MEXICO'S BREAK UP: MEXICO CITY'S MISCONCEPTIONS AND MISMANAGEMENT OF ITS PERIPEHERIES: CENTRAL AMERICA AND TEXAS, 1821-1836

by

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Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON
MAY 2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I cannot thank my committee enough. Dr. Sam Haynes, the committee chair, remained unflinchingly supportive from the very beginning. He took on this project in its infant stages and allowed it to change and evolve as necessary. His support and trust in me were unbelievable. Dr. David Narrett read every draft so carefully and responded with such detailed commentary. Dr. John Garrigus kept this project alive through his advice and guidance at a critical time in its development. The entire committee was indispensable to this thesis and I cannot thank them enough.

While working on this project, I relied on the support of so many people. The person who deserves the most gratitude is my wife, Mickey. She patiently supported me through all the research, all the writing, and all the editing that went into this thesis. I could not have done it without her.

I also extend my thanks to everyone who helped me in the massive research campaign this thesis required. The staff at the University of Texas at Arlington Library Special Collections deserves special thanks. Additionally, I received great assistance from the staffs at the Nettie Lee Benson Library and the Bancroft Library. Further, I thank Dr. Stephanie Cole for her patient guidance and referrals to research grants. Dr. Les Ridingin deserves thanks, as well, for granting me funding to travel to the Bancroft. Fellow students Michael Deliz and Robert Caldwell also put me on great research paths and were always around to discuss ideas.

April 17, 2013

ABSTRACT

MEXICO'S BREAK UP: THE INDEPENDENCES OF

CENTRAL AMERICA AND TEXAS

1821-1836

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The University of Texas at Arlington, 2013

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In 1822, Mexico's boundaries held the territories of what is now Central America and Texas. Just after independence from Spain, it seemed Mexico would emerge as a powerful nation to challenge the United States in North America due to Mexico's vast lands and mineral wealth. That did not transpire. Political struggle in Mexico City and challenges from its peripheries undermined Mexico's political and economic stability. Central Americans chose to detach from Mexico in 1823 due to ideological differences based on colonial traditions, differences in the ethnic makeup of the populations of Central America and the Mexican plateau, and a shift to federalist authority. Anglo-Americans in Texas proclaimed the separation of that territory in 1836 due to radical Anglo-American filibusters and the shift to centralized authority in Mexico City. Essentially, Mexican leaders mishandled their control of Mexico's peripheries based on misconceptions and confusion created by the evolving political paradigms throughout the region. Though different circumstances caused both separatist movements, analyzing both movements furthers the understanding of the changing relationship between Mexico City and its peripheries.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

After independence from Spain, Mexican leaders sought to unite a vast landed empire that included the modern-day territories of Central America and Texas. Mexico failed to hold those regions together under its leadership for several reasons. First, the peripheral populations of Central America and Texas had much different colonial experiences than those around Mexico City. Further, the peripheral populations did not share the same political development after Mexico's independence. Geography also created an obstacle to Mexico City political elites understanding its northern and southern peripheries. All of these factors and more separated the peripheral populations from Mexico City and impacted Mexico's territorial break up.[1]

Political elites in Mexico City had a different relationship with the Spanish colonial government than political elites in either the northern or southern peripheries during the late colonial era. Though Mexico, Central America, and Texas made up a large portion of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, Mexico City was the political center in Spanish North America. In the colonial system, leaders in Mexico City delegated power to political elites in Guatemala City who ruled over the region that became Central America. Mexico City also directly controlled the Eastern Interior Provinces, which included Texas. The population in Texas by the beginning of the nineteenth-century was no more than four thousand, however, and barely participated in the colonial era. Mexico City's power in New Spain gave it a closer relationship to Madrid than the

[1] There is a problem with terms when discussing territorial boundaries during this era. To clarify: in the colonial era, the Viceroyalty of New Spain included lands from modern-day Colorado to Costa Rica. The Audiencia of New Spain included most of the Mexican Plateau and the Audiencia of Guatemala included all of Central America and Chiapas. After independence from Spain in 1821, the First Mexican Empire under Iturbide consisted of basically the same territory as the Viceroyalty of New Spain. Central America broke away in 1823 and Texas broke away in 1836. For the sake of clarity, I often use “Central America” and “Texas” before they officially became the names of those territories.

peripheries. Thus, political changes and crises that erupted in Spain affected Mexico City and its surrounding area differently than the peripheries of Central America and Texas.

Policies and crises in Spain affected changes in all three territories. Events in Europe, like Napoleon's invasion of Spain in 1808 and the adoption of the Spanish Constitution of 1812, influenced the entirety of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, but had various effects regionally. Napoleon's invasion set off insurgency movements on and around the Mexican Plateau that lasted over a decade before Mexico gained its independence from Spain. Additionally, new power structures developed around localized regional centers. Both of these developments in Mexico during the late colonial era continued to influence politics in independent Mexico. Collaterally, enlightened constitutional ideas pervaded the Central American isthmus through the Constitution of 1812 and also impacted the trend toward regional power centers in Central America. This spurred regional unrest there during the late colonial era, but not a sustained violent movement for independence like in Mexico. The Mexican insurgent movement of the late colonial era drew Anglo-American adventurers to Texas. Anglo-American filibusters entered from the United States to fight royalist forces on the side of the Mexican insurgency. This sparked interest in the United States about the Texas territory. Even through all these changes created by crises in Spain, Mexico City remained the political center in New Spain.

After independence from Spain, Mexico City retained its position of power in the former Viceroyalty of New Spain. The new government, led by Iturbide, held prestige in the eyes of peripheral leaders for defeating the Spanish and declaring independence. Mexico's military success created the possibility for Central American leaders to declare their own independence from Spain. From that moment, leaders in both Mexico City and Guatemala City broached discussion of reuniting both territories under Mexico. Mexico City pushed very hard, and even used its military force to assure the union of Mexico and Central America. The different reactions and political developments during the late colonial era, however, created a gap

between both territories. That gap widened as both territories continued their independent political development.

Political turmoil in Mexico City affected Mexico's break up. Colonial traditions persisted in shaping politics after independence. The Mexican government retained former insurgents who fought for independence and former royalists who fought against insurgents. Both sides reached a compromise at independence through the Plan of Iguala, Mexico's independence document. That compromise dissolved after Iturbide declared himself Emperor of Mexico. Insurgents and royalists became liberals and conservatives who often embraced the opposing ideas of federalism and centralism, respectively. Meanwhile, regionalism spread through Central America. Some regions deplored the union with Mexico. One, San Salvador, violently revolted against the Mexican representative stationed in Guatemala City. Iturbide, dealing with political struggle in Mexico City, had no clear understanding of the reasons for such resistance in Central America. From the beginning of union, Mexican leaders had little idea the peculiarities of Central America. This situation worsened as both territories continued their political development. Eventually, Iturbide abdicated. Mexico City chose a republican government, and Central America voted to detach and forge its own independent government.

After Mexico lost Central America, it developed its own constitution. The Constitution of 1824 created a republican style government in what remained of Mexico. It also became the document through which Mexico City interacted with its northern periphery. The Spanish colonial population of Texas was very sparse and therefore limited imperial control of the region. The Constitution of 1824 not only encouraged settlement of the territory, but was the structure through which the immigrants interacted with their new government during the mid-to-late 1820s. When leaders in Mexico City dissolved the Constitution of 1824 in favor of a return to centralized hierarchical control, uprisings against the central government flared throughout Mexico's periphery, including Texas. Then, when Mexican leaders mounted a military assault on Anglo-Americans in Texas, it galvanized Anglos to unite against Mexico. Mexican leaders'

misconceptions about the Anglo-American population impacted the Texas movement to separate from Mexico.

Geography also played a key role in Mexican officials' misunderstanding of peripheral populations. The entire former colony of New Spain, of which Mexico, Central America, and Texas were a part, spanned from California in the north to Costa Rica in the south. Other than the sheer distance between Mexico City and the peripheral population centers, poor overland roads and rugged terrain defined the routes between cities. The time and expense that went into sending a message often exceeded the importance of communication. Geography isolated the peripheries from the center. That isolation allowed them to develop differently than the center. Misunderstandings based on this geographic isolation and lack of communication marked the relationship between Mexico City and its peripheries.

Interestingly, many of the same actors involved in Central America were also involved in Texas. Two Mexican officials, Vicente Filisola and Manuel Mier y Terán, featured prominently in trying to counter those territories' respective movements to break away from Mexico. Filisola became the primary Mexican official and leader of Central America during that territory's attachment to Mexico in 1822-1823. Filisola also commanded the Mexican armies in Texas prior to rebellion in 1835 and after Santa Anna's capture at San Jacinto. Terán was the first official sent to Central America after New Spain's independence from Spain. He worked in the borderland territory of Chiapas and convinced Chiapans to remain attached to Mexico even after the rest of Central America claimed independence. Terán also commanded troops in Texas prior to the rebellion there in 1835. He worked tirelessly to stem the tide of Anglo-American encroachment into Texas, which aggravated tensions between Anglo-Americans and Mexico City. Both of these Mexican officials make great examples of how Mexicans misunderstood the peripheral populations.

The contrast between Mexico's loss of Central America and its loss of Texas reveals significant aspects in the relationship between Mexico City and its peripheries. Central America

resisted following Mexico on its republican path in 1823 to forge its own constitutional government. Texas resisted Mexico's return to central authority in 1835. In both cases, the changes of regimes in Mexico City created perceptions of weakness. That perceived weakness emanated from the capitol in both 1823 and 1835 and empowered separatist radicals in both Central America and Texas to challenge Mexico for independence. Central America resisted joining Mexico in a federalized republic. Texas resisted Mexico's turn away from that federalized republic. Looking at the Mexico's territorial break up illuminates the different experiences of the peripheries and their connections with Mexico City.

Generally, historians have not studied the process of rule of Mexican elites over Central America and Texas. Only a few historians have previously offered connections between the two regions' separation from Mexico. Nettie Lee Benson and David Weber connected the two events together. Benson, in her work with Charles R. Berry, "The Central American Delegation to the First Constituent Congress of Mexico, 1822-1823," discusses the interactions between that delegation and delegates from the Eastern Interior Provinces, of which Texas was a part.[2] Benson also points out in her work, "Texas as Viewed from Mexico, 1820-1834," that, "...internal and external events relating to the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the nation continued to condition the view of Texas and its population."[3] The detachment of Central America clearly informed Mexicans of the precariousness of maintaining that territorial integrity. Further, Weber makes it clear that placing Texas within the larger perspective of the Mexican experience creates a considerable advantage for the historian. Those advantages include drawing out patterns and highlighting the similarities and differences between regions.[4]

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[2] Nettie Lee Benson & Charles R. Berry, "The Central American Delegation to the First Constituent Congress of Mexico, 1822-1823", in *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 49, no.4 (November 1969), p. 685.

[3] Nettie Lee Benson, "Texas as Viewed from Mexico, 1820-1834", in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 90, no. 3, (January 1987), p. 220.

[4] David J. Weber, *The Mexican Frontier, 1821-1846, The American Southwest under Mexico*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982) p. xviii.

The preeminent historians of the chaotic era of the independence of New Spain from 1821-1836 focus either on specific regions or regimes. Historians generally focus on how Mexico impacted Central America, rarely the reverse. Historians of Central America often fall into the trap of focusing on the regions that became independent nations from the Central American Republic. Ralph Lee Woodward is notable for avoiding that trap by placing the focus on Guatemala City. From that political center, Woodward is able to describe the impact of the decisions of the ruling classes on the entire region.[5] Mario Rodríguez's work *The Cádiz Experiment in Central America*, gives serious consideration to the Central American attachment to Mexico. He describes the various social, economic, and political impact Mexico had on Central America.[6] For all the valuable insights of Rodríguez and Woodward, we will need to understand more fully Central America's political relationship with Mexico during the era of Latin American independence.

Modern Mexican historians often fail to consider the larger political and geographic contexts of the era. Timothy Anna's two excellent histories, *The Mexican Empire of Iturbide* and *Forging Mexico*, make sense of the chaos that defined the First Mexican Empire and the First Mexican Republic. Anna's focus on cutting through the political confusion in Mexico City during the Central American connection inhibits his discussion on the influence Central America had on politics in Mexico City. He glosses over the attachment, but makes it clear that the union between the two regions was important because it clearly demonstrated the connection of the entire Mesoamerican region.[7] Jaime E. Rodríguez O. comes closer than most modern historians to explaining the significance of the entire landmass of the former colony of New

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[5] Ralph Lee Woodward Jr., *Central America, A Nation Divided,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 85-100. & Ralph Lee Wodward Jr., "Economic and Social Origins of the Guatemalan Political Parties (1773-1823)", in *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 45, no. 4, (November 1965), pp. 544-566.

[6] Mario Rodriguez, *The Cádiz Experiment in Central America, 1808-1826*, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978), pp. 147-187.

[7] Timothy Anna, *The Mexican Empire of Iturbide*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), pp. 43-49. & Timothy Anna, *Forging Mexico, 1821-1835*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), pp. 116-121.

Spain being connected under one central political authority. He points out that periodization and regionalization mar the history of independence of New Spain.[8] Rodríguez O. pushes other historians to consider the different regional perspectives of the era in order to better understand the seemingly chaotic events.

Historians of Texas and the Texas Revolution tend to focus on the Anglo perspective and rarely, if ever, consider comparing the Texas Revolution to another Latin American movement for independence. Texas historians seldom consider the context or the long history in which the rebellion was a part. Paul D. Lack, in his valuable work, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience*, places the territory, correctly, within the Mexican sphere, but not before 1824. He also attempts to include the various social groups in Texas at the time, Tejanos and Africans, but the focus is narrow and limited north of the Rio Grande.[9] The one outstanding work that considers the larger period and region is Edward Miller's *New Orleans and the Texas Revolution*. His book considers the Texas Revolution in the context of the struggle between United States land speculators and Mexico.[10] Miller's is especially revealing about the relationship between US economic interests and Mexican political elites.

Contemporary Mexican historians proved to have the best awareness of the long history of events and the regional context in Mexico. Lucas Alamán, a conservative centralist, wrote his history of Mexico about the era from 1808 through 1850. This five volume work describes the major events from the beginning of the independence movements through the U.S. - Mexican War. Alamán lived through and participated in most of the events he described. He does not specifically connect the independence of Central America and Texas, but he does

[8] Jaime E. Rodríguez O., *Mexico in the Age of Democratic Revolutions, 1750-1850*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), p. 13.
[9] Paul D. Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1992).
[10] Edward L. Miller, *New Orleans and the Texas Revolution*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004).

place both regions in the same context.[11] Lorenzo de Zavala, a liberal federalist, wrote his history of the independence era up to his expulsion from Mexico in 1830. He, like Alamán, considered the effects of the colonial era on independence and the subsequent major events in Mexican politics. Zavala also participated in many of those events and created his history with a clear liberal bias.[12] These two histories are unique because of the authors' active participation and their abilities to connect the entire era together.

This work aims to synthesize the vast bodies of secondary sources that focus on the regionalized and periodized histories of Mexico, Central America, and Texas. It also incorporates relevant primary source materials, both archival and published documents. This thesis concludes that lingering effects from the colonial era created political instability in Mexico City. That instability created misconceptions among Mexican political elites about Mexico's peripheries. Those misconceptions, and actions based on misconceptions, galvanized separatist movements in both Central America and Texas. Those movements differed greatly, though, largely because of the populations that inhabited both peripheries. Heavy Spanish influence with a large native population defined the Central American isthmus. Conversely, Anglo-American immigrants dominated the population of the Texas territory. These populations' different pre-independence experiences and separate political development after Spanish independence confused Mexican political elites and also impacted those elites' mishandling of the peripheries.

The first chapter of this thesis discusses the important colonial policies and processes that continued to influence ideas after independence. Chapter two discusses the importance of the annexation of Central America on Mexico. It also describes how the detachment of Central America from Mexico affected both Mexico City and Guatemala City. Further, chapter two elaborates on how Mexico City bungled the union of the two territories. Chapter three describes

[11] Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Méjico desde los Primeros Movimientos que Preparon su Independencia en el Año de 1808 hasta la Epoca Presente*, vols. I-V, (Mexico: Imprenta J. M. Lara, 1852).
[12] Lorenzo de Zavala, *Ensayo Historico de las Revoluciones de Megico desde 1808-1830*, (Mexico: M. N. de la Vega, 1845).

the rising tensions between federalists and centralists in Mexico City. It focuses on how the struggle between federalism and centralism affected Mexico's domestic politics as well as Mexico's relationship with international powers, such as Spain, Britain, and the United States. It goes on to describe the rise of radical separatist Anglo-Americans in Texas in the context of Mexico's changing foreign and domestic politics.

Politics in the former colony of New Spain evolved rapidly after independence. In the years between Central American union with Mexico and Texas independence, six different men held executive power in Mexico City. All six had different ideas about Mexico City's relationship with its northern and southern peripheries. None of them had a clear grasp of the demographic, geographic, economic, and ideological differences that separated Mexico, Central America, and Texas. Mexican leaders' failure to recognize those differences impacted the peripheries' movements toward independence. Many of those differences developed during the colonial era and lingered in the years after independence.

CHAPTER TWO

RESIDUAL EFFECTS OF SPANISH RULE, 1786-1821

2.1 Introduction

Colonial traditions and institutions influenced political elites' concepts of what the political makeup and geographic boundaries of independent Mexico would be. These traditions and institutions had various influences on Mexican leaders. The colonial experience created competing concepts of the geographic and political makeup of independent Mexico. Two of the more dominant ideas that influenced these boundaries that came from the late Spanish colonial era were a strong federalist style of government with greater power bestowed on provincial leaders on one side, and a strong centralized government that ruled the vast expanse of the former Viceroyalty of New Spain on the other. These political ideas affected Mexico long after independence from Spain.

Perceptions and concepts of the political and geographic makeup of an independent Mexico were based on colonial conventions. At the time of Mexican independence, elites could not agree on a fixed political boundary for the new nation. The political elites also had no clear consensus on the form of government that should be implemented. This was due to colonial structural changes from Spain and also crises that erupted in Europe. These changes and crises included the Ordinance of Intendants of 1786, Napoleon's invasion in 1808, and the Constitution of Cádiz in 1812. Further, the suspension of the Constitution of 1812 in 1814 and its reinstatement in 1820 created more confusion about the best path after independence because of the shifts in power centers from the regional to the central authorities and back

again. Thus, from the beginning of the independence movements in New Spain, various notions existed of how a newly independent State, or States, would be organized.

2.2 Administrative Divisions

Perceptions of centers of power and political boundaries in New Spain differed based on the perspective of a given person. This was primarily due to the fact that the colony as a whole, known as the Viceroyalty of New Spain, was broken into three large Audiencias, or kingdoms, and then into smaller intendancies after the Ordinance of Intendants in 1786. This ordinance divided the colony into twelve political intendancies. The chief magistrate in Mexico City, the viceroy, theoretically remained the top decision maker in the colony, but the superintendents held an abundance of power. These powers included justice, finance, and war in their respective intendant boundaries.[1] Additionally, the three larger Audiencias, the Audiencia of New Spain, the Audiencia of Guadalajara, and the Audiencia of Guatemala, were run by powerful captain-generals that had control of most decision making powers in their territory. So, if one chose to ignore the smaller political boundaries of the intendants, namely those political elites who favored centralized control, New Spain included everything from Costa Rica in the south to California in the north. The intendancies, however, created conceptions for many creole elites of localized provincial powers that were unilateral from Mexico City and, further, Spain. For many creole elites, the regional political boundary seemed the best administrative division.

The earliest and most crude, administrative division of the Viceroyalty of New Spain occurred just after the Spanish conquest of the area in the early sixteenth century. By the end of that century, the Viceroyalty of New Spain was broken into three administrative kingdoms, known as Audiencias. At that point, the political heirarchy in the colony consisted of the King of

[1]William Spence Robertson, *History of the Latin-American Nations*, (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1922), pp. 121-122.

Spain at the top, the viceroy as the royal surrogate of New Spain under the monarch, and the captain-general of the Audiencia under the viceroy. It is generally agreed, however, that the captain-generals had an abundance of power because the viceroy delegated a great deal of authority to the captain-generals of the Audiencias.[2] This delegation of power likely happened because of the immense territory of the entire Viceroyalty of New Spain made centralized administration practically impossible.

The delegation of power to the three administrative Audiencias created political power centers within those kingdoms. Mexico City became the central authority for both the Audiencia and Viceroyalty of New Spain. Guadalajara and Guatemala City became the regional power centers of their respective Audiencias. For all intents and purposes, the Audiencias ruled themselves unilaterally from Mexico City and if the viceroy attempted to override the captain-general of an Audiencia, he came up against stiff resistance unless the viceroy had the full backing of the monarch. Thus, most issues were left to the captain-generals unless considered necessary for the betterment of the empire.[3]

The Audiencias were the first regional administrative units that created a sense of regional autonomy. They were very large, and power was concentrated in the hands of very few individuals. The Ordinance of Intendants of 1786 for New Spain further divided the colony into smaller administrative districts and expanded regional power.

The idea of creating intendancies began in Spain in the early eighteenth century during the reforms initiated by the Bourbons. The intendant controlled and oversaw the finances of the intendancy to prevent financial corruption. The intendant's job was to collect taxes and keep treasury records in order to add an additional check on municipal leaders from enriching

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[2] James Lang, *Conquest and Commerce, Spain and England in the* Americas, (New York: Academic Press, 1975), p. 31.

[3] Lillian Estelle Fisher, *Viceregal Administration in the Spanish-American Colonies*, (Berkeley: University of California Publications in History, 1926), pp. 131-173.

themselves off the native tributes. The intendant also relieved the viceroy of his financial duties to give the central executive more flexibility as the leader of the colony. These responsibilities of the intendant were established because by the mid-eighteenth century, it was clear to leaders in Spain that checks needed to made on the captain-generals of the Audiencias of New Spain. Additionally, the responsibilities of the viceroy and captain-generals had become overwhelming.

