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Revolutionary Republics: U.S. national narratives and the independence of Latin America, 1810-1846

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REVOLUTIONARY REPUBLICS:
U.S. NATIONAL NARRATIVES AND THE INDEPENDENCE
OF LATIN AMERICA, 1810–1846

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of English

by
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	v
INTRODUCTION	
DEFINING “OUR SOUTHERN BRETHERN”: LATIN AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE AND ANTEBELLUM U.S. LITERATURE.....	1
CHAPTER 1	
NEUTRAL TOURING: U.S. TRAVEL WRITERS AND THE SPANISH AMERICAN REVOLUTIONS.....	22
CHAPTER 2	
LOCATING NATIONAL PATRIOTS IN 1826: TIMOTHY FLINT’S <i>FRANCIS BERRIAN</i> AND THE REVOLUTIONARY AMERICAS.....	78
CHAPTER 3	
“THE CAUSE OF LIBERTY AND LAND SPECULATIONS”: REPRESENTATIONS OF TEXAS INDEPENDENCE IN U.S. PRINT CULTURE CIRCA 1836.....	130
CHAPTER 4	
LEGACIES OF SPANISH RULE: NARRATIVES OF ANGLO-AMERICAN EMPIRE IN THE CIRCUM-CARIBBEAN.....	170
CONCLUSION	
RECONSIDERING 1846 AS “THE YEAR OF DECISION”.....	224
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	232
VITA.....	252

ABSTRACT

Revolutionary Republics analyzes how U.S. literature depicted the independence of Latin America, focusing on the period from the beginning of the Spanish American revolutions in 1810 to the outbreak of the U.S.-Mexican War in 1846. During this brief timespan, the nation's literature featured a radical transition in which the independent republics of Latin America shifted from being viewed as "southern brethren" of the United States, a term used by such prominent public figures as Daniel Webster and John Quincy Adams, to hostile enemies allegedly in need of assistance from their northern neighbor. This reversal exposes a contradiction between the imperialist ventures of the United States and its espoused principles of republican democracy, especially considering antebellum celebrations of the American Revolution as the beginning of a transatlantic discourse promoting universal liberty. Formulated in national narratives, literary responses to the revolutions and independent republics expose U.S. territorial and ideological expansion south and west as a form of Anglo-American empire-building. By transposing traditions of revolutionary inheritance onto the wars for independence in Spanish America, writers reinforce the ideology of U.S. exceptionalism. The study's geographic focal points are Cuba, Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana, particularly the circum-Caribbean city of New Orleans. Several chapters examine Spanish-language works published in the United States, focusing specifically on texts issued by Hispanophone presses in New Orleans and Philadelphia. Authors discussed include Robert Montgomery Bird, Henry Marie Brackenridge, Maria Gowen Brooks, James Fenimore Cooper, Timothy Flint, Joseph Holt Ingraham, Edgar Allan Poe, William Davis Robinson, Vicente Rocafuerte, Orazio de Atellis Santangelo, Catherine Maria Sedgwick, Richard Penn Smith, José Alvarez de Toledo, and Lorenzo de Zavala.

INTRODUCTION

DEFINING “OUR SOUTHERN BRETHREN”: LATIN AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE AND ANTEBELLUM U.S. LITERATURE

In December of 1811, the exiled Cuban patriot José Alvarez de Toledo y Dubois advised the people fighting for independence throughout Spanish America that when forming their own governments, they should consult the “beautiful” ideas contained in the Constitution of the United States, but ultimately “select the good and avoid what may be deadly for America some day” (qtd. in Kanellos, “José Alvarez de Toledo” 89). The statement appeared in a pamphlet Toledo published in Philadelphia, where he lived at the time, part of a large population of revolutionary exiles dwelling in the city.¹ Kristin A. Dykstra and Nicolás Kanellos credit Toledo’s pamphlet as one of the first texts to offer a theoretical and philosophical justification for Spanish American independence, associating his publications in Philadelphia with the tradition of exiled writers using U.S. print culture to influence affairs in their homelands and to inform other nations of their local struggles.² A radical component of Toledo’s commentary on the U.S. Constitution is his argument that revolutionaries should appropriate the document for their own ends, rather than emulate it exactly. Toledo proposes a method of reading U.S. revolutionary texts, including the Declaration of Independence and Constitution, in a manner that critically discerns the aspects most applicable to Spanish American independence. He suggests that the new republics should *not* be exact replicas of the United States—or even what the Monroe Doctrine later dubbed the nation’s “southern brethren”—but rather autonomous states working toward the continued liberation of their people. In effect, he advocates de-nationalizing U.S. revolutionary principles by adopting only the aspects that would prove most beneficial throughout all the Americas, rather than to an individual nation alone.

