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Republic to Empire: Anglo-American Perceptions of the
Hispanic West and American Empire Building, 1800-1850

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Ea Nicole Madrigal

August 2014

Dissertation Committee:
Dr. Steven Hackel, Chairperson
Dr. Alec Haskell
Dr. Molly McGarry

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The Dissertation of Ea Nicole Madrigal is approved:

Committee Chairperson

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I want to briefly show my appreciation for the people in my life who showed me support throughout this process. Without them, I could never complete this project.

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*Dedicated to the memory of Rachel Madrigal, advocate of
education.*

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Republic to Empire: Anglo-American Perceptions of the
Hispanic West and American Empire Building, 1800-1850

by

Ea Nicole Madrigal

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in History
University of California, Riverside, August 2014
Dr. Steven Hackel, Chairperson

Articles from American periodicals about the Hispanic west in North America published between 1800 and 1850 exemplified the changes that the government of the United States and its people experienced. These articles reveal the nation's transition from a republican form of government to an emerging American empire. Utilizing periodicals, this study reveals the cultural and political transitions of the United States in the early national period. Yet, rather than examine ideas about news and ideas that circulated in articles about the United States, my study analyzes Anglo American news, ideas, and developments in Mexico and greater New Spain. By doing so, conceptions about the country, with respect to its representation in periodicals, can be viewed in broader

terms; here, they can be viewed in terms of empire building.

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We are at war that the history of the United States, rich with the record of high human purposes, and of faith in the destiny of the common man under freedom, filled with the promises of a better world, may not become the lost and tragic story of a futile dream.

-Frederick Jackson Turner, The Significance of the Frontier in American History, 1893

INTRODUCTION

1. THESIS:

Articles from American periodicals about the Hispanic west in North America published between 1800 and 1850 exemplified the changes that the government of the United States and its people experienced. These articles reveal the nation's transition from a republican form of government to an emerging American empire.

2. THE GENESIS OF THE PROJECT:

This study was originally inspired by work completed in a writing seminar with Steven Hackel about the California missions. The missions, as more commonly understood in scholarship today, were Spanish institutions that facilitated both a devoutly religious purpose as well as efforts for empire building in North America. However, as I performed more research with American periodicals, I realized that the leaders of the United States also aimed to expand their country. More so, eventually, American expansion impinged on portions of land once claimed by Spain, such as California. This early nineteenth-century emphasis on empire building as revealed in scores of

articles (for the United States rather than Spain) became the motivation as well as promising finding of this study.

The most common question posed to me by colleagues during my research process was, "Did Americans really have anything to say about the Spanish or their land prior to the Texas Revolt, Mexican American War, or California Gold Rush?" The desire to answer this question as comprehensively as possible became an additional motivation behind my research. In the first two years, this project appeared as if it would be yet another analysis of the origins of Manifest Destiny. However, it developed into a study that shows that this famous piece of rhetoric from 1845 had deeper roots in years of periodical dialogue about American expansion and how central Hispanic areas were to this dialogue.

Over time, I came to realize that periodicals show that early nineteenth-century U.S. history cannot be simply studied within the framework of a changing political system that transitioned from a republican form of government to a democratic system. Instead, periodicals from this period reveal a political system that fought for independence against an empire and then emerged as one soon thereafter.

3. PERIODICAL RESEARCH:

This project began with a personal interest in historical prints, and the print medium utilized in this study is the periodical. A periodical is any news-related print medium: magazines, journals, and newspapers. Based on the methodology behind this study, my project owes gratitude to journalism scholars.

Newspapers played significant roles in American society from the pre-Revolutionary period forward. Due to the impact of periodicals on ideas and culture, particularly in the Revolutionary period, many early-American journalism historians focus on the late eighteenth century. Scholars such as David A. Copeland and Julie Hedgepeth have created pioneering works in the examination of this era. In addition, and more commonly known for his work on pamphlets published during the Revolution, Bernard Bailyn also agrees that periodicals were central to this period as well.¹ Scholars such as Catherine O'Connell Kaplan, Mark L. Kamrath and Sharon M. Harris have also made relevant contributions to the study of periodicals in this period, but especially in the case of Kamrath and Harris,

¹ Bernard Bailyn and John B. Hench, eds., *The Press and the American Revolution* (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1980).

it is their perspective on the historical analysis of periodicals that informs this study the most. In their recent work, they suggest that scholarship that examines periodicals must "reassess periodical literature in the eighteenth century and how it directly reflected and contributed to the formation of American national identity."²

Indeed, the emergence and emphasis on national identity formation and the role of American periodicals cannot be understated. Michael Cody, a scholar of Charles Brockden Brown (well-known newspaper editor of the early nineteenth century) finds that "Americanness" was central to people in the American republic. Cody notes, "The people of the United States located themselves in the world according to their Americanness on both individual and national levels. The evolution from the Federalist republic through Jeffersonian republic to democracy was this slow process of localization."³ In fact, political and cultural changes in the United States permeated periodical writing. Particularly in the case of political themes,

² Sharon M. Harris and Mark L. Kamrath, eds., *Periodical Literature in Eighteenth Century America* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005), xxiv.

³ Michael Cody, *Charles Brockden Brown and the Literary Magazine: Cultural Journalism in the Early American Republic* (Jefferson: McFarland and Company, 2004), 8.

Culver Smith and Mark Schmeller have individually contributed works that illuminate changing political systems; Smith shows the influence of Federalist ideas and Schmeller's work reveals republican themes.⁴

Yet, the geographic focus, periodization, and themes of these studies can be limiting. Journalism histories about the North American West often utilize publications from the West. For instance, scholars such as Barbara Cloud's *The Coming of the Frontier Press* provides interesting details about early western newspapers, but the sources are western-centric. In addition, although the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are important times for periodicals in early American history,

⁴ See Culver Smith, *The Press, Politics, and Patronage: The American Government's Use of Newspapers, 1789-1875* (Athens: University of Georgia, 1977); Mark Schmeller, "The Political Economy of Opinion: Public Credit and Conceptions of Public Opinion in the Age of Federalism," *Journal of the Early Republic* 29.1 (Spring 2009): 35-61; Jeffrey Pasley, *'The Tyranny of Printers': Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2001); Catherine O'Donnell, "Literature and Politics in the Early Republic: Views from the Bridge," *Journal of the Early Republic* 30.2 (2010): 279-292. Beyond these intellectual or political themes in newspapers examined by historians, more recent analyses of the period often focus on specialized subject matter. For example, some scholars, such as Kenneth Price and Susan Belasco Smith – editors of *Periodical Literature in the Nineteenth Century* – highlight newspapers that reference everything from women, to African Americans, to children. In another edited collection and in another example of specialized subject matter, scholar Frances Smith Foster describes the role of the "Afro-Protestant" press. There is an emphasis among these specialized studies to focus exclusively on one newspaper (or just a couple newspapers) throughout the piece. Unfortunately, it limits the scope of the analysis. For example, Jared Gardner finds that the *American Museum* – another newspaper title utilized in this study – simply served as a creative "anthology" whose subscribers included Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton. Representative of the same sort of analytical limitations, scholar Isabelle Lehuu – whose study also uses newspaper titles found in this project such as *Brother Jonathan* and *New World* – aims to show the United States as a nation of avid readers whose literacy and interest in newspapers increases over time. Yet, her emphasis on readership in the republic limits a better understanding of other important transitions for the country.

periods of study can also be extended through the middle of the nineteenth century, which in turn, will reveal different themes.

By taking these different approaches, I argue that articles reveal the cultural and political transitions of the United States in the early national period. Yet, rather than examine ideas about news and ideas that circulated in articles about the United States, my study analyzes Anglo American news, ideas, and developments in Mexico and greater New Spain. By doing so, conceptions about the country, with respect to its representation in periodicals, can be viewed in broader terms; here, they can be viewed in terms of empire building.

However, periodical research can come with its own set of analytical complications. For instance, in some articles, information about the editor may be well known but authorship of a certain piece may not (since the editor did not always write each article in their periodical). In addition, periodicals very frequently changed editorship and ownership; therefore, opinions in the same periodicals will change over time because the perspective shifts as well. In the same vein, political or cultural bias was as present in historical periodicals as it is today, if not

more so. Also like to today, a writer's article does not reflect the general attitudes of all people in American society, but the consistent presence of certain topics across a range of periodicals over time helps to explain key social and political issues of the day.⁵

⁵ Periodicals have always played a significant role in the history of the United States. The popularity of newspapers grew quickly in early America. In 1690, the first colonial newspaper created by Ben Harris, *Publick Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestick*, made its debut in Boston. Early on, Boston and Philadelphia were two of the most important locations for the press. By 1704, John Campbell created the *Boston News-Letter*; and by 1728, Benjamin Franklin's, *Pennsylvania Gazette*, also started publication. From its start, reading was meant to be accessible to the masses. However, not everyone in early America could read. In fact, only about 75% of adult, white males in the United States were literate at the end of the 1700s. Yet, by the 1820s, newspaper reading and literacy flourished, and there were hundreds of newspapers around the new country (rather than just a few in major publication cities). The advent of the Postal Act of 1792, as well as innovations in printing technology, continued to contribute to accessibility in the United States. For example, there were approximately 100 newspapers in the United States before 1825. Yet, there were over 1,200 newspapers just eight years later. It is also important to understand that periodical publishing was different in early America compared with today. First and foremost, the term "periodicals" was a word that encapsulated different forms of periodical leisure reading that might include newspapers, journals, and magazines. In addition, especially in relation to newspapers, publication occurred most frequently on a weekly or bi-weekly basis rather than daily (which became a more common publishing practice by the end of the nineteenth century). Also, subscriptions were localized and it was extremely rare for someone many miles away from a publishing house to receive a newspaper outside of their town. Further, circulation statistics were not carefully determined. Therefore, this study does not examine this portion of journalism history. Finally, as this study often reflects, the authorship of articles was often unknown. Unlike today where a writer's name must be attributed with the article he or she published, this was uncommon practice in the early period of publishing. Instead, most articles were likely published by a particular periodical's editor but there was no certainty (unless the article stated so). However, this study is not focused on who wrote the articles as much as it examines the ideas within the articles. Particularly, this project shows a transition from republic-minded ideas about the far west to empire-based conceptions of the same topic. Indeed, as journalism scholar Adam Rowe finds, the republic virtues such as industriousness, frugality, and civic mindedness were central themes to American newspapers. Rowe notes, "Like all Americans in this era, they expected arguments in the press to appeal to republican principles." In fact, this study would not exist if it were not for the initial aims for western expansion posed by Thomas Jefferson. Expansion west was a vital aspect of Jefferson's ideas of the American republic. Therefore, ideas about expansion showed up in newspapers from the republic period forward. Indeed, ideas about "the west" were not simply lands just west of the Mississippi. Instead, as this study reveals, the west also was the lands of the Spanish empire in North America. Historian Peter Onuf suggests, "Jefferson envisioned 'an empire for liberty,' an expanding union of republics held together by ties of interest and affection... Their (Americans) destiny was not to be a great power in the conventional sense but rather an inspiration to other peoples."

For this study, I predominantly used periodicals in the *American Antiquarian Society's* online database; this is the most comprehensive archive of early U.S. newspapers in existence today. I also utilized the *Early American Newspapers* and *American Periodicals Series* online databases both of which are considered highly respected newspaper archives among scholars. After combing through over 200 different periodicals, I choose to include articles from 72 different U.S. newspapers with publication dates that range from 1800 to 1850 and publisher locations that span from New York to Ohio. Throughout each chapter, detailed footnotes provide pertinent editor, periodical information, and circulation records (if available) of each periodical included.

4. CHAPTER SUMMARY:

The overall trajectory of the project reveals that articles published from 1800 through the early nineteenth-century emphasized a republican form of government. However, over time, dialogues changed. Eventually, U.S. periodicals published by the middle of the nineteenth-century portrayed an environment of empire building. In each chapter, this study chronicles this change.

Chapter 1, "Republic-Minded," describes how the conception of independence became a common theme in articles about supposed Spanish "interference" in North American territories. These articles, published between 1800-1827, emphasized independence and made accusations against the Spanish who allegedly abused this principle. The authors of these articles suggested that a republican form of government was best and monarchy was abhorrent. These pieces denounced empire building, and rather, emphasized the common experiences of the newly independent United States with those of different Spanish colonies that aimed to end imperial control.

However, writing about independence diminished over time, and the second chapter begins to reveal a transition in attitudes. The second chapter, "California and Republic Expansion" presents California's central role in new conceptions about Anglo-American expansion from 1827-1840. California's notoriety grew during this time because of the influx in foreign visitors to the area as well as the impact of secularization on its Catholic missions. Articles provided specific details about California, like the environment and weather based primarily on excerpts from travel memoirs. In addition, American writers viewed

California as an area that suffered at the hands of Hispanic people and government (despite the shift from Spain to Mexico's authority in the region). Dialogues about the possibilities of the republic's expansion into far western Hispanic territories were underway.

By 1840, Richard Henry Dana published the book that put even more of an emphasis on California, and the third chapter, "Empire-Minded," shows that articles about American empire building became more pronounced in periodicals. This was often most visible in the way the United States government was represented: as a rival empire as much as a republic. Many articles reflected on supposed imperial rivalries not simply with Mexico but also with England. Articles formerly emphasized independence among like-minded republic nations. Yet, between 1840-1845, writers considered U.S. expansion into the far west and stressed that Americans take action before other nations had the opportunity to do so. This chapter shows how writers would conceive the United States as an empire.

The fourth chapter, "The Destiny of American Empire," focuses on the outcomes of years of articles that revealed the country's transition into expansive empire. Epitomized in John O'Sullivan's phrase, "manifest destiny," the

leaders of the United States engaged in a war with Mexico to acquire Mexican territory north of the Rio Grande. In addition, the California Gold Rush only epitomized the reality of far western expansion on a massive demographic scale. Dreams of far western expansion and the acquisition of California for the United States became a reality in 1850 when it eventually entered the Union. The country that was once simply discussed empire became one in reality, and articles in periodicals detailed this transformation.

The disease of liberty is catching; those armies will take it in the south, carry it thence to their own country, spread there the infection of revolution and representative government, and raise its people from the prone condition of brutes to the erect altitude of man.

-Thomas Jefferson, Letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, 1820

CHAPTER ONE: REPUBLIC-MINDED, 1800-1827

1. THESIS

Periodicals published in this period of time reveal a dialogue that supported the idea of independence from empire. Prior to this moment, American writers used this idea to discuss a story about their own country's struggle for independence against the British empire. Yet, by 1800, fostered by President Thomas Jefferson's focus on expansion in an independent United States, articles began to discuss news that happened *outside* the United States using the same dialogue. The republican theme of independence utilized in articles critiqued the Spanish imperial presence in North America. These articles portrayed a bias toward their own form of government and heralded the resounding republican theme of independence in accounts about people in Spanish territories. Indeed, the republic era served as the foundation in which writers viewed foreign news.

2. FROM EMPIRE TO REPUBLIC

Only some parts of the world considered republican forms of government in the late eighteenth century.

Colonial America survived and won its Revolution against

the British. At the same time, the French engaged in their own revolution against an absolute monarchy. Soon, Mexico would take up the revolutionary ideology for independence as well. Yet, until then, in the case of Mexico, the imperial Spanish government focused on territories in northern portions of their frontier.

By the late eighteenth century, Spain successfully established Catholic missions across North America, some of which were Jesuit. Eventually, when Jesuit priests were dismissed by the Spanish government, Franciscans would replace them. Fostered by the devout Junípero Serra, Franciscans moved into Baja California and later Alta California. This Spanish mission building not only signaled the presence of the Catholic faith along the Pacific, but more importantly, it revealed that the Spanish continued to seek to extend control over far western North America. In the meantime, tensions between the Spanish colonial government and Mexican rebels (those who were disloyal to imperial governance) began to accelerate. Nonetheless, Spanish dominance remained the stronghold in this portion of the world. Colonial Mexico would have to wait a while - or fight - to create a republican form of government and eliminate Spain's imperial presence.

As for the United States, its government was created based on principles that foreign countries should not interfere with domestic issues. American founder Thomas Jefferson was a proponent of less intrusive government. Often credited for the ideas he contributed to the *Declaration of Independence*, Jefferson was influenced by both Greek and Enlightenment philosophies about inherent individual independence.⁶ Scholar Bethel Saler argues, "More than merely a conviction that 'the large body of Americans' had republican sympathies, Jefferson shared basic republican principles - what he called the 'spirit of 1776' - as well as national ties as Americans."⁷

By the time Jefferson became the President of the United States in 1800, his ideas about a republican form of government would influence the nation in lasting ways. In fact, Jefferson promised that he would create an "empire of liberty" that expanded the nation's borders westward. This motivation led him to buy the Louisiana territory from

⁶ Jean M. Yarbough, "Moral Sense, Character Formation, and Virtue," in Gary L. McDowell and Sharon L. Noble, eds., *Reason and Republicanism: Thomas Jefferson's Legacy of Liberty* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1997): 273. Also see Jean M. Yarbough, *American Virtues: Thomas Jefferson on the Character of a Free People* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998).

⁷ Bethel Saler, "An Empire for Liberty, A State for Empire: The U.S. National State Before and After the Revolution of 1800," in Peter Onuf, ed, *The Revolution of 1800: Democracy, Race, and the New Republic* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002), 374.

France in 1803 for \$15 million.⁸ His vision made the United States twice as large as before and it facilitated a legacy and interest in expansion. However, more than his actions to facilitate expansion, Jefferson was impassioned about independence which he saw as crucial to the "spirit of 1776." He believed it was vital for citizens in a republic to exercise their right to independence. Independence was a central feature of the Jeffersonian message about a republican form of government (however far, geographically, that government would extend).

Some articles published in periodicals in the U.S. during this era reflected the emphasis on independence. Independence was considered something that Americans once fought for and now possessed. Therefore, stories about the theme of independence beyond America's borders often discussed people who did not experience it. Thus, some writers chose to detail the issues of the "southern" nations (as Jefferson called Spanish America). These were countries, according to the articles, without independence and restricted by imperial governance. These kinds of

⁸ Jenry Morsman, "Jefferson's Fluid Plans for the Western Perimeter," in *Across the Continent: Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and the Making of America*, eds. Jeffrey Hantman, Peter Onuf, and Douglas Seefelt (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press), 58-59.

articles criticized Spanish imperialism because it was considered as an obstacle to independence. In addition, these articles made assumptions that a republican form of government was the best form of political government. In fact, when Mexico eventually won its independence, writers contrasted the United States' republic with Mexico's form of government. The Spanish empire was ripe for criticism by those, in the United States, who lived in and adhered to the principle of independence.⁹

By 1800, articles in American periodicals could observe a similar and more current struggle that the people of Mexico experienced under the Spanish empire. The article "On the Independence of Spanish America" published by the *American Register and Literary Magazine* in 1806 characterized this. The article contrasted as well as critiqued America's republican government with that of

⁹ The initial accounts of the Spanish empire in North America came primarily from English newspapers as early as the late eighteenth century. As was the common practice in this early period, these accounts would be later reprinted in the United States. The foreign news that was passed down to American newspapers derived from trading expeditions, travel memoirs, and letters. By the end of the eighteenth century, editors of periodicals printed foreign news stories that were originally published in their own country rather than abroad. Different periodicals from different towns that covered foreign news about the Spanish empire would often cover some of the same events and information allowing the prominent themes (in this case, independence) stand out even more. For instance, The New York Daily Gazette, Pennsylvania Packet, Salem Gazette, and Columbian Centinel each published a small article about Spanish territory in North America in 1790. Each periodical published the same article called, "State Paper." This was a translation from a Spanish Ambassador about land disputes with France. Early on, the existence of original news about the far western Spanish frontier in North America was scarce compared to the plethora of American-related news stories. However, over time, ideas and information of this region became a relevant part of American periodicals.