The intendant system began in the Spanish colony of Cuba in 1764. Four years later, in 1768, José de Gálvez, a member of the Council of the Indies, wrote and published a treatise that explained the necessity for expanding the system from Cuba to New Spain. He claimed, "...the captain-generals of Spanish America had, for two centuries, been a point of decadence and brought total ruin."[4] He went on to explain that the viceroy had too many responsibilities and could not keep up with the corruption that plagued that colony. Gálvez also explained that the system that was in place in 1768 was disastrous to the native population. "The alcaldes regularly enrich themselves through tribute at the cost of the poor and native population."[5] For Gálvez, New Spain needed the intendant system. He believed it would be beneficial to all social groups in the colony, from the viceroy to the natives.

The Ordinance of Intendants for New Spain was promulgated in 1786. This piece of legislation was a turning point for the structure of government in the colony. By 1790, Spain divided the Viceroyalty into sixteen intendacies.[6] The Ordinance of Intendants distributed responsibility away from the viceroy, who was overworked and unable to effectively govern the colony.[7] The majority of responsibilities transferred to the intendants were financial in character; however, the intendants had a say in both justice and war. They collected the revenues within

[4] Josè de Gálvez, "Intendencias. Informe y plan de intendencias ... Mexico y Enero 15 de 1768" , BANC MSS M-M 1848, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, p.2.
[5] Ibid, p. 6.
[6] There were twelve combined in the Audiencias of New Spain and Guadalajara. There were four created in the Audiencia of Guatemala.
[7] Lillian Estelle Fisher, "The Intendant System in Spanish America", in *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 8 no.1, (February 1928), p.6.

their respective boundaries and reported those amounts to the treasury. Intendants also distributed the salaries and supplies of the Spanish troops stationed within their intendancy.[8] Essentially, the intendants were regional accountants. The financial power they wielded, though, through the collection and distribution of funds, limited the power of the viceroy and captain-generals and spread it throughout the colony on a regional level. Intendants answered directly to the viceroy, which bypassed the captain-generals adding an additional check on their powers.

The creation of the intendant system subdivided the Audiencias into smaller administrative bodies. This system created new perceptions among regional political elites of administrative and geographic boundaries within the Viceroyalty of New Spain that had previously not existed. These systems informed the political and military figures who led Mexico after independence in 1821. Within that group of leaders after independence, there were those who believed in a strong centralized government and those who believed power should be distributed throughout the regions. The two sides struggled to assert themselves for decades after independence.

The intendant system was a part of the Bourbon reforms. These reforms began after the Bourbon family dynasty replaced the Hapsburgs in Madrid. Many of these reforms meant to streamline and centralize rule in the Spanish-American colonies. The Bourbons created the intendants with centralization in mind. It had the opposite effect, however. The intendant reforms gave new powers to regional leaders and even reinvigorated regionalism throughout New Spain.[9] The intendant system influenced the creation of the binary politics of centralism and regionalism.

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[8] Ibid, p. 11

[9] Richard Graham, *Independence in Latin America, A Comparative Approach*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), p. 12.

2.3 Crisis in Spain

The French invasion of Spain in 1808 marked a major turning point for political development in all of the Spanish American colonies. This was especially true for Spanish North America. The collapse of the monarchy in Europe initiated three key political shifts in New Spain. First, it created pushes for greater autonomy from the Peninsula. This pitted American-born Hispanics against Spaniards residing in New Spain in an open ideological rivalry. It also spurred the removal of a viceroy, which demonstrated that the colony could remove a viceroy, the central figure of government, with little repercussion from the metropole. Finally, a movement developed to gain recognition from the interim Spanish government that the colony of New Spain was a political equal to the Peninsula. Localized elections for American representation in the interim Spanish junta, best defined as an administrative council, opened more regional political power to local elites. These shifts had key effects on the territorial and political concepts of what became independent Mexico.

Creoles and peninsulares had different reactions as to how to handle the collapse of the monarchy in Spain. The American-born elites tended to believe that the colony should have autonomous rule after the French removed the Spanish king. Traditional Spanish political theory explained that if an event compromised the king, sovereign government reverted to the people.[10] Creoles argued that government in New Spain should revert to the ayuntamientos, which were municipal councils usually dominated by American born politicians. Many of the Spaniards in New Spain, not surprisingly, resisted movements toward colonial autonomy and preferred to wait out the French occupation of the Peninsula in hopes that the monarchy would

[10]Jaime E. Rodriguez O. "New Spain and the 1808 Crisis of the Spanish Monarchy", in *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 24 no. 2, (Summer 2008) pp. 246 & 252.

be restored. They based this plan on the resistance movements developing throughout Spain.[11] They believed that the *Real Acuerdo* (the royal council) of New Spain, almost entirely made up of peninsulares, was best able to guide the colony through the crisis. Though there were proponents and dissenters on both sides of this developing political dichotomy, the line was cut relatively clearly between American-born autonomists on one side and Spanish centralists on the other.

This political dichotomy had lasting effects on the remaining years of the colonial era and at least the first two decades of Mexican independence. The autonomist group developed radical factions that pushed for independence and rose up in insurgency against the colonial regime. The centralists maintained that the best form of rule for New Spain came from a central monarch and that idea also persisted after independence. This pre-independence political strife evolved over time into the federalist and centralist struggle that plagued Mexican politics for decades and greatly influenced the geopolitical makeup of Mexico.

The second important effect of the 1808 crisis in Spain was the removal of a viceroy through extra-legal means. José de Iturrigaray held the position of viceroy at the time of the crisis in Spain. He actually supported the ayuntamientos in their push for colonial autonomy. His motives for this support were both altruistic and personal. He did believe in the traditional Spanish political concept of rule by the people in the absence of the monarch. Iturrigaray also understood that autonomous rule of the colony, with the viceroy at the head, made him an equal to the sovereign junta of Spain. This support of autonomy of New Spain drew the ire of the *Real Acuerdo*. Members of that council conspired for Iturrigaray's removal. Council members and three hundred supporters arrested the viceroy for treason, based on the idea that Iturrigaray

[11]Richard Herr, "Flow and Ebb, 1700-1833", in *Spain, A History*, ed. Raymond Carr, (New York, Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 195-196.

supported full independence of New Spain rather than just marginal political autonomy. His captors transferred him back to Spain for trial by the Central Junta in Seville.[12]

The removal of Iturrigaray was another political turning point in Mexico City. It established that, given enough followers, a head of state could be removed from power by the use of force outside the bureaucratic structure. Meaning, one small group could remove a political executive without consulting the governing body. This would also be an issue that would plague independent Mexico. The steady rotation of leadership in Mexico City caused constant political instability after independence.

Local elections opened in New Spain to place a representative from the colony in the Central Junta in Spain. It remains a watershed event in the relationship between Spain and its colony. These elections took place in 1809 and involved more than two hundred nominees considered by ayuntamientos throughout New Spain. Thousands of Spanish Americans participated in the electoral process. The ayuntamientos elected the candidate from Mexico City, Miguel Lardizábal y Uribe, as their representative to the Central Junta. He maintained a visible status in the Junta throughout 1809 until the Spanish Cortes was reconvened in mid-1810.[13]

This first electoral process in New Spain of 1809 was vitally important to the geopolitics in the colony and then in Mexico after independence. The elections allowed the ayuntamientos to flex their strength, even after the removal of Iturrigary, who had been sympathetic to regional power. Creoles dominated these local municipal councils and this election signified the importance of municipal governments to the general populations. Regional power and politics became more clearly established as local populations became more closely tied to their ayuntamiento. This was a turning point toward ideas of representative government and

[12] Rodriguez O., "New Spain and the 1808 Crisis", pp. 277-285.
[13] Nettie Lee Benson, "The Election of 1809: Transforming Political Culture in New Spain", in *Mexican Studies/ Estudios Mexicanos* 20 no. 1, (Winter 2004), pp. 18-19.

decision-making made at the local level, rather than from the center. At this point, many local creole elites began to identify politics with their regional geographic area rather than the greater Viceroyalty or, later, nation-state of Mexico.

All three of these consequences of Napoleon's invasion of Spain in 1808: the rising tensions between American born and Spanish born people, the removal of a viceroy, and the spread of local elections laid the foundations for internal political struggles after independence. In fact, it has been argued that this European crisis, which Napoleon caused, was the beginning of Mexican independence from Spain. This was because Hidalgo's rebellion in 1810 was organized around the idea that Spanish royalist officials could not govern New Spain effectively with the monarchy under French control. Regardless, these effects specifically influenced Manuel Mier y Terán and Vicente Filisola in their careers prior to and after independence of Mexico. They became a part of the Mexican struggle of creoles against peninsulares and, later, of centralists against federalists. This would, in turn, affect the independence movements of both Central America and Texas from Mexico as the trend toward concepts of regional sovereignty controlled by American-born leaders gained popularity.

2.4 The Constitution of 1812

The continuation of the movement toward greater regional political power gained momentum after the Constitution of 1812. It opened the ayuntamientos to popular elections.[14] Generally, this gave the people who could vote that lived in a respective municipality a clear relationship to their government and legitimized regional power. Additionally, the American-born elite had a means to gain respected political positions without support of Spanish bureaucrats. Further, the dissemination of the Constitution of 1812 throughout the colony of New Spain greatly expanded awareness and participation of citizens in their local politics and cemented the

[14]Art. 312, "Constitución Política de la Monarquía Espaňola Promulgada en Cádiz el 19 de Marzo de 1812", p. 39, Archivo de la Nacion México, www.agn.gob.mx.

idea that the colony was equal to the Peninsula in the Empire. These three important factors, popular elections in the ayuntamientos, American-born access to political power, and the massive public awareness and participation in the constitutional processes, solidified regional political boundaries and greatly influenced in the era of independence.

First, popular elections for representatives in the ayuntamientos marked an important turning point for regional political strength in the greater Viceroyalty of New Spain. Citizens living in a given municipality during the application of this policy were explicitly tied to their local government. People no longer had to look to the captain-general of the Audiencia or the viceroy as the executive representative of the monarch. The powers of maintaining local peace, health, and education transferred to the ayuntamiento.[15] These responsibilities were arguably the most important to the everyday life of the citizens of a municipality. Ayuntamientos changed from being largely ceremonial bodies to prestigious and active governments.

Alongside the expansion of power and responsibilities of the ayuntamientos grew the prospect of representation of colonials in the Spanish Cortes. Two of the most vocal and influential American representative in the Cortes came from the regions that are the focus of this study. Antonio Larrazábal of Guatemala and José Miguel Ramos Arizpe from the Eastern Interior Provinces both supported the liberal reforms of the Constitution of 1812 and pushed to raise New Spain closer to political equality with the Peninsula.[16] In addition to their work on behalf of all of New Spain, they also worked for their respective constituencies. Larrazábal lobbied for Spanish support to keep the British out of Belize and to reform the tobacco monopoly in the Audiencia of Guatemala in order to spur competition and economic growth.[17] Arizpe championed the small municipalities with policies of expanded local government, which

[15] Art. 321, "Constitución Política de la Monarquía Española 1812", p. 40.
[16] Mario Rodriguez, *The Cádiz Experiment in Central America, 1808-1826*, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978), pp. 99-100.
[17] Ibid, 79 & 89.

made sense in Coahuila y Texas where the population was sparse and far removed from Mexico City.[18] Larrazábal and Arizpe exemplify the creole challenge to Spanish traditional authority and the importance of regional issues and power.

Thirdly, the speed and coverage of the contents of the Constitution of 1812 quickened the pace of the movement toward regional power and colonial equality with the metropole. The residents of the provinces of New Spain regularly received broadsides and pamphlets from Cádiz with information about the decisions being made at the Cortes.[19] Literate citizens throughout the colony kept up to date with the major events in the Peninsula and discussed them with their peers and formed localized ideas about what they meant. This diffusion of news and ideas stimulated participation in local elections and regional government.[20]

Insurgency movements for complete independence from Spain ran parallel with the movements toward regional authority. José María Morelos led the most prominent insurgency group. He fought for the independence of Mexico for two years and even succeeded at convening a small insurgent congress that drafted a liberal constitution in 1814 in the name of an independent Mexico.[21]

The insurgent movements for Mexican independence from Spain excited the interest of Anglo-Americans in the United States. Adventurers and filibusters saw the removal of the Spanish as a profitable outcome. The land and ore potential of northern New Spain, alongside the prospect of glory, drew Anglo filibusters to the insurgent movement. Though Anglo-American filibusters were crushed by royalist forces in 1813, the insurgent and filibuster

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[18] Roger L. Cuniff, "Mexican Municipal Electoral Reform", in *Mexico and the Spanish Cortes, 1810-1822*, ed. Nettie Lee Benson, (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1966) pp. 68-69.

[19] Jamie E. Rodríguez O., *"Rey, Religión, Yndependencia, y Unión": el processo político de la Independencia de Guadalajara*, (Mexico, Instituto Mora, 2003) p. 20.

[20] IvanaFrasquet, "Cádiz en America: Liberalismo y Constitución*,"* in *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 20 no. 1, (Winter 2004), *pp*. 28-29.

[21] Richard Graham, *Independence in Latin America, A Comparative Approach*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994) pp. 100-102.

movements in the Texas territory stirred attention from Anglos to what would become northern Mexico.[22]

The traditional rulers in New Spain, namely the viceroy and captain-generals, hoped the application of the Constitution of 1812 in the colony would prevent insurgent activities from spreading from the localized insurgent hotspots in Oaxaca, Guanajuato, and Michoacán.[23] Application of the constitution depended on local leaders. This meant each individual region interpreted and applied the constitution differently. Not surprisingly, the constitution stimulated insurgent activity rather than curbing it because ayuntamientos in regions of concentrated insurgency supported the independence groups. Though the constitution was meant to establish uniform law throughout the empire, it furthered regional peculiarities that perpetuated the movement for independence.

The trend toward regional power, political equality, and insurgency for New Spanish independence continued after the promulgation of Constitution of 1812 through 1814. Even the insurgency itself became a highly regionalized phenomenon underscoring the complexities of Mexican society. In 1814, though, Ferdinand VII retook the throne and he abolished the Spanish constitution. This created an era of central consolidation and changes in the trend of regionalization.[24]

2.5 Suspension of the Constitution of 1812

In 1814, the trend toward regional power stalled as did the momentum toward independence. Ferdinand VII returned as the monarch in Spain and he dissolved the Constitution of 1812. Central authorities regained power in the Spanish Empire and the

[22] David Narrett, "Geopolitics and Intrigue: James Wilkinson, the Spanish Borderlands, and Mexican Independence," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 1, (January 2012), pp. 116, 129, 132, 137.
[23] Roger L. Cuniff, "Mexican Municipal Electoral Reform", p. 70.
[24] Christon I. Archer, "Insurrection-Reaction-Revolution-Fragmentation: Reconstructing the Choreography of Meltdown in New Spain during the Independence Era," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 10, no. 1, (Winter 1994), p. 67.

captain-generals of the Audiencias quelled the rise in power of the various ayuntamientos. Félix María Calleja del Rey in New Spain and José de Bustamante in Guatemala established themselves as strong central leaders in their respective Audiencias. These men consolidated their authority and often used heavy handed tactics to counter regional insurrections. Regardless, many contemporaries viewed the years between 1814-1820 as one of stability, because centralization weakened the insurgency movements against Spanish leadership. This led military and royalist elites in Mexico to draw a relationship between strong central authority and stability.

The restoration of the central monarch in Spain stemmed the rising tide of regionalization in Spanish North America. In both Spain and New Spain, liberals and conservatives, Spaniards and creoles, generally the entire political elite, welcomed the return of the king to the throne.[25] The end of French occupation in Spain elicited broad political support. This massive support from the political elite hindered the progress of pro-constitutionalists and the insurgent groups. The restoration of the monarch in Madrid and the dissolution of the constitution meant the abrogation of the ayuntamientos and the restoration of the power of the captain-generals in New Spain.[26] Insurgent guerrilla fighting continued in New Spain, but the movement's success from 1812-1814 stalled and was nearly eliminated by a united and more centralized Viceroyalty.

Félix María Calleja personified the return to centralized authority in New Spain. Calleja became the viceroy of New Spain after Ferdinand VII regained the Spanish throne. Calleja had been in New Spain battling insurgents since Hidalgo's rebellion in 1810 and sought to crush the independence movement while viceroy. He showed little mercy to those arrested and executed many accused insurgents for fighting for independence. Calleja also stirred the royalist forces

[25] Herr, "Flow and Ebb", p. 200.
[26] Timothy Anna, "The Independence of Mexico and Central America", in *The Cambridge History of Latin America* III, ed Leslie Bethell, (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1986) p. 77.

to be more thorough in seeking and destroying insurgent hotspots. He was an absolutist who sought to restore the ancien regime and centralized control in Spanish North America.

Calleja made examples out of anyone captured and convicted of insurgent activities against the Spanish metropolis. The case of Ignacio Adalid in 1814-1815 exemplifies Calleja's policy toward suspected insurgents. Adalid had been a member of the Guadalupe branch of the Morelos insurgency. Spanish forces captured Adalid in 1813. He made a plea of innocence and begged Calleja for pardon. That pardon was resoundingly denied.[27] Further, Calleja used this trial to warn the thousands in New Spain who still supported the cause for independence that they would be pursued by the legitimate Spanish government in New Spain.[28] The courts in Mexico City brought a three volume case against Adalid and found him guilty of treason and executed him. This trial represents just one of many public demonstrations that Calleja intended to crush the rebellion in New Spain.

As the first absolutist viceroy after the dissolution of the Constitution of 1812, Calleja sought to destroy the insurgent movements in the hope of reconnecting the interests of native Spaniards and creoles. He successfully destroyed the base of the independence insurgent movement by having Morelos captured and executed in 185. The execution of Morelos marked a clear shift in the organized resistance. After Morelos's execution, Manuel Mier y Terán, an officer of the the insurgency movement, dissolved the movement's supreme congress, which essentially destroyed any cohesive organization for independence.[29] Other insurgent leaders, such as Vicente Guerrero and Guadalupe Victoria, fled to more remote regions and harassed

[27] Testimonio de la causa de infidencia formada contra Ignacio Adalid y socios : Mexico, 1813-1815, BANC MSS M-M 1, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, p. 19.
[28] Ibid, p. 29.
[29] Virginia Guedea, "The Process of Mexican Independence", in *The American Historical Review* 105, no. 1, (February 2000), p. 127.

the royalist army through guerrilla attacks. Royalist military leaders dismissed those attacks as mere banditry and consolidated their hold on municipal centers.[30]

Calleja pursued his ultimate goal of reforming the politics and economics of New Spain by redistributing authority to American-born royalist military commanders throughout New Spain. He did this in the hope of pacifying the creole political elites.[31] The Constitution of 1812 had opened access to political power to a broader group of the creole elite and Cajella sought to appease this potentially powerful section of New Spanish society. Spanish-born elites balked at Calleja's plan to redistribute power. The viceroy found that compromise was difficult and, "...egoism blinds them (Spaniards) to their true interests."[32] For Calleja, the stubbornness of peninsulares to distribute more power to the creole elite irreparably divided the two sides.

At the same time Calleja was working to crush the rebellion and unite Spaniards and creoles in the Audiencia of New Spain, José de Bustamante pursued a similar process in the Audiencia of Guatemala with the full backing of viceroy Calleja. Though there was no organized and violent uprising in Guatemala, there was a large pocket of liberal creole resistance to the restoration of central authority. Under the Constitution of 1812, the Spanish American merchant class had experienced a boom in trade and political authority and challenged the traditional colonial structure. Additionally, like the rest of the Viceroyalty, ayuntamientos throughout Guatemala realized local political power through the constitution and were reluctant to return to the absolutist control of the captain-general.

Bustamante loathed the power of the Guatemalan merchant class and sought to limit it in order to restore the colonial balance of power between Spaniards and American-born. He thought the creole merchant oligarchy to be the most dangerous group to the pre-1808 status

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[30] Archer, "Reconstructing the Choreography of Meltdown", p. 68.
[31] Christon I. Archer, "The Army of New Spain and the Wars for Independence, 1790-1821", *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 61, no. 4, (November 1981) p. 712.
[32] Ibid, p. 711.

quo that Bustamante wanted to reestablish.[33] Bustamante challenged the Aycinena clan, which was the most illustrious group in the creole merchant class. The Aycinenas had a large stake in the indigo market and had found it very lucrative, so much so, that in 1783 the family head was given the title of marquis, a sign of nobility in Spain. To their benefit, the Aycinenas supported the Cádiz Constitution of 1812 and found political power in the Guatemala City ayuntamiento. Bustamante seriously challenged the Aycinenas political power after the restoration of Ferdinand VII. He refused to allow the Aycinenas to hold meaningful political office and filed suit against them to pay exorbitant back taxes.[34] Until 1818, Bustamante successfully limited the authority of the merchant oligarchy and restored an absolutist regime in Guatemala City.

Bustamante had other challenges than the rising merchant class in Guatemala City. He also had to contend with growing regional sentiments throughout the Audiencia. Like the rest of New Spain, Guatemala was effected by the Ordinance of Intendants which created significant political boundaries. Arguably, these political boundaries were more defined in the Audiencia of Guatemala than New Spain or Guadalajara. The geography of Central America limited communication and interaction among the intendancies. The terrain, weather, and lack of roads all contributed to isolating the people and political leadership in each intendancy. This gave the political elite in the intendancies of the Audiencia of Guatemala even more independent decision making authority than those in the Audiencias of New Spain or Guadalajara. The individual intendancies also developed their own interpretations and executions of the Constitution of 1812, furthering regional peculiarities. Because of the intendancies' isolated political development, Bustamante faced serious regional challenges to his absolutist authority.

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[33] Timothy Hawkins, *José de Bustamante and Central American Independence, Colonial Administration in an Age of Imperial Crisis*, (Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 2004), p. 181.

[34] Ralph Lee Woodward Jr, *Central America, A Nation Divided*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1985) p. 85.