By the time Toledo published his pamphlet, the wars for independence collectively referred to as the Spanish American Revolutions had been underway for over a year, following the revolt in central Mexico led by Miguel Hidalgo on September 16, 1810. Over the next sixteen years, uprisings

achieved the liberation of almost all of Spain's colonies in Central and South America, culminating in the Panama Congress of July 1826, which the patriot leader Simon Bolívar organized so that the independent republics could form a pan-American union to prevent the reinstatement of European imperial rule.³ During this same period, the United States confirmed its status as a sovereign nation by defeating Great Britain in the War of 1812, a victory assured in 1815 by the signing of the Treaty of Ghent and the Battle of New Orleans. Following this validation of the nation's independence, as Caroline F. Levander and Robert S. Levine note in their introduction to a recent collection of essays on transamerican literary studies, "the 'invention' of a seemingly autonomous and exceptionalist U.S. nationality developed in relation to the more expansive geographies and longer histories of the Americas" (4). Responses to Latin American independence provide a suggestive—and often overlooked—topic for analyzing the hemispheric origins of U.S. nationalism. This dissertation proposes that a crucial phase of U.S. literary nation-building occurred between the beginnings of the revolutions in 1810 and the outbreak of the U.S.-Mexican War in 1846. Depictions of Latin American independence in U.S. national narratives from this period reveal a substantial change in the foundational principles of republican democracy, namely its belief in free people as capable of self-government, culminating with the 1846 invasion of the *independent republic* of Mexico.⁴

The selective method Toledo advocated for implementing the U.S. Constitution in former Spanish American colonies—"select the good and avoid what may be deadly for America some day"—contrasts sharply with the attitudes conveyed by public commentaries from prominent U.S. government officials. In his 1823 Message to Congress, which elaborated the policies now known as the Monroe Doctrine, President James Monroe described Central and South America's newly independent republics as "our southern brethren," a clear claim that the recent revolutions in Spanish America modeled themselves on the example furnished by U.S. independence.⁵ Two years later the revered orator and politician Daniel Webster echoed the Monroe Doctrine's

characterization of the new republics in his “Bunker Hill Monument Address,” proclaiming that “on this, our continent, our own example has been followed, and colonies have sprung up to be nations...and at this moment the dominion of European power in this continent, from the place where we stand to the south pole, is annihilated for ever” (1: 63). Webster’s comment depicts the separate independence movements by the former colonies of British and Spanish America as part of a larger hemispheric rebellion against European control.⁶ It is so broad, however, that it also implicitly includes Haiti’s revolution, even though the U.S. had not yet recognized that nation’s sovereignty. Thus it appears unlikely Webster intended his rhetorical gesture surveying “colonies [that] have sprung to be nations” to include Haiti.⁷ Instead, Webster’s comment serves the same central purpose as the monument whose dedication provided his speech’s setting, a celebration of the American Revolution and its espoused principles of liberty and equality.

By claiming that U.S. independence inspired subsequent revolutions, the Bunker Hill Monument Address conveys a vision of U.S. hemispheric hegemony that proliferated throughout the antebellum period, before reaching its first violent, large-scale climax with the outbreak of the U.S.-Mexican War in 1846. Three years prior to the war, when Webster delivered another speech at the Bunker Hill Monument, this time celebrating its completion, his characterization of Latin America revealed a clear disappointment that the republics had not followed the supposedly superior example of the United States. “Truth, sacred truth, and fidelity to the cause of civil liberty,” he claimed, “compel me to say, that hitherto they have discovered quite too much of the spirit of that monarchy from which they separated themselves” (1: 98).⁸ As a Whig, Webster opposed the war, yet his statements echo one of the primary justifications for it offered by President James K. Polk and his supporters: that the Mexican government was a despotic regime oppressing its citizens, as well as the settlers along its border with the United States, and thus the military campaign aspired to liberate the populations of Texas and Mexico.⁹ In 1848, the U.S.-Mexican War ended with the United States

gaining a large portion of territory, when the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ceded over 525,000 square miles of land that became the modern-day southwest.¹⁰ This acquisition supported the pro-expansionist policies known as Manifest Destiny, a term introduced by John L. O'Sullivan's journal *The United States and Democratic Review* in 1845.¹¹

