant that they could not serve as models for the Reconstruction Era. Yet, the texts and images of *El Nicaraguense* and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, the heavily filibuster-influenced story paper, greatly outlived the individual filibusters' narratives. Due to the extended system of preservation for print products that had already been established in the United States, these sources remained widely and easily available. This, and the almost complete absence of preserved material in Nicaragua, Costa Rica and other Central American countries resulted in a hegemonic position of filibuster-authored material in the archive, which historians critically engaged only from the 1960s onwards. In spite of this now critical reception, though, the study has shown that there is still much that needs to be done to "de-colonize" our archives and our research. Especially the elaborate images *Frank Leslie's* offered are still often reproduced without

the necessary contextualization and critical review, as the Honduran exposition mentioned in the introduction reveals.

The filibusters have long passed from admired role models to demonized imperialists, a reversal that itself was based on lopsided argumentations and truncated historical awareness. The filibusters were no mere outsiders and adventurers, but integral parts of a modernity that connected the American hemisphere (Nicaraguans, US Americans and Cubans) with Europe and other world regions. A careful analysis of the intricacies of these processes of modernity can produce astonishing shifts in our understanding of the many local variants of modernity: Historian Michel Gobat, for example, has argued recently that the shared notion of "Latin America" did not emerge simply as a reaction to the French intervention in Mexico from 1861 onward, but actually has its roots in diplomatic efforts undertaken by Central American diplomats during the filibuster invasion to Nicaragua some six years prior.[5] This shows that the filibusters' presence in Nicaragua and the Central Americans' fight against this invasion—albeit often regarded as a minor historical incident from a US-centric point of view—harbors great potential for further investigations.

I chose to end this study not with a conclusion, but with a short summary "in lieu of a conclusion" as it is my conviction that this book does not (and cannot) conclude the research that this historical episode still calls for. Rather, it offers some initial ruminations that shall serve as motivations for others—historians, cultural scholars, economists, (Latin) Americanists and visual scholars—to start forays into the yet unknown. I think that I have outlined some lacunae in the individual chapters, but a preeminent one shall be singled out here: The Nicaraguan filibuster episode is increasingly investigated under a hemispheric perspective, which is a very productive move forward from national(ist) vantage points. Yet, in this move also lurks the danger of forgetting that Central America at the time was the playground for all imperial powers, first and foremost the British Empire. France and the German Confederation also had interests in the region, the latter actively encouraging colonialism at the Nicaraguan Miskito Coast. To dive into the rich British and German archives and concatenate these sundry European nexus with the ongoing investigations into the American connections of the filibuster episode is a daunting task, but one that would serve a truly transnational historiography of this fascinating and important event.

Notes

1. Brady Harrison, *Agent of Empire. William Walker and the Imperial Self in American Literature* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 29.
2. Ibid., 35.
3. Rodrigo Lazo, *Writing to Cuba. Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States*, Envisioning Cuba (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 23–24.
4. Samuel Noah Eisenstadt, “Multiple Modernities,” *Daedalus* 129, no. 1 (2000): 2.
5. Michel Gobat, “The Invention of Latin America: A Transnational History of Anti-Imperialism, Democracy, and Race,” *The American Historical Review* 118, no. 5 (December 01, 2013): 1345–1375.

Index

A

Accessory Transit Company, 37, 38, 51, 88, 107n99
area studies, 7, 193
Argüello Estrada, José. *See* Agüero Estrada, Francisco
Agüero Estrada, Francisco, 93, 94, 105n83, 106n86, 202
Aspinwall Courier, 76, 79, 81

B

Battle of San Jacinto. *See* Castro, Andrés
Blumenbach, Johann Friedrich, 133–4, 138
body politic, 42, 134, 138, 146
Buchanan, James, 10, 62n61, 135
Burr, Aaron, 34

C

California Gold Rush, 21n6, 61n55, 83, 113, 131, 139
Campaña Nacional (Costa Rica), 8–10, 56n6, 184, 185, 194, 194n3
Cardenal, Ernesto, 186–7
Castellón, Francisco, 8, 16
Castro, Andrés, 184, 186, 196n17
Catherwood, Frederick, 69
Cazneau, Jane McManus, 173n39
Central American, The, 83
Centro-Americano, El, 97
Chamorro, Fruto, 8, 9, 17, 130, 162, 167, 180n164
Chontales, 85–7, 103n53, 115, 164, 171n17, 180n153
civilization. *See* progress
Conservative Party (Nicaragua), 47
Costa Rica, 1, 2, 5, 8–10, 15, 51, 54, 56n6, 60n51, 64n81, 70, 76, 80, 82, 87, 88, 96, 102n42, 103–4n55, 152, 160, 177n103, 180n161, 184, 185, 187, 194, 195n4, 199n44, 200n50, 205
Crabb, Henry, 33, 34, 41

Note: Page numbers followed by “n” refers to endnotes.