Spain's imperial government in North America. The piece suggested that the government of the United States surpassed the supposed flawed Spanish government. Spain ruled its North American territories not simply by the establishment of its Catholic missions, but politically, through colonial governors who honored the will of Spain's authority as well as with presidios that protected Spanish settlement. For years, the existence of many loyal Hispanic subjects allowed for articles such as this to point out that, unlike the United States' republican form of government, the Spanish continued to exercise a monarchical system in North America. However, over time, loyalty by Spanish subjects was frail. Therefore, the unknown writer takes time to describe the alleged cruelty of Spanish authority and the precarious situation in colonial Spanish America. According to the article, the Spanish Crown asserts political superiority, possesses strict racial prejudices, and prohibits any kind of freedom. The only people who enjoy freedom in a monarchy are kings and queens. In addition, it is suggested that the Spanish government

"governs too much."¹⁰ Independence is suppressed. The article notes, "The greatest defect in the Spanish colonial government consists in its governing too much; in its being too officious, too intermeddling, too complicated, and too expensive; in its being calculated, not to favour the growth, and protect the progress of an infant colony, but to harass and torment."¹¹

This reaction to Spanish authority reveals similar sentiments that American Revolutionaries possessed just two decades before with regard to England. For this unknown writer, Spain is not concerned about individual rights for anyone in society. According to the piece, Spain's monarchy does not allow any kind of independence for Hispanic populations in North America. In contrast, the principles of the American government promise independence for the governed.

In this article, the Spanish government pales in comparison to the American political system. Yet, in reality, the writer does not consider that the two

¹⁰ "On the Independence of Spanish America," *Literary Magazine*, Nov. 1, 1806 in *American Antiquarian Society*. *Literary Magazine* was associated with the editorship of Charles Brockden Brown, one of the foremost respected writers and editors of the republic period. Brown was synonymous for writing about "international issues" that focused less on localization and more on America's place amongst the rest of the world. This periodical was originally published in Philadelphia, and Brown became its most significant contributor as the head editor. Brown's chosen articles often presented pro-Americanism.

¹¹ Ibid.

political systems are, indeed, vastly different. The Spanish monarchs did not have any intention to release colonial holdings (unless by force) in North America. Eventually, the hand of Charles IV, who would continually deal with imperial problems with relation to France, would be forced. However, until then, the Spanish government would do whatever possible to maintain control over its subjects.

The article reveals these frailties of Spain's colonial governance as well as the issues plaguing the Spanish Crown at the time. The writer suggests that people in New Spain "struggle for subsistence" because of the cruel authority wielded by the Spanish government.¹² In fact, it is suggested that the Spanish have committed atrocities against subjects under their authority. For instance, the issue of starvation is raised. It was believed, and reasserted here, that the Spanish government starved people. However, the Spanish imperial governors did not starve their subjects. These kinds of misnomers, beginning as early as the 1500s, were rumors of forced labor, or what the Spanish more justly deemed the *encomienda* system. Yet,

¹² Ibid.

this began the "Black Legend" about supposed ruthless Spanish conquistadores. There was some truth to this, because the Spanish government exploited land, Indian labor, and resources from their colonial holdings. In this article, the revelations reinforce the central theme. The writer uses American experiences with independence to explain and critique the situation in Spanish America. For example, prior to the American Revolution, one of the central issues that colonists faced was what they believed to be unfair taxation. Here, it is noted that the Spanish monarchy imposes taxes on its colonies as well. The writer believes that Spain extracted over \$8 million from the Americas in order to "replenish" - as the article refers - the Royal Treasury in Madrid. Portraying a shared experience, the author writes, "Colonies are sacrificed, as usual, to the mother country."¹³ This statement reveals empathy toward people under Spanish rule based on America's history under empire.

The similarities continue, because this article does not simply show that the taxation crisis is comparable, but also describes that people are unequally treated as well.

¹³ Ibid.

In the American Republic, all people were considered "equal."¹⁴ Yet, in colonial British America, according to Gordon Wood, there was once a *vertical* hierarchy that British subjects followed. Similarly, inequality existed in Spanish America. Indeed, as the article illustrates, the foundation of Spain's government relied on social difference and classification. This social hierarchy was the basis of societal and political life. "Spanish born men" were considered superior to all others. Thus, since equality was not a part of Hispanic society, the writer contends that colonists suffered.¹⁵ The author argues, "The Spanish colonies cannot but gain by emancipation . . . The natural aristocracy of the Spanish colonies reside in the

¹⁴ It is important to note the glaring ignorance that the author portrays throughout this article. He or she berates Spanish government throughout the piece, but forgets to mention some of the realities of the American republic. For instance, all people were not equal. Women were not considered full citizens. Slavery existed in parts of the United States similar to how it existed still in parts of Spanish America. This writer certainly shows some of the arrogance that could go along with journalism in the republic period.

¹⁵ See Maria Elena Martinez, *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008). The writer does not address it, but he or she observes what was deemed, *Casta*. Spain developed *Casta*, social and ethnic classification, in order to identify those in their society who were purely Spanish from any others who were not. The Spaniards, on the top of this classification, were considered – and treated – significantly better than the others who were below them. In accordance with *Casta* system, the author suggests that non-Spaniards are treated especially poor. The writer finds that "people of colour" are considered inferior. Yet, the article points out that these are the people who should be treated with the most reverence, because they are both "sober and religious." Unfortunately, the author does not distinguish if this statement is in reference to Indians or another particular racial group.

country, and consists of men born and educated in the midst of their inferiors and dependents."¹⁶

For these reasons, empire is denounced. The writer emphasizes, "A devout and well intentioned government exerts more vigilance about the morals and faith of its subjects in the wilds of America, than it employs vigour at home in defence of their lives, properties, and independence."¹⁷ The writer contends that a foreign monarchy cannot best represent the interests of people abroad; this is an ideal upheld from the Revolutionary period forward in the United States. In fact, the article foreshadows that one of Spain's colonial settlements will be able to easily form their own, separate government: Mexico.

The writer points out that Mexico has millions of inhabitants, and the people have the ability to rise up against the Spanish empire.¹⁸ ". . . And so admirably are they situated for commerce, that is emancipated from the mother country, they would advance with the rapidity of the United States." Once more, comparisons with the U.S. are

¹⁶ "On the Independence of Spanish America," *Literary Magazine*, Nov. 1, 1806 in *American Antiquarian Society*.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

utilized to reveal similar experiences as well as the most promising form of government: an independent one.

Indeed, the article predicted Mexico's political future.

By 1824, the Mexican government created a Constitution (similar to the United States). The Constitution established a republican form of government (again, akin to the United States). Furthermore, like the United States, the creation of the Mexican Republic was an arduous process that took time.

Four years after the publication of this piece, "Spanish America Declared Independent" was published in the same periodical. In many ways, it was a continuation of the ideas presented in 1806. Yet, by 1810, there was a transformation in Spain's imperial authority in its northern frontier. In this year, Miguel Hidalgo y Castillo, a Catholic priest turned independent, radical revolutionary, ushered in the Mexican War for Independence with his "Grito de Dolores." Mexico, the most important colony for Spain in North America, was now engaged in the same kind of struggle for independence that the British colonies endured in North America. This article is a reflection on the independence struggle of the Spanish colonies, and similar to the previous piece, the writer

believes that the Anglo-American and Spanish American situations are comparable.

The piece points out that the "Spanish provinces" once had no choice but submission to Spanish authority. Similar to the British colonies, as the writer finds, the Spanish colonies were once in their "infancy" and they needed the "guidance" of Spain.¹⁹ Yet, the situation had drastically changed and the colonies deserved their independence. The article notes, "It has pleased Almighty God to grant to every country alike the natural right of its own sovereignty . . . the period has at length arrived when these united provinces possess both the strength and the power to protect themselves."

In fact, the writer points out the reason independence was so vital. Independence relies on the principle of "self preservation."²⁰ ". . .There exists neither reason,

¹⁹ "Spanish American Declared Independent," *American Register*, Jun. 1, 1810 in *American Antiquarian Society. The American Register or General Repository of History and Science* was originally published in Philadelphia by C. and A. Conrad. C. and A. Conrad were brothers in Philadelphia who started their own publishing and book selling house, and more importantly, they were advocates of Jeffersonian republic ideas. In fact, Cornelius and Andrew Conrad sent occasional letters directly to Thomas Jefferson during his Presidency. Jefferson was the most well-known subscriber to their periodical. Indeed, Jefferson respected their publication so much so that they were commissioned to publish Meriweather Lewis' journals after the famous expedition to the northwest. Unfortunately, the business failed before they could make this possible. Charles Brockden Brown was soon after involved once more in another publication in relation to ideas related to independence in the Spanish colonies. He wrote "Spanish America Declared Independent" published in the *American Register*. This article portrays the Conrads' republican bias as well as Brown's persistent aim to show the United States' important position in the context of world. It provides a comparison of governance based on emerging political disruptions that occurred in Spanish America.

²⁰ Ibid.

right now justice for continuing our dependence on a power that has not existence but in memory; policy and self preservation therefore demand that we should provide for our common safety and the protection of these provinces . . .”²¹ Self preservation, according to the perspective here, upheld the common good. As the leaders of the United States believed, upholding the common good was paramount to a republican form of government.²² Indeed, the similarities of the situations lead the writer to contend that it is the “right” of the provinces to do “the same” as America.²³ Therefore, the Spanish colonies should rebel against the Spanish monarchy just like the British colonies.

However, Spain’s governing and political situation was different from England’s experience in the mid-eighteenth century because the imperial government dealt with pressing global concerns. By 1808, Napoleon forced the Spanish monarchs to abdicate and they were replaced with Joseph I (Napoleon’s brother). Governance in Spain was in a state of flux and warfare. Therefore, Spanish colonies in the

²¹ Ibid.

²² William Seal Carpenter, *The Development of American Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1930), 107.

²³ “Spanish American Declared Independent,” *American Register*, Jun. 1, 1810 in *American Antiquarian Society*.

Americas, such as Mexico, capitalized on this chaotic period in which Spain could do little as their empire began to fracture. For these reasons, the separation from monarchy seemed inevitable.

Indeed, the article shows that the desire for independence reveals a commonality between likeminded nations (once colonies). Similar to values of the United States government that aimed to secure its government from foreign interference, the author discovers that people throughout Spanish America hoped to deny the authority of "any nation" that wanted to control them. In addition, the article points out that people in Spanish America wanted to secure independence for other regions of the world where foreign powers attempted to intervene. This sentiment was starkly similar to the aim of America's political leadership in the coming decade when the Monroe Doctrine was created (something addressed later in this chapter).²⁴

²⁴ Ibid. In comparison to the United States, the author charts the political trajectory of territories in Spanish America toward eventual independence. Indeed, the very beginning of the American republic began with a Declaration by colonists who argued that they were independent from England. Similarly, this article includes a declaration from Spanish America that shows that independent nations will be created soon. Translated into English, this brief declaration reveals that the aims of people in Spanish regions were similar to the aims that the United States' colonists once possessed. It reads, "We the Spanish provinces in America declare ourselves free, sovereign, and independent people." This statement shows that people of Spanish America possessed common interests based on these stated ideas. Freedom, sovereignty, and independence were familiar ideas for Americans in this period. As the Spanish government paid more attention to their European struggles, one by one, more regions once colonized by Spain, began to petition for independence. Undoubtedly, regions in Spanish America took advantage of the chaotic situation in the

Despite Spain's issues with France in the early 1800s, the United States would have minimal involvement in what became known as the Napoleonic Wars in Europe. However, the ongoing crisis between France and Spain - as well as Spain's crisis in the Americas - made for relevant foreign news in the United States. Even as battles for independence commenced in the Americas, Spain looked to its colonies for assistance in its domestic warfare at home. In a letter from Archbishop Laodiceo from the Royal Palace of Seville translated and republished in 1809 in the *American Register* just a year prior to this article, Laodiceo writes, "No, slaves of Bonaparte, lose no time in vain sophistries . . . we choose to be the most wicked of men, because we believe ourselves the most powerful . . . everyday our connexion with America becomes more intimate, to whose timely as well as generous assistance the mother country owes so much." Spain continued to view its relationship with colonial America as somehow mutually beneficial. However, even after the Napoleonic wars ended,

mother country in order to facilitate their political future outside of Spain. In fact, a declaration, such as the one the author uses here, looked starkly similar for different countries throughout Spanish America; yet, each of them exemplify the universal burden that the Spanish monarchy placed on its colonies.

the rebellions of Spain's colonies in the Americas, such as Mexico, Venezuela, and Argentina, raged on.

Other periodicals of the period, not simply the *American Register*, noticed the crucial situation taking place in Spain's colonies. *The National Register's* "Memoir Upon the Present Condition of Spanish America" published September 26, 1818, illustrated the governing problems that Spain faced in this period. The anonymous writer presented this piece at a moment when the Mexican people were already eight years into their war against the Spanish monarchy. The article aimed to illustrate a "true picture" of the independence struggle while also criticizing the Spanish monarchy.²⁵

Similar to other pieces of this era, this article demeans Spaniards as cruel to both their subjects as well as foreigners to their territory in North America. The writer describes that Americans who entered Spanish

²⁵ "Memoir Upon the Present Condition of Spanish America," *National Register*, Sept. 26, 1818 in American Antiquarian Society. This periodical, particularly because it was a Washington, D.C. publication, was one of the more politically savvy newspapers of the period. Published by J.K. Mead, who engaged in correspondences with the likes of republic-minded individuals like James Madison, the newspaper presented stories with political implications for the American republic. Mead noted that the periodical was filled with a "series of the important public documents, and the proceedings of Congress; statistical tables, reports and essays original and selected, upon agriculture, manufactures, commerce and finance; science, literature and the arts, and biographical sketches, with summary statements of the current news and political events."

territory are not treated well.²⁶ In fact, it is noted that the Spanish came to America with "crude notions of human freedom."²⁷ As other periodicals expressed, the Spanish empire withheld independence rather than encouraged it. In fact, here, Spanish leaders are to blame.

The writer explains that "Spanish American agents" are senseless and do not possess the "same wisdom and discretion" as people from other countries.²⁸ As it is noted, the leadership of the Spanish colonial government pales in comparison to the leaders of the United States. Names such as John Adams and Thomas Jefferson are mentioned in the text to compare the wisdom of one government's leaders with the faults of another's.²⁹ Indeed, there is profound American bias, but this was similar to other articles that discussed foreign news. In fact, despite this bias, this article points out that the United States and Mexico could still be similar based on their shared desire for independence.³⁰

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

Shown in this and previous pieces, some American writers believed that the situation that colonial governments faced under the control of Spain was starkly like the former experiences in British colonies in a different part of North America decades earlier. The two situations looked nearly identical and aroused a familiar patriotic spirit, demonstrated in another article's excerpt from the time. Originally published in the *Boston Chronicle* and republished in *The Enquirer* published in Richmond, Virginia, the writer of "From the Boston Chronicle" argues:

It is certain that the Spanish Whigs have now to contend, as those of these United States had to do during their revolution, against a horde of Tories, miscreants and unnatural sons, who prefer the rod of foreign oppressors and bloodsuckers, provided they are allowed to share in their robberies and vexations, to exerting themselves for a living in an honorable vocation, or rising to dignities by the influence of personal merit and public gratitude . . . Thus will the world soon see another federative Republic extending from the Isthmus of Darien to the Magellanic Straits, Old and new Mexico, California, Cuba, and Porto Rico . . . which will connect the splendid constellations of the South . . . Already are the *Americans* preferred to *Europeans*; the names of WASHINGTON, FRANKLIN, JEFFERSON, MADISON.³¹

Thomas Jefferson said, "The disease of liberty is catching; those armies will take it in the south, carry it thence to their own country, spread there the infection of revolution

³¹ "From the Boston Chronicle," *The Enquirer*, January 1, 1812, *America's Historical Newspapers Series 1*.

and representative government, and raise its people from the prone condition of brutes to the erect altitude of man." His words were in reference to places such as Mexico that were under Spanish control. Like his words, periodical articles reflected on the need for independence in Spanish America as well as discussed similar experiences between the United States and Mexico. As the United States once found out, independence was a precarious, enlightened value. Mexico, in a similar situation, would discover the same.

After rebels in Mexico City staged a coup against the imperial government, and after over eleven years of warfare, the army of Three Guarantees successfully claimed victory over Spanish Royalists in 1821. Mexico gained independence but inherited problems as well. Early on in the United States, the Articles of Confederation would be the closest document the Founders had to a Constitution; this was followed by several years of ratification debates about a federal constitution prior to 1787. Despite the early issues, the United States created a republican form of government. The transition for Mexico was even more difficult.

Mexico did not establish a republic immediately following independence from the Spanish empire. Instead, the Mexican government, led by the former military leader Agustín Iturbide, created another empire epitomized by Iturbide's title of "emperor." It would take another three years compounded by rumors of political corruption (shown in American periodicals) until Mexico created their own constitution and became a republic.³² Since Spanish imperial governance - as well as its problems - were now gone, descriptions of the new Mexican government began to change as well. Eventually, the supposed inability of Mexico's leadership to create a successful government facilitated new dialogues that shifted focus from the Spanish empire to Mexico's empire. Periodicals showed that Mexico's leadership wrestled with the ideological and political struggles of nation formation. As the *Essex Patriot*, "From the Philadelphia Franklin Gazette" explains, ". . . The subject of the form of government proper for Mexico, which it seems has began to be a subject of discussion there. The proclamation announces a limited monarchy as the best suited to that

³² See Christon Archer, ed., *The Birth of Modern Mexico, 1780-1824* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2003).

country.”³³ The news of Mexico’s decision to become a monarchy contradicted the solution that American periodical authors offered up earlier about the necessity of an independent republican form of government in “southern” nations. As the Mexican government began to transform over the next three years, writers pointed to differences as well as the similarities between the United States and Mexico’s new empire.

For instance, the *Christian Spectator* published a piece called, “View of Public Affairs Spanish America” on April 1, 1822. Despite the fact that Mexico was a new empire, rather than republic, the article points out that the governments of the United States and Mexico shared a similar history; this history was based on the need and eventual acquisition of independence.³⁴ In fact, according to the piece, the former situations of the countries were so alike, that “people in the United States” had begun to show “more interest” in the foreign region.³⁵

³³ “From the Philadelphia Franklin Gazette,” *Essex Patriot*, February 23, 1822, *America’s Historical Newspapers Series I*.

³⁴ See William Fowler, *Forceful Negotiations: The Origins of the Pronunciamiento in Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010).