Analyzing representations of Latin America during this period, my project addresses a key opposition identified by several recent studies of antebellum U.S. culture: the apparent contradiction between the imperial ambitions of the United States and its espoused principles of republican democracy.¹² This opposition's relevance becomes particularly clear considering the era's valorization of the American Revolution as the beginning of a transatlantic discourse promoting universal liberty.¹³ Instead, U.S. texts addressing the Latin American republics often use that discourse to reinforce American exceptionalism, implying that the United States represents what Whitman called "a nation of nations" upholding republican principles and protecting foreign populations against tyrannous governments. Such claims use the notion of preserving popular sovereignty to rationalize imperial ventures like the U.S.-Mexican War, an interpretation that reveals a counter-narrative to the nation's rhetoric of universal liberty. Webster's second Bunker Hill address chillingly suggests these shifting conceptions of republicanism by chastising Latin American governments for failing to establish "true" democracies. Formal expressions of revolutionary solidarity, which flourished during the 1820s and reached a crescendo in "the jubilee" celebrations of 1826, in fact established a context for the systematic dismissal of Latin American independence, particularly Mexico's, during the 1830s and 1840s, the same era when expansionists began advocating the acquisition of western territories.

While public spokespeople like Webster praised the republics in theory, some U.S. citizens engaged in privately organized military actions in Latin America, particularly Mexico and its then-province of Texas. Later referred to as "filibusters," these individuals initially aided the local

rebellions, worked toward the full-scale “liberation” of the areas, and in many cases labored for their annexation into the United States. Robert E. May notes how most filibustering campaigns prior to the U.S.-Mexican War targeted “neighboring Spanish colonies in North America,” often offering the participants financial rewards and property acquisitions, even though they performed their actions “all in the name, supposedly, of the Latin American revolutions” (*Manifest Destiny’s Underworld* 4, 6).¹⁴ Filibustering constituted a crucial part of what J. C. A. Stagg describes as “the story of American territorial aggrandizement at the expense of Spain,” which “forms part of the larger narrative of American expansionism,” namely how the nation systematically acquired new areas of land until its territorial holdings stretched across North America from the Atlantic to Pacific coasts (4).

Several important recent studies by cultural historians and literary critics interpret U.S. expansion south and west during the antebellum period as a form of Anglo-American imperialism. A central component of this was the belief in Manifest Destiny, which described the U.S. nation as preordained to expand its borders to the Pacific. In the process, critics suggest, antebellum writers classified Central and South America according to such factors as race, class, and gender, opposing each with the predominant Anglo-Saxonism of the United States. Focusing on these specific ethnocentric trends complicates our understanding of Manifest Destiny by unpacking how its discourse facilitated material ends. Prior to the U.S.-Mexican War, as Thomas R. Hietala observes, expansionists faced “the dilemma of balancing imperialism with racism”: “American feelings of superiority over other peoples provided a self-serving sanction for taking territory from them, but these same feelings also inhibited expansion by making areas more densely populated by nonwhite peoples less attractive to the Democrats” (164). One resolution to this dilemma stressed that acquiring new territories provided additional protection for the nation, securing its borders against foreign incursions, a philosophy dubbed “continentalism.”¹⁵ In another influential analysis, Amy S. Greenberg argues that Manifest Destiny was in fact a gendered concept, its rhetoric and popular

images creating stereotypes of empowered U.S. men journeying on quests to provide assistance (i.e., domineering control) to the southern republics, which were presented as weak, yet sexually promiscuous feminine regions.¹⁶ María DeGuzmán ties Anglo-Americanism in specifically with images of Spain and Latin America, arguing that writers depict both according to stereotypes stemming from the Black Legend, which associated the Spanish with villainy because of the Inquisition and the conquest of the Americas.¹⁷