© The Author(s) 2016

A. Beer, *A Transnational Analysis of Representations of the US Filibusters in Nicaragua, 1855-1857*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-28352-4

Cuba, 6, 7, 11, 12, 26, 27, 33, 39, 41, 45, 55–6n3, 58–9n30, 59n32, 59n34, 61n59, 63n79, 65n88, 67n114, 83, 106n86, 140, 172n34, 173n39, 176n85, 181n166, 190, 202, 207n3
filibustering to, 26, 33, 55n3, 58n30, 173n39, 176n85, 207n3

D
Davis, Richard Harding, 63n73, 190, 191, 197n29, 198n30, 198n31, 198n32, 198n33
Defensor del Orden El, 16, 152, 153, 157, 164, 177n112, 178n116, 179n132, 180n156
Destino Manifiesto, 129, 131–3, 167, 204–5

E
Enlightenment, 4, 47–50, 73, 125, 130, 165

F
Federal Republic of Central America, 46
Ferrer, Fermín, 86, 103n51, 103n52, 115, 137, 171n18
filibuster campaign in Nicaragua (1855-1857)
aftermath in Nicaragua, 40, 169, 170, 183, 184
and 'Americanization' program, 132
Central American reactions to, 9, 94, 97, 98, 202, 206
comparisons to Conquest of the New World, 28, 31, 146, 156, 157
contemporary collective remembering in Nicaragua, 4–5, 185, 186
and land reform, 132, 169
Nicaraguan historiography of, 183–7, 196n14, 64n80
propaganda and press relations, 82–3
relations with US, 10, 34–5
testimonial literature about, 185, 188
timeline, 8–10
in US canon, 41, 189
in US popular culture, 190–2
and women, 50, 135, 152, 174n65
filibustering
attempts after US Civil War, 40, 41
connection to piracy, 28, 189
defenses of, 31–3
definition and terminology, 26, 28
historical antecedents, 26, 56n4
and newspapers, 3, 4, 12, 13, 19, 24n19, 44
participants, 40, 61–2n60, 94
reactions of US administration to, 33–7
as social practice, 27, 57n12
targets of, 27, 37
and US expansionism, 20, 31, 35
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper
correspondents in Nicaragua, 16, 90–1
history of, 15–16
visual content in, 90–1
futurity (concept), 154, 155, 159, 178n117

G
Gaceta de Guatemala, 73, 79, 96
Gaceta Oficial, 107n98, 183
gender. *See* masculinity
Gobineau, Arthur de, 133, 134, 140

Goicuría, Domingo, 93
Gold Rush. *See* California Gold Rush
Granada (Nicaragua), 8–10, 13, 17, 24n17, 24n24, 44, 47, 69, 70, 72, 74, 76, 79–81, 84–4n106, 89, 90, 92–5, 97, 102n35, 120, 123, 125, 131, 135, 139, 148, 152, 159–62, 165, 168, 175n79, 177n100, 177n105, 178n114, 179n136
Grand Tour, the, 48–9
Great Britain
  influence in Nicaragua, 46, 52
  relations with US, 10, 35, 77
Guerra Nacional (Nicaragua), 10, 184

H

Honduras, 1, 10, 12, 15, 22n11, 24n22, 40, 41, 69, 70, 73, 77, 82, 94, 101n28, 103–4n55, 160, 164, 190, 191

I

indigenous people, 48, 50, 91, 110, 116, 118, 125, 138, 165. *See also* progress
Irish immigration to US, 136

J

Jérez, Máximo, 2, 8

K

Kinney, Henry L[awrence], 83

L

León (Nicaragua), 8, 9, 16, 47, 64n83, 70–4, 78, 79, 82, 86, 97, 115, 123, 125, 131, 137, 168
liberalism (economic), 4, 12, 39, 127, 129, 165–70, 193, 204
Liberal Party (Nicaragua), 8–10, 14, 47, 96, 205
López, Narciso, 26, 29, 55n3, 58n19, 58n30, 103–4n55, 181n166

M

Malè, Joseph, 17, 59n31, 81, 101n27, 101n31, 101n33, 102n36, 102n37, 103n44, 103n45, 103n46, 103n47, 103n50, 105n80, 105–6n84, 106n87, 106n88, 106n89, 106n90, 106n93, 106n95, 106n96, 171n13, 173n45, 173n46, 175n83, 178n114, 178n115, 179n143, 179n149, 180n153, 180n157, 180n162
manhood. *See* masculinity
Manifest Destiny, 30, 33, 55n2, 56n4, 56n9, 58n22, 60n44, 60n48, 60n50, 62n66, 63n74, 63n76, 101n34, 103–4n55, 116, 126–33, 134, 138, 143, 154, 172n36, 172n37, 173n41, 173n42, 173n47, 174n61, 175n76, 175n77, 175n92, 176n91, 198n38, 199n43, 202, 204, 205
masculinity
  definition, 141
  and expansionism, 143–4, 151
  and filibustering, 4, 14, 144–7
  martial, 146, 147, 150, 151, 153
  restrained, 148, 149
  in US Civil War, 151
  William Walker as model for, 147–51
Mayorga, Mateo, 16, 164, 178n116, 179n132, 180n156
McManus, Jane. *See* Cazneau