³⁵ “View of Public Affairs Spanish America,” *Christian Spectator*, Apr. 1, 1822 in *American Antiquarian Society*. This newspaper was usually associated with religious news and information. One of the most well-known contributors as well as subscribers to the newspaper was Lyman Beecher (one of the leading ministers of the Second Great Awakening).³⁵ However, this article digresses from the more frequent

In reference to the shared independence struggle, the writer shares: "Engaged in a contest resembling in so many important respects our own revolutionary struggle - contending for the same object - and probably by reflecting on what we had done . . . surely it was most natural and reasonable to suppose that our sympathies would have been awakened, and our best wishes have attended them".³⁶

In the same vein, in an article from the *Washington Whig* called, "Don Jose Manuel Herrea; United States; Mexican Republic," the author notes with regard to Mexico, "These few years past have developed abundant evidence of their disposition to throw off the yoke . . . In the declaration of independence it is assumed as a self evident fact, that all men are created equal . . . Upon this principle the American people acted; and it would be inconsistent in them to refuse the people of Mexico the same privilege."³⁷

Like other pieces of the era, the article portrays a common experience between the United States and former Spanish colonies, particularly Mexico. Yet, it was not simply the

religious focus of the newspaper and addresses what may have been considered important foreign news with regard to the political situation in Mexico.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ "Don Jose Manuel Herrea; United States; Mexican Republic," *Washington Whig*, January 8, 1816, *America's Historical Newspapers Series I*.

initial fight for freedom that connected these two countries' histories together. As the previously mentioned writer implies, Spain was slow to recognize Mexico's independence even after the war ended. The United States experienced the same lack of recognition from England years after the American Revolution during the War of 1812. In this piece, like what came to fruition between the U.S. and England, the writer believes that Spain's unwillingness to support Mexico's independence will lead to further "contests" between the two nations.³⁸

Indeed, all of these articles attempted to show commonalities between Mexico and the United States in their initial years of development. They also portrayed the tenuous political challenges that came with political transformation. Independence continued to be a resounding theme and one that writers reflected upon from a perspective of a person writing in a Republic. These kinds of sentiments in all of the previous articles affirmed the American political system that heralded republican government. For example, an article called, "Spanish

³⁸ Ibid.

America" published in the *Western American* in Williamsburg, Ohio notes:

We have hitherto observed towards the struggles of the Mexican patriots . . . they may be invited and encouraged by our government to an undertaking congenial to the feelings of every genuine American . . . When we reflect that in our struggles against our mother country, we dispatched our Jays and our Franklins to implore the aid of men, money, arms, and ships . . . The cause of Mexico is not strictly analogous to our revolutionary struggle, that is to say, our former colonial government and the blessings we then enjoyed, made our political situation a paradise.³⁹

Here, once more, Americans and former Hispanic colonists have something vital in common: a shared interest in independence.⁴⁰ In fact, by the 1820s, the recognition of the situation in Spanish America became a significant political issue for the American government. In 1823, two years after Mexico's independence, President James Monroe announced a diplomatic philosophy that the United States government would utilize for its interactions with Spanish America. The philosophy introduced at this time became known as the Monroe Doctrine. Monroe was considered the last of the "republican generation" who originated from the "Virginia dynasty" among the likes of trailblazing President Thomas Jefferson. His Doctrine epitomized how

³⁹ "Spanish America," *Western American*, April 27, 1816, *Early American Newspapers Series I*.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

independence was central to the American government and to the ways that the government would interact with foreign countries, specifically "southern republics," or Latin American nations.

FROM THE LOUISIANA COURIER.
Spanish America.
 Recent advices from Washington announce, that the chevalier de Onís has made a formal demand on our government for the surrender of the Floridas, and likewise for the surrender of general Toledo and his associates in order that they may be brought to condign punishment for having dared to promote the emancipation of Mexico from the thralldom of Spain.
 These demands, whether viewed separately or connected, are to be considered among the political novelties of the 19th century.
 -- The age of chivalry is about to commence -- Ferdinand VII. and the pope, with the aid of the inquisition, are about to establish their supremacy in the new as well as the old world. Both anti expeditions against the heretics of South America and Mexico, are becoming as fashionable as during the reign of Charles V. and if we are to judge from the lofty ground taken by the chevalier Onís, it is presumable that Ferdinand means to take under his holy protection a portion of the citizens of the United States. After we give up the Floridas I suppose the next question will arise as to the validity of our holding Louisiana, because as it is in the order of the day, among the potentates of Europe, to divide all that France has discovered, Louis XVI. was deposed, Spain conceives that she has a right to require the restoration of a territory which she consented to part with during the moments of her weakness, but which she may now deem essential for the dignity and integrity of the Spanish monarchy. -- Waiving every discussion for the present on these points, let us take a cursory view of the demand, by the person of gen. Toledo and his associates.
 The inhabitants of the Mexican empire have been struggling for some years past to emancipate themselves from the most killing oppression that ever afflicted any portion of the human race; they have succeeded as to spread the spirit of resistance against Spain, from one extremity of the empire to the other, although they have had no effective assistance from the United States or any other quarters; they have been literally without arms or munitions of war, without discipline or organization, and yet with all these disadvantages and notwithstanding the numbers that have been published in the city of Mexico, at Havana, and Cadiz often and even thousands of rebels slain in battles, we find that these rebels have been gradually augmenting, that they have formed a considerable portion of the empire; that there is a general feeling of indignation against the government; that the communication between the cities of Vera Cruz and Mexico is frequently interrupted by the republicans and that the royal forces in the city of Mexico are obliged to remain in the city for its protection. It being well understood that if the troops were only a few days absent from the place, the victory would be disposed of in favor of the republicans. I have given this statement of the situation of things from the feelings and sentiment of the writer on this subject. -- Much has been said of hostile combinations and of the thousands and tens of thousands American citizens that had

joined the Mexican revolution list, and no doubt the Spanish minister's counsils, and all those who were hostile to the independence of Mexico, have made ridiculous & exaggerated representations to the government of the United States on this subject -- but the fact is, and I do much regret it, that the Mexicans have not received from the citizens of the United States any thing that merits the appellation of succour either in men, muskets, or munitions of war. Some two or three hundred adventurers, many of them desperate in circumstances, and destitute of military knowledge, and perhaps a few hundred inutile muskets, is about the whole assistance they have as yet obtained from our countrymen. Had it been otherwise, that is to say, if two or three regiments of our citizens, conducted by good officers, had co-operated with the Mexican patriots, the destinies of Mexico would have been fixed long before this time -- But I do still hope and shall rejoice at the event, that the conduct of the Spanish cabinet in reviving a controversy either about the Floridas or Louisiana, may enable our government to depart from that system of apathy which we have hitherto observed in the struggles of the Mexican patriots, and that in the place of proclamations from our executive cautioning our citizens against enrolling themselves under the banners of Mexican independence, they may be invited and encouraged by our government to an undertaking congenial to the feelings of every genuine American, and deeply interesting to the future glory and prosperity of our country.
 When we reflect that in our struggles against our mother country, we dispatched our Jays and our Franklins to implore the aid of men, money, arms and ships from the nations of Europe, and when we reflect during that struggle our beloved Washington was denounced as a rebel and a traitor, when James Madison and his compatriots when we reflect on those solemn facts we ought not, may we cannot without incurring the reproach of partiality, play with indifference the efforts of our Mexican brethren to shake off the chains of Spanish tyranny.
 The cause of Mexico is not strictly analogous to our revolutionary struggle, that is to say, a former colonial government and the blessings we then enjoyed, made one political situation a paradise when compared to the horrors and outrages under which the Mexican population have been groaning for more than three centuries; and shall it be recorded on the page of American history, that our government, our ed a great ear to the supplications of the Mexican patriots, but in reality palmed their exertions by a course of measures calculated to make every friend to the cause hesitate as to the opinions he advanced, or the steps he might feel disposed to take in their favor? For my own part, I never have hesitated, nor never will, in the open avowal of my feelings and opinions on this subject. The right of expatriation is given me by the constitution of my country; nor is there a single clause therein that authorizes an inglorious scrutiny as to what country I may be desired to remove, or under what banners I may wish to fight. (notwithstanding the opinion of some learned men to the contrary.) much less would I feel any hesitation when my object was to rally round the standard of freedom, and to assist in the emancipation of my fellow creatures from tyrannical oppression. Under these circumstances, I feel, I hope, as every American ought to do, a sentiment of contempt and indignation at the demand or requisition of the chevalier de Onís for the person of general Toledo and his associates. General Toledo is an officer in the service of the American patriots, & there is likewise in this place a minister from the congress of Mexico, going to lay his credentials before our government.
 These individuals are attempting, as is their duty, to render the cause of Mexico popular in our country; they wish the aid of our government and our citizens towards accomplishing their object; they have a right to pursue every legal means to effect that object; and in fact they are attempting to do no other than what we have observed our Franklins and our Jays succeeded in doing for our country during

Figure No. 1: "Spanish America," Western American, 1816. Courtesy of NewsBank-Readex

He asserted, "We owe it, therefore, to candor and to amicable relations existing between the United States and

those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous . . . with Governments who have declared their independence and maintain it . . . we could not view any interposition . . . or controlling in any other manner their destiny.”⁴¹ Therefore, upholding independence in other countries would be central to the United States government’s foreign agenda. Yet, discussing the importance of independence with regard to foreign nations was already a prominent feature of periodical dialogues before 1823.

Despite this emphasis by the United States government, some writers believed that independence was not upheld by the Mexican government following their revolution. The *United States Catholic Miscellany* published “Emperor and Court of Mexico” on September 14, 1822 which examined this issue. As previously noted, before the establishment of the Mexican Constitution, political governance in Mexico was erratic under the leadership of Iturbide. Iturbide may have been successful in the Mexican War for Independence, but he was accused of political corruption as well failure

⁴¹ James Monroe, “Seventh Annual Message to Congress,” December 2, 1823.

as a political leader. In fact, Iturbide did not bring prosperity or drastic political change to Mexico. He was not popular with Mexican commoners. Eventually, his army loathed him as well because he could not pay them.

In this article, Iturbide, or "Hurbide" as he is incorrectly referred to here, is portrayed as the controversial figure that he truly was. The writer suggests that Iturbide was a selfish ruler who engaged in immoral and inappropriate behavior such as political scheming and licentious relationships. In this piece, Iturbide is portrayed as a leader who takes advantage of others and aims to control those around him rather than support what Mexicans fought so very hard for: independence. In an example, the writer explains that Iturbide used something called the "Order of Knighthood" to justify and safeguard his authority as "emperor." This Order reaffirmed Iturbide as the "grand master" of all others.⁴² He is portrayed as an authoritarian and a leader who restricts, rather than upholds, the independence of his people.

In fact, Iturbide was an overbearing emperor in Mexico and displayed this through his political choices. He

⁴² "Emperor and Court of Mexico," *The United States Catholic Miscellany*, Sept. 14, 1822, *American Antiquarian Society*.

created the "Order of Our Lady of Guadalupe" which was composed of an Order of Knights who were both loyal and obedient to his authority. In the meantime, his un-republican authority suppressed commoners in Mexico. Thus, it appeared as if independence was not valued in Mexico in the same ways that the leaders in the United States cherished it and in the ways that writers pointed out.

In another article about Iturbide's leadership, "Mexican Affairs" which was published in the *New Bedford Mercury*, the writer finds that Iturbide's problems as a leader led to his removal. In an effort to justify the lasting impact of a republican form of government, the piece points out that the Mexican empire was weak and ended quickly. The article notes, "By the first, the abdication of Don Augustine de Iturbide is announced; all imperial titularies and laws revoked; and the Supreme Executive is directed to hasten his departure from the nation . . . all persons who shall utter cries in his favor, as Emperor, are to be held as traitors."⁴³ The fleeting age of empire was finished, and the Mexican Republic's future was uncertain.

3. CONCLUSION:

⁴³ "Mexican Affairs," *New-Bedford Mercury*, July 11, 1823, *America's Historical Newspapers Series I*.

Despite the transitions Mexico's government would face in the future, its past allowed independence to be a resounding theme in U.S. periodicals from this period. It was used as a theme that criticized empire as well as justified an end to it. American writers utilized a republican form of government as a lens to view Spanish American colonies as the Spanish empire fractured. As the writers described regions outside the boundaries of the United States, they showed bias, even patriotism, toward their own republican government.

However, what began as sympathy toward "southern republics" soon turned into a dialogue that was to become more visceral. Eventually, periodicals focused on a more specific Spanish region, and articles criticized more than simply a form of government. Rather, California, now in *Mexican* territory, was supposedly an enticing environment, but its Spanish past (and present) made it ripe for criticism. New dialogues served as a justification for possible American expansion signaling a change in America's political structure and foreign policy.

As the story has already told you, there reigned on California Island a queen in the flower of her youth who was bigger and more beautiful than the other women on the island . . . When she heard that most regions of the world were joining together in that expedition against the Christians--regions about which she knew nothing because she was acquainted only with neighboring lands--she conceived a desire to see the world and its various generations.

-Garci Montalvo, Las Sergas de Esplandián, 1510

CHAPTER TWO: CALIFORNIA AND REPUBLIC EXPANSION, 1827-1840

1. THESIS

As the republic era ended and the early national period began, themes in periodicals that once revolved around the criticism of foreign empires now reflected on the possibilities of U.S. empire building. California had a prominent role in new discussions about lands in the Hispanic west. Several writers discussed California's environment as well as its religious institutions (a remnant of Spanish imperial authority from the past). The articles demonstrated an interest in U.S. expansion into the far Spanish frontier long before expansion was aimed to fulfil "manifest destiny."

2. CALIFORNIA'S SIGNIFICANT PLACE

"La isla" of California was a more familiar characterization of the region later known simply as *California* prior to the sixteenth century. The European ambiguity of the area led to a fascination with it as early as the beginning of the 1500s. Early modern cartography illustrated California as a small region off of the coast of the much larger Americas, or Novus Mundo. In fact,

Europeans called it, "isla" or "isle," because it was often visually portrayed as an island on maps.

For Spain, following Columbus' voyage, expeditions to the New World became more frequent. Early exploration and settlement in Mexico and Cuba by men such as Diego Velázquez and Hernán Cortés facilitated the rise of Hispanic presence in North America. In California, first it was the efforts of Spanish explorers Diego Becerra and Fortún Ximenez who landed at the tip of modern day Baja California. Later, Francisco de Ulloa became the first person commissioned to explore the Gulf of California. Eventually, Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, of Portuguese decent, discovered the modern-day San Diego Bay (which was deemed, San Miguel).

However, the earliest explorations of the region go far beyond the initial discovery, and ideas about early California are based on a fantastical, mythical history. Garci Montalvo was a Spanish writer who wrote a series of novels in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. In 1510, one novel, *Las Sergas de Esplandían*, introduced fictional conceptions about an island on the other side of the world. In it, Montalvo describes an adventurer, Esplandían, who encounters a queen, Calafía. She is the

leader of a group of Amazonian women who live on an island that becomes known as California (taking her namesake).⁴⁴ Montalvo's California island was full of gold, and he deemed the region a "terrestrial paradise." Ironically, despite the legendary beginnings of California, the government of New Spain would take little initial interest in permanent settlement in a region considered more frontier land than part of the metropolis.

By the middle of the 1700s, France and England made footholds in other parts of North America, but Spain's long standing presence on the continent allowed it to possess a defensive and settled border along southern portions of the modern-day United States. Over one hundred and sixty years after the Spanish navigator, Sebastián Vizcaíno visited the California coast in 1603, Gaspar de Portola's expedition arrived in San Diego in 1769. Governor Portola, as he became known, created permanent Spanish settlement and facilitated the rise of Franciscan missionaries. Led by the efforts of Father Junípero Serra, Spain derived its authority in California from a combination of imperial settlements, military forts, and Catholic missions.

⁴⁴ See Garci Rodriguez de Montalvo, *Las Sergas del Virtuoso Cavellero Espladian Hijo de Amadis de Guala* (Roma: J. de Junta y A. de Salamanca, 1525).

By the late eighteenth century, Spain shared North America with the United States. The United States government did not attempt to conquer Spanish territories. In addition, Spain did not consider the United States a threatening empire in comparison with the more formidable England and France (the latter, in particular, whose unstable government began to cause Spain's monarchy continued political threats as mentioned in the previous chapter). Indeed, Spain's ongoing issues with France would allow the United States to become more relevant in western portions of North America. In addition, the Monroe Doctrine bolstered the chances (despite its stated aims) that the United States government could expand into new portions of North America, because it denounced Spain's (as well as other countries') intervention in the Americas.

However, what could articles discuss about places such as California in the early nineteenth century when gold had yet to be discovered and American presence in the region was scarce? California represented a place of ambiguity as much as the Montalvo novel demonstrated hundreds of years prior. However, articles showed that the interest in the region remained. Despite the various reports and views on California that developed from the late 1820s forward,

writers were aware of California to the point of discussions about American expansion. Articles discussed the California region and simultaneously showed that the acquisition of it could transform the future of the United States.

Yet, Americans were not entirely unknowledgeable about the region. On October 29, 1796, the *Otto* became the first ship from the United States to land in California. Over time, ships that originated from Boston became more commonplace in Monterey harbor in California. These ships predominantly carried English and American travelers who were traders as well as some of the first non-Spaniards to take advantage of California's vast resources which included, among other aspects, cattle. The cattle industry, or "hide and tallow" as it would be referred to by Boston traders in the early nineteenth century, was already a thriving one in part due to the efforts of Hispanic rancheros. Additionally, a mild climate and cultivatable land made California's environment something worthy of mention to American periodical writers.

The accounts about California found in American periodicals during these years most often originated from travelers (both Americans and foreigners) to the region.

One such traveler was Johann Friedrich Eschsholtz, a naturalist from Germany. He was a member of a Russian scientific expedition to California led by Otto Von Kotzebue.⁴⁵ Eschscholtz's thoughts on California were published in the *Horticultural Register and Gardener's Magazine* on January 1, 1835. The article examines a distinct part of California's environment (a part that became one of the primary symbols of the region in years to come). Based on observations made during his visit, he describes that the "eschscholtzia" was the most abundant flower in the region. The flower he detailed, and that took his namesake, became known as the "California Poppy," and he describes that it had a "dark, orange eye." Eschscholtz suggests that the flower was a central feature of California's environment.

This was an accurate depiction but few foreigners to California could see the poppy for themselves by this point in time. Thus, his account would simply contribute to any other segments of information about California's

⁴⁵ Detailed in other newspapers from this period, Kotzebue's travel account would become well known for the specific and graphic details it provided about the Pacific region. Kotzebue left two narratives that were translated into English in the early nineteenth century. They became the foundation for several articles published about California in this era: *A Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Bering's Straits for the Purpose of exploring a North-East Passage, undertaken in the Years 1815-1818*, and *A New Voyage Round the World in the Years 1823-1826*.

environment. For example, some periodicals might see it necessary to point out California's agricultural potential. An article called, "California Corn" exemplifies this.