San Salvador represented the radical liberal population of the Audiencia of Guatemala. Two factors created the liberal atmosphere in San Salvador. First, San Salvador had one of highest ladino populations in the Audiencia of Guatemala.[35] Ladinos, who were ethnically mixed Spanish and native people but below creoles on the social ladder, tended toward liberal ideas of egalitarianism because of their social station. Additionally, San Salvador contained a large concentration of wealthy ladino indigo planters.[36] So, not only did many San Salvadoran ladinos support the egalitarian tenets of liberal thought, but also the ideas of free commerce. These factors made that municipality a bastion for liberalism in the Kingdom of Guatemala.

In 1814, just after the restoration of the monarch, Bustamante forcefully put down an insurrection in San Salvador. This maneuver, though successful, caused a backlash in Madrid. The Council of the Indies chastised Bustamante for pursuing hardline tactics when peaceful measures should have been used.[37] Not surprisingly, this public report had an effect of limiting his success of consolidating central authority and emboldened regional leaders throughout the Audiencia. Bustamante dealt with further regional challenges to central authority with coercion rather than force. The Aycinena clan worked feverishly to undermine Bustamante's actions. Eventually, they influenced policy makers in Spain to obtain Bustamante's dismissal. Regardless, Bustamante used his central authority to counter the liberalizing agenda of the Aycinenas and the regional push of the Salvadorans.

Calleja and Bustamante both successfully reestablished some form of the absolutist structure of the colonial era in New Spain after the restoration of Ferdinand VII. Many contemporaries, like Lucas Alamán, viewed this brief era, from 1814-1820, as a reprieve from the social and political turmoil that came from the challenges of the independence insurgency

[35] Ibid, p. 77.
[36] James Mahoney, *The Legacies of Liberalism: Path Dependence and Political Regimes in Central America*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), p. 56.
[37] Timothy Hawkins, *José de Bustamante and Central American Independence,* p. 195.

and the politics of the rising merchant class. For those like Alamán, this era also marked a lull in the rampant and destructive warfare that came through the insurgent struggle for independence.[38] Another turn in the balance of power between regional and central authority in New Spain occurred in 1820, that shift began with a crisis in the Peninsula.

2.6 Reinstatement of the Constitution of 1812 and Independence

In 1820, a mutiny of high ranking military officers in Spain forced Ferdinand VII to re-institute the Constitution of 1812. The reinstatement of the Constitution of 1812 initiated the final step toward Mexican independence and the reemergence of a push for localized political boundaries. Popular elections reopened at the municipal level. This limited central authority because more power, again, shifted to the ayuntamientos. Basically, two competing sides were born in New Spain based on these early nineteenth-century waves of central and regional authority. On one side, those in the royalist military or who had been a part of the colonial government, tended to favor central control. On the other, those who were involved in the local ayuntamientos or the process of representative government tended to favor a federalist system. The waves of control from central to regional power bases that had occurred from Napoleon's invasion in 1808 to the reinstatement of the Constitution in 1820 blurred the geographical and political makeup of New Spain.

Augustín Iturbide proclaimed independence from Spain under the Plan of Iguala in 1821. Insurgents in New Spain, who represented the trend toward local government and independence, compromised with the military, who represented central authority and whose goal was to destroy the insurrection.[39] The Plan of Iguala reflected that compromise between the insurgents and loyalist military. Iturbide, a general of the royalist army, supported

[38] Archer, "Reconstructing the Choreography of Meltdown", p. 68.
[39] "Union de las Fuerzas Independentistas y Realistas" Archivo de la Nacion México, http://www.agn.gob.mx/independencia/Imagenes/index1.php?CodigoReferencia=MX09017AGNCL01FO003GVSE019OGUI0429US410 , (accessed 09/30/2012).

independence and the Plan. He marched into a jubilant crowd in Mexico City in September 1821 with his most trusted officers at his side. Iturbide had great popular support because the masses viewed him as the liberator of Mexico. Vicente Filisola described the extent of Mexican admiration for Iturbide as being comparable to George Washington in the United States.[40] Though the Plan of Iguala and Iturbide were both extremely popular in 1821, neither had a clearly defined blueprint for how to constitute government in Mexico.

Iturbide chose to break with his royalist ties and join the independence movement for several reasons. The primary reason Iturbide compromised with insurgent leaders was to end the decades of internal warfare. Iturbide wanted to dictate the terms of Mexico's independence from Spain so that insurgents, like Vicente Guerrero, could not force a radical political agenda. Iturbide and other royalist defectors developed the Plan of Iguala to both convince insurgents to join them and to maintain Spanish traditions.[41]

The Plan of Iguala vaguely outlined the blueprint of government in Mexico at the point of independence. It claimed that New Spain's independence from Old Spain, but did not define whether "New Spain" was the Audiencia or the whole Viceroyalty.[42] Further, it called for a constitutional monarchy, preferably led by Ferdinand VII. It declared the creation of a governing junta to enforce established colonial law and create a congress.[43] That congress would produce new laws and legislation for independent Mexico. But, frankly, whoever became the constitutional monarch had the power to interpret the articles of the Plan of Iguala anyway he deemed fit. In the meantime, Iturbide became President of the Regency. He essentially wielded

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[40] Vicente Filisola, *La Cooperacion de Mexico en la Independencia de Centro America*, vol. I, (Mexico, Vda. De Bouret, 1911), p. 22.

[41] Michael C. Meyer & William L. Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, 3rd ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 295.

[42] "Plan de Independencia de Mexico, proclamada y jurada en el Pueblo de Iguala en los dias 1 y 2 des marzo de 1821", Art. 2, Archivo de la Nacion México, http://www.agn.gob.mx/independencia/Imagenes/index1.php?CodigoReferencia=MX09017AGNCL01FO003GVSE013IOUI0060USPI (accessed 09/30/2012).

[43] Ibid, Art. 7, 11, & 15.

executive power in Mexico. He viewed Mexico as including the whole of the former Viceroyalty of New Spain and worked to include the former Audiencia of Guatemala into his Empire.

Two key factors influenced Iturbide and helped form his opinion on the geographic boundaries of Mexico after independence. *A Map of New Spain,* created by Alexander von Humboldt in 1803, determined how Iturbide viewed Mexico, geographically. In this map, Humboldt defined the northwestern limits of New Spain to modern day California and the southern limit to Chiapas, titled the "Kingdom of Guatemala".[44] Further, this map gave Mexicans the only reliable visual definition of Mexico from 1821 until Antonio Garcia Cubas completed his *Carta General de la República Mexicana* in 1858.[45] From 1821-1858, mapmakers who focused on Mexico based their works on Humboldt's map.

Iturbide also believed that economics and social conventions inherently tied Mexico and Central America together. In a letter he wrote to Gabino Gaínza, the last Spanish captain-general of the Audiencia of Guatemala and the first acting president of independent Central America, Iturbide explained his feelings about having Mexico and Central America unite. Iturbide wrote, "...the interests of Mexico and Guatemala are identical and indivisible, they cannot establish themselves as separate and independent nations without risk to their existence and security,"[46] Iturbide made it clear from the outset of his tenure as the first ruler of Mexico that he wanted Central America to be a part of a union.

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[44] Alexander von Humboldt, *A Map of New Spain*, (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orne and Brown, 1810), Accessed through libguides.uta.edu/ccon.

[45] Timothy E. Anna, *Forging Mexico, 1821-1835*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), p. 100; Antonio Garcia Cubas, *Carta General de la República Mexicana*, (Mexico: Imprenta de José Mariano Fernandez de Lara, 1858) David Rumsey Map Collection.

[46] Iturbide to Gabino Gainza, October 19, 1821, in *La Anexion de Centro America a Mexico*, vol. 1, ed. Rafeal Heliodoro Valle (Mexico: Publicaciones de la Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, 1924), p. 50.

2.7 Conclusion

The Ordinance of Intendants and the Constitution of 1812 anchored the idea of regional power for creole elites throughout New Spain. These colonial changes informed the elites' perceptions of political boundaries and political power. The problem was that the colonial era created binary conceptions of those boundaries and the distribution of power. The traditional makeup of the Audiencias and centralized power informed many conservatives of how best an independent Mexico should be structured. Many liberals developed their ideas of local autonomy based on the Ordinance of Intendants and the Constitution of Cádiz.

This struggle between the two concepts affected all the leaders of Spanish North America and can clearly be seen in the case of Central America in 1822-1823. There, elites who preferred centralized rule clashed with elites who preferred local autonomy. These clashes, at times, became heated and violent. This was because of the relative isolation of intendacies and municipalities from one another. That isolation allowed one idea or another to firmly establish itself with little resistance. Rampant regionalism in Central America came from the changes of the late colonial era.

The late colonial era had far-reaching impacts on the former Viceroyalty of New Spain. Those impacts, however, had peculiar differences based on the various regions and people in those regions. Regional peculiarities existed on the Mexican Plateau, but they were far more various and acute in the former Audiencia of Guatemala. Iturbide, and his Mexican representatives sent to oversee Central America's attachment to Mexico, did not fully comprehend those peculiarities. This resulted in improper actions and policies enforced in Central America, which irritated the relationship between Mexico City and Guatemala City from the beginning of union.

CHAPTER THREE

RISE AND FALL OF THE MEXICAN EMPIRE OF SPANISH NORTH AMERICA, 1821-1826

3.1 Introduction

The initial success of Iturbide and the Plan of Iguala for the independence of Mexico stemmed from the fact that it was a compromise between those who supported continued centralized rule and those who wanted greater local autonomy through the promise of a constitutional monarchy. The strength of that compromise, among other factors, drew Central America into union with Mexico.

The three guarantees of the Plan of Iguala also appealed to Central American leaders, especially those in Guatemala City. Religion, the first guarantee of the Plan, protected the rights of the Catholic Church. Independence, the second guarantee, proclaimed New Spain's sovereignty, but also that any territory united under the Plan of Iguala would be protected by the "Army of the Three Guarantees", which was the Mexican army. Unity, the third guarantee, promised social equality for all people under the Plan. Unity included both peninsulares and indios. The Plan, with its call for constitutional monarchy and three guarantees, appealed to political elites in Guatemala City.

It must also be noted that union under the Plan represented a continuation of the Spanish colonial model. The Plan of Iguala emanated from Mexico City. Iturbide and his Army of the Three Guarantees enforced it. If Central America submitted to union under the Plan, that territory also submitted to the Plan's enforcement. As events unfolded after independence, Iturbide, as Emperor, based the structure of control of Central America on the colonial model.

Iturbide appointed Vicente Filisola, a general in the Army of the Three Guarantees, as captain-general of Central America. As the tenets of the Plan of Iguala dissolved in Mexico City, however, so too, did the relationship between Mexico and Central America. The Plan and Iturbide were the adhesives that created and held together the First Mexican Empire.

Leaders in both Mexico and Central America agreed in early 1822 that union would be best for both territories based on key economic and social aspects. Economically, both Mexico and Guatemala City thought that union benefited both parties based on the simple ideas of expanded populations and markets. Socially, most leaders in both territories thought the philosophy laid out in the Plan of Iguala moderated Church-State relations and furthered the development of the status of natives in post-colonial society. These socioeconomic issues, which dominated discussions among elites after independence in both Mexico City and Guatemala City, seemed to many of those elites to be able to be solved through union of the two territories.

Additionally, Mexican military leaders influenced the process of annexation, attachment, and detachment of Central America to Mexico. Vicente Filisola and Manuel Mier y Terán briefly persuaded Central American leaders that annexation was best for both territories. Terán was the first Mexican official to enter the former Audiencia of Guatemala to persuade Central Americans to approve of union to Mexico. Filisola led a battalion of Mexican soldiers to Guatemala City to become the Mexican captain-general of Central America. From their positions, both men impacted the attachment of Central America to Mexico.

3.2 Annexation for Economic Stabilization

The economic benefits of union dominated discussions in both Mexico City and Guatemala City. In the fall of 1821, both regions were in economic shambles. They had reached these economic depths for different reasons. The ten years of war and insurgent

activities destroyed Mexico's mining and agricultural output. Mexico City saw in annexation a way to boost income through taxation of a broader population in order to raise public funds and rebuild its broken infrastructure. In Central America, there was a depression due to problems within the single export agricultural economy based on indigo. Leaders and merchants in Guatemala City saw through annexation a path to diversify Central America's economy and open trade with its northern neighbor as well as Europe. Key leaders, such as Iturbide in Mexico City and Gabino Gainza in Guatemala City, viewed union as a means to extract economic gain from the other.

At independence, Mexico needed to raise funds for its public coffers. Mexico's biggest economic asset was its mineral wealth. The wars for independence, however, led to the destruction of the mines, mining materials, and skilled miners. This hindered the ability to quickly recover revenues.[1] The independence insurgency affected agricultural output. Fields had been burned and cattle destroyed or stolen at alarming rates. Finally, the disruption of trade with its most reliable partner, Spain, contributed to the decline. During the first year in independent Mexico, government expenses heavily exceeded income.[2] Other forms of income had to be sought and a union with Central America offered prospective advantages to offset the financial difficulties Mexico confronted.

Population growth represented the simplest way for Mexico to gain a benefit from union with Central America. The more Mexican citizens there were, the broader the tax base would be, and the more direct income would fill the public coffers in Mexico City. Secondly, Central America had not been wracked by a decade of insurgency and warfare. Many leaders in Mexico City assumed that Central America was economically stable and had wealth in reserve.

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[1] John H. Coatsworth, "Obstacles to Economic Growth in Nineteenth-Century Mexico", in *The American Historical Review* 83, no. 1, (February 1978), p. 86.
[2]Meyer & Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, pp. 304-305.

This represented one of Mexico City's first misconceptions of Central America. Iturbide viewed the Central American declaration of independence from Spain as a "prosperous event" and believed Mexico should defend its southern neighbor from the danger of a Spanish reconquest.[3] That protection, of course, would come at a price. A price that Iturbide hoped would help offset the economic strain on the newly independent Mexico.

Though Iturbide believed in Central American prosperity, the entire isthmus faced economic depression. The geographic isolation of Central America from Mexico City created Iturbide's misconception. The topography of Central America, with its mountainous terrain and few roads, isolated the territory from its northern neighbor. Communications from Guatemala City to Mexico City could take up to two weeks or more depending on weather. A message needed to be of considerable importance for a courier to undertake the journey. Transportation and communication routes within the former Audiencia of Guatemala itself suffered from ill repair. It is not surprising, therefore, for Iturbide to be poorly informed of situations in Central America in 1821.[4]

The former Audiencia of Guatemala confronted dire economic conditions, contrary to what Iturbide believed. The export of the cash crop indigo defined the Central American economy. This dye had been in high demand in Great Britain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Though sales had to legally go through Madrid, export of indigo buoyed the colonial economy of Guatemala through 1805. By that time, though, Britain had successfully cultured the crop in Bengal at a much cheaper cost, thus eliminating the need for Central American indigo.[5] From 1805 to 1821, Central American merchants and officials attempted to

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[3] Iturbide to Gainza, October 19, 1821, in *La Anexion de Centro America a Mexico,* vol. 1, ed Rafael Heliodoro Valle, (Mexico: Publicaciones de la Secretaria de Relaciones de Exteriores, 1924), p. 49.
[4] Ralph Lee Woodward Jr., *Central America, A Nation Divided*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 48.
[5] Miles Wortman, "Government Revenue and Economic Trends in Central America, 1787-1819", in *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 55, no. 2, (May 1975), p. 257.

diversify and shifted to cochineal production. By independence, cochineal replaced indigo as chief export of the territory, but profits never reached pre-1805 levels and the territory was still reliant on a single cash crop.[6] Political and business leaders in Central America perceived their northern neighbor as a powerful economically that could bring the Central American economy out of its nearly two decade long depression.

There were two economic benefits that Central American leaders saw in annexation to Mexico. First, Mexico would take the place of Spain as a sure and stable trading partner. A majority of Central Americans with business interests wanted to maintain a system of protected trade patterns and saw in annexation to Mexico a continuation of that colonial process.[7] Secondly, Mexico would allow more opportunities for free trade and economic diversification than Spain. Attachment to Mexico promised liberal economic reforms. In fact, Central American merchants began free and expanded trade with Great Britain in 1821 without interference from Mexico City.[8] British textile goods entered Central America at record rates and cochineal exports to Britain jumped considerably. Central American leaders assumed attachment with Mexico would create a positive united economy.

3.3 Annexation for Social Stabilization

The break from Spain created social disturbances in both Mexico and Central America. Demographic issues plagued Mexico, particularly. Its decade of warfare led to many thousands of deaths, displaced populations, and caused a structural labor problem. In Central America, two major social issues affected the general population. Conservative leaders desired to incorporate the traditions of the Church alongside the growing push for enlightened reforms. Additionally, liberal leaders in Central America wanted to equalize the social statuses of the

[6] Ralph Lee Woodward Jr., "Economic and Social Origins of the Guatemalan Political Parties (1773-1823)", in *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 45, no. 4, (November 1965), p. 559.
[7] Woodward, *Central America,* p. 90.
[8] Mario Rodriguez, *The Cádiz Experiment in Central America, 1808-1826*, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978), pp. 171-172.

native, peninsular, and creole populations. Leaders in both territories saw the solutions to their social challenges and problems through union. Mexico supposed it would have access to a broader labor source and the Plan of Iguala would allow a compromise between the social agendas of liberals and conservatives in Central America.

At the time of independence, Iturbide and the new Mexican government were extremely popular in Mexico City. This made the sociopolitical atmosphere in Mexico very stable in late 1821. Iturbide, though, viewed socioeconomic problems as a possible source of instability. The decade of insurgency created shifts in populations that left many Mexicans, especially in rural areas, dispossessed of their livelihoods. Many productive mines and haciendas were destroyed during the independence movements, thus destroying the nearby villages that relied on them. Destruction and warfare moved people from the rural areas to the already overcrowded cities of Mexico, Veracruz, and Guanajuato.[9] After independence and the end of insurrection in the rural areas, there was not an equalizing migration of people moving back to the countryside. Most of those who had moved to cities to escape the insurgency, stayed in the cities after independence. Thus, the urban centers had an excess of labor and a shortage of employment. A labor shortage occurred in the rural areas and stalled the redevelopment of the mining and agricultural sectors.

Mexican leaders saw the large Indian population of Central America as an excellent source of cheap rural labor. They sought to redistribute the native population to "recolonize" the abandoned and uninhabited rural territories of Mexico.[10] Some Mexican officials sought to redistribute the Central American native population to more sparely populated areas of Mexico,

[9] For demographics see Alexander von Humboldt, *Political Essays on the Kingdom of New Spain*, trans. John Black, (New York, I. Riley, 1811). pp. 67-83 & Robert McCaa, "The Peopling of Mexico from Origins to Revolution", http://www.hist.umn.edu/~rmccaa/mxpoprev/cambridg3.htm, (accessed 12/11/2012).

[10] José Angel Hernandez, "From Conquest to Colonization: Indios and Colonization Policies after Mexican Independence," in *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 26, no. 2, (Summer 2010), p. 291.

like Texas. This group, including Mier y Terán, saw the importance of colonizing Mexico's northern border with a hispanicized population since Central American indios at least had a sense of Spanish culture.[11] The boost in agricultural and mining production in the rural areas would, in turn, support business in the urban centers. The boost in the urban economy would stem any potential unrest due to poverty and idleness. This represented another misconception of Mexican leaders about Central America. The native population on the isthmus remained strongly tied to their villages because of the longstanding colonial method of native social control. Each indio village had its own curate who acted as the village leader and kept the community closely knit. In order to redistribute Central America's native population, Mexico would have to do it an entire village at a time.

In Central America, leaders of the newly independent territory faced two daunting social challenges. One of the major issues was the Catholic Church. The influence of the Church was especially prevalent in Central America due to its largely nonviolent break from Spain because the rural populations remained under their respective parishes. Liberals and conservatives in Guatemala City argued about the extent the Church would have power in the State. The population divided between those who supported maintaining the colonial status quo of Church-State relations and those who supported the more liberal idea of Church-State separation. This debate became heated and instances of violence occurred in Guatemala City between 1812 and 1821.[12] Church-State relations became a primary issue for the governing junta after the declaration of independence.

Union with Mexico seemed to the governing junta in Guatemala City as an easy fix to the social problem of Church-State relations in Central America. The Plan of Iguala considered

[11] Ohland Morton, "Life of General Don Manuel Mier y Terán: As it Affected Texas Mexico Relations", *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 46, no. 3, (January 1943), p.243.
[12] Bancroft Reference Notes for Central America, Container 10, Folder 9, BANC MSS B-C 9, The Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.

the Church as one of its three guarantees, the first guarantee, in fact, and that pacified any unrest on the subject in Mexico. By accepting union and, by extension, the Plan of Iguala, Central America had a built-in compromise to relieve tensions caused by the Church-State relationship.

Another challenge that leaders in Central America faced early in its independence was how to equalize the status of natives, Spaniards, and creoles. Central America's large native populations had regularly been exploited under the colonial regime. Indios paid higher tributes and received lower wages than ladinos or creoles. Indios also often lived in all native villages so they could be easily counted for the census and taxation, and also for separation into local Church parishes. The provisional junta in Guatemala City made it one of its political agendas to raise the native populations above their lowly status.[13] The junta faced the problem of how to fulfill that agenda without suffering losses of the local treasuries, since the native tributes had become the basis for public funds. Central American officials confronted a fine line of maintaining public incomes and avoiding a native uprising.

Once again, the issue of racial inequality could have been solved through union with Mexico. The Plan of Iguala called for unity as its third guarantee. The third guarantee of the Plan of Iguala defined unity as creating social equality throughout the regions of the Mexican nation regardless of ethnic origin.[14] From the beginning of the enforcement of Iguala, Mexican officials honored the pledge for racial equality and that policy would extend to Central America in the event of union.[15] By putting the issue in the hands of Mexico City, Central American

[13] Rodriguez, *The Cádiz Experiment*, p. 173.
[14] "Plan de Independencia de Mexico, proclamada y jurada en el Pueblo de Iguala en los dias 1 y 2 des marzo de 1821", Art. 12, Archivo de la Nacion México, http://www.agn.gob.mx/independencia/Imagenes/index1.php.
[15] Rodriguez, *The Cádiz Experiment*, p. 173.

officials would be able to bypass the problem of tribute in the hope that the financial burden would be shared with its northern neighbor.