modernity. *See* progress
Mora, Juan Rafael, 2, 9, 21, 183, 185

N
nature. *See* progress
Neutrality Act, 35
Neutrality Laws. *See* Neutrality Act
New Orleans Picayune, 13, 15, 79, 89, 91, 92
newspapers
in antebellum America, 11, 43–5
correspondents in Nicaragua, 89, 92, 202, 203
history in Nicaragua, 19, 72, 74–6
in Latin America, 12, 73–4, 77
and literacy, 43, 71
and practices of journalism, 75, 203
transnational movement of, 45, 70–1, 77–9
visual content in, 44, 90–1
New-York Daily Times, 13, 15, 31, 57n12, 58n29, 62n67, 81, 87, 89, 91, 92, 101n30, 102n36, 102n38, 104n57, 104n58, 104n59, 104n63, 104n65, 104n72, 104n75, 104n76, 127, 156, 160, 173n43, 179n131, 179n140
Nicaragua
collective remembering of filibuster campaign, 185–6
contemporary historical archives, 18–20, 187
and foreign mercenaries, 54
history after independence, 8–10, 45–51
as new Frontier, 20, 116–17, 124, 204
as new Mediterranean, 163–5
press after independence, 74–5
race relations in, 47–8, 50
Nicaragua Flag, The, 83
Nicaraguense, El
impact and importance, 14, 98, 202–3, 205
as official filibuster organ, 13–14, 87, 94, 202
print history, 17–18, 24n23
Spanish section, 17–18, 93–4, 97
staff of, 17, 88
transnational circulation, 45, 82, 202–3

O
O. Henry [William Sidney Porter], 1, 25, 26, 29, 55n1
O'Sullivan, John L[ouis], 33, 55, 126, 143, 154, 155, 173n39, 178n117, 178n121

P
Pacific Mail Steamship Company, 76
Panama Star and Herald, 76, 79, 81
Parte Oficial/Boletín de Noticias (Nicaragua), 16
patriarchy, 64n85, 66n104, 66n109, 67n111, 71, 99n4, 122, 141, 143. *See also* progress
in Nicaragua, 47
Paulding, Hiram, 40, 62n61
Pierce, Franklin, 10, 33
Porter, William Sidney. *See* O. Henry
Prescott, William Hickling, 146, 156, 163
progress
and degeneration, 124
and indigenous people, 50, 116
versus nature, 116
and patriarchy, 122
temporal concepts of, 155, 156, 159, 163–4

R
racism
in antebellum America, 11, 133–5
in filibuster campaign to Nicaragua, 137, 187
in Nicaraguan society, 49–51
Rivas, Patricio, 9, 14, 16, 169
Roatán (Honduras), 22n11

S
Salinas, Sebastián, 16, 73, 96, 100n15, 102n42, 106n94, 174n57, 180n155
Santamaría, Juan, 56n6, 64n81, 177n103, 180n161, 184, 195n4, 195n6, 195n9, 199–200n50, 199n44
Schlesinger, Louis, 87, 91, 103–4n55
slavery, 39, 40, 43, 65n88, 125, 161
Spain, 1, 29, 33, 40, 49, 51, 64n81, 66n96, 78, 155, 156, 178n124, 196n15
Spencer, Sylvanus, 10, 194
Spring of Nations [1848], 30, 49
Squier, Ephraim George, 38, 44, 70, 86, 88, 99n3, 110, 112, 113, 131, 173n51, 174n56, 188, 197n22
Stephens, John Lloyd, 44, 69, 71, 86, 99n1, 109, 110, 130, 164, 173n52
story papers, 15, 16, 24n20, 43–5, 91, 205

T
Telégrafo Septentrional, El, 16, 97
transisthmian canal
attempts prior to 1850s, 37, 130–1
and Cornelius Vanderbilt, 37, 79
Transit Route, 9, 10, 53, 98
travel literature
about Nicaragua, 109, 112
genre, 109
and imperialism, 110–12
Trujillo (Honduras), 1, 22n11, 40

U
US Civil War, 26, 40, 41, 62n61, 77
US expansionism
in Central America, 126–7
and natural rights, 128
on North American continent, 126
US-Mexican War, 14, 31, 36, 41, 58n27, 135, 139, 156

V
Vanderbilt, Cornelius, 2, 9, 10, 37–9, 51, 79, 107n99, 192, 194
Vijil, Augustín, 165–8

W
Walker, William
death in Honduras, 40, 189
as gray-eyed man, 90, 149
in literature and performing arts, 44, 189–92
as masculine role model, 147–52

Y
Young America [movement], 37, 139