This article originally published by the *Poughkeepsie Telegraph* and later by the *Genesee Farmer* on December 15, 1838, contends that California was an environment ideal for blossoming corn fields. In the piece, informed by the sentiments of a farmer, James Tallmadge, California's potential to produce corn is praised. Tallmadge expresses astonishment over the production of seeds that he recently planted from California.⁴⁶

These seemingly small reports on California were not without purpose and portrayed truths about the region rather than myth. By the 1820s, California was an emerging marketplace characterized by a majority of Hispanic people who practiced a rural lifestyle. Most of them, particularly those known as Californios, traded hides or otter furs with visiting foreigners. They raised their own crops as well. The climate in much of "Alta California"

⁴⁶ "Eschoscholtzia Californica," Horticultural and Gardener's Magazine, Jan. 1, 1835, *American Antiquarian Society*. "California Corn" was an especially small news story about corn in California. Similar to news in the *Poughkeepsie Telegraph* which focused on agrarian lifestyles in New York, the *Genesee Farmer* discussed information related to agricultural interests in the same locale. Its tagline was "Devoted to agriculture, horticulture, and rural economy," and its creator and editor, Luther Tucker, hoped to share stories from all regions of North America that were relevant to American farmers in the New York area.

was mild, but missions near mountainous regions, such as Mission San Gabriel and Mission San Fernando, recorded months of rainfall as well. Additionally, parts of California, away from the coast, were deserts. Deserts like the Mojave became infamous with extreme dry, heat. American trailblazers like Jedediah Smith recorded these erratic climate changes in 1827 as he traveled through the Cajon Pass.⁴⁷ The experiences of American adventurers who journeyed through the area such as Smith, James Pattie, Christopher Carson (later known as Kit Carson), and others would supply and inspire the news about California's environment in the 1830s and 1840s.

"Description of High California" published on September 14, 1839 exemplifies how early western travel accounts could make their way into periodical reading on the east coast. *Boston Weekly Magazine* published an article which was, specifically, a description of Alta California.⁴⁸ The author for this piece was Hall J. Kelley. Kelley was an advocate for far western expansion in the years before it became popular for many Americans. Much of

⁴⁷ "The History of San Diego," <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/books/pourade/silver/silverchapter1.htm>.

⁴⁸ See various articles in Steven W. Hackel, ed., *Alta California: Peoples in Motion, Identities in Formation, 1769-1850* (Berkeley: Huntington-USC Institute of California and the West and University of California Press, 2010).

his life was spent in Massachusetts as a teacher, but his most significant contribution during his lifetime would be his account of his western travels. In 1833, inspired by the Lewis and Clark expedition, he led a group to Oregon.⁴⁹ During his journey, he spent a brief time in Monterey, California; this is where his illustrative account of the region derived.

Kelley vividly details California's environment. He mentions that the region has prairies, rivers, and vegetation of different sorts.⁵⁰ He also astutely explains that there are primarily two seasons in California: "wet or dry." Kelley writes, "Only once in 10 years, it happens that little or no rain falls during the winter season."⁵¹ He finds that the frequency of rainfall allows people along the coastline to thrive. However, he warns that California has a hot climate as well, and mentions that a traveler may "pant as they roam through the dry burning prairie."⁵²

⁴⁹ See John B. Horner, *Oregon: Her History, Her Great Men, Her Literature* (Portland: J.K. Gill, 1919).

⁵⁰ "Description of High California," *Boston Weekly Magazine*, Sept. 14, 1839 in *American Antiquarian Society*.

⁵¹ Ibid. Boston Weekly Magazine was one of the largest newspapers in the Boston region. It would be produced on and off again for over 100 years. At the time this article was published, the newspaper was under the editorship of E.H. Ela and J.B. Hall who aimed to report on relevant domestic and foreign news.

⁵² Ibid. I did not include a discussion for the article, "Desert of California" but I found it equally as fascinating. The article goes into details about a desert. Unfortunately, the writer never puts a name to the desert. Exemplifying the vagueness, the author suggests that the desert lays somewhere in the "central part" of Upper California. Unlike the previous piece where the article was informed by a firsthand account, it is also unclear to the reader if this article was based on firsthand information; the anonymity of

These descriptions of different features of the environment by visitors were vital to eradicate any kind of fictitious notions of what California might be like. However, it was the hide and tallow trade that became synonymous with the region. The cattle industry flourished and advertisements as well as reports on the industry were prominent parts of American periodicals. For instance, on May 21, 1827, the *Connecticut Mirror* provided an advertisement about the cattle industry. It mentioned that there was a recent shipment of "2,000 prime heavy California hides" with an average weight around 70 lbs. Seven days later, the *Connecticut Courant* showed that there were over "2,000 hides" that averaged about 30 lbs.⁵³

**Together with every article ever enquired
for in a Leather Store.**
**At Wholesale, as above, and well worthy the
attention of Tanners,**
2000 prime heavy California
Hides,—(average 70 lbs.)
600 do. light do. do.
900 do. Rio Grande do.
250 do. Missouri do.

Figure No. 2:
"Advertisement,
" *Connecticut
Mirror*, 1827.
Courtesy of
NewsBank-Readex

the author contributes to the ambiguity. Nevertheless, this writer describes that the "desert" in California is very large. In fact, the author argues that the desert is the size of the entire state of Virginia. In order to further justify his or her claim, the author contends that the desert resembles the Sahara desert in Africa.

⁵³ "Advertisement," *Connecticut Mirror*, May 21, 1927; "Advertisement," *Connecticut Courant*, May 28, 1827, in *America's Historical Newspapers Series 1*.

Yet, as the article, "Boston, March 29" published in the *Newport Mercury* on March 31, 1831 reveals, news about trade between the states in the American north east and Mexican California could also be news about growing political tensions in California as well. In this article, the author describes that a ship called the *Pocahontas* plans to travel to California, because as the article mentions, "trade has been good here."⁵⁴ Yet, it discusses more than simply trade. The article points out that political leaders in California recently experienced challenges from settlers there. The report states:

There are two parties; the citizens and some of the military have risen up against Gen. Manuel Victoria and his party. The two parties met on the 4th inst. Near the Pueblo de los Angeles, where a short engagement took place; two only were killed and several wounded; among the latter was Gen. Victoria . . . The remainder fled with the General to the Mission of San Gabriel and have since surrendered to the other party.

The article refers to the tenuous and changing political situation in California by the 1830s. Specifically, it illustrates the military skirmish referred to as the Battle of Cahuenga Pass which eventually led to the defeat of the Mexican governor Manuel Victoria and

⁵⁴ "Boston, March 29," *Newport Mercury*, March 31, 1831 in *America's Historical Newspapers Series I*.

facilitated his resignation. Amidst this chaos, there was an emergence of new governors in the Mexican government with jurisdiction over California, who over time, were more influenced by Anglo wealth and foreign intervention in California; this would lead to radical transformations of the region, both politically and economically in decades to come. Indeed, as this article shows, descriptions about California could have more far reaching implications than simply what the environment looked like and the resources available.

In fact, articles about Hispanic missions in California showed that the region still endured the legacy of Spanish imperialism, and therefore, it was still a topic that was contentious with many American writers. Different from the truths revealed about the environment, ideas about the missions were not always truthful or flattering to Hispanic institutions or Hispanic people. Despite the attitudes that articles in periodicals reflected, when writers described life in California, the missions were an undeniable and pertinent aspect that best illustrated the region in these years.

The first Spanish Catholic mission was founded in 1769 by Father Junípero Serra in San Diego and it was called,

Mission San Diego Alcalá.⁵⁵ Serra would not live to see all of the missions that were built, but his life's work would initiate a Hispanic Catholic legacy in the region that still exists today. This legacy became what many American writers in the early nineteenth century understood as a particular characteristic of California. However, ideas varied about the missions, their inhabitants, and their padres. The fictional conceptions about the missions often derived from unknown accounts while more factual information about the Catholic missions originated from sources that could be traced to California's earliest foreign visitors (but even some of these firsthand accounts exaggerated the realities).

For instance, an article titled, "Spanish Missionaries in California" which was first published in 1827 by the *New Harmony Gazette*, was a portion of the account from the Kotzebue expedition (mentioned earlier in this chapter). The account detailed what Kotzebue witnessed during his visit to the mission in San Francisco.⁵⁶ Utilizing the

⁵⁵ Serra would go on to facilitate the creation of Missions San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo, San Antonio de Padua, San Gabriel Arcangel, San Luis Obispo Tolosa, San Francisco de Asis, San Juan Capistrano, Santa Clara de Asis, and San Buenaventura (in that chronological order). Eventually, twenty-one missions would run south to north along the California coastline.

sentiments of visitors like Kotzebue, American newspapers such as this, critiqued the Hispanic presence in the western portion of the continent.

His account demeans the missions. He denounces Spanish military efforts to protect missions and mission residents. By claiming that "natives are dominated by the Spaniards", he suggests that Indians in the missions fear the Spanish. In fact, he implies that padres are poor leaders for Indians. Kotzebue notices that many natives were half naked when he encountered them.⁵⁶ He writes that he was shocked at the Indians' physical appearances since much of the choir that he interacted with was composed of,

⁵⁶ Author based findings from Otto Von Kotzebue, "Spanish Missionaries in California," *New Harmony Gazette*, 1827, in *American Periodicals Series Online*, 2. This magazine was originally printed in Indiana but a few years later its publication house was relocated to New York. For more primary documentary evidence on United States expeditions to the Pacific and Northwest see "Exploring Expedition to the Pacific Coast, 1826-1876," *U.S. Navy*; "Select Committee on Exploration of the Northwest Coast," from U.S. 19th Congress, 1st Session: 1826; "Survey of Northwest Coast," *U.S. Navy Department* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1826). The *New Harmony Gazette* has a fascinating background beyond its retelling of Kotzebue's travels. Similar to several other articles presented in the remainder of this chapter which focus on California mission life, this periodical was founded on religious and utopian principles. The periodical was published in an area that became known as New Harmony, Indiana. The town of New Harmony was created by Robert Owen, a moral reformer who hoped to build a utopian community in the wilderness. Owen's son, Robert Dale Owen, was the one responsible for publishing the *New Harmony Gazette*. Published weekly, it was filled with information that allowed the residents of the small town of New Harmony to remain connected to the happenings in society outside of their community.

⁵⁷ Author based findings from Otto Von Kotzebue, "Spanish Missionaries in California," *New Harmony Gazette*, 1827, in *American Periodicals Online*, 25. For articles published in this period based on explorations in South America see "Humboldt's Personal Narrative," *The Antheneum; or, Spirit of the English Magazines*, August 1, 1818, 363, in *American Periodicals Series Online*; "Article No. 2," *The Analectic Magazine*, Nov. 1818, 12, in *American Periodicals Online*. Also for the Philippines see Joseph Segui, "Article No. 7," *The Catholic Telegraph*, Aug. 1, 1834, 284, in *American Periodicals Series Online*. These articles discuss the Spanish missions in their respective locations.

what he referred to as, "half nude" boys. He also details how Indians receive small portions of food each day. In his determination, the food barely suffices their needs. He calls the padres "overbearing patriarchs" and claims that one of the missionaries called an Indian "stupid."⁵⁸ Kotzebue writes, "Missionaries do them much harm, as they destroy whole nations by the religious hatred which they kindle."⁵⁹ He summarizes his sentiments best when he argues that Franciscan missions are "worse than useless."

Kotzebue's account generated, as well as elaborated on, existing anti-Catholic and anti-Hispanic attitudes in some American periodicals. His observations about California, which would be republished over 90 times in other periodicals, emphasized how Catholic missionaries degraded and mistreated Indians.⁶⁰ Other articles and other authors from the era would follow suit. Articles that degraded the Spanish missions and the padres contributed to notions that California might benefit from non-Hispanic

⁵⁸ Ibid., 25.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ On June 23, 1827 the *New York Telescope*, a weekly New York periodical, republished this article as would occur many other times in the coming years. Kotzebue's descriptions are graphic depictions of the California missions.

presence in the region. Articles implied that California needed Anglo-American influence.

Indeed, many articles - like earlier published articles that utilized independence as a comparable theme - now used religion as a prominent theme as well. Several publications in this era compared Franciscan missions in California to Protestant missions elsewhere. These articles, published primarily from Protestant-funded periodicals, were some of the most biased about news on the region. Indeed, several of these pieces revealed disdain as well as outright disgust toward Hispanic influence in California.

For instance, the *Missionary Herald's* article titled, "Mr. Brigham's Report Respecting the Religious State of Spanish America" harshly criticized Catholic influence in California and snidely deemed the Hispanic west as "Catholic country."⁶¹ The writer of this piece was J.C. Brigham, a donor to Protestant Christian missionary

⁶¹ "Mr. Brigham's Report Respecting the Religious State of Spanish America." *The Missionary Herald*, Nov. 1, 1826 in *American Antiquarian Society*. The *Missionary Herald* touted itself as a periodical that spread "missionary intelligence." Much of its regular information came from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. This organization was founded during the Second Great Awakening. It was a Christian missionary society that aimed to promote and spread the Christian faith throughout the United States and abroad. Begun in the early 1800s, this Board became well known for their efforts to stop the Indian Removal Act as well as their Protestant missionary efforts among Indian tribes. Despite the publication date, it is used in this chapter because his report would be republished several times in this chapter's era.

efforts. In his republished account about his travels, he writes:

In upper and lower California, and on the northern frontiers, they yet carry on the system of missions on a broad scale . . . the object of the friars seems to be, as it always was, only to enslave poor natives and draw from them their hard earned possessions. O how unlike these, to the missions among our natives at present day.⁶²

Brigham's account of Catholicism reveals his own bias toward Protestantism. At the same time, his article illustrates that he was intrigued by Catholic rituals and symbols. He labeled the far west as "Catholic country" because he observed how crosses were used as the central symbol of Catholicism. Indeed, as Brigham finds, crosses were hung throughout the west.⁶³ His observations reveal that the Christian symbol of the cross was as meaningful to Catholics in the early nineteenth century as it was hundreds of years earlier when Catholicism became the hallmark of religious faith both in Spain and throughout the rest of Europe.

However, as much as he describes the ritual practices of Catholicism, Brigham aims to degrade the Catholic faith and missionary efforts of the religion. Brigham uses words

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

with visceral implications in order to show his contempt of Spanish Catholics in the Americas. For instance, he describes Catholic religious prayers as the "mournful prayers of an aged monk."⁶⁴ He also goes on to disparage one of the central Catholic religious rituals. He calls the Catholic practice of lent a "solemn season."⁶⁵ In fact, Brigham looks down upon all Catholic rituals because he views them as useless practices which do not reflect what he sees as the true "spirit of Christ."⁶⁶ He contends, "It is indeed a mystery, how the simple religion of Christ, the most simple of all systems, was ever transformed into such an unmeaning show . . . how totally the nature of the Christian system is mistaken and abused."⁶⁷

Just two years after the publication of Brigham's "Report," the *Friend* produced an article entitled, "Idolatry in Spanish America," which also lambasted Catholicism. Articles such as the one printed in the *Friend* (supported by the Quaker church), illustrated the hatred and ignorance that some Protestants expressed toward Catholicism. Similar to Brigham's account, this piece

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

expressed disgust with the Spanish religion. These kinds of articles showed a refusal to understand another form of Christianity - at least different from the Protestant faith - that also existed in North America.

The anonymous author, identified only as a British "agent," suggests that the Catholic religion provides a "melancholy picture of mental darkness and degradation."⁶⁸ Different from Brigham's account, this piece focuses particularly on one aspect central to Catholic belief: the Virgin Mary. The writer explains that Catholics believe that the Virgin Mary is the "intercessor or mediator" between God and the world.⁶⁹ Yet, it is noted in the article that the only true mediator of God is Jesus. The writer uses the Bible to legitimize this claim. The writer points out: "To be more serious upon this subject, the virgin Mary is the goddess of this country. I was forcibly reminded of what is said in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, how that the city of Ephesians was a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image fell down from

⁶⁸ *Friend*, Nov. 1, 1828, in *American Antiquarian Society*. The *Friend* was another religious oriented publication. Published in Philadelphia, this periodical was influenced (as well as it received its namesake) by the predominant religious group of that particular region: the Society of Friends or Quaker church. Demonstrating the stronghold of this sect, this periodical would remain in publication for over a century. Similar to this piece, the periodical was often filled with stories that promoted Christian lifestyle and values.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

Jupiter".⁷⁰ Here, like in other pieces, the observer criticizes a significant feature of Catholic beliefs and practices.

One of the most adamantly anti-Catholic articles, "North=West Coast," would appear in April 1830 in *The Missionary Herald*. The piece provided a vivid description of the California mission system and aimed to show its "failures." The writer, who is referred to by the periodical as "Mr. Green," apparently visited several missions in California and reported on his observations. In fact, "Mr. Green" was the Reverend Johnathan S. Green who served as a foreign, Christian missionary. The information he compiled came from his journey throughout the Pacific portion of North America. Originally stationed as a missionary in the Sandwich Islands, Green was a member aboard the *Volunteer*, a brig sailed by Captain Charles Taylor in the late 1820s. Based on the trajectory of the *Volunteer's* travels, Green and the rest of the passengers spent over two weeks in San Francisco as well as Monterey.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners on Foreign Missions (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1828), 99-100.

Based on the observations presented in the article, Green suggests that 50,000 Indians resided between San Diego and San Francisco and over 20,000 belonged to Catholic missions. He insists that there are 300 Indians at each of the twenty-one missions along the coast. Green contends that missionaries successfully "lured" Indians to live in the missions, but he does not mention how.⁷² In fact, parts of the piece portray irresponsible and irreverent priests:

At each (mission) is one or more European padre; who has a few soldiers on guard . . . Under the Spanish government, the influence of the padres was very great. Their establishments of course have been, and continue to be, in a great measure, secular. Had the gospel been preached in its purity and simplicity to these men, had they been taught to read, and had the simple statements of the bible met their eyes . . . If the preaching of the gospel and the perusal of the bible have changed to a moral garden the barren-rocks.⁷³

Green argues that padres did not take time to improve the religious instruction of the Indians who resided at the missions. In addition, he finds that missionaries required Indians to labor incessantly by building houses or

⁷² Mr. Green, "North=West Coast," *The Missionary Herald*, March 1831, in *American Periodicals Series Online*, 27. One of the first accounts about missions in California article was published in October 1809 in *The Christian Observer*. However, I do not discuss it in this study because the article is a reaction from a reader based on *Venegas' History of California*, which is in fact, a Jesuit account not one based on Franciscan missions.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

cultivating land, and he suggests that mission Indians were degraded, drunken, diseased, and they often attempted to run away because they were mistreated. He adds that the missionaries' "intentions were good," but he portrays the Catholic missions as useless institutions in this region of the continent.⁷⁴

There were American readers who read these attacks on Hispanics and their religion, and this was best exemplified on March 29, 1831, when in the *Western Recorder* an unknown person familiar with Green's article published a response to his thoughts. In the article titled, "Catholic Missions," the commentator mentions that Green's ideas about the Franciscan missions in California should concern Protestants in the United States. The writer finds Green's thoughts troublesome, because (as the reader believes) he does not distinguish enough between Protestant and Catholic faiths. The respondent attempts to defend Evangelical missions so that future readers will not confuse *their*

⁷⁴ This was republished a few times in the United States such as "North West Coast, America: Extract from the report of an exploring tour of the North West coast of North America," *New York Evangelist*, March 19, 1831, *American Periodicals*

efforts with the efforts of the Franciscan missionaries in California.⁷⁵

The respondent insists that evangelical missionaries should "not be held responsible for the operations of Catholic missions." Based on the observations Green provided in his account, here, the commentator criticizes Franciscan missionaries for "infidelity." In fact, it is pointed out that American Protestants should be skeptical about the success of Catholic conversion in California. Moreover, the reader believes that Catholic and Protestant missionary efforts are not even worthy of comparison whatsoever. The article champions Protestant missionary work in North America when the respondent mentions:

The Catholics take ignorance for their basis; the Protestants take knowledge. The former make religion consist in external observances; the latter make their appeal directly to the heart . . . How evident is it, from such statements as the preceding (in reference to Green's article), that infidelity borrows all its slang against missions from the operations of the Catholics.