The Plan of Iguala acted as a stopgap agreement to appease the various provinces and municipalities to satisfy their regional orientation. It blended economic liberalism with social conservatism. The former intendant of Salvador represented the center of dissent to the idea of annexation in Central America. Regional leaders there and in other provinces in Central America loathed the power center of Guatemala City and did not want to merely see it replaced with Mexico City. There developed a political split in Central America based on economic and social ideological principles. Even before annexation, political action in Mexico City affected the politics in Central America.

The greatest amount of support in Central America for annexation to Mexico came from the merchant and business sectors, but not all regions agreed with the social aspects or the prospective political makeup of union. The municipality of San Salvador resisted union. The ayuntamiento of San Salvador pulled the entire province of Salvador with it in its push for Salvadoran sovereignty. In Honduras, the municipalities of Tegucigalpa and Omoa resisted union because their rival, Comayagua, supported it. In Nicaragua and Costa Rica, the municipalities of León and San José fought about the future of the municipality of Managua. Costa Ricans took advantage of the opportunity of the confusion of independence from Spain and tried to secure Managua for the province of Costa Rica.[16] Regional competition intensified in 1821, showing disparate geographic influence from the colonial eras.

3.4 The Politics of Annexation

When both territories declared independence from Spain in September 1821, they did so under different circumstances. It cannot be stressed enough how much the decade of

[16] Miles Wortman, *Government and Society in Central America, 1680-1840*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), pp. 232-233.

violence affected politics in Mexico City from 1821-1822. Mexicans just wanted peace with independence and most accepted the Plan of Iguala as the document that represented that peace. The political separation of Central America from Spain, in contrast, created an atmosphere of public argument as to the future of the territory that continued for months in 1821. Guatemala City witnessed the founding of two competing newspapers that portrayed and defended their respective ideological tenets for the political future of Central America. Public discussion and opinion wavered between union with Mexico and a republican union of Central American States. For the short term, pressure from Mexico City tipped the argument in favor of union.

Politics in Guatemala City had become divided over several issues. Primarily, all of the decentralized regionalism that had been bred during the colonial era erupted in Central America over the issue of union with Mexico. The municipalities of Comayagua, León, and Quezaltenango, all declared themselves in favor of union and the Plan of Iguala. Tegucigalpa and San José opposed the idea. San Salvador went even further and decided it did not want to be a part of either Mexico or a union of Central American states and declared its own independence.[17]

Additionally, social issues became politicized and split liberals and conservatives. At the time of independence in 1821, both sides had their own newspapers in Guatemala that regularly printed their respective propaganda. *El Editor Constitucional,* edited by Pedro Molina, represented a liberal merchant ideology. *El Amigo de la Patria*, edited by José Cecilio del Valle, represented the traditional aristocracy and its interests. Both sides argued in the public forum for over a year until union with Mexico became a very real issue in October 1821. The argument over union with Mexico split the Central American liberals between those more

[17]Mario Rodriguez, *Central America*, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1965), p. 62.

interested in trade and those who cared more for Church.[18] This split in the liberal party realigned the political dynamic in Central America in favor of the conservatives.

The Plan of Iguala, which was economically liberal and socially conservative, appealed to both conservatives and the merchant business class. When the merchant class broke away from the liberal party and aligned with the conservatives, *El Editor Constitucional* dubbed the merchants "serviles," or slaves, because they were willing submit to Mexico City and continue the colonial paradigm. This resulted in political suicide for Molina, who had become a minority leader. Molina's finances evaporated. José del Valle, the editor of *El Editor de la Patría* maintained a considerable political position and his moderate tendencies guided Central America in its early years.[19] The "serviles" carried the majority in Guatemala and pressured Gainza, the former captain-general and interim executive for independent Central America, to accept union with Mexico. Gainza, however, favored the liberal party and thought it unwise to alienate the peripheral States, especially San Salvador, for it out produced the rest of Central America in indigo production. There was a political stalemate in Central America on the decision to unite with Mexico or go it alone. A "reign of violence" began on the isthmus as the political struggle spilled onto the streets.[20] Gainza could not make the decision unilaterally without risking open rebellion from San Salvador. It was up to Iturbide and Mexico to make a move to sway popular opinion within its southern neighbor.

From the moment Iturbide marched into Mexico City on September 27, 1821 until he dissolved the Mexican Congress in October 1822, Mexican politics remained stable. Stability derived from the fact that insurgent violence had ended and the new nation had become

[18] Woodward, *Central America*, pp. 88-90.
[19] Louis E. Bumgartner, *José del Valle of Central America*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1963), p. 181.
[20] Edward Kewen, "Historical Retrospect of the Isthmian States", p. 32, BANC MSS M-M 340, The Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.

independent from Spain.[21] Some historians consider it the political honeymoon period in Mexico City. Though there were political divisions, mainly between those who defended constitutional monarchy and those who leaned toward republicanism, great rifts did not erupt until Iturbide's fateful decision to dissolve Congress. This left the new Mexican government to focus on establishing itself and making the nation economically viable. Iturbide saw that one path to economic stability was to bring Central America into the Mexican Empire. Additionally, he viewed Central America as a possible foothold for the Spanish attempt at reconquest that he greatly feared.[22] He began making overtures to Guatemala City for union almost immediately.

Iturbide made two moves toward annexing Central America, one clandestine and the other diplomatic. He ordered Manuel Mier y Terán to travel to Chiapas to assess the situation and the attitudes of the population and leadership toward joining Mexico.[23] He then wrote Gabino Gainza, the former captain-general and interim head of the governing junta in Guatemala City. The letter was a persuasive overture that showered compliments on Gainza and described Mexico as the new center of liberty and democracy in the western hemisphere.[24] Iturbide's timing was perfect. Iturbide wrote the letter to Gainza a day before Terán arrived in Chiapas. Gainza likely received the letter and the news of the presence of a Mexican general in Central America at the same time. This shrewd political maneuver did not assure union of the two territories, though. The work of two Mexican agents finally solidified an alliance.

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[21] Lorenzo de Zavala, *Ensayo Historico de las Revoluciones de Megico desde 1808-1830*, (Mexico: M. N. de la Vega, 1845), pp. 126-127.
Even Zavala, a staunch republican, admits the first year of Iturbide's reign was peaceful and positive for nearly all involved.

[22] Timothy Anna, *The Mexican Empire of Iturbide*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), pp. 43-45. This idea will be discussed further in chapter four.

[23] Morton, "Life of Terán", p. 240.

[24] Iturbide to Gainza, October 19, 1821, in *La Anexion de Centro America a Mexico,* vol. 1, ed Rafael Heliodoro Valle, (Mexico: Publicaciones de la Secretaria de Relaciones de Exteriores, 1924), p. 50.

3.5 Chiapas, The Mexican Foothold

As the border territory between the former Audiencias of New Spain and Guatemala, Chiapas became the test subject and staging ground for expanded Mexican influence in Central America. The territory began as the intendancy of Ciudad Real in 1786. It evolved into the province of Chiapas after independence from Spain.[25] As the northernmost territory of the former Audiencia of Guatemala, Chiapas had the only physical land border between Mexico and Central America. Naturally, it had deeper economic and sociopolitical relations with the former Audiencia of New Spain than the rest of Guatemala because of its geographical placement. Chiapas became an early supporter of annexation to Mexico and welcomed the Mexican military leaders into Tuxtla and Ciudad Real to convince the rest of Central America that annexation was best for all involved. The geographic and political makeup of Chiapas made it the perfect base of operations for penetration into Central America.

Iturbide wanted to annex Central America to Mexico at the outset of his tenure as a leader for the independence of New Spain. He maintained that it was the first and most important project of his leadership.[26] So, it is not surprising that he sent Terán, one of his most ambitious and competent generals, south to the border of Mexico and Central America. From his position in Chiapas, Terán assessed the feelings of Central Americans toward union, both in Chiapas and in the greater territory.

The speed with which Iturbide sent Terán to the former Audiencia of Guatemala demonstrates the importance Iturbide placed on annexing Central America. It took less than one month from the time Iturbide marched victoriously into Mexico City to the time Terán reached Ciudad Real. When Terán arrived, he found that even in a territory predisposed to

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[25] Jordana Dym, *From Sovereign Villages to National States; City, State, and Federation in Central America, 1759-1839,* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 2006), p. 51.

[26] Iturbide to Negrete, 05/13/1823, Augustin de Iturbide Collection, 1813-1838, Benson Latin American Collection, General Libraries, University of Texas at Austin.

union with Mexico, dissent to annexation flourished. The leadership in Ciudad Real had to decide whether to join Mexico in union, join Guatemala and Central America, or remain the sovereign state of Chiapas. This decision between union with Mexico, or a Central American republic, or provincial sovereignty, appeared in nearly all the regions of Central America. Terán concluded that the least likely scenario was for Chiapas to unite with Central America because of longstanding quarrels Chiapans had with Guatemalans that were steeped in the colonial era. The people of Chiapas had little faith in Gabino Gainza and looked to their local leaders to decide the best course for the former intendancy. Terán concluded that a significant military presence in Chiapas would sway dissenters toward union and that Chiapas would join Mexico easily. He further suggested that a Mexican military presence would likely convince Guatemala City that full union of Central America and Mexico was necessary.[27]

Terán had developed a shrewd analysis of the political situation in Chiapas and the rest of Central America. Most leaders saw the benefits of union with Mexico under the Plan of Iguala, but regional politics blurred the positives and caused a stalemate in the decision making process. Terán surmised correctly that a display of military power would convince a clear majority of Central Americans that union with Mexico was the best option for the future of the territory. He did not, however, comprehend that prolonged military presence would seriously aggravate Central American regionalism and undermine Mexico's rule of the territory.

While the presence of Terán and his small entourage of fewer than one hundred Mexican soldiers stirred debate about Mexico's incursion, it was not a significant enough force to elicit any real feeling of danger of an invasion in Guatemala City. By the first of days of 1822, though, Iturbide had decided in favor of reinforcing Terán's position in Chiapas with a much larger force.[28] A small battalion of about six hundred troops under the leadership of General

[27] Terán to Iturbide, 10/24/1821, in Valle, *La Anexion de Centro America a Mexico*, pp. 60-61.
[28]Iturbide to Terán, 11/20/1821, in Valle, p. 77.

Vicente Filisola marched south toward the former Audiencia of Guatemala. Filisola's orders were to reassess the situation in Guatemala City and convince those in power that union with Mexico was the best course of action for everyone involved.[29] The general stationed himself in Ciudad Real and became the intermediary between Iturbide and the Central American leaders. He initiated a vote on the question of annexation in the governing juntas and ayuntamientos throughout the provinces of Central America. Most returned votes in favor of that union. The merchant aristocracy's aligning itself with the conservatives in Guatemala City and the presence of Filisola and his force of Mexican soldiers influenced the favorable vote for annexation.[30] On January 5, 1822, Gainza formally proclaimed that Central America would unite with Mexico. The actions of the political chief in Mexico City influenced the Central American decision.

Though his primary goal had been achieved with the issue of annexation settled, Filisola remained in Chiapas because the vote was not unanimous and there was clear dissent in the province of Salvador. With Filisola in charge militarily, Terán participated in Chiapan politics in order to cement the bond between that territory and Mexico City. In the early months of 1822, both Terán and Filisola worked as diplomats in Mexico's newly acquired territory.

Almost immediately, problems arose in Central America over the political decisions made in Mexico City and Guatemala City. Quetzeltenango, a city within the former intendancy of Guatemala and located only one hundred miles west of Guatemala City, became incensed over being placed under the administration of Guatemala City. The ayuntamiento of Quetzeltenango declared it would only follow orders from Mexico City and ignore any from Guatemala City. Gainza was furious and threatened to use Guatemalan forces to attack the insubordinate city. Filisola wrote Gainza and told him to take care of the issue in a more

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[29] Orders to Filisola, 12/27/1821, in *La Cooperacion de Mexico en la Independencia de Centro America*, (Mexico: Vda de Bouret, 1911), pp. 105-108.
[30] Woodward, *Central America*, p.89.

sensible manner.[31] Filisola and Iturbide also sent letters to Quetzeltenango telling the ayuntamiento to obey orders from Guatemala City. It was clear, though, that Gainza had lost control in Guatemala and something more drastic needed to be done before violence erupted. In April 1822, Filisola left his base of operations in Chiapas and marched south toward Guatemala. He relieved Gainza of his position and established himself as the Mexican captain-general of Central America. This signaled that the union between Mexico and Central America would be a continuation of the colonial experience. The difference was that the monarch no longer resided in Spain, but in Mexico City.

3.6 An Unhappy Marriage

The eighteen-month period of union between Mexico and Central America was difficult for both territories. The political honeymoon in Mexico City waned as different factions began to align in opposition to one another. Regional tensions exploded in Central America after the establishment of union with Mexico. Vicente Filisola held a strange politco-military authority over the entire territory of Central America and found himself caught in the middle of complicated developments. He was forced to balance his role of being both Mexican diplomat and captain-general to Central America in a growing atmosphere of confusion, doubt, and indecision. The attachment modeled colonial conventions of the Viceroyalty of New Spain with Filisola acting as captain-general to Central America, as if the southern region was still an obedient Audiencia to Mexico City.

In the spring of 1822, as Filisola marched toward Guatemala City, opposition against Iturbide began to form in Mexico City. This situation came about because no acceptable monarch could be found to rule Mexico based on the Plan of Iguala. No European noble family

[31]Filisola to Gainza, 02/13/1822, in Valle, p. 69.

would take up the crown of Mexico and rule it as a constitutional monarch. Iturbide thought himself the best replacement candidate. The Mexican Congress objected to raising him as monarch. However, Iturbide had been the de facto executive in the absence of a monarch. It was logical to make it official, if only to legitimize the new Mexican government to the international community.[32] Iturbide installed himself as Emperor of Mexico.

Up until that point in May 1822, a strong republican element did not exist in the Mexican Congress. After his ascension to emperor, though, a shift away from the imperial model toward republicanism mounted in Congress. No official quorum confirmed Iturbide as emperor. This caused most members of Congress to view Iturbide's appointment as illegal.[33]

Additionally, anti-Spanish sentiment rose throughout Mexico. Creoles especially pushed to expel anyone of recent Spanish descent. Iturbide, based on the third guarantee of the Plan of Iguala, did not support expulsions. There were even many members of the Regency, the body that worked closely with Iturbide and most often sided with him against attacks from Congress, who sympathized with idea of Spanish expulsions.[34] Iturbide as Emperor faced political challenges within Mexico City from the moment he ascended to the throne. As this ideological factionalism grew in Mexico City, Filisola dealt with growing regionalism and unrest in Central America.

As he marched to Guatemala City, Filisola likely noticed the makeup of the population and its distribution. Most of the population in Guatemala survived on subsistence agriculture and lived in relatively poor conditions. Further, creoles and ladinos, alike, relied on the native population's food production. This was because the indio population exceeded those of the creole or ladino. Approximately eight hundred and fifty thousand people lived in the province of

[32] Timothy Anna, "The Rule of Agustin Iturbide: A Reappraisal", in *Journal of Latin American Studies* 17, no.1, (May 1985), p. 85.
[33] Zavala, *Ensayo Historico*, pp. 170-171.
[34] Harold Dana Sims, *The Expulsion of Mexico's Spaniards, 1821-1836*, (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990).

Guatemala. Of that total, indios likely made up just more than half. They did not, however, reside in Guatemala City. Native populations were confined to their own Indian towns in rural areas surrounding the creole and ladino population centers. Local church leaders held great social control in these native villages. Those church leaders had traditionally cooperated with the colonial government to maintain social control of the natives. Filisola marched into a situation in Central America where creoles, ladinos, and natives were segregated to their own regional centers. When the Spanish colonial regime disappeared, each region turned to its local leaders. This demonstrates why regionalism became exponentially worse in Central America than in the rest of Spanish-America.[35]

Gabino Gainza compounded the regionalism problem in Central America for Filisola. Gainza had worked to re-centralize control of Central America in Guatemala City after the proclamation of union in January 1822. This aggravated tensions with regionalist hotspots like San Salvador, Quetzaltenango, and Comayagua in Honduras.[36] Filisola hoped that the removal of Gainza and his own appointment as captain-general would calm tensions and avoid violence. His arrival in Guatemala did, in fact, calm tensions with Quetzaltenango and Comayagua. It did not, however, stem the radical republican movement in San Salvador.

The fighting between Salvador and Guatemala in Central America revolved around the conflict between liberalism and conservatism. This was especially true after the Aycinenas in Guatemala City shifted to favor the conservatives. The heavy indigo-producing areas around San Salvador despised the merchant class in Guatemala City due largely to the fact that there were no deep water ports on the Pacific side of the isthmus. Indigo growers had long been forced to move their good through Guatemala City merchants in order to get them to market.

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[35]G. A. Thompson, *An Official Visit to Guatemala from Mexico*, (London: John Murray, 1829), pp. 450-469.

[36]Rodriguez, *The Cádiz Experiment*, p. 180.

Those merchants, namely the Aycinenas, controlled prices and exports. Thus, the basis for Salvador's challenge to Guatemala was control of its indigo product. Salvadoran producers wanted to market their product on their own terms and did not view union with Mexico as a way to reach that goal. In fact, liberal Salvadorans believed Mexico City would simply replace Guatemala City as the middle-man through which Salvadoran producers would lose profits.[37]

Many of the ayuntamientos in the former intendancy of Salvador strongly supported republicanism. They defied the proclamation for union with Mexico and protested against it in both Mexico and Guatemala City. They often cited the Constitution of Cádiz as the basis for their arguments of local rule. There were, however, several ayuntamientos in the province of Salvador that remained loyal to Guatemala and thus accepted the decision on union. The problem of violence arose when the republican districts attacked the loyalists.[38] Filisola attempted to stop this violence with diplomacy and the threat of Mexican reprisal. He sent an ultimatum to the governing junta of San Salvador that made it clear that the junta should call an immediate end to all violence. Filisola's ultimatum threatened the municipal leaders in San Salvador with invasion unless they proclaimed Salvador as a province of the Mexican Empire.[39] Negotiations continued throughout the fall of 1822, but eventually reached an impasse because San Salvador would not recognize Iturbide or the Mexican Empire.

In November 1822, Filisola's ability to work diplomatically weakened to a considerable degree. Iturbide dissolved Congress in Mexico City in an attempt to eliminate the republican element which he felt was dangerous to the integrity of the empire. From the moment of his ascension to the throne, his distrust of congressional members grew. He accused them of

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[37]Wortman, *Government and Society in Central America*, p. 231, & Ralph Lee Woodward, Jr.,"Economic and Social Origins of Guatemalan Political Parties (1773-1823)," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 45, no. 4, (November 1965), p. 551.
[38] Kenyon, "Mexican Influence in Central America", p. 192.
[39]Filisola to the junta of San Salvador, 10/26/1822, in *La Cooperacion*, pp. 119-121.

clandestine meetings and attempting to annul the Plan of Iguala.[40] Iturbide also believed the representatives of El Salvador to the Mexican Congress as being the biggest agitators against him.[41] The dissolution of Congress negatively impacted Filisola's diplomacy because the ayuntamientos of Central America saw it as a clear step toward centralized rule, which would make regional representation impossible. To the rebellious Salvadorans, Mexico City just replaced the tyranny of Guatemala City. The San Salvadoran junta declared El Salvador an independent State.[42] Iturbide's actions in Mexico City caused regional unrest in Central America.

Iturbide also issued a proclamation in November 1822 that stirred regional disturbances in Central America. Iturbide sought to stem the regional infighting among municipalities in the former Audiencia of Guatemala by redistricting provinces under different administrative centers. Quezaltenango was placed with Chiapas under the administration of Cuidad Real. The proclamation also placed the provinces of Nicaragua and Costa Rica under the administration of León. Additionally, Iturbide moved San Salvador closer to Guatemala City so Filisola would have direct control over the rebellious territory. This proclamation marked a temporary fix to the regional issues that plagued Central America and, in fact, resulted in greater vitriol from San Salvador about annexation.[43]

Filisola gave the governing junta of San Salvador every opportunity to avoid being invaded by Mexican troops, but the junta continued to cause discord. Iturbide issued an order to Filisola to invade Salvador and put down the republican uprising there.[44] The Salvadoran republicans made one last ditch effort to continue their push for regional power. They wrote a

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[40] Augustin Iturbide, *Memoirs of Augustin Iturbide*, trans. Michael J. Quin, (Washington DC: Documentary Publications, 1971), pp. 55 & 62.
[41] Ibid, p. 51.
[42] Timothy Anna, *Forging Mexico, 1821-1835*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), p. 71.
[43] Rodriguez, *The Cádiz Experiment*, p. 181.
[44] Vicente Filisola, Copy of Speech Given to Mexican Soldiers, Guatemala, 02/09/1823, in *La Cooperacion*, pp. 162-164.

proclamation that declared Salvador as being open to annexation to the United States in the hope that the northern republic would come to its aid.[45] It did not. Filisola and his small, but well trained body of troops quelled the Salvadoran uprising by February 1823.

From late February to early March 1823, after the Salvadoran affair, Filisola's tenure in Central America reached its peak. Other than Costa Rica, which remained as politically aloof from the Mexican Empire as its geographic isolation would allow, all of the provinces of Central America had accepted union. Filisola established himself as a strong central figure in Guatemala City, but was content to allow the regional ayuntamientos enough power and decision making as imperial laws allowed, especially economically. During his tenure, British goods entered Central America in high volume and cochineal exports reached record numbers.[46] Additionally, Filisola had strict orders to his troops to pay for all goods and services rendered in Central America and display appropriate conduct.[47] He understood the importance of being popular with the locals, especially in such a difficult situation. Filisola later attempted to apply this policy when the northern territories rebelled in 1836, but found Santa Anna averse to applying it. The situation in Texas in 1836, however, differed greatly from Central America in 1822.

For all intents and purposes, Filisola continued to govern in the colonialist mode. After he put down the Salvadoran uprising, Central America seemed to accept the situation. It was not surprising that Filisola would make himself a strong central figure in the former Audiencia of Guatemala. He had the perfect background for the job. He came from Europe to New Spain as a member of the loyalist military. He saw a flexible central authority as the best means to combat regionalism. By combining respectful diplomacy with effective force, he was able,

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[45] Filisola, "Manifesto de 11/10/1822", in *La Cooperacion*, p. 151.
[46] Ralph Lee Woodward Jr., "The Origins of the Guatemalan Political Parties," in *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 45, no. 4, (November 1965), p. 564.
[47] Kenyon, "Mexican Influence in Central America", p. 190.

however briefly, to patch the relationship between Mexico and Central America. It seemed that though the relationship started out in trouble, the Mexican general steered it on course. The factional politics in Mexico City, however, made that impossible. By summer, Central America would break away and form its own independent union of provinces.

3.7 The End of Empire

Iturbide's empire began to crumble in the spring of 1823. The popular military leader who had finally realized Mexican independence from Spain saw his most trusted generals turn against him. The military had been Iturbide's power base. When his top officers began to openly favor the federalist message that members of the dissolved Congress openly published, Iturbide became increasingly isolated and vulnerable. The same can be said of Filisola's position in Central America. As it became more apparent that the emperor was losing power, ayuntamientos throughout Central America clamored for change. The fortunes of Filisola as captain-general of Central America ran parallel to those of Iturbide as emperor, just like the power of the viceroy hinged on the status of the European monarch during the colonial era.

Those Mexicans who turned against Iturbide projected the message that reconvening a congress would stabilize the Mexican economy. They blamed Iturbide for the financial problems plaguing Mexico. His grand plan of annexing Central America and creating a vast empire with a wealth of natural resources failed. One of the many damning broadsides published and distributed throughout Mexico accused Iturbide of being an absolute despot whose greed ruined the Mexican currency.[48]

This message of portraying Iturbide as incapable of correcting the economic condition of Mexico convinced the upper echelons of the Imperial Army. Those who had supported

[48] Juan Cabrera, "Ya Se Va Augustin Primero, Desterrado y sin Corona", printed 1823, Augustin de Iturbide Collection, 1813-1838, Benson Latin American Collection, General Libraries, University of Texas at Austin.

Iturbide in his push for independence expected to be rewarded for their loyalty, but the public coffers could not meet the demand. Antonio López de Santa Anna was one of the more prominent figures who felt slighted by the emperor. He had requested several times for a promotion to brigadier general. Iturbide promised the promotion, but at a future date. This was because Iturbide understood he did not have the funds to pay all of the generals he had already promoted. The military movement against Iturbide in 1823 was a case of ambition veiled as an enlightened movement toward republicanism.[49]

As more of Iturbide's generals turned against him, they produced a plan for the future of Mexico to replace the Plan of Iguala. They distributed the Plan of Casa Mata throughout Mexico in 1823. It avoided saying the two things that would turn the populace in Mexico City against the rebellious movement. First, the Plan of Casa Mata declared that its supporters would install a new congress and not rule as a military government.[50] It also made it clear that the national hero, Iturbide, would not be punished, let alone executed, stating, “The army shall never harm the person of the Emperor”.[51] With these two provisions, installed to avoid resistance from the masses, the rebels pushed toward Mexico City to relieve Iturbide of the throne.

This situation left Iturbide with limited choices. He could have assembled supportive officers and countered the opposition on the battlefield. This option, though, would have meant that Mexico fell into a state of civil war only two years after it had become an independent nation.[52] After just coming out of a decade of warfare, this was the last thing Iturbide wanted to do. So, he attempted to appease the opposition by convoking a congress himself. This was a

[49] Timothy Anna, *Iturbide,* pp. 151-153.
[50] Plan de Casa Mata, Art. 1, trans. Nettie Lee Benson, in *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 25, vol. 1 (February 1945), p. 50.
[51] Ibid, Art. 11, p. 51.
[52] Anna, *Iturbide,* p. 173.

last gasp maneuver that demonstrated the weakness of his position. By the end of March, his tenure as emperor ended.

From his position in Guatemala City, Filisola received only bits and pieces of information about the status of his boss. He knew that many of Iturbide's generals and advisors had turned against the emperor and that Iturbide reconvened Congress, but Filisola was unable to fully comprehend the gravity of the happenings in Mexico City. Disturbances began again in San Salvador and elsewhere. In order to offset this aggravation, Filisola did what Iturbide had done. He called for elections to a separate congress of the Central American States.[53] Filisola did this in an attempt to prevent Central America from falling into its own civil war with him caught in the middle.

By the beginning of April, though, news that Iturbide had abdicated the throne had spread throughout the empire. A new government replaced Iturbide and dissolved the Plan of Iguala for the Plan of Casa Mata. This signaled a watershed moment in the relationship between Mexico and Central America At the moment of the fall of Iturbide, the colonial mold through which Filisola worked shattered. He and his token regiment of about 600 Mexican soldiers no longer had the backing of the full force of the Mexican emperor. The new republican-leaning leaders in Mexico City were far more interested in replacing Iturbide with their own legitimate government than maintaining union with Central America. In fact, some members of Mexico's new republican Congress thought Central America should have its own sovereignty.[54] Further, Filisola understood that Central Americans had not identified themselves as Mexican during the eighteen months of union.[55] He also realized that they did not consider themselves Central Americans. They were Salvadoran, Comayaguan, Quetzaltenaguan, and

[53] Filisola, Proclamation, 03/29/1823, in *La Cooperacion*, pp. 212-221.
[54] Lorenzo de Zavala, *Ensayo Histórico de las Revoluciones de México, 1808-1830*, vol. I, (Paris: P. Dupont et G. Languionie, 1831) pp. 264-265.
[55] Filisola, Proclamation, 03/29/1823, in *La Cooperacion*, pp. 212-221.

so forth. Regardless, by the summer of 1823, Filisola was forced to make an executive decision that would reshape the geographic and political makeup of Mexico.

As news spread of Iturbide's fall, tensions rose in Central America. The alcaldes of the Central American ayuntamientos who had agreed to union with Mexico under the Plan of Iguala began to clamor for change. Without Iturbide, there were perceptions that the contract for union had been broken.[56] Voices rose for independence and violence seemed inevitable. In this precarious position, Filisola opened the Congress of all the Central American provinces and the political elites in Guatemala City decided the fate of the territory. On July 1, 1823, the Congress decided on Central American sovereignty and separation from Mexico. Chiapas, however, chose to remain in union with Mexico and did not participate in that Congress. Filisola accepted that decision and led his troops north out of Central America and back to what remained of Mexico.

3.8 The Federal Republic of Central America

The brief Mexican attachment gave Central American liberals and conservatives insight into the application of a constitutional monarchy in Latin America. At its most basic, that style of government did not work. The executive held too much power and ignored representatives from the periphery. Constitutional monarchy aggravated regionalism. Both liberals and conservatives realized they needed a compromise government that limited executive power. Detachment from Mexico in 1823 created an atmosphere of cooperation that did not exist in Central America in 1821. That cooperation and optimism fell apart by 1826 through inconsistent application of the compromise constitution and the rise of a supreme executive and challenges from the Church and native populations.

[56]Kenyon, "Mexican Influence in Central America", p. 199.

Liberals and conservatives in Central America differed greatly, which makes the compromise of 1823-1826 that much more astounding. That compromise demonstrated the impact the Mexican attachment had on Central American political elites. Liberals carried the majority after separation from Mexico. Several subgroups of class and ideological thought comprised the liberal party, though, generally, liberals were professionals and artisans from the periphery of Guatemala City. Liberals agreed to pursue European enlightenment programs, such as universal suffrage, education, and open commerce. Conservatives, on the other hand, primarily consisted of old royalists and the merchant aristocracy of Guatemala City. They supported traditional ideas of Church-State interaction and privileges and power retained among the upper class.[57] Prior to 1823, both parties differed on their ideas of the power allotted to a central executive. That difference changed after detachment from Mexico.

When liberals and conservatives came together in late 1823 through 1824, they knew they needed to create a compromise government that gave enough power and control to the provinces, while retaining a central government. Liberals understood the weakness of the provinces and that, individually, they could not support themselves. Conservatives recognized that a supreme executive might trigger regional discord and fragmentation. It took over a year to create a compromise government structure, but leaders succeeded on November 22, 1824. A national assembly, led by José del Valle, moderate politician and former newspaper editor, and Tomás O'Horan, a Mexican lawyer from the Yucatan, along with representatives from Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica produced the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Central America. That document managed to create both a confederation and federation of states at the same time.[58] This means it openly supported provincial rights and recognized the power of a national Congress to enact laws for the provinces to respect.

[57] Woodward, *Central America*, pp.92-93.
[58] Rodriguez, *Central America,* p. 64.

Article 10 states, “Each one of the States is free and independent in its government and interior administration; and they share all the power of the constitution not conferred to the federal authority.”[59] In contrast, article 69 laid out thirty-one specific powers of the federal Congress. These powers included raising and sustaining a national army and conceding authority to an executive in times of crisis.[60] The Central American Constitution of 1824 clearly represented a compromise between two opposing ideologies, though the new structure proved fleeting.

The provinces of Central America, renamed States after the completion of the constitution, did not uniformly apply the articles of the constitution in every State. Though the political elites in Guatemala City realized a compromise needed to be reached, some regional leaders felt otherwise. For example, the municipal militia of Granada attacked León in mid-1824, taking advantage of Guatemala City's preoccupation with establishing a workable government to settle their bitter political rivalry within that State.[61] Throughout the ninteenth-century, León's ayuntamiento held a liberal majority and Granada's a conservative one. Both vied to be the political center of Nicaragua. Even after the constitutional committee published its document, several States ignored the federal government. Nicaragua and Salvador were the biggest offenders. Municipal infighting continued in Nicaragua even after the fight between Granada and León ended. El Salvador, now led by the State government in San Salvador, acted as a sovereign State. It wanted no part of the federal government in Guatemala because of Salvadoran's longstanding distrust of the colonial capitol. El Salvador established its own bishopric and unilaterally sent troops into Nicaragua to aid in the conflict there.[62] Costa Rica, the State farthest removed geographically from Guatemala City, took out its own loans from

[59] Article 10, “Constitución de la Republica Federal de Centro-America dada por la Asamblea Nacional”, (Guatemala: J.J. Arér, 1824), p. 2.
[60] Article 69, nos. 2 & 5, in Ibid.
[61] Wortman, *Government and Society in Central America*, p. 236.
[62] Rodriguez, *The Cádiz Experiment*, p. 214.

British lenders to support the State government. From the inception of the Constitution of the Federal Government of Central America, article 69 was regularly ignored.

The backlash in Guatemala City to the actions of the States tore apart the Federal Republic of Central America. Ironically, the President of the Federation, Manuel José Arce, who had been elected by the liberals over the moderate José del Valle, defected to the conservative party while in office. At that moment, conservatives controlled the executive branch of the federal government through Arce and the Aycinena's controlled the entire Guatemalan State government.[63] The conservatives attempted to consolidate power in Guatemala City by calling for new elections to Congress in order to eliminate the liberal majority of that body. El Salvador resisted and its troops marched on Guatemala City to remove Arce. At the same time, factionalism flared in Honduras between Comayagua and Tegucigalpa.[64] By the end of 1826, the whole federation degenerated into civil war.

The civil war that began in September 1826 lasted three years and resulted in thousands of deaths. The rise in the popularity of the conservatives coincided with the Church's disillusionment with its place in the State. The role of the Church in the State became a major problem in Central America by 1826. Even though article 2 of the constitution defined the Catholic Church as the State religion, the Church perceived attacks on it by the liberal dominated government. A major point of contention was the law of pastorals. This law granted the chief executive the power to ignore Papal Bulls and Ecclesiastical notices. Church leaders and conservatives reacted to this liberal legislation. Friars began to preach to their parishes about the evils of the State and calling the government one of heretics. Many regional rural parishes, especially those made up predominantly of natives, became alarmed about the

[63] Woodward, *Central America*, p. 95.
[64] Bumgartner, *José del Valle*, pp. 254-257.

motives of the federal government.[65] Native populations began to distrust the State, even though part of the liberal agenda included granting indios equality before the law. The Spanish tradition of making the Church responsible for the social control of the Guatemalan natives re-manifested itself in the late 1820s.[66] The Church in Central America, with its power at the local level through its traditionally established role as social controller of the native population, represented a serious threat to an enlightened federal government.

Regardless, the civil war in 1826 overshadowed the positive steps of intelligent compromise in 1823-1824 after the detachment from Mexico. In that formative year, liberal and conservative elites in Guatemala City understood that self-preservation laid in balancing central control with regional power. The power of the Church and the native population's traditional tendency to support the conservatives contributed to destabilizing the temporary compromise.

3.9 Conclusion

The process of annexation, attachment, and detachment repeated the colonial experience. Both Mexico City and Guatemala City hungered for a return to the political, economic, and social stability that defined the region up until the crises that began in 1808. Iturbide in Mexico, and the merchant class in Central America, believed union under the structure of the Plan of Iguala would bring stability and a return to prosperity. The first year of union, however, did not bear the fruit of economic recovery in Mexico or Central America. This opened the opportunity for liberals in both Mexico and Central America to challenge their respective central authorities.

In addition to the economic failures and rise of liberal federalist politics, Mexican leaders failed to understand and solve the problems of union with Central America. Iturbide redistricted the southern territory with seemingly no attention paid to regional tensions or even geography.

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[65] Mary Patricia Holleran, *Chruch and State in Guatemala,* (New York: Octagon Books, 1974), p. 87-91.
[66] Carol A. Smith, ed. *Guatemalan Indians and the State: 1540-1988*, (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1990), pp. 60-61.

Filisola, by stationing his headquarters in Guatemala City, projected the message to Salvador that union with Mexico meant continued subordination to Guatemala. Even Terán upset local several local leaders in Chiapas when he won the election as representative for that province. Mexico City, frankly, did not understand the political environment in Central America.

The outbreak of the political struggle in Mexico contributed to a rising tide of independence seekers in Central America. When Iturbide was dethroned, a power vacuum opened in Central America as well as Mexico and rendered Filisola's central position indefensible. The overthrow of Iturbide shattered the colonial mold through which Mexico, represented by Filisola, ruled Central America. Central America took a republican path, with the distribution of power from the center to the regional provinces. Political elites in Mexico City chose a similar republican path for government in what remained of Mexico.

The republican path, for both nations, caused political disruption, fragmentation, and internecine conflict. In Central America, liberals and conservatives degenerated into civil war along regional lines. In Mexico, after Central America's detachment, regional peculiarities throughout the nation impacted political stability in Mexico City. It eventually turned into a struggle between federalists and centralists that dragged Mexico into its own civil war.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE MEXICAN REPUBLIC, 1823-1835

4.1 Introduction

The republican era that followed the fall of Iturbide and the detachment of Central America marked a turbulent time in Mexico. The entire nation faced a huge paradigm shift. Mexico's political power structure as well as its geographic makeup changed radically and the new leadership disagreed as to how best to organize those changes to create a productive political and economic system. The new leadership convoked a Congress that drafted a constitution. The new republican government, led by Guadalupe Victoria as president, viewed recognition and cooperation with the international community as a means for creating a stable Mexico. Additionally, the new Congress viewed the continued presence of the Spanish-born population as a main contributor to instability and sought to purge them from Mexico. The republican era, which was a paradox of open international policies and closed domestic policies, failed to create political stability.

The republican era attempted to move farther away from colonial traditions and give a clear political and geographic identity to Mexico. The lingering political problem of the power of the central authority against the power of the provinces, however, prevented the formation of a clear political identity. Once President Victoria's term ended, the military instigated a coup following the contested election of 1828. This coup concluded with a developing struggle between federalism and centralism that involved the entire nation, including the northern frontier territory of Texas.

4.2 The Political and Geographic Shift

The detachment of Central America, and the resignation of Iturbide, created a massive geographic and political shift in Mexico after only two years of independence. New leaders in Mexico City needed to create a structure of government that could both separate itself from the Plan of Iguala as well as accept the loss of Central America. Those leaders utilized the flexibility of the Plan of Casa Mata to protect themselves from the numerous supporters of Iturbide who retaliated at news of his deportation to Italy. Also, various provinces demanded self-government in order to spur the new Congress to draft a constitution. The stipulations of the Plan of Casa Mata allowed the framers of that constitution time to create the document and work to get national support throughout the provinces for a republican system of government.

Mexico lost a huge geographic area when Central America gained independence. The new government also viewed it as a political and economic blow to Mexico. With one decree from Guatemala City, Mexico was stripped of the southern border of the province of Costa Rica to the northern border of the province of Guatemala and all the population and natural resource potential. The detachment had major consequences for both sides. Mexico no longer had to worry about the expense of defending the isthmus, but fear of a Spanish reconquest lingered in both Mexico City and Guatemala City. Further, the territory of Chiapas declared itself a province of Mexico and broke away from the former Audiencia to which it had been traditionally attached. Additionally, with the creation of a firm border between Mexico and Central America and the unclear future of their respective governments in 1823, the status of trade remained a question for some time. In fact, Mexico City and Guatemala City became estranged from one another

while they attempted to organize and structure their respective governments. Ironically, both nations developed similar federal constitutions.[1]

Many provinces in Mexico resorted to regional authority through the ayuntamientos in reaction to Central American independence. Most provinces, including Guanajuato, Michaocán, and Puebla, elected provincial deputations which called for the creation of a newly elected Congress. Those provinces wanted a new Congress because they believed that many of the representatives of the first constituent Congress had been the Emperor's men. Other provinces, like Oaxaca, Yucatan, and Zacatecas, declared separation from the national government and established their own governing juntas. They viewed Central American independence as an opportunity to continue the trend of localized control. To them, the independence of a former Audiencia was one step closer to the independence of a former intendancy.[2]

Other provinces declared themselves sovereign and free from the national government as a means to prod Congress to create a federal system of government. The province of San Luis Potosí pronounced itself independent unless a new national Congress convened to establish a republic based on the Catholic religion.[3] This creative tactic intended to scare the members of the old Congress about the volatility of the provinces and force them to create the government the provinces preferred.

The Eastern Interior Provinces, of which Texas was a part, made a similar pronouncement. The Eastern Interior Provinces had a more specific goal than Potosí. They pushed to back Miguel Ramos Arizpe and his constitutional proposal to Congress. Ramos

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[1] Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Méjico desde los Primeros Movimientos que Preparon su Independencia en el Año de 1808 hasta la Epoca Presente*, vol. V, (Mexico: Imprenta J. M. Lara, 1852) pp. 758-760.

[2] Timothy E. Anna, *Forging Mexico, 1821-1835*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), pp. 117-120.

[3] Pronunciamiento de San Luis Potosí, 09/06/1823, in "The Pronunciamiento in Independent Mexico, 1821-1876", University of St. Andrews, http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/pronunciamientos/dates.php?f=y&pid=1246&m=9&y=1823.

Arizpe's constitutional draft created the States of Coahuila, Nuevo León, Tamaulipas, and Texas.[4] That meant the regions of the Eastern Interior Provinces would have had expanded local power under the federal constitution. These provinces and San Luis de Potosí influenced the path of the Mexican government toward federated republicanism.

While the independence of Central America irritated the people and governments of the peripheral provinces in Mexico, Iturbide's resignation aggravated the population in Mexico City. The Congress that Iturbide reinstalled decreed that the former Emperor go into exile. An armed escort placed him on a British frigate to Livorno, Italy and the Mexican Army gave the disgraced leader of Mexican independence a respectable pension.[5] The interim government announced that if he ever returned to Mexico, he would be executed. Iturbide, the charismatic and popular leader, could never return to Mexico City without risking his life. This situation created disorganized protests and mobs of people openly challenging the reinstated Congress. These challenges did not move the interim government to overturn the exile.

By the fall of 1823, the interim government realized a new Congress needed to be seated. For this to happen, interim leaders needed to deal with the angry crowds in Mexico City who lamented the loss of Iturbide and the pronounciamientos from the provinces. The Plan of Casa Mata was the perfect tool for that task. In addition to calling for a new Congress, it decreed that the army would protect national representation until the new Congress was established.[6] So, the interim ruling authority it Mexico City, a triumvirate of military generals, protected the congressional process and sent divisions into those provinces that refused to realign with the national government.

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[4] Nettie Lee Benson, "Texas as Viewed from Mexico, 1820-1834", in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 90, no. 3, (January 1987), p. 241.

[5] "Manifesto de Iturbide en Liorna", 1823, in the Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas at Austin.

[6] Art. 5 & 10, "Plan de Casa Mata" in Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, *Apuntes Historicos de la Heróica Ciudad de Vera Cruz*, vol. II, (Mexico: I. Cumplido, 1857), pp. 262-263.

The new interim government used the military to bring some of the rogue provinces back in line. It called on Vicente Filisola immediately on his return from Central America. The leaders ordered Filisola to assist with operations in Oaxaca, where the uprising became too much for the single division of soldiers sent there to pacify the locals. Filisola joined forces with another regiment sent from the capitol and subdued the province.[7] Oaxaca was just one of the many provinces in rebellion. Those provinces pushed for more localized power. In the power vacuum caused by the abdication of Iturbide, the provinces forced the issue of federalism on Mexico City.