⁷⁵ "Catholic Missions," *Western Recorder*, March 29, 1831, in *American Periodical Series Online*, 8. The *Western Recorder* was a periodical funded by two organizations with religious foundations: the Western Education Society and the Auburn Theological Seminary. Both of these groups supported continued Protestant missionary efforts as well theological education for young men. The bias is reflected in this piece. For an article published later that specifically addressed the Catholic vs. Protestant debate see Reverend John Hughes, "A Discussion of the Question 'Is the Roman Catholic Religion Inimical to Civil or Religious Liberty?'" (John Murphy Co., 1867). Particularly in terms of the Western Education Society, which was based out of New York, group members began to place an increased emphasis on Presbyterian missionary activities in the North American west during this time. As one annual report from their meeting notes, "A tide of emigration is rolling into our western wilderness, with unexampled rapidity, where the inhabitants are almost wholly destitute of gospel privileges; and they are likely to remain so unless great exertions are made to send among them the heralds of salvation." This periodical response by an unknown citizen reflects Protestant missionary bias.

Protestant missions furnish no such details. They are as different as light is from darkness. It would be well to keep this idea in mind.⁷⁶

This public response demonstrates the already well known anti-Catholic attitudes that existed in the United States. However, here, they were compiled with prejudice specifically against Hispanic missions. These anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic attitudes were well represented as well in the February 6, 1827 *Pittsburgh Recorder*. Its article titled, "Spanish Catholic Missionaries" showed the same Protestant bias. However, this article describes that Catholic missionaries were only successful because Indians were simply enamored by Catholic religious rituals.

The anonymous writer believes that Indians do not understand conversion; therefore, as it is pointed out, conversion happens either by "fraud or force" because of their supposed lack of intelligence.⁷⁷ The writer adds, "The success of the missionaries in converting the natives, was almost entirely deceptive."⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid. However, unlike other Pennsylvania publications that were financially supported by the Society of Friends, the *Pittsburgh Recorder*, was not associated with the Quaker Church.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

Yet, what took place at the California missions was neither deceptive nor fraudulent. Franciscans were excellent record keepers of each sacrament taken at the missions: most importantly the records of baptism and death (which reflected how long any Indian was associated with a mission). Franciscans in California reported Catholic baptism of Indians in the *thousands*. In addition, including baptisms that took place prior to the establishment of the California missions in other parts of Spanish America, higher estimations of supposed conversion are accurate as well.

Additionally, as some writers noticed but often exaggerated pejoratively, Indians were essential to the success of the missions. Padres relied tremendously on Native American labor to cultivate land and to build up the mission grounds. They also relied on Indian attendance at masses and participation in religious activities to make the purpose of each mission's existence fruitful. Briefly, during the early Spanish period, the practice of *encomienda* was construed by some as a forced labor system. However, by the 1830s, when some American and Euro American visitors came to California, governance of the missions was already in transition from Spanish to Mexican control. This

secularization of the missions facilitated Indian departure from mission grounds, but misnomers about the missions would remain in the minds of outsiders for years to come.

These misnomers were exemplified in the article, "California" published by the *Army and Navy Chronicle* which most often reported observations made during military expeditions.⁷⁹ In the late 1820s, the U.S. Navy commissioned the expeditions of the *Vincennes*, the *Peacock*, and the *Dolphin*, all of which visited California. However, this specific article derived from the observations of Benjamin Bonneville, a former army officer, who briefly visited California on an overland journey funded by John Jacob Astor. Washington Irving, a prominent American writer of the period, purchased Bonneville's maps and memoirs, and compiled them into a book; this book would inspire several articles about California in similar ways that Kotzebue's account had done.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ This piece was created by Benjamin Homans known as the Navy Secretary who had correspondences with the likes of James Madison and was responsible for sending important letters between the government's executive and military branches. However, he also had the responsibility to put together this periodical. The following article describes observations made during an expedition to California.

⁸⁰ At first, I believed that this was an account retold from Jedediah Smith's memoirs of his stay in California. However, the specific details that the newspaper relays seem much closer to the description that Irving transcribed from Bonneville's narrative rather than Smith's details. However, this newspaper does point out that the narrative derived from the "first" American in California. I am confident that this was an exaggeration, and rather, Bonneville, being associated with the U.S. military (and based on the facts of the narrative), was the man they associated as the "first."

The article, taken from Bonneville's account, describes missionaries, Indians, and the small surrounding communities he witnessed during his travels.⁸¹ However, the account that he provides is not altogether negative in its sentiment. He notes: "The character of the Priests is kind and benevolent, they devote almost all of their time to the duties of their establishments, and have a fatherly regard for those placed under them, who are obedient and diligent."⁸² Bonneville's memoirs also mention that there were twenty-one missions and as many as 45,000 "converts," an evangelical Protestant term. In addition, the details reveal that the missions were established "about forty years ago." Considering the publication date of this piece, 1836, and the years associated with the creation of the California missions beginning in 1769, this was not an outrageously inaccurate calculation. This article was a stark contrast to Kotzebue's (and others') exaggerated criticisms and it provided clarity with regard to the mission system in California.

⁸¹ "California," *Army and Navy Chronicle*, April 14, 1836, in *American Periodicals Online*, 228. This article was republished with a different title in the following periodical: "Some Account of California," *The Catholic Telegraph*, June 16, 1836, in *American Periodicals Series Online*, 5, 29, & 228. The *Army and Navy Chronicle* was a specialty publication to provide news informed by military expeditions as well as other important stories relating to the United States government. Interestingly, the editor of the periodical, Benjamin Homans, was simply known as the "Navy's clerk."

⁸² *Ibid.*

Similar to other writers of the time, Bonneville describes Indians' experiences at the missions as well. However, he approaches the topic more pragmatically. Bonneville observes that Indians lived in huts at the missions or in small, sex-segregated "apartments." Additionally, he discusses that most of the missionaries taught trades such as weaving, tanning, shoemaking, and brick making and that Indians were expected to produce grain as well. Further, he finds that Indians were expected to attend morning and evening masses. Bonneville argues that Indians "eagerly await spiritual tutoring."

These kinds of observations resembled an attempt at accuracy. In fact, Indian men and women lived in separate areas on mission grounds, labored in different trades, and also learned to speak Spanish. In addition, they were expected to attend masses in an expression of their devout faith.

Yet, even among all of the factual information he shares, there were points that even unbiased accounts such as his could fail to mention. Bonneville (like others before and after him) does not discuss the work of Father Junípero Serra. In fact, in periodicals of this era, Serra's vital role in the creation of the mission system in

California went unnoticed.⁸³ In addition, the article, like others, did not mention the transition that the missions endured during secularization. By the time this article was published, Mexicans had ousted Spanish imperial authority at the missions, and many former "mission Indians" had left the mission grounds permanently. Leaving out these kinds of details facilitated a plethora of dialogues that eventually contributed to inaccuracies and criticisms about the Catholic missions and the Hispanic presence in California.

Articles such as Bonneville's may have appeared to be without bias. However, his particular American point of view revealed that observations *about* the west could simultaneously aim to *promote* America's expansion west. At the conclusion of the article, Bonneville writes:

It is evident, from the observations which have recently been made upon this hitherto obscure part of the globe, that this indifference cannot long continue' for either it must disappear under the present authorities, or the country will fall into other hands . . . the commerce of the Pacific, it is of too much importance to remain neglected.⁸⁴

⁸³ Unfortunately, Serra's absence from the historical record of American periodicals in this period is telling and obscure. Four of the major periodical series publishers do not have any records that show up within this period when typing in "Serra." The mystery and intrigue behind this is another unusual but interesting story in itself to be investigated.

⁸⁴ "California," *Army and Navy Chronicle*, April 14, 1836, in *American Periodicals Online*.

Therefore, promoting the far west was inherent in describing it. In addition, the economic viability of the west garnished further inquiry. Indeed, articles such as his showed that California played a significant role in considerations about the expansion of the boundaries of the United States, even the financial profitability of the resources in California's environment.

Yet, there were also biased articles from a Catholic rather than Protestant perspective. Catholic-funded periodicals aimed to combat the Protestant perspectives of this era. One such article was published by *The Catholic Telegraph* on March 9, 1837; it was titled, "Missionary Intelligence." The article came from observations made by a writer named, "Captain Horn." Horn sailed to South America and California. His observations detailed the successes (rather than failures) of missionaries and their interactions with "nomadic tribes in California."⁸⁵

⁸⁵ "Missionary Intelligence," *Catholic Telegraph*, March 9, 1837, in *American Periodicals Series Online*, 14. Unlike so many other publications of the period that were filled with Protestant biases, the Catholic Telegraph was a periodical financially supported by the Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Ohio. Therefore, a bias still existed in this piece but it was a Catholic one. Edward Fenick started the periodical. Fenwick served as the first bishop of the city's archdiocese in 1831. His periodical would become one of

Horn contends that there were over "20,000 Indians at one of the missions in Upper California." This was an exaggeration but one that was commonly made during this era. However, different from other articles, and evident in this statement, he mentions that Franciscans *successfully* converted many of the Indians in California. In addition, Horn observes that padres educated and civilized Indians. Furthermore, rather than argue that Indians were forced to labor throughout the year, Horn emphasizes that missionaries were devoted to their work and also to Indians. In fact, the article even points out that Catholic missionaries surpassed Protestant missionaries in their efforts to convert indigenous populations.

Another article published by the *Catholic Telegraph* expresses this kind of sentiment as well.

In an article published on October 6, 1832, the writer accuses Protestants in California for "persecuting" Catholic believers:

The poor Catholic converts - about 100 in number - have been the constant objects of sectarian persecution; and they could not attend Mass but by stealth. No means have been left untried, at the instigation of the biblical emissaries, to draw them from the Catholic faith and

the first successful Catholic publications in the country. It would eventually claim a circulation that extended well outside the parameters of Ohio eventually reaching readers in Kentucky, Maryland, and Missouri; it was eventually translated into German as well.

worship. Many of the neophytes have been threatened with death . . . led on by the Calvinistic preachers.⁸⁶

Despite the existence of the *Catholic Telegraph*, anti-Catholic articles outnumbered Catholic perspectives and reinforced American Protestant aims. Therefore, the kind of sentiment expressed in the *Catholic Telegraph* was far different than most other attitudes presented in American periodicals at this time. The *Catholic Telegraph* facilitated a rhetorical platform that provided an avenue of expression for Catholicism in a country absorbed by Protestant traditions and faith. However, despite the writers' attempts to enlighten readers about Spanish Catholic achievements outside of the United States, there were few Catholic periodicals like *The Catholic Telegraph* to reinforce these claims.

Nonetheless, whether possessing a bias or not, in each of the previously mentioned articles from this period, California was presented as a place dominated by Hispanic Catholic influence. Represented most in these articles, California was a place that would benefit from Protestant rather than Hispanic Catholic presence. Most of these

⁸⁶ "Letter 1 – No Title," *Catholic Telegraph*, October 6, 1832, *American Periodicals*.

writers failed to comprehend (even if briefly mention) the realities of religious life in California.

By the 1830s, the once "Franciscan missions" were now secular parishes. Yet, writers continued to treat the missions as if they were still simply "Spanish" institutions. The implications of this corresponded with the anti-Spanish attitudes already demonstrated in periodicals from an earlier era.

3. CONCLUSION

Indeed, American writers continued to present stories that showed the missions under faulty Spanish leadership, and Spain's influence in California was posed as a detriment to the region. Inherent in the Protestant perspectives was the notion of spreading their faith, and writers looked far west in order to do so. Simultaneously, they provided a platform to discuss expansion while more directly pursuing American religious growth into Hispanic areas of North America.

At the same time, non-religious views of California (best represented in details about environment) were also presented with the purpose to best describe a region to which most Americans had not traveled but a region that

presented opportunities, maybe even for economic profit.

Looking west, articles generated notions about an area that was not American but might fit into a national agenda about American expansion. These kinds of ideas were about to become more popular than ever before in new articles that conceived the United States as an empire.

. . . For all our minds were prepared to give a brotherly embrace to the sons of the Great Republic, whose enterprising spirit had filled us with admiration. Ill-advisedly, however, as some say, or dominated by a desire to rule without let or hindrance, as others say. . .

-Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Recuerdos Historicos y Personales Tocante a la Alta California, 1875

CHAPTER THREE: EMPIRE-MINDED, 1840-1845

1. THESIS:

From the publication of Richard Henry Dana's book about California in 1840, articles in selected periodicals continued to demonstrate interest in Hispanic presence in the far west and raised issues that suggested interest in potential U.S. conquest of this portion of North America. Articles about expansion into the Hispanic west replaced much earlier descriptions about this region and the aims of Spanish colonies (similar to those of former British colonies in America) to eliminate empire; now writers discussed the United States as an empire. Articles expressed expansionist sentiment representative of empire building.⁸⁷

2. EMPIRES ENDING, EMPIRES BUILDING:

The expansion of existing empires facilitated the settlement of North America throughout the early modern period. In fact, the Americas became relevant to the western world as early as the fifteenth century because of

⁸⁷ Peter J. Kastor, *The Nation's Crucible: The Louisiana Purchase and the Creation of America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 8-9.

European imperial expansion. Eventually, European nations (particularly the French, Spanish, and English) confronted one another for land and resources within this valuable part of the world. Challenges with empire building escalated during the Seven Years' War.⁸⁸ This was a global battle that took place in Europe, South America, India, and Africa as well as North America; this war represented the efforts that each country would take to expand its dominion. In the British colonies of North America, the Seven Years' War was better known as the French-Indian War. England defeated French troops and allied Indian soldiers in order to render itself the dominant empire on the continent.

Following the war, the French ceded much of New France to Britain. Therefore, the French government's largest portion of land that remained in North America was the Louisiana Territory. After the eradication of English imperial power in the colonies and following American Federalist governance, the leadership of Thomas Jefferson - who acted more like an empire builder during his Presidency compared with the two Presidents who preceded him -

⁸⁸ Paul W. Mapp, *The Elusive West and the Contest for Empire, 1713-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 147.

facilitated America's ability to expand into new western frontiers. By the early 1800s, the United States government had the potential to expand with few obstacles to acquire foreign territories.

By 1840, the challenges to continued western expansion would be posed by the existence of Mexican governing control in this portion of North America as well as the threat of the British empire acquiring parts of the far west. For the United States, the threat of another country's governmental control in areas close to the Pacific became more relevant in American politics as a part of the 1840 election of Whig candidate William Harrison and his ideas of expansive government. In the same year, knowledge about life in Hispanic territory (especially California) gained more urgency after the publication of Richard Henry Dana's memoir.

Two Years Before the Mast was the published account of Richard Henry Dana, Jr.'s trading expedition into the far west. Dana traveled on the *Pilgrim* from Boston to the Pacific in the years between 1836 and 1838.⁸⁹ During the journey that took him around Cape Horn, he visited portions

⁸⁹ The newspaper the *Sheet Anchor* on July 20, 1844 called, "Shortest Passage from California" reflected on the voyage of the *Pilgrim*.

of California such as San Diego, Monterey, and San Francisco. Dana's book pondered the possibility of permanent American settlement in Mexican territory.⁹⁰

Dana wrote about the people of California, and particularly, the economic viability for trade in the region. Economic necessity was of crucial political interest at the time his memoir was published, because people in the United States as people continued to deal with the economic repercussions of the Panic of 1837. Indeed, as Dana expressed, the cattle industry - otherwise known as the hide-and-tallow trade - was California's best potential industry.⁹¹ As Dana observed, this industry would provide a beneficial economic prospect for Americans.

⁹⁰ Unlike some republished travel accounts where the author was not provided recognition for his observations, this piece includes the traveler's name and occupation. The person credited with providing the observations is known as Captain Arthur. Arthur was one of many "Yankee traders," better known as Boston traders, who came from the far east coast of the United States into Hispanic territories on the Pacific. Arthur's ship, appropriately called California, came to the Monterey region in an expedition to acquire products from the hide and tallow trade. Captain Arthur describes that the trading expedition took place on "Sunday the 30th." This article includes excerpts from the account that aim to highlight the most pertinent parts of the expedition. Captain Arthur contends that the travel took approximately 115 days. The nearly four month journey would seem lengthy. Yet, Arthur argues that this expedition became the quickest of any other trading excursion before this time. In order to support his point, Arthur finds that the fastest travel that previously took place was the voyage of the "Pilgrim" led by "Captain Faucon." He notes that the "Pilgrim's" journey took three days longer. The mention of the Pilgrim here is revealing. The Pilgrim was the ship that the acclaimed Richard Henry Dana would travel on just a few years earlier. Similar to Dana, Arthur points to the United States' government emerging interest in far western trade. Those who conducted trade wanted to find ways to reach California as quickly as possible.

⁹¹ Richard Henry Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast: A Personal Narrative of Life at Sea* (Boston: Estes and Lauriat Publishers, 1840), 75-77.

Yet, Dana's memories about the region were not simply a compilation of details without a specific message for readers. Dana wanted Americans to take more interest in the region, particularly for the U.S. government to do so. In the chapter, "California and Its Inhabitants," Dana makes a blatant statement that criticizes the Hispanic population of California for its lawlessness, impropriety, and cruelty toward Native Americans. Further, he suggests that new populations of Americans in California would tremendously benefit the region. He writes:

In their domestic relations, these people are not better than in their public. The men are thriftless, proud, and extravagant, and very much given to gaming; the women have but little education . . . have little virtue . . . Of the poor Indians, very little care is taken. The priests, indeed, at the missions, are said to keep them very strictly . . . Such are the people who inhabit a country embracing four or five hundred miles of sea-coast, with several good harbors; with fine forests in the north; the waters filled with fish, and the plains covered with thousands of herds of cattle . . . In the hands of an enterprising people, what a country this might be! We are ready to say . . . The Americans . . . are indeed more industrious and effective than the Spaniards.⁹²

Dana's fervor toward California is visible throughout his account. However, the impending imperial rivalries of the era are also explained. He foresees that the English

⁹² "Two Years Before the Mast," <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2055/2055-h/2055-h.htm#chap21>.

could pose a threat to American presence in California. There were a few Americans who lived in California at the time of Dana's visit, but he dually notices that there were just as many (if not more) "Englishmen," as he refers to them, who lived there as well. Dana expresses concern about their presence because he believes that England aimed to control this portion of North America. Indeed, Dana's published memoir serves just as much as a precautionary message to American readers about the threat of English expansion as it simultaneously promotes American expansion.⁹³

Dana, a common Boston merchant, encouraged interest in the far west. His book sold over 10,000 copies in the first year of publication and spurred editors on to include excerpts of his journey in periodicals throughout the 1840s. Despite his expansionist message, he would not become synonymous with *manifest destiny*. However, his ideas about the potential of the far west for the United States, especially California - and other writers of the period that followed this kind of dialogue - permeated new

⁹³ Ibid. This may explain why, as the foreword from this author contends, that his text was more popular in England than it was in America. The English, although across the Atlantic, saw themselves as much in contention for "new" territory in the North American far west as much as the Americans were.

articles. Additionally and importantly, Dana posed England as an imperial foe to the United States implying that America was also an empire to be reckoned with. This dialogue became increasingly common in articles that followed the publication of his book.⁹⁴

Dana's text was an elaboration on preexisting ideas from periodicals about the Hispanic west. As Dana's text and periodicals showed after 1840, this period was a transformative moment for the United States in terms of considering far western expansion. Articles came to reflect the country's transformation and the emerging expansionist aims of the American government. They described the United States as an emerging empire in the midst of imperial adversaries in far western North America.

In fact, Mexico was the most significant rival of the United States in 1840, because the Mexican government either presently or in the recent past had control over important western portions of North America including Texas and California. In the early 1800s, the Mexican government encouraged foreign immigration into their territories. Foreign trade and settlement became commonplace and was

⁹⁴ Indeed, Dana's text led to increased interest in California. The book sold over 10,000 copies in the first year of its publication.

often viewed as beneficial by the Mexican government. In addition, the Mexican government offered land grants to interested foreigners. However, by the 1830s, immigration into Mexican territory, particularly Texas, became a problematic issue for the Mexican government, because in 1829, Mexico abolished slavery.

However, many Americans continued to enter into Mexican territory with slaves. By 1830, the Mexican government issued an immigration law that banned American immigration as well as placed a customs duty on goods entering into Texas from the United States. Yet, the immigration problem was not resolved. In the middle of the 1830s, Americans outnumbered Mexicans in some portions of Mexican territory more than 4 to 1. Territorial disputes erupted in Texas amongst Anglo Americans, Tejanos, and Mexicans, and eventually, Americans living in Texas challenged Mexican leadership.

These challenges facilitated the Battle of the Alamo and the subsequent Battle of San Jacinto, where eventually, Anglo Texans would form an independent government. Yet, in other parts of Mexican territory, like California, challenges to the Mexican government's authority continued.

More Americans pushed for the United States government's intervention.

This would be reflected in the articles published in this era. For instance, on June 1, 1840, *Sailor's Magazine and Naval Journal* printed "California." Five years before John O'Sullivan coined the term "manifest destiny," this article suggested that American expansion into the far western frontier was a part of God's destiny for the United States.⁹⁵ In reference to California, the journal mentions: "It appears as if it was designed by the Creator to be the medium of connecting commercially, Asia with America."

Like Dana's thoughts about the region, this article expresses any interest in California in terms of its economic potential for the United States. The article contends that California is the most desired region for all other foreign empires. Similar to the precaution that Dana offered in his memoir about the risks involved in potential American disinterest in the area, the anonymous writer notes that Americans should take a vested interest in far

⁹⁵ "California," *Sailor's Magazine and Naval Journal*, June 1, 1840 in the *American Antiquarian Society*. *Sailor's Magazine* was a product of the moral reform era and the various temperance societies that emerged in this period. The American Seaman's Friend Society, founded in New York in the early nineteenth century, aimed to promote the welfare of Americans abroad at sea. The society also particularly hoped that Americans would spread the Christian faith as they traveled. This piece exemplifies the kind of foreign information available to a Society interested in travelers' lives and experiences.

western lands.⁹⁶ Similar to Dana, this piece suggests that California has prominent economic and political possibilities. Like others before, the writer believes that the "Californias" are one of the most important places in the world because of the environment and its potential for trade.⁹⁷ Indeed, the article points out that the "western shores of the Pacific" will soon have thriving sea ports and areas for significant commerce. For this reason, echoing Dana's message, the writer implies that other countries will aim to control California if the United States government will not.

Other periodical articles reflected on the challenges as well as benefits that the United States government might face in this portion of North America. The July 20, 1844 article, "Department of War and Marine" by the *Niles National Register* republished letters from the Mexican interim President José María Bocanegra and Waddy Thompson, a South Carolina Whig who was the Foreign Envoy for the United States to Mexico.⁹⁸ Bocanegra's letters reflected on

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ "Department of War and Marine," *Niles National Register*, Jul. 20, 1844 in *American Antiquarian Society*. Indeed, this was a newspaper that took on some of the most pressing political and diplomatic issues of the middle of the 19th century. As one recent scholar suggests, the Niles Register was the New York Times of its day. Begun by Hezekiah Niles, by the time this article was published, the periodical was run by his son, William Ogden Niles. Both men stated that they would "avoid party politics and promote

the concerns that the Mexican government possessed in this moment about possible American expansion, and Thompson's letters reflected on the economic desires for the United States government to trade with Mexico.

Protecting Mexico's interests and control in its remaining portions of North America, Bocanegra's letter advised American citizens that they should not reside in portions of Mexican territory. In fact, Bocanegra specifies that "natives" of the United States should not make a home for themselves in any "north" part of California.⁹⁹ On the other hand, Thompson aims to convince Bocanegra that Mexico's policies against Americans are unfair and violate diplomatic "friendship." Thompson writes:

. . . Mexico has been continually receiving, not professionals, but practical evidence of the friendly dispositions of the government of the U. States, and has not habitually repeated the professions of the same feelings on her part . . . an act only to be palliated by apprehension of immediate war.¹⁰⁰

national character." William Ogden's focus on the far west in this piece implicates that there was something to be said about American national character in a discussion of a region outside the United States. The article includes a portion of a Mexican governmental letter that was originally written in Spanish and translated to English for this piece. The letter is addressed to "His excellency of the governor of California." Even though the Niles National Register published this article on the 20th of July, according to the unknown author, this letter was written seven days prior

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

In fact, Thompson's sentiments show the tensions that existed between Mexico and the United States as the American government and the people of the country hoped to not simply expand but acquire Mexican land. On the other hand, despite trade and immigration restrictions, Bocanegra's letter details the continued problems that the Mexican government faced because of foreign (particularly American) interest and presence in its territory.¹⁰¹

Indeed, evident in these letters, the American government's position among rival empires was apparent in this period. Despite the potential interest about new territory from representatives of the U.S. government, the Mexican government was an obstacle to expansion. This was evident in 1845 in *Littell's Living Age* in an article originally published in the *Cincinnati Gazette*. The title of the article, "The Crusade the Curse," exemplifies the tensions present at this moment between America's growing interest to expand and the politics of doing so. The author writes:

¹⁰¹ Ibid. The ambiguity regarding the origin of this article (and the letter it contains) allow for varied interpretations of its meaning. For instance, it could be possible that this letter derived from the United States government; perhaps it was created in an effort to appease the Mexican government. Yet, the political climate of the two countries, as well as the United States' desire for California in the 1840s, would suggest otherwise.

Why tempt us to excess - to a boundless ambition for conquest . . . The social position of the West, as it knows, is somewhat peculiar. From a variety of causes the ambition with all to be first, to get up in the world, is as hot as ever inflamed or afflicted the human breast. The competition in trade - the intense, fierce energy with which business and labor are driven for money.¹⁰²

The article questions the intentions of those in the United States who promoted western expansion. The writer considers the benefits as well as the problems that might arise with the creation of a "wider empire" based on "conquest."¹⁰³ These concerns were part of the process of empire building and reflected the changing political atmosphere the United States government experienced in this moment.

By the time this article was published in 1845, James K. Polk had been elected and inaugurated as President, and he inherited a number of territorial issues not simply with Mexico but also with England as well. Polk entered political office promising that he would solve the territorial turmoil as well as pursue his dream of continental expansion. More impressively, when he took office, he vowed that he would not run for a second term as President; therefore, all of this would be settled within

¹⁰² "The Crusade and the Curse," *Littell's Living Age*, July 12, 1845 in *American Periodical Series*.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

four years. His desires would be fulfilled amidst rumors - and eventually the reality - of war.

Indeed, as Polk's foreign policy demonstrated (and as periodicals noted), England and Mexico's governments were the primary foreign policy concern for the American government. For example, since 1818, both England and the United States had occupied the Oregon territory. Polk would need to handle this territorial dispute with England diplomatically to once-and-for-all acquire the territory for the United States. In regard to California, territorial issues remained tenuous as well. Indeed, both Mexico as well as England became the two countries that the United States government had to confront.

In fact, England's diplomatic interactions in this period were ironic. A country that was once the ruling empire over British colonists in North America now became a country vying for territory with Americans in North America. By the 1840s, England was an imperial rival of the United States on the Pacific portion of this part of the world. Southern leaders in the United States were more vocal about proposed plots that the English government possessed to prohibit, in any way possible, the United States government's chances to expand into Mexican

territory. Southerners were the most concerned about this issue because of their slave holding agenda. As one historian Samuel Haynes refers, "This fear of British designs, real and imagined, changed the face of Manifest Destiny, converting many advocates of gradual expansion into apostles of a new, more militant brand of imperialism."¹⁰⁴

These anxieties were evident in an article from *The Army and Navy Chronicle* published in 1840. As a bastion of foreign news the article, "Cession of the Californias" (originally published in the *The New Orleans Bulletin* in 1840), provided an early glimpse into the challenges that Mexico faced with the United States and the possible threat that the English posed to the country as well. The anonymous writer describes how the English government, through its diplomatic relations with Mexico, supposedly planned to acquire California.

The article points out that Mexico's government continued to have financial problems because of strained finances dating back to the Pastry War with France. The writer notes, ". . . Mexico is indebted to England in a

¹⁰⁴ Samuel Haynes, "Manifest Destiny,"
http://www.pbs.org/kenapa/usmexicanwar/prelude/md_manifest_destiny.html.

vast sum. The sale of the Californias might be a convenient mode of cancelling an enormous debt.”¹⁰⁵

However, the validity of the claims were questionable and this is even admitted in the article.

The writer mentions that this supposed purchase is based on “rumors” circulating with regard to England and Mexico’s diplomatic relationship. However, as it is noted, whether these findings may be rumor or not, the outcome would undeniably favor England. Therefore, it might diminish any opportunity for Americans to settle in the territory. The author writes:

The ambition of the British cabinet would grasp at the prize, as a possession admirably adapted to advance the naval and commercial aggrandizement of the nation. It would be desirable also, as offering a barrier to the encroachments of the Texians and Americans . . . that might prevent the acquisition of the territory by a kindred but a rival people.¹⁰⁶

Akin to the United States government’s acquisition of the Louisiana Purchase, the English government foresaw potential trading possibilities in western portions of North America if they could acquire parts of the Pacific. However, England’s direct diplomatic relations with Mexico

¹⁰⁵ “Cession of the Californias,” *Army and Navy Chronicle*, Mar. 5, 1840 in the *American Antiquarian Society*.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*.

during this period were uncertain, especially to Americans.¹⁰⁷ Despite the uncertainty, rumors were visible in periodicals. Represented in this article, Mexico desperately needed England's continued financial assistance. Yet, the rumor that concerned this writer the most was not necessarily that England could settle and monopolize trade in the region but that England's imperial presence would restrict slavery in the far west.

The writer contends that England hoped to sign a treaty with Mexico that would put an end to "negro slavery."¹⁰⁸ The racial attitudes presented in the article reflected the political and social realities of this period as different Americans envisioned the future of the country in separate ways. One part of the United States, the South, aimed to expand slavery. The other portion, the North, sought western expansion through an emphasis on "free soil." What would the United States look like in the future, socially and politically, if its boundaries eventually extended to California?

¹⁰⁷ England and Mexico developed a diplomatic relationship because of the English government's support of the Mexican government during the First Franco-Mexican war in the late 1830s. In this wartime period, the United States was France's ally. Mexico lost the war, and also was indebted to England for their diplomatic support. However, evident in this piece (as well as others), questions circulated about Mexico's possible repayment of debt to England.

¹⁰⁸ "Cession of the Californias," *Army and Navy Chronicle*, Mar. 5, 1840 in the *American Antiquarian Society*.

Based on the rumors in this piece, the possibilities for Americans in the far west might never come to fruition at all because of England's political plans for the region. In reference to England, the writer states, "Under the pretext of colonizing the Californias with her colored allies . . . the absolute control of all Mexico be her's. With Black battalions from the West Indies . . . the unscrupulous fanatics of England would find argument for their abolition doctrines, such as it would require all the energies of our Southern States to resist."¹⁰⁹

These were shrill and paranoid concerns. Indeed, by the 1840s, English abolitionists came to the United States and joined in a larger political and social debate that accelerated due to the rise of moral reforms that occurred during the same era. However, the precise diplomatic and financial relationship between the English and Mexican governments was largely unknown to most Americans and continued to be a point of interest for periodicals. The *Niles National Register* May 13, 1843 publication "The Monterey Affair" demonstrated this.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

The article was a collection of letters written by "Commodore Jones" who was better known as Thomas Catesby Jones, the commanding officer of a U.S. Naval exploring expedition to different regions of the Pacific commissioned by the U.S. government from 1838-1842. Jones offered up his thoughts about Mexico, England, and the United States' potential position on the Pacific coast. Jones' ideas illustrated that there were several types of rumors that existed about the English government's relations with Mexico at this time.

In the piece, Jones mentions one circulating, and false, rumor that Mexico already had ceded the Californias to England for \$7 million. He also raises another false rumor which concerns a supposed war that was "already taking place" between Mexico and the United States. Yet, the Mexican and American governments were still three years away from war with one another. Nonetheless, Jones' inclusion of this rumor demonstrates the uncertainties as well as rising tensions that existed in this period. In fact, his thoughts about diplomatic relations between the three countries show that rivalries were present despite the unfounded rumors. Therefore, similar to other

observers of his period, Jones finds urgency in the situation for the United States. He writes:

And if the views of the late President Monroe, as expressed in his celebrated message to congress, December 2, 1823, are still received as the avowed and fixed policy of our country . . . We should consider military occupation of the Californias by any European power, but more particularly by our great commercial rival England . . . as a measure so decidedly hostile to the true interest of the United States.¹¹⁰

However, in another article, "The Mortgage on California - Condition of the Mexican Finances" published by *Littell's Living Age*, the writer attempts to clarify the rumors that existed in this period. The article was a republication of portions of a report first produced in a Mexican newspaper called, the "Amigo de Pueblo" (A Friend of the People).¹¹¹ The portions of the report were originally made by Luis De La Rosa, the Minister of Finance for Mexico in the mid-1840s. His report was first shared with the Mexican Congress but was eventually made public. The rumors of Mexico's financial troubles in this era would be supported by Rosa's statements.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ "The Mortgage on California - Condition of the Mexican Finances," *Littell's Living Age*, Sept. 27, 1845 in the *American Antiquarian Society*. This was a politically radical newspaper published in the 1820s that promoted Mexican progress. It often defended a federal political system for the betterment of Mexico's political governance.

¹¹² "The Tax Reform Proposals of the Finance Ministers of Mexico," <http://storiaefuturo.eu/the-tax-reform-proposals-of-the-finance-ministers-of-mexico-1825-1854/>.

In his original report to the Mexican Congress, Rosa explained that Mexican finances were in a state of "chaos and confusion." In the portions of the report that made it into this article, he describes that a "mortgage" has been placed on California from Mexico for the English government. In fact, the proposed deal between Mexico and England could give the English government California, Chihuahua, Sonora, and New Mexico.¹¹³ The article points out that the Mexican government owes about "20 million" (pesos) to England.¹¹⁴

Indeed, the term of a "mortgage" on California was not accurate. Yet, this estimated debt was. For the English government's financial assistance in the past, the Mexican government owed England around 11 million (pesos) by 1824. By 1850, this number had reached almost 50 million (pesos), or about \$4 million, according to later Mexican Finance Ministers Manuel Piña y Cuevas and later Guillermo Prieto.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ "The Mortgage on California – Condition of the Mexican Finances," *Littell's Living Age*, Sept. 27, 1845 in the *American Antiquarian Society*.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ "The Tax Reform Proposals of the Finance Ministers of Mexico," <http://storiaefuturo.eu/the-tax-reform-proposals-of-the-finance-ministers-of-mexico-1825-1854/>. Much of the debt owed to England stemmed from loans the English government provided Mexico when it first became a republic and its financial situation was precarious. In fact, the Mexican government borrowed money for England in 1823 as well as two years later totaling about \$32 million.

From the Albany Argus.
**THE MORTGAGE ON CALIFORNIA—
 CONDITION OF THE MEXICAN FI-
 NANCES—A GUARANTY OF PEACE.**

A very interesting, we may rather say im-
 portant translation, appears in the Washington
 Union in the shape of a report of Rosa, the
 present Minister of Finance, which he made
 while a member of Congress in the year 1844,
 when it was proposed to borrow \$10,000,000
 for the contemplated invasion of Texas. This
 report seems to have laid buried among the
 mass of Congressional Documents, until the
 present excitement in Mexico called it more
 fully to the light. It is now published in a
 Mexican paper called the *Amigo del Pueblo*,
 that is "a friend of the People," to be used as
 a political weapon in the canvass, against the
 existing administration.

Mexico is clearly in a condition of hopeless
 insolvency. The debt due to foreigners alone
 (mostly in England) amounts to FIFTY MILL-
 ions of dollars. How large the domestic debt
 is, we have no means of telling, but that it
 must be considerable is more than probable—
 for it is the practice of all Governments to ex-
 haust borrowing at home, before they seek
 loans abroad. Under these circumstances if
 TEN MILLIONS is added for the domestic debt,
 we shall probably fall short of the mark. Of
 the foreign debt, the report says "Twenty
 millions begin to be payable on the 1st of Oc-
 tober, 1847," or in two years from the present
 time. We come now to the kernel of the re-
 port. We refer to the mortgage to the Eng-
 lish bond-holders of the public domain in CAL-
 IFORNIA and other provinces of Mexico. The
 Report says "for the payment of the TWENTY
 MILLIONS and its interest, one hundred mill-
 ions of acres in California, Chihuahua, Sono-
 ra, New Mexico and Texas, equal to one-sixth
 of all the territory, claimed by the Republic,
 are mortgaged."

Figure No. 3: "The
 Mortgage on
 California";
Pittsfield Sun, 1845.

Thus, with financial rumors sustained as truthful, the
 editorial commentary of this article contends that Mexico
 is beholden to England in the future. Because of this
 dependent financial relationship, both England and Mexico
 posed a threat to the United States government and American
 dreams for Hispanic lands. "This bargain might be mutually
 advantageous to both parties. England gets a fine province

and a position on the Pacific ocean . . . and Mexico gets rid of nearly half of her foreign debt . . . By many, it is supposed that Mexico will be instigated by England to declare war against the United States.”¹¹⁶ Similar to others, this article suggests that war was eminent. In reality, despite England’s supposed intervention with the Mexican government and the problems it might pose for the United States, Mexico – rather than England – was the country that went to war against America.

The precarious pre-war moment was noted in other pieces such as, “California,” published in 1845 in *Times and Seasons*. Similar to the previous article that attempted to dispel rumors, this piece aimed for the same outcome. In fact, the ideas raised in the article stemmed from the points made by an American who temporarily resided in California: Albert M. Gilliam. Gilliam was a former United States Consul who briefly lived in San Francisco.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ “The Mortgage on California – Condition of the Mexican Finances,” *Littell’s Living Age*, Sept. 27, 1845 in the *American Antiquarian Society*.