The new Congress needed to draft a constitution after the mobs and insurgent provinces had been subdued. The representatives sent from the provinces met in the new Congress to draft a document that would solidify the new government in Mexico. That Congress wrestled with the problem of how much power to cede to the provinces. Miguel Ramos Arizpe, a liberal politician from the Eastern Interior Provinces, submitted a rough draft constitution that broke the provinces into states and created a federal system based heavily on the United States' model.[8] Conservatives challenged this document, claiming that the extreme decentralization of power would leave Mexico weak and open to Spanish reconquest. The more liberal and federal-leaning representatives used Central America, and the regional support of its independence, as an example of what the majority of the Mexican people wanted. A year of debate and revisions continued in the Second Constituent Congress of Mexico until a compromise document produced a meld of ideas from the Spanish Constitution of 1812, the

[7] Anna, *Forging Mexico*, p. 136.
[8] Watson Smith, "Influences from the United States on the Mexican Constitution of 1824", in *Arizona and the West* 4, no. 2, (Summer, 1962), p. 120.

French enlightenment, and the United States Constitution.[9] The complete document was published in October 1824.

The Constitution of 1824 marked a clear break for Mexico from the colonial model. It was also a very liberal and federalist document. The first thirty pages and seventy-three articles therein deal with the powers of Congress, which were expansive.[10] It also made clear the limited powers of the States of the Republic. Those limits included disallowing the States to charge their own tariffs on either interstate or international trade.[11] Otherwise, the states had leave to organize themselves on the constitutional model to have their own elections and pass their own laws. The compromise the liberals made in the document were the powers ceded to the President. The President had several checks on Congress, but the national legislature was generally the supreme authority. The President had veto powers over Congressional decrees and Congress had to give the President consent to command the military.[12] Though very liberal and enlightened, the document seemed to be a strong basis for the new republic.

The constitutions of Mexico and Central America shared many similarities. These similarities were remarkable given that Guatemala City essentially cut itself off from Mexico City following the detachment. They were both liberal and enlightened documents that ceded a lot of power to the States and set strict limits on the powers of the executive.[13] However, one conservative policy they both shared was making the Catholic Church the exclusive national

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[9] James Q. Dealey, "The Spanish Source of the Mexican Constitution of 1824", *The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association* 3, no. 3, (January, 1900), pp. 165-166. & Catherine Andrews, "Los Primeros Proyectos Constitucionales en Mexico y su Influencia Británica, (1821-1836), in *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 27, no. 1, (Winter, 2011), pp. 18-19.

[10] "Constitución Federal de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos", 1824, Archivo de la Nacion México, http://www.agn.gob.mx/independencia/Imagenes/index1.php?CodigoReferencia=MX09017AGNCL02SB05FO131AICMUS002.

[11] Ibid, Art. 162.

[12] Ibid, Art. 106 & Art. 112.

[13] Ibid, Arts. 157-160. & "Constitución de la Republica Federal de Centro-America," Arts. 179-195.

religion.[14] Both constitutions also outlined very similar election processes for their respective three branches of government.[15] All of these similarities likely derived from the fact that the constitutional committees of Mexico City and Guatemala City relied on the Spanish Constitution of 1812 and the United States Constitution of 1787.

Though both documents shared similar models and structure of governments, their differences showed the regional peculiarities between Mexico and Central America. The most glaring difference between these two constitutions was the scope and detailed character of the Mexican document when compared to the Central American counterpart. The Mexican Constitution was far more precise in outlining the federal powers of the government in Mexico City. The Central American document focused more on the limits to the powers of the federal government in Guatemala City. This demonstrated Central America's worry and distrust of a centralized government. The recognition of the Catholic Church differed in both documents. Mexico's Constitution devoted one article recognizing Catholicism as the national religion.[16] However, the Mexican document firmly stated the ecclesiastics remained subject to government authority.[17] The Central American Constitution devoted two articles to the Church. One article defined the national religion as Roman Catholic and another that proclaimed Central America as a, "sacred asylum" for all Catholic foreigners.[18] The framers of the Central American Constitution of 1824 made Catholicism more of a presence in government than Mexico. Another difference in these documents was the definitions of citizens. The Mexican Constitution did not clearly define a Mexican citizen, just the necessary background to become a

[14] Ibid, Art. 3. & "Constitución de la Republica Federal de Centro-America," Arts. 8-12.
[15] Ibid, Arts. 8-24, Arts. 79-94. & "Constitución de la Republica Federal de Centro-America," Arts. 23-44.
[16] Ibid, Art. 3.
[17] Ibid, Art, 154
[18] "Constitución de la Republica Federal de Centro-America," Arts. 11-12.

government representative.[19] The Central American Constitution explicitly stated that all men in the Republic were free and that citizens of the Central American Republic required a useful profession, or at least knowledge of one, to live in subsistence.[20] The framers of the Central American document considered the large native populations of that territory in creating their constitution. The Central American Constitution gave indios the right to vote and participate in government. It defined them as equals to the creoles under this law.

Both nations also adopted liberal immigration laws, which had more drastic effects in Mexico than Central America. The Mexican Constitutional Congress did not include an article for colonization in its constitution. It instead noted that Congress would, "establish a general law of naturalization."[21] Congress then passed a general colonization law created in August 1824. It offered protection under Mexican law to any foreigners willing to establish themselves in Mexico and embrace Mexican law. It excluded foreigners from lands inside twenty leagues from the border. The colonization law also decreed that immigrants had to adopt Catholicism.[22] The Central American constitution outlined lenient naturalization terms for foreigners. It recognized anyone born in Central America as a citizen and foreigners could request citizenship in the State Congress if gainfully employed.[23] Though many British settlers took advantage of Central America's liberal naturalization policy, Anglo-Americans entered Mexico through its northern border in far greater numbers. The Anglo-American population became an an emerging problem for Mexico after Victoria's presidential term.

[19] "Constitución Federal de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos" Arts. 19-24.
[20] "Constitución de la Republica Federal de Centro-America," Arts. 13-14.
[21] "Constitución Federal de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos", Art. 50.
[22] "Ley de Colonización Mexicana," August 18, 1824, Arts. 1 & 4.
[23]"Constitución de la Republica Federal de Centro-America," Arts. 15-20.

4.3 The Victoria Presidency

After the Mexican Congress agreed upon and passed the Constitution of 1824, elections opened for the chief executive. Not surprisingly, the people chose the President from the interim triumvirate that ruled as the constitutional assembly drafted the document. Guadalupe Victoria officially took office in April 1825. Divergent policies marked the Victoria Presidency. He built his foreign policy around gaining international recognition for the new republican government and, further, becoming a part of the international economic community. His domestic policy, however, focused on defending Mexico against foreign invasion and became increasingly preoccupied with the Spanish-born population residing in Mexico. Terán and Filisola were called upon to use their experience in the defense of Mexico. Filisola also found himself drawn into the heated political battle over the issue of Spanish expulsions. Increasing fear of European invasion affected both policies and caused Mexico to slowly turn inward and away from the international community.

The presidential election took place right after the publication of the Constitution of 1824. The election solidified social order and stability in both Mexico City and States. An organized government structure needed to be put in place as quickly as possible due to the unrest in the metropolis and the periphery.[24]

Iturbide's return from exile and subsequent execution smoothed the path of Victoria's presidency. Conservatives and royalists who were left out of the new Congress and the formation of the Constitution convinced Iturbide to return to Mexico. They formed their plea around the message that Spain had amassed an army in the Caribbean for an attempt to

[24]Justo Sierra, *The Political Evolution of the Mexican People*, trans. Charles Ramsdell, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969), p. 191.

reconquer the former colony of New Spain.[25] Iturbide returned to take up the scepter and lead the military to defend Mexico. His dreams of glory were dashed upon his arrival. The Mexican army arrested Iturbide on his arrival. They executed him under the approval of Victoria based on the fact that Iturbide broke the terms of his exile. With his death, an entire political segment of imperialists that could have undermined the Victoria regime was eliminated.[26] With his biggest dissenters reeling from the loss of their leader, Victoria concentrated on the major issues facing Mexico, rather than consolidating his power in Mexico City. Victoria eliminated the figure that represented the colonial compromise of the Plan of Iguala. Mexico was free to continue on its new republican path.

President Victoria's primary goal was to execute the Constitution of 1824. He also needed to maintain the balance of the federalist liberals and the centralist conservatives in Congress. Victoria wanted to bring stability after the year of chaos that followed the fall of the imperial government. His middling politics gave him a reputation among members of both the liberals and conservatives of being a timid leader.[27] His moderate politics explain his divergent foreign and domestic policies.

The Mexican Republic met daunting financial problems. No substantial economic recovery occurred under Iturbide and what little was gained was lost during the chaos of 1823. The imperial government only made feeble attempts to restore the mining infrastructure that was so desperately needed to get the economy back up to its peak recorded in 1800.[28] Further, smuggling and piracy were major problems that limited government income and forced raises in

[25] Augustin de Iturbide, *Memoirs of Iturbide*, trans. Michael J. Quin, (Washington D.C.: Documentary Publications, 1971), pp. xxii-xxiii.
[26] Alamán, *Historia de Mejico*, pp. 802-803.
[27] Lorenzo de Zavala, *Ensayo Historico de las Revoluciones de Megico desde 1808-1830*, (Paris: Imprenta de P. Dupont et G. Laguione, 1831), p. 317.
[28] John H. Coatsworth, "Obstacles to Economic Growth in Nineteenth-Century Mexico", in *The American Historical Review* 83, no. 1, (February 1978), p. 95.

the tariff rates, which negatively affected trade.[29] The lack of financial revenue caused the inability of Iturbide to pay his military, a problem which led to his overthrow. Victoria sought to correct the financial issue. Like Iturbide, Victoria looked outside the borders of Mexico for economic salvation. He did not choose to expand those borders, however, but to push Mexico into the international economic community.

Victoria used all of the governmental resources available to him to achieve his goal of stabilization through international cooperation. He kept the foreign minister that Iturbide sent to the United States because of his experience there. Minister José Manuel Zozaya used the establishment of the Constitution of 1824, the republican system, and President Monroe's own proclamation of 1823, which established the Monroe Doctrine, to convince the United States to recognize Mexican independence and the United Mexican States as a part of the international community. At the same time, Mexican diplomats in London were able to convince the British government that Mexico was independent of Spain and not tied to Spain's Atlantic slave trade. They signed a maritime treaty with Britain that led to British recognition of Mexico as an independent nation. This achievement opened the possibility of greater economic exchange between Mexico and the Anglo nations.[30]

Mexico and Britain were both interested in a similar plan for economic investment in 1825. Both wanted to reestablish the mining industry in Mexico. The founders of the Anglo-Mexican Company created it with the idea that it would be a "company to unite all the mines of Mexico."[31] British banking houses, primarily Barclays, invested over thirty million pesos in Mexico. Those banking houses charged exorbitant interest rates which limited Mexico's full use

[29] John H. Coatsworth & Jeffery G. Williamson, "Always Proctectionist? Latin American Tariffs from Independence to Great Depression", *Journal of Latin American Studies* 36, no. 2, (May 2004), p. 208.
[30] Alamán, *Historia de Mejico*, pp. 815-817.
[31] Ibid, p. 818.

of that investment.[32] This financial windfall should have enabled the Mexican mining industry to recover, which should have led to a more prosperous Mexican economy because its rich natural resources were its primary wealth. That was not to be. Though the Anglo-Mexican Company reestablished the Valencia silver mine in Guanajuato, the Victoria government funneled the bulk of the loaned funds into the military. Those loans haunted Mexico for years.

Rising domestic issues hindered the success and continuation of Mexico's foreign policy. The two main issues of the Victoria presidency were defense and the "Spanish problem." On defense, the problems included the prospect of another military coup and the fear of European invasion. Additionally, growing anti-Spanish sentiments throughout Mexico, among liberals and conservatives alike, created a push for the expulsion of peninsulares. Victoria's middling politics forced him to appease multiple groups at the expense of full economic investment. These domestic issues gave rise to a growing trend of xenophobia in Mexico during Victoria's term.

Victoria recognized that Iturbide's downfall had been the Emperor's inability to pay the salaries of the military leaders, who had been vital to the independence movement of 1820-1821. So, Victoria made a point to promote loyal soldiers to high positions and pay high salaries to the military leadership. He also conceded to pay what generals claimed the Iturbide regime owed them. The Mexican standing army maintained enlistment at over fifty thousand men, and numbers swelled as it became an outlet for increasing numbers of poor and unemployed young men.[33]

The other domestic challenge the Victoria government faced was the rising resentment toward the Spanish-born population. A push for deportation of all Mexico's Spaniards became a popular platform for many liberals in Congress. Liberals who supported expulsions wanted to

[32] Sierra, *The Political Evolution of the Mexican People,* p. 191.
[33] Michael C. Meyer & William L. Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 318-319.

make a clean break from colonial ties. Some of those liberals wanted to take expulsions so far as to redistribute the land and monetary wealth of Spaniards residing in Mexico. Expulsions, though, created a big problem. Mexico relied on an export-based economy and many of the Spanish families targeted for expulsion facilitated trade with Iberia. It became an issue on which Victoria could not find a middle ground.[34]

The representatives from the coastal States cared more about Spanish expulsions than those from the interior, though it was brought to the forefront in the metropolis by representatives who forced the debate in Congress. As early as May 1824, Spanish born people began to speak out in the Second Constituent Congress about the productivity and importance of the Spanish in Mexico. Luis Quintanar, a former royalist officer and politician in Guadalajara, proclaimed to Congress that most of the Spanish had become Mexican citizens; they lived in Mexico, worked there, and called it home.[35] The next year, Victoria tried to appease the anti-Spanish movement by supporting military action in Vera Cruz against lingering Spanish forces.

By 1827, though, individual States began to pass their own expulsion laws, much to the chagrin of the federal government. Victoria, his cabinet, and many of the conservatives in Congress did not want the issue to become a popular movement because it alienated foreign business and investors. The movement against the Spanish, however, began to gain a popular following in Mexico City, fueled by fear of the reconquest and jealousy of class distinctions between wealthy Spaniards and the poor masses. By the end of December 1827, Congress passed a law for expulsion and it was announced throughout the States by the year's end.[36]

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[34] Harold Dana Sims, *The Expulsion of Mexico's Spaniards, 1821-1836*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990), pp. 3-5.
[35] Luis de Quintanar, "La Exposición Reservado", 05/17/1824, in Valentín Gómez Farías Collection, 1770-1909, Benson Latin American Collection, General Libraries, University of Texas at Austin.
[36] Sims, *Expulsion of Mexico's Spaniards,* p. 26.

The first expulsion law of 1827 was not as effective as the anti-Spanish congressmen would have liked. Local governments made lots of exceptions. Less than one quarter of the total number of Spaniards ordered to be expelled actually faced deportation. The other three quarters were given official exemptions to the law.[37] Execution of the law fell under the jurisdiction of the individual states. Many, like Coahuila y Texas, did not have a particular issue with their Spanish population, likely because that population was very small. It was only in the coastal territories and Mexico City that the expulsions were carried out with any alacrity.

Elections opened in Mexico the next year. The issue of Spanish expulsions became the primary issue of the election. Manuel Gómez Pedraza ran as the successor of Victoria to continue the politics of moderation. Vicente Guerrero represented the liberals to push their agenda of greater State authority and expanded Spanish expulsions. Pedraza won the election outright, but radical federalists feared losing control of the Congress and revolted. Members of the Congress that had created the rules of legal suffrage just four years earlier, violated their own constitution.[38] A crisis began that required Victoria's most loyal generals to come to his aid.

Vicente Filisola maintained his position as a general and used the realpolitik skills gained in Central America to maneuver through criticisms and political turbulence. This was important because it allowed him to be an integral part of the Mexican military throughout the crises of the 1820s and 1830s. He had to face heavy criticism for his role in loss of Central America. Francisco Barrundia, a Guatemalan born politician, publicly criticized Filisola for his leadership failures in Central America.[39] Filisola defended himself in pamphlets and newspapers distributed throughout Mexico and Central America, which ultimately culminated in a book on his defense, *La Cooperación de México en la Independencia de Centro América.* In

[37] Ibid, 37.
[38] Sierra, *The Political Evolution of the Mexican People,* p. 195.
[39] Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Central America*, vol. VIII, (California: History Company, 1887), p. 70.

it, he claimed that he always remained loyal to the Mexican government and followed the best course of action for the people of Central America and the people of Mexico.[40] Filisola proved that loyalty when he fought for Pedraza on behalf of Victoria and the majority of voters who elected Pedraza.

Victoria ordered Filisola to march to Tlalmanalco, which is on the eastern border of the State of Mexico with Puebla. There, he found the resistance against the Pedraza election to be poorly armed, but sincere in their will to fight. He also found that the alcaldes of the area favored the revolt and pushed the masses to continue the fight against federal troops. Filisola believed, however, that tranquility could be brought to area rather quickly.[41]

Two months later, the President called on Filisola when the rebels, mostly Mexico City residents led by Lorenzo de Zavala, captured a fortified militia compound named La Acordada. Fighting raged for days and hundreds of civilians died. Victoria admitted defeat and commanded Filisola and his men to stand down. The surviving mob turned their violence against the city's Spanish population and ransacked their merchant quarter, called El Parián. Collateral damage from this mob action destroyed millions of pesos worth of private property. A large portion of the property destroyed belonged to the British and French. This event aggravated tensions between Mexico and Europe. After the failure at La Acordada, Filisola made a point to assure the safety of the President, then withdrew from the city on horseback with thoughts of retirement.[42] The last year of the Victoria presidency was a mess and a harbinger of things to come.

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[40] Vicente Filisola, *La Cooperacion de Mexico en la Independencia de Centro America*, (Mexico: Vda de Bouret, 1911), p. 17.

[41] Filisola to the Minister of War and Navy, 10/10/1828, in Valentín Gómez Farías Collection, 1770-1909, Benson Latin American Collection, General Libraries, University of Texas at Austin.

[42] Filisola, *La Cooperacion*, p. 8.

The looting and destruction of property during the revolt of La Acordada cost Mexico millions of pesos. It was a disaster for the Mexican government, which had made such headway in the international community. Further, the whole situation delegitimized Congress and the Constitution of 1824. Regardless, because of the losses at La Acordada Victoria declared Guerrero President elect, but still served out the rest of his term. He became a lame duck puppet of the liberal Congress and pushed through an expanded expulsion law. One of his final declarations admonished the governments of California, New Mexico, and the Eastern Interior States for not thoroughly executing the law of Spanish expulsion.[43]

4.4 The Reconquest

The movement against the Spanish who were residing in Mexico was part of a larger problem. Fear of the Spanish reconquest grew throughout Latin America.[44] That fear escalated in Mexico after the detachment of Central America. Civil war broke out in Central America which weakened that territory militarily, economically, and politically. If the Spanish chose to invade Central America at that time, the isthmus would have provided a foothold for the Spanish in its former colonies. Further, the fear of the Spanish reconquest created an air of suspicion about the Anglo powers of the United States and Britain. So, when a Spanish invasion actually occurred in July 1829, Congress responded by abandoning the Constitution of 1824 and giving full executive power to President Guerrero. Guerrero appointed General Antonio López de Santa Anna as commander of forces to repel the invasion. Santa Anna promoted Manuel Mier y Terán as his second in command. Their success at Tampico in defeating the Spanish invaders had great implications for Mexico.

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[43] "Declaración por Guadalupe Victoria", 03/20/1829, Mariano Vallejo Collection, BANC MSS M-M 323, The Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.

[44] Jeremy Adelman, *Sovereignty and Revolution in the Iberian Atlantic*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 4-5.

The union of provinces in the Federal Republic of Central America deteriorated after 1824. By 1826, a civil war broke out on the isthmus. A conservative coup against the liberal government in Guatemala City sparked three years of violence and chaos, as well as created anti-clerical and anti-Spanish movements. The civil war left the territory open to Spanish attack. Leaders in Mexico City, as well as Gran Colombia, were worried about the possibility of Spain taking advantage of the situation to regain a foothold on the continent. News of the violence and anarchy in Central America disquieted many Mexicans who feared Spanish designs to reclaim Spain's former colonies.[45]

This situation in Central America added to fears in Mexico City of a Spanish reconquest attempt through a weak southern border. At the same time, Mexican fears of a foreign invasion from the north grew higher. Reports of an Anglo incursion into San Francisco Bay stirred fears of losing California. A Mexican ship captain claimed to see four English ships heading toward the port of San Francisco. It was unclear whether the ships were British or North American, but Mexicans in California feared that they were North American agents sent to get a foothold in San Francisco for the United States.[46] The Anglo ships were probably British or United States trade ships heading for Oregon. Regardless, this situation demonstrated the Mexican fear of invasion from its northern and southern boundaries.

All of the fear and xenophobia in Mexico appeared reasonable in the summer of 1829. That July, a division of Spanish soldiers under General Isidro Barradas left Cuba for the east coast of Mexico. They landed just south of Tampico, a town that had been evacuated in anticipation of the Spanish landfall. Santa Anna was the first Mexican general dispatched to defend against the invasion. Terán arrived a week later under the command of Felipe de la

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[45] Miles L. Wortman, *Government and Society in Central America, 1680-1840*, (New York, Columbia University Press, 1982), pp. 247-250.

[46] Estevan to Secretary of State, 12/13/1828, Official Mexican Correspondence, BANC MSS M-A 6, The Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.

Garza, the commandant general of the Eastern Interior Provinces. Santa Anna's troops laid siege to the town and prevented the Spaniards from being resupplied. Garza's troops harassed Barradas, but could not secure a definite victory. Santa Anna relieved Garza and promoted Terán to command. That promotion for Terán also entailed the position of commandant general of the Eastern Interior Provinces. In his new leadership role, Terán used the guerrilla insurgent tactics he had learned during the independence movement to cripple the morale of the Spanish soldiers, which was already low due to rampant mosquito-born illness and lack of supplies. Barradas unconditionally surrendered to Terán in September under lenient terms. The remaining Spanish troops, under Mexican guard, embarked for Cuba in October.[47] The Spanish attack at Tampico seemed to justify the anti-Spanish actions of the previous five years.