¹¹⁷ “California,” *Times and Seasons*, Dec. 15, 1845 in *American Antiquarian Society*. See Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of the Pacific States of North America, 1884-1990: Vol. 16 California* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft, 1886). This periodical was not one based on military expeditions or political interests like some others of the time. Instead, *Times and Seasons* was an Illinois publication whose founder, Don Carlos Smith, was the brother of Joseph Smith. In fact, this was a Mormon publication. Smith’s caption for the periodical argued “The truth will prevail.” However, this particular piece did not have anything to do with his religion. Rather, it showed that even the least politically-motivated newspapers were interested in situations occurring in the far west.

He recorded his observations of Mexican territory and political governance there during his travels from 1843-1844.¹¹⁸ Gilliam's observations and opinions about the Mexican government confirmed the rumors of war.¹¹⁹

The article details the steps that the Mexican government recently had taken to prepare for a possible conflict with the United States. Gilliam finds:

The natives are now expecting troops from Acapulco to reconquer the country, and are drilling many young men in preparation . . . if they cannot exceed in this, they will take to the mountains and worry the invaders out. Many think these soldiers are sent by Mexico at the instigation of the English . . . In the mean time the Californians do not believe this story, but give land to all that come.¹²⁰

His letter justifies rumors as well as dispels them. Yet, Gilliam's presence in California made the claims about possible warfare as well as English intervention even more unsettling. For instance, his letter details how a British consul recently took up residence in California. In addition, he mentions that many children have been sent to an "English school" to "prepare them for coming events."¹²¹ Like other writers, Gilliam implies that English interest

¹¹⁸ Albert Gilliam, *Travels in Mexico Between 1843-1844* (Aberdeen G. Clark: 1847).

¹¹⁹ "California," *Times and Seasons*, Dec. 15, 1845 in *American Antiquarian Society*

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

in California is not just a current concern but could pose future problems for the United States.

Indeed, like other writers from this time, Gilliam believes that the United States' success in the future relies on the resolution to a growing imperial rivalry over the far west. In fact, he contends that the potential for the United States government to control any other lands relies on its possession of California.¹²² He argues that the region is the singular most important part of America's future, and he believes that Oregon will be of "no use" to the United States unless American land extends all the way to California. Clearly, his argument is one based on empire building. In fact, Gilliam's impassioned rhetoric best exemplifies the attitudes of other commentators of this time who viewed the situation in Mexican territory as vital to national interests. He points out that California will either be taken over by "John Bull" (England) or "Uncle Sam" (American).¹²³

Indeed, as much as supposed English interest in California and the far west had grown in recent decades, so too, had American desires for the territory. By the early

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

1840s, American wagon trains from the United States began to more frequently cross into Mexican territory. In 1841, American, John Bidwell, formed the Western Emigration Society and led a pioneer group to California. Similarly, American, John Frémont, led a scientific expedition across the Rockies and would eventually settle in California.¹²⁴ In terms of English interest, the former British Minister in Mexico, Richard Pakenham, summed it up when he stated: "To establish an English population in the magnificent Territory of Upper California . . . should not fall into the hands of any power but England . . . daring and adventurous speculators in the United States have already turned their thoughts in this direction."

3. CONCLUSION:

Contrary to the rumors and concerns in a host of U.S. periodicals in the early 1840s, England would never pursue the rumored purchase or colonization of Mexican territory. In fact, as Gilliam correctly pointed out, England was not going to support Mexico's threats of war against the United States. By the end of 1845, the truth was this: Mexico was

¹²⁴ "New Perspectives on the West," http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/events/1840_1850.htm.

the United States government's most menacing rival in this portion of North America because they were going to do anything possible to reject Anglo-American intervention and settlement. The imperial warfare for the far west would take place between Mexico and the United States, not England.

In fact, in terms of Mexico, the United States government became increasingly impatient with the Mexican government's lack of diplomacy. James Polk would offer their government \$30 million for much of Mexico's territory but he was rebuffed. Diplomatic efforts ended after 1845. From the American perspective in articles of the era, the Mexican *and* English governments were both in the way of U.S. expansion. In reality, the Mexican government was the true problem for the United States, and they would be dealt with through force. Dialogues about imperial rivalries were a far different kind of discussion compared to when American writers previously portrayed Mexicans' desire for independence akin to former American experiences. Warfare would settle their differences; this, combined with increased western migration, solidified American empire building.

One thing is certain that the people looked on my property as their own, and in the Winter of 1849 to 1850, I had not an Idea that people could be so mean, and that they would do a Wholesale business in Stealing . . . Well it is only a kind of memorandum, and not a History at all, Only to remember you on the different periods when such and such things happened.

-John Sutter, Personal Diary Entry, 1850

CHAPTER FOUR:
THE DESTINY OF AMERICAN EMPIRE, 1845-1850

1. THESIS:

By 1845, the United States government sought to expand into Mexican territory, and articles in periodicals reflected this aim for American expansion as well as discussed the new development of Americans who headed into the west. In this year, John L. O'Sullivan branded America's expansion efforts as "manifest destiny." However, articles like O'Sullivan's only continued the dialogue about emerging empire-building that was already decades in the making. By 1850, the United States government successfully acquired additional parts of North America, such as California, that had once only been written about in articles in American periodicals.

2. THE SPIRIT OF EXPANSION:

From the Presidencies of John Tyler to James Polk, the United States aimed to extend its potential territorial borders closer to the Pacific. However, each President possessed different aims for his desire to push the United States' boundaries into the west. Tyler, a man who inherited the Presidency after William Harrison's death,

hoped that territorial expansion would preserve the institution of slavery.¹²⁵ On the other hand, Polk, in his inaugural address articulated another justification for expansion:

To enlarge its limits (the United States) is to extend the dominions of peace over additional territories and increasing millions . . . Foreign powers should therefore look on the annexation of Texas to the United States not as the conquest of a nation seeking to extend her dominions by arms and violence, but as the peaceful acquisition of a territory.¹²⁶

Indeed, Polk became President in the midst of a political debate about the possible annexation of the independent Republic of Texas. Texans and Americans alike considered the possible advantages as well as disadvantages to this incorporation. At the same time, political and military tensions with the Mexican government increased as the United States government, under Polk, made it clear that expansion was in the future for the country. Amidst all of this political change and debate, new western migrants from the United States found new lands by displacing indigenous people from their own.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Edward P. Crapol, "John Tyler and the Pursuit of National Destiny," *Journal of the Early American Republic*, 17.3 (October 1997), found in <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/crapol.htm>.

¹²⁶ "James Knox Polk Inaugural Address," <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres27.html>.

¹²⁷ Tim Alan Garrison, *The Legal Ideology of Removal: The Southern Judiciary and the Sovereignty of Native American Nations* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2002), 234-237.

In 1845, it would be O'Sullivan's article that captured the spirit and the challenges of this period so well. The *Democratic Review* published O'Sullivan's article "Annexation," which addressed the possible annexation of Texas and detailed his perspective about American expansion. In addition, O'Sullivan raised the problem that exacerbated the issues of expansion for the United States: slavery. However, this issue would not be directly confronted until a decade and a half later when the Civil War began. Instead, it was in this piece that O'Sullivan produced one of the most important contributions to American rhetoric in the nineteenth century: *manifest destiny*. If Jeffersonian republicanism first promoted expansion to the west, O'Sullivan's piece contributed to the argument that America's territory could expand even further westward.

"Manifest destiny" was one of the most influential cultural phrases offered up by any American periodical writer up until this point. O'Sullivan's ideas about far western expansion were not innovative in 1845. Yet, by this time, the term "manifest destiny" captured the spirit of American expansionism and a desire for empire building. In fact, O'Sullivan was just one of the new, emerging

intellectuals who wanted to perpetuate the earlier Jeffersonian messages of expansion.

O'Sullivan was a member of the Young American Movement, a faction of the Democratic Party which eventually gained the support of prominent politicians such as Stephen Douglas and James Polk.¹²⁸ Although this group did not believe that the future of the U.S. hinged on the expansion of a *yeoman republic* - as Jefferson once promoted - it advocated for continued territorial expansion into western territories. Indeed, O'Sullivan's piece characterized the changes that occurred during this period: a country in a transition into an empire based on the conquest of the far west.

In "Annexation," O'Sullivan argues that all people should hope Texas enters the Union. He believes that everyone in the United States should possess the aspiration to strengthen the country by expanding its borders. He suggests that this aspiration is the "common duty" of every American patriot.¹²⁹ However, his work is more than an

¹²⁸ See Edward Widmer, *Young America: The Flowering of Democracy in New York City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

¹²⁹ "Annexation," *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, July 1, 1845 in *American Antiquarian Society*

argument that advocates annexation; rather, O'Sullivan introduces *manifest destiny* as a form of fulfillment.

He contends that Americans possess the "Providence for free development," or that it is within a providential design that they should pursue migrations west.¹³⁰ He does not see an end to the territorial reaches that American citizens can expand into. Instead, O'Sullivan envisions the entire continent filled with available lands for Americans to settle in. His epic perspective encourages people in the United States to "overspread the country."¹³¹

Yet, like writers before him, the Mexican government serves as the obstacle that will make it difficult for Americans to expand into new territories. Decades earlier, writers in periodicals often noted similarities between Mexican and American experiences based on the desire for independence and the creation of republican forms of government. By the mid-1840s, exemplified in O'Sullivan's perspective, the two countries grew antagonistic. In this excerpt, O'Sullivan ponders on the possible different outcome for both countries if diplomatic relations were more amiable at present:

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

Its history has been a sad tissue of diplomatic blundering. How much better it might have been managed . . . California probably ours—and Mexico and ourselves united by closer ties than ever; of mutual friendship and mutual support in resistance to the intrusion of European interference in the affairs of the American republics. The singular result has been produced, that while our neighbor has, in truth, no real right to blame or complain—when all the wrong is on her side.¹³²

Building on other writers who published years before him, O'Sullivan now believed that American acquisition of the west was a crucial part of expansion. Motivated by his national ties, as much as writers before him, O'Sullivan contends that California must be "ours." He demands that the United States government take control of California in order to extend the American *empire*. He writes, ". . . The day is not distant when the Empires of the Atlantic and the Pacific would flow together into one, as soon as their inland border should approach each other."¹³³ True to the Young American Movement, O'Sullivan advocates for a nation that continues to build in the west. In fact, O'Sullivan (with a less devout purpose in mind), but taking on a similar tone of Protestant-biased writers from the past, believed western expansion was providential. He writes,

¹³² "Annexation," <http://web.grinnell.edu/courses/HIS/f01/HIS202-01/Documents/OSullivan.html>

¹³³ Ibid.

"Our greatness and checking the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions."¹³⁴

For these reasons, he contributed to dialogues that long existed about the possibility of empire building and the detriment of Hispanic influence in North America. In his piece, O'Sullivan exclaims, "There is no growth in Spanish America!"¹³⁵ Indeed, Mexican control in western parts of North America, like California, was about to end. On December 29, 1845, the United States annexed Texas, and two months later, Texas officially changed from an independent republic to a state of the American Union. Nonetheless, American-Mexican relations remained tenuous and questions about Mexican territory lingered.

O'Sullivan's perspective about a possible war with Mexico was clear. He believed that the United States would easily win a war against the country, and was so certain that he argued that the "natural flow of events" would take their course.¹³⁶ He was certain that, eventually, the

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

United States would have representatives from areas that extended from "Washington, DC to California."¹³⁷ His dream was telling and accurate, but the resolution of existing problems - at least when he wrote this piece - had yet to come to fruition.

By July 1845, less than a year after O'Sullivan's article, the United States government's tensions with Mexico escalated when Polk sent General Zachary Taylor to the Mexican border. In addition, one year later, Americans in California engaged in a brief military skirmish against Mexican forces in Sonoma, California. Led by early pioneer William Ide, Americans established a temporary republic (similar to the former situation in Texas a decade earlier); the battle was deemed, the Bear Flag Revolt and it established California's independence from Mexico. Adding further justification for the United States to engage in war, the Mexican government was in disarray. There were four different Presidents, six different Ministers of War, and sixteen different Ministers of Finance all in the same year of 1846.¹³⁸ The violent

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ See Donald Fithian Stevens, *Origins of Instability in Early Republican Mexico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991).

conflict, known as the Mexican-American war, lasted less than two years, and collectively, over 100,000 soldiers fought on both sides of the one-sided war where American soldiers dominated every major battle.

The war vastly contributed to American empire building in North America, and periodical writers during the wartime era pushed this expansion spirit forward. "Mexico her People and Revolutions," published during the middle of the war in 1847 in the *Southern Quarterly Review* described the significant politics as well as the possible consequences of the war. The writer of this article was Brantz Mayer, who went by the penname "B.M." He was an American intellectual well versed in the history and present political tensions within the Mexican government. He had written about Mexico's former independence struggle against Spain and he also served as the Secretary of Legation for the United States in Mexico.¹³⁹ Additionally, Mayer was the first to write a history about the Mexican-American War after the war concluded.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ See James Grant Wilson, *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography* (New York: Appleton, 1900).

¹⁴⁰ See Brantz Mayer, *History of the War Between the United States and Mexico: With a Preliminary View of Its Origin* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1848).

As a Southern sympathizer, racist attitudes inform his opinions about the purpose of the war in Mexico as well as the motivations behind American expansion. Indeed, Mayer believed that expansion facilitated slave holding. By this era, Southern Democrats in Washington, D.C. pursued the expansion of slavery in possible territories acquired from the Mexican government. In the meantime, in 1847, the same year that Mayer's article was published, Southerners were outraged as the House of Representatives approved the Wilmot Proviso which, if passed in the Senate, would have prohibited slavery in newly acquired areas from Mexico after the war.

Mayer's article exemplifies the Southern opinion of this time as well as continues the rhetoric of empire building. Similar to other authors, Mayer's arguments stem from his ability to see the United States as a superior country in comparison to others and to represent Mexico as an enemy to the country.

Like other articles published years before his, Mayer draws comparisons to the historical experiences of colonial America and colonial Mexico, but he adds a different point of view to this comparison. He suggests that both countries struggled to "rise up" in order to facilitate

their own "national existence" against monarchies.¹⁴¹

Through this, Mayer argues that people of both countries discovered that violent revolutions were the only way to solve their colonial challenges. Yet, as he suggests, this emphasis on revolution would also facilitate an eventual collision. He writes, "The characters of nations become entangled with each other by wars, for the people necessarily mingle; and the more powerful, either absorbs the weaker or leaves its indelible impress."¹⁴² Like other writers decades before, Mayer compares the two nations, but by this point in time, the implications of the comparison were far different.

Mayer suggests that the government of the United States has the ability for "the national expansion of popular liberty."¹⁴³ Moreover, Mayer contends that the Mexican government is incapable of being an independent country. In terms of the United States, he points out that

¹⁴¹ "Mexico her People and Revolutions," *Southern Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1, 1847 in *American Antiquarian Society*. The *Southern Quarterly Review* was published by Daniel Kimball Whitaker, who went by the name D.K. This periodical joined a host of other Southern newspapers published in the middle of the nineteenth century that reflected upon "Southern interests" and the ever prominent issue of sectionalism in the United States. In addition, this piece reflects overarching ideas in the post-O'Sullivan era about the need to expand American borders. Once again, the article utilizes many of the points that writers discussed decades prior before writers knew a war would occur.

¹⁴² *Ibid.* Many of the thoughts raised in this piece likely come from Mayer's first manuscript publication, *Mexico As it Was and As it Is*.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

the *Declaration of Independence* makes America exceptional based on its inherent ideas of freedom. To exemplify this point, Mayer explains that "every man can be President" in the United States.¹⁴⁴ Yet, on the other hand, Mayer's explanation of Mexico simultaneously degrades its people and reinforces the need for American expansion, both of which other writers had discussed before.

He argues that Mexican men are "selfish, false, reckless, and idle," and he believes that the Mexican government would fail because of these kinds of men.¹⁴⁵ Further, he suggests that the "purpose of life" in Mexico is "objectless."¹⁴⁶ For these reasons, Mayer summarizes:

We confess our belief that Mexico is now incapable of self-rule . . . It is the genius of American institutions that our people should fly and not crawl. Eagles are the national emblems of both Mexico and the United States. The bird of our country is represented as bearing its talons the arrows of war and the olive branch of peace, while that of Mexico strives to slay the serpent that struggles in its grasp.¹⁴⁷

Similarly, other articles of this era responded to the wartime moment with opinion-based material that described

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ One of the central virtues of republicanism was industry. Industry was not a noun at this point. Instead, industry referred to being industrious. Men who were not idle were considered virtuous men of society. Whereas, being idle, certainly would be viewed as a vice.

¹⁴⁶ "Mexico her People and Revolutions," *Southern Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1, 1847 in *American Antiquarian Society*.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

conquest of the west as an exclusive American venture. For instance, in the *Massachusetts Ploughman and New England Journal of Agriculture*, "California and New Mexico" described American superiority and its role in U.S. expansion. The article's focus on California, in particular, reinforces long existing ideas about the region's prominent place in conceptions about American expansion.¹⁴⁸ In addition, articles like the one in the *Niles' National Register* on October 17, 1846, titled, "The Conquest of California and New Mexico," described the same motivations behind the war.¹⁴⁹ These American-centric, even patriotic articles, also reveal that conceptions about California continued to be significant parts of American articles.

During the war, California was one of the regions where conflicts took place. Therefore, continued news about California became more commonplace during and following the war, but by this era, it took on different themes and perspectives. For instance, on March 4, 1846, the *Morning News* re-published a poem about California's

¹⁴⁸ "California and New Mexico," *Massachusetts Ploughman and New England Journal of Agriculture*, Mar. 11, 1848, *American Periodicals Series*.

¹⁴⁹ "The Conquest of California and New Mexico," *Niles' National Register*, October 17, 1846, *American Periodicals Series*.

central position in the United States government's emphasis on expansion. An excerpt from the poem reads: "Texas we got and Oregon - For bond and free to squat upon - But stopping here will never do - We must have California too - And then our breadth of beam will be - Westward, to the Pacific sea."¹⁵⁰ In addition, the connection between California and expansion was visible in other articles of this period such as, "The Anglo Saxons in America" published by the *New York Observer and Chronicle* on April 11, 1846. Particular views on racial, rather than national identity, allowed the unknown writer to make a case for the importance of the acquisition of California in the United States government's expansionist efforts. The article notes:

We begin to look farther, and talk of other annexations. Beyond these boundaries lie Upper and Lower California . . . and all the half-explored regions stretching down to the isthmus, the national division of the western Continent . . . The mission of the Anglo Saxons is to disenthral, civilize, elevate, and regenerate the world; that of our own countrymen, no degenerate plant of the same vine, to perform all these offices for the population of North America from ocean to ocean and the isthmus to the pole- a work as glorious as great, and sure to be done.

¹⁵⁰ "Brother Jonathan's Valentine," *Morning News*, Mar. 4, 1846 in *Early American Newspapers Series I*.

Opinions about California, which now could be extended upon, had existed for decades prior. Yet, nothing galvanized the expansionist spirit more than the eventual discovery of gold as well as the events and people that surrounded this discovery in this region.

The man that became synonymous with the region and with the discovery of gold was Johann "John" Sutter. Sutter was a Swiss immigrant who embodied the entrepreneurial, traveler spirit that the far west demanded from hopeful pioneers. Sutter came to Mexican territory in 1839, became a Mexican citizen in 1840, and obtained a land grant from California Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado. He received nearly 50,000 acres of land along the Sacramento River. He named his land, "New Helvetia" in honor of his home country. Yet, even before gold was discovered on his vast property, Sutter's descriptions of the region began to circulate in some American periodicals of this era.¹⁵¹ One such article was "California: Fort New Switzerland" published in *Littell's Living Age*; this was a reprint from the original publication in the *United Service Magazine*.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ See Albert Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers: Sex, Gender, and Culture in Old California* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999).

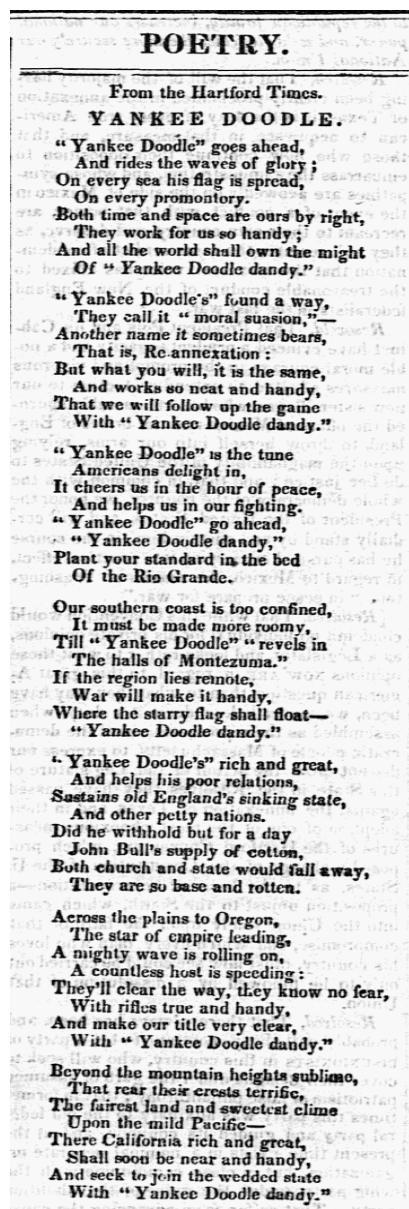


Figure No. 4:
"Yankee
Doodle,"
Pittsfield
Sun, 1845.
Courtesy of

152 "California: Fort New Switzerland," *Littell's Living Age*, Jan. 31, 1846 in *American Antiquarian Society*. The founder and editor of *Littell's Living Age*, Eliakim Littell, was one of the most well known journalists of the nineteenth century. He was associated with several newspapers, and he was in correspondence with various political elites during his lifetime including Andrew Jackson, John C. Calhoun, and Thomas Jefferson. Despite the relationship he had with predominant American leaders, his newspaper was better known for republishing important information that related to foreign and domestic news. His desire to reprint this particular article from the *United Service Magazine* exemplifies how news related to foreign military discoveries would be important for his own newspapers' purposes. It is likely that a member of the Fremont expedition provided the details in this article.

The piece provided details about Sutter and his fort. The writer notes that Sutter's land was not simply another settlement by another foreigner in California; instead, Sutter had established a thriving establishment that emphasized military defense and security as well as supported growing demographic diversity.

The unknown writer points out that Sutter was adamant about protecting his large plot of land. Therefore, Sutter had created a protective brick wall around his property and had purchased canons (supposedly from nearby Russians).¹⁵³ Sutter also hired diverse groups of people to work on his land.¹⁵⁴ The writer suggests, "The whole fort and its appurtenances is kept in admirable order, and guard is mounted day and night . . . The fort is inhabited by a motley band of Swiss, Germans, Americans, Englishmen, and Frenchmen . . . the settlers, however, gain their livelihood principally by rearing cattle."¹⁵⁵ As Richard Henry Dana's text pointed out years earlier, the hide-and-tallow industry seemed to be the most lucrative business

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

California offered. Indeed, by this time, settlers such as Sutter lived out the reality of Dana's hopes.

This account of Sutter's settlement was accurate based on the memoirs of Sutter himself. His settlement was not an "ordinary one" and best exemplified the ever-increasing interest in the region. He was proud of the different kinds of people who inhabited his land (at least in the earliest years of his settlement). In his memoirs, he mentions interacting with Mexicans, Russians, Americans, as well as Native Americans.

These similar findings and experiences were also noted in the March 14, 1847 publication, "Information about California" in *Dwight's American Magazine and Family Newspaper*. This piece was a Swiss-to-English translation of Sutter's personal diaries and echoed the details of the previous article including the diversity of the population on his land, the success of the cattle industry, as well as recorded interactions with the Mexican government.¹⁵⁶

Details about the Mexican region flourished as California became independent, foreign migrants (like Sutter) began to settle more frequently, and the United

¹⁵⁶ "Information about California," *Dwight's American Magazine and Family Newspaper*, Mar. 14, 1847 in *American Antiquarian Society*.

States' probable victory in the war was eminent. Articles presented hopeful possibilities for American success in California. For instance, "California" published May 6, 1847 in the *Maine Farmer* raised the idea about a promising produce industry in the region offered. " . . . Upper California one of the finest fruit countries in the world, the different parts being severally adapted to the various kinds of fruit."¹⁵⁷ In addition, stories were published about how to travel to California and what to expect upon arrival. For example, the article "The California Emigrants" in 1846 in the *Niles' National Register* raised ideas about overland travel. Lansford Hastings, associated with the infamous "Hastings' Cut-Off" that the Donner Party utilized, is mentioned in this piece as the writer describes the continued influx of emigrants into the far west. The writer notes:

. . . Mr. Hastings, from California, who came out to conduct them in by the new route, by the foot of Salt Lake . . . The distance to California was said to be six hundred and fifty miles, through a fine farming country, with plenty of grass for cattle. Companies of from one to a dozen wagons, says the writer, are continually arriving, and several have already started on, with Hastings at their head.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ "California," *Maine Farmer*, May 6, 1847 in *American Periodicals Series*

¹⁵⁸ "The California Emigrants," *Niles' National Register*, Nov. 7, 1846, *American Periodicals Series*

Indeed, articles included optimistic perspectives about the region. In fact, in mentions of Sutter's observations about California in different periodicals, Sutter also pointed to new economic ventures that were rarely described before, such as the wine industry. As Sutter contends, even the most "minimal" industry in California should not be overlooked.¹⁵⁹ By this time, the realities of the far west, particularly descriptions of California, had become more detail than ever before because more non-Hispanic, English speakers were beginning to experience, first-hand, the actualities of expansion.¹⁶⁰

The reality was, in fact, that more people traveled to the west after 1845. Before 1845, brave pioneers known as "mountain men" crossed the Rocky Mountains. These men, like Jedediah Smith in 1830, were true trailblazers. However, for most people, the uncertainty of overland travel outweighed the motivations.

Nonetheless, by the time Sutter, Bidwell, and Frémont settled in California, from 1840-1842, they would signal a

¹⁵⁹ In this portion of his letter, Sutter acts as a fortune teller for future financial prospects, as certainly well known, California becomes one of the most well known wine producers for the rest of the world over 100 years after this letter was published.

¹⁶⁰ "California: Fort New Switzerland," *Littell's Living Age*, Jan. 31, 1846 in *American Antiquarian Society*.

host of other foreign settlers to come into the Mexican territory. By 1843, some of the first wagon trains set out for Oregon as well as California. By 1846, American settlers dominated former Mexican strongholds in California such as Sonoma and Los Angeles. Just two years later, more Americans would arrive in California than ever before during one of the most significant immigration events of the nineteenth century.

The migration of over 100,000 people, most from the United States, between 1849 and 1850 began with James Marshall's discovery of gold on January 24, 1848. What began as a secret between Marshall and Sutter about this discovery turned into a social and economic event that changed perceptions about the west, especially on California.¹⁶¹ Writers for periodicals in the United States could now report on California with an entirely new focus in mind: gold. After 1848, discussions about gold became the driving (rhetorical) force behind articles regarding the necessity of conquering foreign territory in North

¹⁶¹ Ironically, neither Marshall or Sutter became wealthy because of this discovery. Samuel Brannan, local business man and the owner of the "California Star" newspapers (the first English newspaper in the region) took it upon himself to spread the news about gold and he became the wealthiest of all men associated with the gold rush early one. Indeed, Brannan is credited for the infamous exclamation that would facilitate headlines about gold throughout the United States: "Gold! Gold from the American River!"

America. These articles solidified California's vital place in dialogues about continental expansion.

It was on August 19, 1848 that the *New York Herald* was the first major newspaper from the east coast of the United States to report on the discovery of gold in California. The news of the discovery spread rapidly throughout American periodicals, and stories of "gold fever" quickly became synonymous with the events in California. For instance, on September 21, 1848, a writer from the *Farmer's Cabinet* (a local newspaper from Amherst, New Hampshire) noted, "The excitement which this gold discovery has produced is most immense. People stop each other in the streets feel the pulse, and see how the gold fever, as it is called, beats."¹⁶² In fact, "gold fever" captured the headlines, stories, and most associations with California from 1848 to 1850.

Articles published in the U.S. about the far west reached a peak not seen before the gold rush era and came to dominate news. For example, the article, "The California Gold Fever," published in the *Christian Secretary* December 15, 1848, pointed out, "The most common

¹⁶² "Gold Fever in California," *Farmer's Cabinet*, September 21, 1848 in *Early American Newspapers Series I Online Database*.

topic of conversation now is - not who is to be our next President, or what policy will the President pursue - but of the gold mines in California, and the best way of securing a share of the glittering dust; showing very clearly that the 'thirst for gold' is as strong in the human breast as ever."¹⁶³ In the year 1848 alone, over sixty different articles published in the United States discussed the "gold fever" that captured the nation's attention. In the following year, that number climbed to over 300.

Indeed, the "fever" surrounding gold and the expansionist spirit behind it, was described in periodicals as an ailment that potential western travelers to California might actually endure. A different article called, "California Gold Fever," published in the *Ohio Cultivator* on January 1, 1849, mentions: "This malady seems to prevail to an alarming extent throughout the whole country . . . The gold fever has not yet abated, and the great distance of the country in which it originates will cause its continuance in proportion to that distance."¹⁶⁴

Most Americans who traveled to California never

¹⁶³ "The California Gold Fever," *Christian Secretary*, December 15, 1848, *American Periodicals Series*

¹⁶⁴ "California Gold Fever," *Ohio Cultivator*, Jan. 1, 1849, *American Periodicals Series*

experienced wealth from the gold rush. Instead, their peopling of California transformed the region in terms of population growth (making places liked San Francisco twenty times as large in two years between 1848 and 1850). More vitally, it showed expansion in progress rather than in theory.

By the end of the decade, news about California would only contribute to existing dialogues that came before. This was best exemplified in the article, "A Tour of Duty in California" published in the *Christian Inquirer* on February 17, 1849. The article derived from the observations of Lieutenant Joseph Warren Revere of the United States Navy who became the Military Commander in Sonoma, California. Revere's perspective justified the United States' expansion into California and the destiny of the country's future (ideas that had begun in earlier published articles):

The pastorage afforded by the country is of the most luxuriant description and is capable of sustaining immense numbers of domestic animals. The vast numbers of cattle and horses roam the hills and plains of California . . . When a more industrious and thrifty race shall take possession of the vacant lands which now invite the settler, the business of raising cattle, horses, sheep, and other useful animals, will be immensely augmented . . . United to all these natural advantages, is the unsurpassed beauty and grandeur of the scenery, which presents an

endless series of glorious pictures, to cheer the heart and delight the eye. But I count most of all upon the race of men who will mainly people and govern the country - that Anglo Saxon race, which, transplanted to the free soil of America, has acquired new force, new impulse, new enterprise; that Anglo Saxon race, which seems destined to possess the whole of the North American Continent.¹⁶⁵

Revere captured the expansionist spirit that represented the culmination of the transformation that people in the United States experienced from the beginning of the nineteenth century to this period. Hopeful for the future, Revere like O'Sullivan, contends that Americans' possessed a destiny that would lead them to settle along the Pacific. By 1850, when California entered the American Union, these ideas came to fruition.

3. CONCLUSION:

The reality of U.S. expansion into Mexican territory was most visible after 1845, and representations in articles about the United States as a growing empire engaged in conquest of the far west was more frequent during the same period. An American empire emerged with the acquisition of California (a region discussed in periodicals so many years earlier). In the *Barre Patriot*,

¹⁶⁵ "A Tour of Duty in California," *Christian Inquirer*, February 17, 1849, *American Antiquarian Society*.

a local newspaper from Barre, Massachusetts on May 16, 1845, a writer questioned, "But will our patriots, who clamor so loudly for 'extending the area of freedom' stop with Mexico? Will the 'area of freedom' be sufficiently extended to suit their expansive patriotism?"¹⁶⁶ By the middle of the nineteenth century, expansive motivations turned into reality.

Traces of Hispanic impact in this portion of North America was diminished by outsiders but not forgotten over time, because the Spanish past in the west could not be eradicated altogether. Decades before far western migration became commonplace for people in the United States, American periodical writers - writing in religiously motivated, politically motivated, or even specialty periodicals - discussed the far west as distinctly Hispanic. Simultaneously, these writers - sometimes their identities known and sometimes unknown - revealed a political transition in the United States from an independent republic with an emphasis on expansion to a nation where its success, even its destiny, hinged on significant territorial growth.

¹⁶⁶ "California," *Barre Patriot*, May 16, 1845 in *Early American Newspapers Series I Online Database*.

*I have heard something said about allegiance to the South.
I know no South, no North, no East, no West, to which I owe
any allegiance.*

-Henry Clay, U.S. Senate Speech, 1848

CONCLUSION

After the United States acquired California, American settlers and miners increasingly migrated into the region. In fact, by the middle of the 1850s, over a quarter-million new arrivals came to the far west. By the end of the 1850s, 1 in 90 people in the United States claimed that they were *from* California.¹⁶⁷ The topic of gold was the central feature of news about California for decades to come. All things considered, “manifest destiny” seemed fulfilled. Yet, in the same period, ideas that either supported or challenged the institution of slavery, accelerated. Unfortunately, the meanings behind a providential design in the west meant different things to different people, contributing to the American Civil War.

Following the war, the future of the country was uncertain even if it was now reunited. The United States government was not done building its empire or interacting with foreign powers. In fact, the “southern nations” continued to be an important geographic region for the United States government in their renewed efforts to facilitate republican forms of government around the world.

¹⁶⁷ “8 Things You May Not Known about the California Gold Rush,” <http://www.history.com/news/8-things-you-may-not-know-about-the-california-gold-rush>.

As historian Gretchen Murphy points out, in 1865 Ulysses S. Grant explored the possibility of sending troops to Mexico "with the assignment of raising support in the United States for Mexican republicanism."¹⁶⁸ This effort failed, but later the Spanish-American War at the turn-of-the-century proved that the United States government continued to consider itself an institution which aided other countries as well as a willing participant in warfare which attempted to the expansion of its borders.

The contradictions behind the ideology of American intervention never ceased. Whether the government of the United States "carries a big stick" or is the "policemen of the world," it is not isolated, and rather, it continues to think expansively on a global stage. More recently and contentiously, wars in Southeast Asia and in the Middle East only solidify how the United States government views itself. Will the *age of empire* come to an end?

Early periodicals discussed this centuries before these developments. The articles reflected on the changes that the United States endured as its leaders acted more as empire builders rather than simply members of a republican

¹⁶⁸ See Gretchen Murphy, *Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

government. Exemplified first in Thomas Jefferson's leadership and then expounded on from there, articles from the period between 1800 and 1850 illustrated America's transition from American republic to empire, because these periodical pieces were not about *American* stories; rather, these articles discussed foreign news.

Described in this study, in the early days of American empire, the far Hispanic west, especially California, played a vital role in the dreams of possible expansion. Certainly, only a Hollywood film would be able to conceive of such a fantastical conclusion: the discovery of gold solidified American expansion and facilitated a mass American exodus into the far west. Spanish California, like the rest of former Spanish territory of the early nineteenth century, would never fully resemble its Hispanic past.

Twenty-four years after Richard Henry Dana made his first visit to California and eventually published his famous memoirs that impacted periodicals for years to come, Dana decided to return to the region that contributed so much to his legacy in the United States. He was astonished, surprised, as well as sentimental about the California he now witnessed; it was far different than the

region he first observed years prior. He wrote, "The past was real. The present, all about me, was unreal, unnatural, repellant. All, all were gone!"¹⁶⁹ His account laments the population, industry, and greed that existed in California by the late nineteenth century. Dana's words reminds us that our realities are fragile, and by our own actions, one day we will look back at a particular moment in time, and it will never be the same again; this is, of course, when the practice of writing history will be the only means to experience the past in a familiar way over and over again.

¹⁶⁹ "Two Years Before the Mast," <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/2055/pg2055.txt>.

LIST OF PERIODICALS USED IN STUDY
Arranged Alphabetically

American Masonick Record and Albany Saturday Magazine
American Monthly Review
American Museum; or Universal Magazine
American Register
Atheneum; Or Spirit of the English Magazines
Army and Navy Chronicle
Barre Patriot
Boston Weekly Magazine
Brother Jonathan
Catholic Telegraph
Christian Inquirer
Christian Secretary
Christian Spectator
Church Register
Columbian Centinel
Connecticut Mirror
Dwight's American Magazine and Family Newspaper
Essex Patriot
Family Magazine or Monthly Abstract of General Knowledge
Farmer's Cabinet
Friend
Genesee Farmer
Horticultural Register and Gardner's Magazine
Literary Magazine
Littell's Living Age
Maine Farmer
Massachusetts Ploughman and New England Journal of
Agriculture
Minerva or Literary, Entertaining, Scientific Journal
Missionary Herald
Monitor
Morning News
National Atlas and Tuesday Morning Mail
National Recorder
National Register
New-Bedford Mercury
New Harmony Gazette
Newport Mercury
New York Catholic Register
New York Daily Advertiser
New York Daily Gazette
New York Mirror

New York Religious Chronicle
New York Telescope
Niles National Register
Ohio Cultivator
Pennsylvania Packet
Philosophical Magazine
Pittsburgh Recorder
Protestant Vindicator in Defense of Civil and Religious
Liberty
Quarterly Paper of the Foreign Evangelical Society
Religious Intelligencer
Religious Rembrancer
Sailor's Magazine or Naval Journal
Salem Gazette
Sheet Anchor
Southern Literary Magazine
Southern Quarterly Review
Spirit of Texas
Times and Seasons
The Enquirer
The New World
The Philadelphia Album and Ladies Literary Gazette
The Scientific Magazine and Freemasons Repository
Town and Country Magazine
United States Catholic Magazine and Monthly Review
United States Catholic Miscellany
United States Magazine and Democratic Review
Western American
Western Monthly Review
Western Recorder
World of Music
Youth's Companion

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