The Mexican victory over Spain at Tampico opened many important outcomes. In international terms, Spain had to rethink its relationship with its former colony. The loss at Tampico was an international embarrassment for Spain and a credit for Mexico. It solidified Mexican national identity and opened discussion in the Spanish Cortes of recognizing Mexico as an independent nation-state. That recognition would end the constant fear of a Spanish reconquest.[48]

Domestically, the suspension of the Constitution of 1824 in order to give President Guerrero special war powers had dramatic consequences. Guerrero expanded his wartime powers beyond the necessities of war. He decreed that slavery in all of Mexico be abolished, an act directed at the Anglo-Americans in Texas. He also gave the Treasury Department expanded authority. Its Secretary, Lorenzo de Zavala, took radical steps and imposed heavy income taxes. These policies isolated Guerrero and put him in an assailable position, even

[47] Manuel María Escobar, "Campaña de Tampico de Tamaulipas, año de 1829," in *Historia Mexicana* 9, no. 1, (Summer 1959), pp. 73-81.
[48] Leslie Bethell, *Mexico Since Independence*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 10-16.

after the Spanish defeat. The suspension of the Constitution decreased the authority of the document as the model for government, because if it could be suspended by the executive in any time of crisis, Congress lost all checks on the executive power.[49]

Santa Anna and Terán also became wildly popular after their success at Tampico. Both men became national heroes, which greatly expanded their political influence. Santa Anna earned the title of "Benefactor of the Homeland," an honor granted by Congress.[50] His influence on Mexican politics affected the next several decades. Terán continued as commandant general of the Eastern Interior Provinces. He used his experience in Chiapas to work directly in Texas to repair the Anglo situation he saw when on the Boundary Commission expedition. Terán's work and influence in Texas directly impacted the relationship between Anglo Texans and Mexico City due to his recommendations in the Boundary Commission report and his personal interactions with Anglo leaders.[51]

4.5 Mexican Concerns about Texas

After the success at Tampico, Mexico became more xenophic. Mexico City concerned itself with domestic matters. New leaders, like Anastacio Bustamante, wanted to consolidate power in Mexico City in order to protect Mexico from outside encroachments. Bustamante's political program included limiting foreign immigrants from entering Mexico and, consequently, consolidating defenses on Mexico's borders. This program irritated Anglo-Americans in Texas, who had become used to the practical sovereignty they experienced under Victoria and the Constitution of 1824.

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[49] Anna, *Forging Mexico*, p. 227.
[50] Meyer & Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, p. 321. Santa Ana's title in Spanish was "Benemérito de la Patria".
[51] Ohland Morton, "The Life General Don Manuel Mier y Terán: As it affected Texas-Mexican Relations", in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 47, no. 3, (January, 1944), pp. 256-267.

In 1827, Terán headed a commission to survey the northern boundary of Mexico that the United States and Spain agreed upon in the 1819 Adams-Onís treaty. This commission put Terán in Texas for almost a year. While there, he saw the problems caused by the Anglo population that dominated the area. He found that many of those who resided in Texas loathed the Mexican government and believed it was a, "...republic that consists only of ignorant mulattoes and Indians."[52] He wrote extensively to President Victoria explaining the Anglo problem in Texas and suggested policy changes in order to bolster greater Mexican authority in that territory.[53] Terán's complaints and suggestions regarding the northern territories resonated with the conservative Mexican president in 1830, Anastasio Bustamante.

Bustamante assumed the Mexican presidency on the last day of 1829. He led a coup against Vicente Guerrero, who refused to relinquish unconditional executive powers granted him during the Spanish invasion.[54] Bustamante was a career military officer and began in the royalist armed forces under Félix Calleja. He joined Iturbide under the Plan of Iguala and became the first commandant general of Eastern Interior Provinces in independent Mexico. When Bustamante came to power in 1829, he took Terán's report of the Boundary Commission very seriously and called Terán and Lucas Alamán, the new conservative foreign minister, together to discuss a solution to the perceived threat to Mexico's territorial integrity. The overall goal of the discussion was made clear by the title of the first draft of the law, "Proposal for a Law to Preserve the Integrity of the Territory of the Republic."[55] That proposal birthed the Law of April 6, 1830. This law represented the culmination of the inward turn and isolationist trend in

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[52] Manuel Mier y Terán to the Governor of Coahuila y Texas, June 24, 1828, in *Texas by Terán,* ed. Jack Jackson, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), p. 96.
[53] Mier y Terán to the President of Mexico, June 30, 1828, in *Texas by Terán,* pp. 96-101; Mier y Terán to the Secretary of Foreign Relations, July 7, 1828, in Ibid, pp. 104-105.
[54] Timothy Anna, *Forging Mexico 1821-1835*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), pp. 227-229.
[55]Nettie Lee Benson, "Texas as Viewed from Mexico", in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 90, no. 3, (January, 1987), p. 275.

Mexico that began after the Central American independence and continued through the reconquest attempt in 1829. The law combined liberal economic policies with conservative immigration policies. Bustamante hoped that the law would both boost the Mexican economy and stem the tide of Anglo-American encroachment on the northern frontier.[56]

Many of the articles in the Law of 1830 dealt with economic issues. The Mexican economy had still not recovered and the European loans went unpaid. Bustamante sought to remove government regulations in order to expand trade to rebuild the Mexican economy. The law decreed that coastal trading in Mexico would continue to be free to foreign merchants for four years. It also stated that goods previously excluded from entering Mexico to protect local manufacturers would be allowed.[57] These articles of the law built upon the decrees Iturbide made in 1823 that offered duty-free concessions on foreign imports for six years.[58] Bustamante wanted to resolve the Mexican economic difficulties before all else.

However, Bustamante also wanted to limit Anglo-American encroachment into Mexico. Article 11 stated that, "...it is prohibited that emigrants from nations bordering this republic shall settle in the states or territory adjacent to their own nation."[59] Bustamante and the Mexican government had every right to implement a law restricting immigrants from the United States. The first colonization law of 1824 left a provision for amendments to be made concerning the origin of immigrants. Article 7 of the Mexican National Colonization Law of 1824 stated that in case of imperious circumstances, Congress could prohibit foreigners based on their nation of

[56] Gregg Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin, Empresario of Texas*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1999), p. 219.
[57] Wallace L. McKeehan, trans. "Articles of the Bustamante Decree of April 6, 1830", stable url: http://www.tamu.edu/faculty/ccbn/dewitt/consultations1.htm#articles , Art. 1 & 12.
[58] Wallace L. McKeehan, trans. "Colonization Law Decree of 1823", stable url: http://www.tamu.edu/faculty/ccbn/dewitt/cololaws.htm#decree , Art. 24.
[59] Wallace L. McKeehan, trans. "Articles of the Bustamante Decree of April 6, 1830", stable url: http://www.tamu.edu/faculty/ccbn/dewitt/consultations1.htm#articles , Art. 11.

origin.[60] Technically, article 11 of the law of 1830 did not undermine the Constitution of 1824 or the laws that coincided with it. Anglo-Americans still took serious issue with article 11 and voiced their dissent in letters to Mexico City.

Though it was article 11 of this law that so infuriated the Anglo colonists, several articles of this law exhibited the fear the Bustamante government had of Mexico being reconquered by a foreign power. The unsuccessful Spanish invasion of 1829, overtures from the United States to purchase the northern territories, and general social unrest in those northern territories in the late 1820s all influenced the content of this law. For example, articles 2 and 14 called for a reserve fund to be created in case of a future Spanish invasion and for more forts to be built in the frontiers, respectively.[61] This law made it clear that Terán, Alamán, and Bustamante all worried about the territorial integrity of Mexico in 1830.

Radical factions of Anglo-Americans in Texas, who were generally newly arrived in the territory and sought to separate Texas from Mexico, used the Law of April 6, 1830 as a catalyst to violently resist greater Mexican military presence, customs enforcement, and threats to Anglo slaveholding. One radical group, led by William B. Travis, who had just arrived in Texas in May 1831, instigated an uprising against a Mexican Army garrison at Anáhuac near Galveston Bay. Travis and eighty members of the local ayuntamientos organized a militia to fight the regular Mexican soldiers in the fort. The Mexican soldiers, though, mutinied and dispersed based on information from Mexico City that General Santa Anna overthrew Bustamante as President.[62] The commander of the fort, Col. Juan Davis Bradburn fled the garrison and escaped to Louisiana to avoid capture. Radical Anglo-Americans used the political struggle in Mexico City

[60] "Ley de Colonización Mexicana," August 18, 1824, Art. 7.
[61] Ibid, Art. 2 & 14.
[62] Juan Davis Bradburn, "Memorial of Colonel Juan Davis Bradburn Concerning the Events at Anáhuac , 1831-1832", prepared for Vicente Filisola, in Margaret Swett Henson, *Juan Davis Bradburn: A Reappraisal of the Mexican Commander of Anhuac* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1982).

between Santa Anna and Bustamante as cover for their rebellion in 1832. They also used the law of 1830 as their excuse for attacking Anáhuac.

The radical separatist Anglo-Americans who attacked Anáhuac claimed the law of 1830 pushed them to rebel. The rebels sent the Turtle Bayou Resolutions to the Mexican colonel sent to replace Bradburn. This document associated the uprising in Anáhuac to the greater political struggle in Mexico City of federalists against centralists. It placed the Anglo uprising as a continuation of the federalist movement. The resolutions outlined the reasons for the rebellion at Anáhuac. Those reasons revolved around the idea that Bustamante's government and the laws that government installed ran contrary to the Constitution of 1824.[63] The Anglo-American radicals claimed that, if given leave to continue life under the constitution, there would be peace and prosperity in Texas.[64] Interestingly, peace reigned in Texas between 1833-1835 during a very liberal and federalist regime in Mexico City that embraced the enlightened tenets of the Constitution of 1824.

4.6 Terán's Death and Santa Anna's Rise

Manuel Mier y Terán reacted poorly to the failure of his policies in Texas. After two years, it seemed the Anglo problem was getting worse rather than better. To compound the problem, the political strife that erupted in Mexico City between the states and the central government bothered him personally and professionally. Terán saw the nation he had helped create from its inception coming apart State by State. He became overwhelmed and committed suicide in July of 1832. His death had serious repercussions in both Mexico City and Texas.

Terán's death created political shifts in Mexico City. Terán had been considered one of the saviors of the republic for his success at Tampico against the Spaniards in 1829. His

[63] Address to Colonel José Antonio Mexia, June 13, 1832, Mirabeau B. Lamar Papers #157, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.
[64] Ibid.

popularity among political elites rivaled Santa Anna's. His advisors pressed him to run for president as the figure who would moderate relations between the liberals and conservatives.[65] Many thought that he would succeed in Texas and return to Mexico City as the future leader of the nation.

His death, however, eliminated any serious challenge to Santa Anna's popular support. Interestingly, though, Terán's death caused many high ranking officials to question Santa Anna's leadership. They believed someone assassinated Terán. Vicente Filisola refused to accept that Terán killed himself. Filisola cited a letter Terán wrote to his brother which stated that Terán believed he had become a target of Santa Anna's revolution.[66] Others, including Carlos María de Bustamante, claimed it had to be assassination because of Terán's belief in God and the tenets of Catholicism.[67] Though only a minority of political elites believed the assassination theory, it had consequences for Santa Anna and his leadership.

Terán's death also had serious consequences for Texas. The man who spent four consecutive years intimately involved in the politics there disappeared. With him went all his experience and influence on Anglo-American elites in Texas, especially his friendship with Stephen F. Austin. Officials in Mexico City lost a valuable asset in the event of open Anglo-American rebellion. Instead, when the sustained movement against Mexico occurred in 1835, Santa Anna went basically unchallenged.

Terán's career from Chiapas to Texas impacted Mexico as a whole. In Chiapas, he learned that direct military pressure could sway popular support and get results. He successfully convinced Chiapas to remain a part of Mexico, even if it angered some Chiapans and elites in Guatemala City. Additionally, his work as Boundary Commissioner directly

[65] Anna, *Forging Mexico,* pp. 250-251.
[66] Vicente Filisola, *Memorias para la Historia de la Guerra de Tejas*, vol. 1, (Mexico: Editora Nacional, 1957), pp. 254-255.
[67] Morton, "Life of Terán", p. 542.

influenced policy and elicited the passage of the law of April 6, 1830. This law and his implementation of it, however, did not gain popular support in Texas. The Anglos living there loathed this law and felt it infringed too far onto their perceived civil rights. Ironically, Terán's superior work as a soldier and politician added to the frustrations of an already volatile population in Texas. His suicide was likely the result of his severe disillusionment with his failures in Texas and the continuous civil strife throughout Mexico.

Vicente Filisola replaced Terán as commandant general of the Eastern Interior Provinces. He presided over the area for two years and ingratiated himself with both the State leadership in Coahuila y Tejas and the Anglos who resided there. Filisola gained respect in Texas for his even temper and support of the peopling of the frontier regardless of birthplace.[68] He guided the frontier states peacefully by enforcing the liberalizing agenda of the federalist national government, until the next eruption of civil violence occurred in 1835.

Filisola had a selfish motive for enforcing the liberal Mexican agenda toward Anglo-American immigration from 1833-1835. The State government of Coahuila y Tejas granted Filisola a colonization contract in 1828 and, if he met the terms of the contract, he gained title to twenty leagues of land in northeast Texas.[69] He recognized that peaceful relations between Mexicans and Anglo-American immigrants allowed for a positive atmosphere in which to draw colonists from both the United States and Mexico. Filisola needed those colonists to meet the terms of his contract and thus get title to his choice of vast tracts of land. His term as commandant general marked two years of relative cooperation between Anglo-Americans and Mexican officials in Texas.

[68] W.S. Parrott to Stephen F. Austin, 01/16/1833, in "The Austin Papers", vol. 3, p. 914.
[69] Ramon Musquiz to Austin, 06/12/1828, in Ibid, vol. 2, p. 47.

4.7 Texas Independence

The return to local power structures in 1833 gave way to over a year of relative peace in the Texas territory. Santa Anna overthrew Bustamante and replaced that centralizing regime with a federalist one, first led by Manuel Pedraza and then Valentín Gómez Farías. Gómez Farías, along with a Congress laden with liberal federalists, returned regional authority to the States, including Coahuila y Tejas. Their liberalizing agenda, though, targeted the Church and the military. This stirred Santa Anna to return to Mexico City to overthrow Gómez Farías. In doing so, Santa Anna restored many of the political leaders who worked under Bustamante. They reverted to the policies of 1830-1832 and took their centralizing plan a step further. In 1835, the centralist regime dissolved the Mexican Constitution of 1824. Mexican States throughout the nation pronounced against the dissolution of the document and rebelled. Coahuila y Tejas also rebelled. Santa Anna marched on the rebelling States to crush local militias. Radical separatist Anglo-Americans in Texas took the opportunity to unite Anglos in Texas under the banner of independence.

Santa Anna declared against Bustamante in January 1832. The States saw the Bustamante regime as a threat to regional power and the tenets of federalism outlined in Constitution of 1824. Mexico disintegrated into civil war by February. The national army fought skirmishes against civic militias all year. By December, Bustamante and his exhausted forces admitted defeat in the face of such staunch resistance. Santa Anna stood as the leader of Mexico after Bustamante admitted defeat. Santa Anna, though, did not want to lead Mexico politically. Instead, he turned the reigns over to Pedraza, who still had great support even after the contested election of 1828. Pedraza called for new elections to be held in order to confirm legitimacy to the newly installed federalist government. Santa Anna won that election in March

1833 and turned the running of government over to his vice president, Valentín Gómez Farías.[70] Santa Anna retired to his hacienda in Veracruz.

The Gómez Farías regime was very liberal. One effective liberal policy initiated in Texas, the law of May 18, 1834, divided Texas into three departments. The three departments included one at Béxar, one around Brazos, and one at Nacogdoches. Anglo elites became the majority and ran the new departments. This policy appeased Mexicans in Coahuila y Tejas who wanted greater State controlled authority. It also satisfied the self-interested Anglo-Americans who received greater autonomy. Though the concentrated Anglo population still created concern for Mexican officials, they supposed that if given local control alongside greater military oversight, Texas would remain a peaceful and prosperous territory for the republic.[71]

Anglo-Americans in Coahuila y Tejas still pursued the idea of making Texas a State independent of Coahuila, but did so through available local government channels. Anglos brought up the issue of statehood in the ayuntamiento of Béxar, which elicited responses and letters from all over Coahuila y Tejas.[72] One Anglo-American group organized and created a resolution for separate statehood that they submitted to the federalist regime in 1833. Though Mexico City declined to consider it at the time, the movement was not discouraged to bring up the issue at a later date.[73] Though this movement stirred fears in Mexico City of separatist motivations in Texas, it demonstrated that some of the Anglos in Texas were willing to work within Mexican federalist structures in order to gain stronger local authority. Many Anglo-American settlers believed that separate statehood was the only way by which they could remain a part of Mexico.

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[70] Anna, *Forging Mexico*, pp. 246-259.
[71] Juan Almonte to Secretary of State of Mexico, 06/14/1834, in Jack Jackson, *Almonte's Texas*, (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2003), pp. 132-135.
[72] Austin to Ayuntamiento of San Antonio, 10/16/1833, in "The Austin Papers".
[73] Josefina Zoraida Vazquez, "The Colonization and Loss of Texas: A Mexican Perspective," in Jaime Rodriguez O. & Kathryn Vincent, *Myths, Misdeeds, and Misunderstandings: The Roots of Conflict in US – Mexican Relations.* (Wilmington DE: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1997), p. 68.

In 1834, a small but growing minority of Anglos wanted either Texas independence or for the United States to absorb the territory. This minority consisted largely of adventurers and agents of interested United States businessmen. These mostly came from New Orleans, where there existed an extreme interest in Texas' resources and a tradition of sponsoring filibustering incursions into the Spanish-Anglo border region. Adventurous Anglo-Americans who sought to instigate rebellion in Texas could find funding from New Orleans businessmen.[74] These adventurers, funded by United States businessmen, filled the ranks of the growing group of radical Anglo-Americans seeking Texas independence.[75] The political conditions in Mexico under the federalist regime, though, did not create an atmosphere conducive to an uprising in Texas.

By the end of 1833, the liberal controlled Congress in Mexico City attempted to separate the Church from the Mexican economy and government. The *Ley de Curatos* of December 1833 limited the obligation for Mexicans to pay tithes to the Church. It also prohibited the clergy to openly discuss politics in religious buildings, such as temples and churches.[76] These two key points, among others included in the law, sought to restrict the powers of the Church in Mexican society. This law met stiff resistance from conservatives and moderates, alike. Even Valentín Gómez Farías openly disapproved of the measures against the Church.[77] The passage and enforcement of this law created a backlash against the liberals in power. Santa Anna sanctioned the law. By 1834, conservatives gained political favor and momentum in Mexico City due the liberals' anti-clerical agenda.

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[74] Edward L. Miller, *New Orleans and the Texas Revolution*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), p. 203.
[75] Vicente Filisola, "Representacion Dirigida a Suprema Gobierno", 1836, in Carlos Casteñeda, *The Mexican Side of the Texas Revolution*, 2nd Ed., (Austin: Graphic Ideas Inc., 1970), p. 175.
[76] Gastón Garcia Cantú, "Introduccion a Ley de Curas 1833", www. Senado2010.gob.mx.
[77] Will Fowler, " Valentín Gómez Farías: Perceptions of Radicalism in Independent Mexico, 1821-1847", *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 15, no. 1, (1996), p. 53.

Liberals in Congress further isolated moderates and conservatives in 1834. Congress voted to limit the national army in January. Liberals worried about the power of a national military. They chose to shift finances to local militias. Congressional members hoped these measures would protect the federal system because it had become apparent in 1823, 1829, 1830, and 1832 that the national army could directly influence politics in Mexico City. Congress also wanted to save the public coffers from the cost of maintaining Mexico's large national army. Most conservatives and moderates, conversely, had close ties to the national military and did not want to shrink its power or influence. This split in the way elites wanted to handle the national military and irritated the relationship between liberals and conservatives.[78]

As early as January 1834, conservatives, led by José María Tornel, began to plot and intrigue for Gómez Farías's overthrow. Santa Anna supported Tornel and returned to Mexico City in April of that year to reclaim his seat as President and relieve Gómez Farías of his position. With Tornel and other conservative advisers, Santa Anna initiated the Plan of Cuernavaca. This plan decreed that the laws that Congress issued against the Church be overturned and Santa Anna be given the executive power to implement the reversal of the unpopular liberal reforms. The Plan of Cuernavaca marked Mexico's break from federalism and transition toward centralism.[79] The initiation of the plan also signaled that another major political shift was occurring in Mexico City.

Centralism gained popularity in Mexico City in 1834. Proponents of centralism based their ideas on the traditional colonial model of rule by the privileged classes. These *hombres de bien*, generally made up of wealthy, respected, property owners, thought federalism failed to achieve its goal. To these elites, federalism destroyed the standards of law and order. Centralists, led by Lucas Alamán and Tornel, sought to reform the electoral system so only

[78] Will Fowler, *Santa Anna of Mexico*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), p. 152.
[79] Will Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna: The Writer and the Caudillo, 1795-1853*, Electronic Reproduction, (Boulder: Netlibrary, 2002) pp. 141-143.

property owners could vote. This voting process ensured that the propertied elite consolidated power. These men wanted a return to what they remembered as the stability under central authority of colonial society. Centralists managed to gain the majority in Congress and promptly initiated their own reforms.[80] One of their more radical moves included the dissolution of the Constitution of 1824.

Centralists rose to power by 1835 on the platform that federalism had failed. The centralists' biggest complaints centered on the defects of the Constitution of 1824. The centralist leadership believed the liberal document did not fit Mexico or its people. Those leaders, like Tornel, often cited the La Arcordad and El Parían uprisings in 1828 as the point where the constitution failed.[81] The centralist Congress dissolved the constitution in October 1835. The new structure of government became the Constitution of 1836, also known as *Las Siete Leyes*. This document retained the division of the national government into three branches: the executive, legislative, and judicial. This 1836 document, however, eliminated the powers of the States. It dissolved State legislatures and replaced them with departmental councils that answered directly to the national government.[82] Many States would not abide that transition and openly revolted against the centralist regime. Coahuila y Tejas was one of those States. The dissolution of the Constitution of 1824 ignited the Anglo-American revolt in Texas.

Civil war broke out in Mexico in 1835. The State of Zacatecas declared against the centralist government in April, before the constitution's dissolution. State leaders there, namely governor Francisco García, anticipated the loss of State's rights and called on the civic militia to defend Zacatecas against the perceived tyranny of centralism. Santa Anna's forces crushed the rebellion there and allowed his men to pillage the conquered territory as they pleased. It was a

[80] Michael P. Consteloe, "Federalism to Centralism in Mexico: The Conservative Case for Change, 1834-1835", *The Americas* 45, no. 2, (October, 1988), pp. 175-184
[81] Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna*, p. 143.
[82] "Las Siete Leyes", 12/29/1836, http://bibliotecadigital.ilce.edu.mx/sites/estados/libros/zacateca/html/sec_59.html

statement to all the other rebellious states.[83] In fact, it became public knowledge from Mexico City to Nacogdoches that Santa Anna planned a similar expedition to Coahuila y Tejas as punishment for their insurgency.[84] The movement in Texas continued to radicalize after Zacatecas fell to Santa Anna.

During the summer of 1835, Anglo-Americans in Texas remained split on which course of action to take. Radicals, along with the growing number of filibusters from the United States, called to take arms against the Mexican soldiers stationed in Texas. Moderates warned against such rash action and called for conciliatory actions. As late as July, the moderates clearly held the majority.[85] Mexican military movements and propaganda spread by the radicals quickly turned a majority of Anglo-American in favor of armed conflict. In September, General Martín Cos arrived in Texas with six hundred Mexican troops. He demanded the arrests of radical Anglo-Americans and stationed himself in Béxar. Radical Anglo-Americans used Cos and his reinforcements as evidence that Mexico intended to invade and plunder Texas as it had Zacetecas. By fall, one of the most prestigious and influential Anglo-Americans in Texas, Stephen F. Austin, joined the radicals in the call to take up arms against Mexico.[86] In October, an Anglo-American militia attacked General Cos at Béxar.

Cos's appearance in Texas makes an interesting parallel with Filisola in Central America. Both men led battalions of six hundred troops into Mexico's peripheries during times of uncertainty. Both forces were meant to intimidate leaders of the peripheries into submitting to the will of Mexico City. Filisola went to Central America to force an end to the debate about annexation. Cos went into Texas to force the arrest and removal of radical Anglos. These two

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[83] Fowler, *Santa Anna*, pp. 156-158.
[84] Vicente Filisola, *Memoirs for the History of the War in Texas*, vol. II, trans. Wallace Woolsey, (Austin: Eakin Press, 1987), p. 54.
[85] Paul D. Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1992), p. 30.
[86] Gregg Cantrell, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 315-316.

generals met very different reactions to their presence. Filisola's battalion successfully intimidated Central American leaders. Cos's battalion galvanized Anglo-Americans to fight against the Mexican military. The same policy yielded two very different responses in Central America and Texas based on the different political atmospheres and compositions of the peripheral peoples.

Centralists in Mexico City viewed this Anglo uprising against Cos as an opportunity to solidify centralism in Mexico City and as an opportunity to send a message to the United States. Tornel, as the Minister of War and Navy of the centralist regime, viewed the Texas uprising as a struggle between Mexico and the United States. His history as Mexican ambassador to the United States made him well aware of the expansionist tendency of the Jackson administration. Tornel saw swift action against the Anglo-Americans as a way of establishing Mexico's integrity against the United States.[87] Santa Anna also would not abide the attack at Béxar. He had returned to Veracruz after crushing the rebellion in Zacetecas and left the running of government to men like Tornel and Alamán. He viewed the uprising in Texas as a personal affront and saw it as an opportunity to add to his already glorious military resumé. Santa Anna volunteered to lead the army into Texas.[88] On November 7, the centralist newspaper in Mexico City published a declaration of war on Texas.

From November 1835 to April 1836, Tornel and Santa Anna made several mistakes based on misconceptions about the Anglo-American population in Texas. First, they did not understand that Anglo-Americans in Texas were not united under a unified leadership. Even after Austin joined the radicals, some Anglos still thought conciliation remained the best course of action to avoid the might of the Mexican national army. The Anglo-American militia even

[87] Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna*, pp. 154-155.
[88] Fowler, *Santa Anna,* pp. 159-162.

broke into various factions which fought under different rules and for different causes.[89] Santa Anna felt he needed to make haste to Texas in order to stem the uprising, when, in fact, the factionalism among the Anglos likely would have perpetuated and broke any unified resistance.

The haste with which Santa Anna raised his forces and marched to Texas caused other problems for him. He raised an army of over six thousand troops from San Luis Potosí in a month. He also coerced a large loan from the municipal government there. This resulted in many of his troops being poorly trained and poorly equipped from the outset. When Santa Anna added the rugged march of over six hundred miles in under two months, troop morale became as poor as how the troops were equipped. Further, that march occurred in December and January during terrible weather. Four hundred Mexican soldiers died during the march to Bèxar.[90] Santa Anna's urgency to put down the Texas rebellion was unnecessary.

Santa Anna's decision to quickly raise the national army spread fear among Anglo-Americans in Texas and pushed them to more fully unite against the common enemy. Another catalyst that united Anglos was the Tornel Decree. On December 30, 1835, Tornel announced that all foreigners armed and attacking Mexico would be executed. A division of Santa Anna's forces, under General Urrea, carried out the measures of the decree after the Battle at Goliad.[91] By the time of Goliad, there remained little doubt among Anglo-Americans that the Mexican army represented a common enemy. That united Anglo-American front caught Santa Anna by surprise in the Battle of San Jacinto and captured the Mexican general.

Vicente Filisola marched into Texas in 1836 as Santa Anna's second in command. When Anglo-Americans captured Santa Anna after he met a surprising defeat in the Battle of San Jacinto, command of the Mexican army fell to Filisola. Santa Anna's capture created a

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89 Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience*, p. 55.
90 Fowler, *Santa Anna*, pp. 160-165.
91 Ibid, p. 167.

power struggle among the generals under Filisola. Those generals immediately began to intrigue for Filisola's command.[92] The hierarchical structure of the army fell apart. Additionally, Filisola received orders from Tornel to ensure Santa Anna's safety.[93] Filisola led what remained of the army out of Texas. The same man who relinquished Central America also admitted Mexico had lost Texas.

4.8 Conclusion

The Constitution of 1824 represented Mexico's full break from the colonial model. Although it still recognized the Catholic Church as the national religion, the constitution predominantly contained enlightened ideals, which pushed Mexico away from the colonial model of monarchical control. Some members of the Congress that drafted the constitution wanted to take the break from the Spanish colonial model a step further. They pushed to expel Spanish-born residents in Mexico. Other, more conservative politicians, hoped to place Mexico in the international trade market and viewed expulsions as detrimental to their goal. This debate over expulsions culminated in the crisis of the election of 1828 that undermined the constitution.

The Mexican Constitution of 1824 shared remarkable similarities with the Constitution of the Central American Federation. Politicians in Mexico City dealt with analogous situations of concentrated regionalism that those in Guatemala City faced. However, there were key differences that separated both constitutions. These differences speak to the problems Mexico had in controlling and holding the union with Central America. The Mexican Constitution went further in separating the Church from the government processes and gave more power to the federal Congress than the State governments. It also gave more power to the executive. Vicente Guerrero exploited that power in 1829 when the Spanish invaded. He set a precedent

[92] Filisola, “Representacion a Dirigida al Supremo Gobierno”, p. 209.
[93] Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna,* p. 156.

for consolidating power for the central executive, and for suspending constitutional procedure during perceived national emergency.

Open colonization policies were also included in both the Mexican and Central American constitutions of 1824. This policy had great consequences for Mexico's northern peripheral territory of Texas. Anglo-Americans took advantage of the open colonization laws of the Mexican Republic. They settled in Texas, often without following the requirements outlined in the colonization law. Mexico realized its folly through Terán's Boundary Commission in 1827. By the time Mexico City imposed restrictions on Anglo-American immigration, the settled Anglos had become used to their near absolute freedoms. Adventurers and agents of United States business interests further irritated relations between Anglo-Americans and Mexican military officials. Those Anglo radicals, Terán's death, and Santa Anna's misunderstanding of the Texas situation, among other factors, created the revolutionary atmosphere in Texas.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Mexico emerged from independence as a vast landed empire in North America. That empire lasted fewer than two years before pieces began to break away. First, the former Audiencia of Guatemala declared its independence as the United Provinces of Central America. Twelve years later, Mexico lost Texas due to an Anglo-American uprising. A key factor in Mexico's break up was Mexico's leadership's misunderstanding of the populations and politics of its peripheries. Different colonial experiences, separate political development, and geographic isolation produced those leaders' misconceptions.

The colonial experience informed leaders how an independent Mexico would be constituted geographically. The Viceroyalties, Audiencias, and Intendancies influenced independence leaders' ideas of how the geography of the territory should be defined. These different political boundaries created differing perceptions of how to create the national boundaries after independence. It was unclear in 1821 whether Mexico would be a vast landed empire inherited from the Viceroyalty of New Spain, a moderately sized nation on the Central Mexican Plateau, or just the small area of the former Intendancy of Mexico. Questions of political boundaries also had to be addressed specifically in the Central American isthmus due the regionalism that flared there after independence. All of these questions only began to be addressed after New Spain's independence.

Colonial traditions also formed questions about how Mexico would be governed. No clear message for a model of government came out of the independence movements. Generally, Mexican independence fighters believed in the enlightened ideals of representative government, free commerce, and male suffrage with few limitations based on property-holdings or ethnicity. Conservatives, who eventually joined the independence movement, preferred to

maintain a traditional government of monarchical rule with privileges given the Church and the elite. From the moment of independence, these two groups formed opposing positions on many necessary decisions in Mexico City. Crises that occurred in Spain, like Napoleon's invasion and the re-installation of the Constitution of 1812, pushed these two groups together. When the crisis situation dissolved, so too did the bond that held the liberal and conservative leaders in Mexico City together.

Colonial traditions, in addition to the prospect of economic gains, drove Mexico and Central America to consider a political union. The Plan of Iguala, the independence document of Mexico, outlined, vaguely, the political and geographic makeup of Mexico since it stated that Mexico would be ruled under a constitutional monarchy. This assumed that Mexico would be under centralized control. That fact also hinted that Mexico's geographic boundaries would consist of a large territorial empire. Iturbide initiated discussion with Central America about annexation early in his reign.

Central Americans did not unanimously support union. This pushed Iturbide to use force to coerce dissenters to accept annexation. He first sent agents and then troops to the southern border of Mexico to gather reconnaissance on the former Audiencia of Guatemala and intimidate dissenting leaders to join Mexico in union.

Union lasted just short of two years. Mexican and Central America leaders had perceived a shared colonial tradition and political development. Neither comprehended how far both territories had grown from one another. Mexico had dealt with a decade of insurgency and violence that finally ended with a compromise between opposing sides. In Central America, the struggle between regions simmered below the surface. The same was true of the struggle of politics in Guatemala City. Those struggles exploded in Central America during union. Mexico City had little idea how to solve those struggles because Mexican leaders did not understand the peculiar political and social makeup of Central America. Mexico initiated stumbling policies

that often irritated rather than ameliorated the struggles. Then, when political conflict erupted in Mexico City, the union fell apart.

In those two years of union, Manuel Mier y Terán and Vicente Filisola impacted events in Central America. Terán worked within Chiapas as that region's representative to Mexico City. His time as the representative of Chiapas angered some leaders in Ciudad Real and also in Guatemala City because he realigned Chiapas with Mexico City over Guatemala City. Filisola became the de facto captain-general of the former Audiencia of Guatemala and attempted to cut through the regionalism that plagued the territory. His policy of centralizing control seriously irritated Salvadorans and led to a violent clash between Filisola's troops and the Salvadoran militia. Both Mexican generals based their decisions on their Mexican experiences and left lasting influence on political affairs in Central America.

Concentrated centralized leadership from Iturbide in Mexico City to Vicente Filisola in Guatemala City irritated regionalists throughout the provinces of Central America. Municipal infighting combined with Salvadoran uprisings gave Filisola fits in his quest to maintain stability. Iturbide attempted to redistrict political centers, but failed since he did not consider geography or historical traditions. Regions opposed central decrees by either willful neglect, direct countermeasures, or by attacks on rival municipalities that took a contrary stance. Annexation exacerbated political instability in Central America.

Union between Mexico and Central America failed for several reasons, aside from Mexican leaders' misconceptions. The agreed upon structure of government in Mexico City dissolved in 1823 when Iturbide abdicated the throne under intense military pressure. Central Americans feared that Mexican liberals would push policies of liberalism that would undermine the Church. Leaders in Guatemala City also decided that a Central American federation could recover on its own, economically. Leaders there set upon creating a constitution for a republic of Central American States.

The Central American attachment to Mexico gave liberal and conservative leaders in Guatemala City perspective on how to best to organize their newly independent nation. Conservatives just witnessed how too strong a central authority aggravated regional tendencies. Liberals knew the individual provinces were not economically viable alone and needed a central government for revenue and to help establish order. Both sides joined in a year-long constitutional congress to devise a compromise document that allowed both traditional policies for conservatives, like the power of the Church, and enlightened policies for the liberals, like egalitarian voting policy. Together, they produced the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Central America.

The compromise between liberals and conservatives in Central America faded after two years. Central America fragmented further and fell into civil war. Regional municipalities attacked one another based on longstanding grudges, ideological struggles, and the want for regional power. The influences of the Church also played a major part in the further fragmentation of Central America. The degree of Church power in the State became the primary source of discord among leaders in Guatemala City. The struggle at the federal level impacted the degeneration into regional fighting. The peculiarities that Mexican leaders could not comprehend about Central America became exacerbated during union. Those problems did not resolve themselves after detachment and culminated in civil war and fragmentation in Central America.

Mexico dealt with creating its own republican government after Iturbide abdicated the throne. That process further separated centralists and federalists, conservatives and liberals in Mexico City. The triumph of republicanism in the Constitution of 1824 demonstrated the popularity of liberal and federalist ideas in Mexico. The constitutional committee in Mexico City produced an enlightened document that pushed Mexico into the international community and spurred foreign colonization on its frontier. This liberal republican document created a

theoretically viable basis for a peaceful symbiotic relationship between Mexico City and its remaining peripheries.

Federalists in Mexico City, however, undermined themselves in 1828 by violently challenging a legitimate election. Not long afterward, centralism regained favor and the struggle for power between the two sides raged with leadership changes almost yearly. For seven years, Mexico teetered on the brink of civil war as its peripheral states steadily grew restless of the political struggles in the capitol.

Mexico's economy worsened after detachment, which added to the political struggle in Mexico City, but also to rising xenophobic tendencies. The Mexican republican government knew it needed to fix the economy in order to fund the military to avoid a coup and a return to centralized military control. The Mexican government took loans from prominent European banks in the hope of stimulating the export mining industry. This policy failed and the loans went unpaid. That failure gave rise to a fear of European reprisal.

At the same time, Mexican creoles began to call for the expulsions of resident peninsulares. The Spanish in Mexico tended to have a high socioeconomic standard, which caused resentment among much of the American-born population. Anti-Spanish and anti-European sentiments grew exponentially after the detachment of Central America as the balance of power in Mexico City shifted from former royalists like Iturbide to former insurgent leaders like Guerrero.

Mexican military and government leaders also began to grow suspicious about a foreign invasion. The fear of a Spanish attempt to reconquer former colonies commenced immediately after independence. It reached a fever pitch as growing anti-Spanish sentiments spread throughout the republic. There was also a fear of invasion from Mexico's northern neighbor. The United States' expansionist tendencies and overtures to purchase lands in Mexico's northern frontier added to the paranoia of an armed invasion. Those suspicions seemed

justified when the reconquest attempt occurred at Tampico. After that battle, xenophobic sentiment intensified.

The Battle of Tampico also resulted in the movement away from federalism toward centralized government. Vicente Guerrero took on expanded executive powers during the crisis of the Spanish invasion. He did not give up those powers after Santa Anna and Terán defeated the Spanish forces. Anastasio Bustamante rose up to challenge and overthrow Guerrero. Bustamante, however, continued to centralize power in Mexico City.

Mexico's inward turn and centralizing trend produced the Law of April 6, 1830. The law signaled that Mexico wanted to have greater control of its borders and the populations on its periphery. It was a bold and far-reaching law that reversed liberal laws in the Constitution of 1824, which angered many Mexicans, Anglo and Hispanic alike. Further, the Bustamante government could not afford to enforce it universally. Instead, military officers on the ground in Texas, like Terán, enforced the law on a case by case basis because of the the lack of personnel available to be stationed in Mexico's vast frontier lands. The law infuriated the populations in the northern territories, especially Anglos in Texas. They viewed the variable enforcement of the law as discriminatory and in violation of the Constitution of 1824, though it did not violate the constitution. They mounted a challenge to law until its suspension in November 1833 after a federalist government retook power.

Terán and Filisola influenced events in Texas. Terán instigated and enforced the Law of April 6, 1830, which isolated Anglo-Americans who supported Mexico City. His enforcement seriously aggravated tensions between Anglos and Mexico City. Filisola's role, though more muted than Terán's, impacted Mexican-Anglo relations. Filisola replaced Terán as commandant general of the Eastern Interior Provinces and worked to stabilize the Mexican-Anglo relationship. Filisola had great interest in cooling tensions between Anglo-Americans and Mexicans because of his empresario contract in Texas. His interest in a profitable land speculation venture pushed him to apply the liberal agenda of the Gómez Farías regime.

Though Filisola worked to ease the strained relationship between Anglo-Americans and Mexico City, he ultimately failed because of further political instability in Mexico City.

With the return to the of a federalist regime headed by Gómez Farías, it seemed peace would be retained between Mexico City and its periphery, even though the national government had Stephen F. Austin arrested under suspicion of separatism. Under the Gómez Farías regime, Anglo-Americans received greater regional authority in Texas than they had under Victoria. The government created new departments in Nacogdoches and Brazos. Anglo-American elites ran those new departments. During the Gómez Farías regime, Anglo-Americans returned to acting freely and ignoring the few Mexican laws under which they had agreed to abide as outlined in the national colonization law.

In addition to enacting liberal policies in Coahuila y Tejas, the Gómez Farías regime also undertook an agenda to limit the powers of the Church and the military. A centralist reprisal resulted against the liberalizing agenda of the federalist government. Santa Anna overthrew the government he installed. He turned, instead, to a centralist government run by José Tornel and Lucas Alamán. When Santa Anna dissolved the Constitution of 1824, the structure through which the States and the capitol collaborated was destroyed. Several states went into open rebellion, including Coahuila y Tejas. The calloused method Santa Anna used to put down the uprisings galvanized the Anglo population to unite under the ideology of independence. The radical separatist Anglo-Americans used Santa Anna's tactics to unite the Anglo population under the banner of Texas independence.

Central America and Texas were a part of a different Mexico, which is why a study of these two territories in the first years of independence from Spain needs to be steeped in Mexican history. Iturbide's Mexico differed greatly from the subsequent republican era. Central American leaders understood that Mexico City faced big changes in 1823, and those leaders wanted to have greater control of their own fate. Creating their own government and constitution guaranteed their control of Central America's future, for Central American leaders

realized that outside leadership could no longer rule over the isthmus. Mexico again undertook rapid change after the Battle of Tampico. The struggle to decide between conservative central authority or liberal federal control marked the period from 1829-1835. The changes and confusion of that era, including the heavy-handed suppression of Zacatecas and the confrontation General Cos caused at Béxar, opened the opportunity for independence-minded Anglo-Americans in Texas to take advantage of the situation and unite a movement to challenge Mexican authority. In both cases, Mexico City mishandled its peripheries.

Mexico's relationship with its peripheries evolved and changed overtime. Many of those changes occurred because of politics in the metropolis and the peculiarities of the peripheries. Mexico's relationship with Central America began in the colonial era and was generally marked by Mexico being the political and military power center. Guatemala City could look to Mexico City as a political model and for military assistance in times of crisis. That relationship clearly changed after Iturbide took the throne. Mexico used its power and force to coerce Central America to join and follow it in independence. Then, that power and force evaporated after Iturbide abdicated the throne. The new political dynamic in Mexico City created a new paradigm through which it interacted with Guatemala City. Leaders in Guatemala City decided union had failed and separated to form their own sovereign government.

Changing politics in Mexico City also affected the relationship between it and the northern periphery. Under the Constitution of 1824, Mexican leaders generally ignored Anglo-American immigrants in Texas and allowed them nearly universal freedom. That relationship changed first in 1830 and then, again, in 1835. The shift to centralism in Mexico City and the dissolution of the constitution meant Mexico City would more directly oversee and enforce law in Texas. This, and Santa Anna's military actions, pushed Anglo-Americans to unify against Mexico.

The evolution of politics in Mexico City, alongside separate political development in the peripheries due to geographic isolation, affected the relationships between the metropole and

the peripheries. Further, Mexico City had only a vague understanding of the peculiarities in the populations and societies of either Central America or Texas. These developments and misunderstandings created the confusion that led to Mexican leaders' mishandling of the peripheries and the resulting break up of Mexico.

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Kyle Carpenter received his B.A. in history in 2007 from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. He began the full time pursuit of his M.A. in history in 2011. Mr. Carpenter's primary focus throughout his academic career had been steeped in the history of European Empires. From his study of the Spanish Empire, his focus shifted to the Americas and, ultimately, Mexico. Mr. Carpenter's future plans include future research and writing projects on nineteenth-century Mexico. More specifically, he is interested in pursuing the study of the impacts of foreign land and mineral speculation companies on Mexican politics and economy. Kyle lives in Fort Worth, Texas with his wife, Mickey, and their dog, Arlo.