A related trend in recent criticism, also addressed by my project, focuses on how U.S. literary culture relates to transamerican networks of circulation.¹⁸ In *Hemispheric Imaginings*, Gretchen Murphy studies the Monroe Doctrine's public life, including its changed meanings throughout the nineteenth century and shifting relevance as U.S. power increased. She describes it as "a set of discourses through which USAmericans formulated national identity as well as foreign policy" (13). The policies influenced both public officials and popular culture, a dual trajectory that facilitates Murphy's analysis of literary works by U.S. writers, since literature functions "not only as a medium that registers dominant national narratives or expresses anxiety and uncertainty about them but also as a causal force that constructed and negotiated bonds of affiliation and national belonging" (18). In the antebellum United States, as critics like Murphy argue, national narratives worked simultaneously to promote and obscure imperial ambitions, providing additional realms of expansion beyond the Western frontier. Yet Murphy reveals that after its formulation in 1823, the Monroe Doctrine was not cited as a source supporting Western hemispheric solidarity against European intrusion until Polk referenced it in 1845 to justify U.S. claims to the Oregon territory (26–27).¹⁹ This gap in the doctrine's public visibility underscores, I believe, the co-existence of alternate imperial philosophies during the antebellum period, one of which emerged from the rhetoric of revolutionary brotherhood voiced by Webster and other prominent commentators. Of the recent critical studies that examine nineteenth-century U.S. imperialism, few limit their scope

purely to the antebellum period, focusing more attention on subsequent events like the Spanish-American War of 1898.²⁰

Anna Brickhouse's *Transamerican Literary Relations and the Nineteenth-Century Public Sphere* provides a notable exception by examining the period from 1826 to 1856 in an attempt to reinterpret "a particular period of US literary history within the context of the wider nineteenth-century Americas" (28). Her approach entails reading texts in terms of a "transamerican literary imaginary" she locates at the core of the nation's public sphere: "Fraught with the cultural anxieties and desires that attested to a larger crisis of national identity, this imaginary was from the beginning riddled with the contradictions and rhetorical impasses attending a nation whose geographic borders were expanding even as its imagined racial boundaries were narrowing and calcifying" (6-7). This framework approaches U.S. literary history from a transnational perspective that foregrounds a key ideological contradiction in nationalist discourse: a policy of territorial expansion positioned as progress, despite the fact that it endorsed a system of racial classification designed to oppress rather than liberate non-Anglo inhabitants.²¹ Brickhouse's study covers the thirty-year period from Bolivar's Panama Congress in 1826 to the Continental Treaty's signing in 1856, which included a joint declaration from three Latin American nations that the U.S. posed a threat to their sovereignty.²² By analyzing how U.S. texts were challenged by contemporary ones from Latin America, Brickhouse uses a comparative method that avoids prioritizing a single literary or language tradition, instead contextualizing the nation's literature within transamerican dialogues.

Along with Brickhouse, Kirsten Silva Gruesz argues for a multi-national cultural history of the Americas, the goal of which would be to "unseat the fiction of American literature's monolingual and Anglocentric roots and question the imperial conflation of the United States with America" (*Ambassadors of Culture* 4). On this point, David Luis-Brown notes how the concept of "liberty" possesses different connotations for writers depending on whether or not they have

received it. Offering an observation relevant to the history of minority print cultures in the U.S., he writes, “Those who don’t have liberty are those from the margins—immigrants and blacks in the United States and the colonized abroad—who work toward its future realization” (14).²³ Writers and editors from Latin America living in exile approached the question of “American independence” from an alternative perspective to the Anglo-American writers busy celebrating how the American Revolution inaugurated a new epoch of human liberty. As Luis-Brown observes, “In terms of time, conflicting narratives of liberty work to either rationalize the status quo or require social change,” as evidenced by how Anglophone writers celebrated the significance of U.S. independence and rationalized the nation’s territorial expansion, while many Hispanophone texts labored for an independent Latin America free from continued imperial initiatives, either from the U.S., Spain, or any other foreign power. “In terms of space,” Luis-Brown explains about these oppositional perspectives, “the center proclaims a liberty triumphant, while the marginalized and the oppressed constitute its contradiction and its promise” (14). Once again, many U.S. writers remained content to valorize the American Revolution while ignoring its later ideological contradictions, such as slavery’s continuation or the suppression of dissenters like Daniel Shays. Yet as revealed by the critical works of Gruesz and Luis-Brown, U.S. Hispanophone print culture often remained more ambivalent toward the hegemonic assent of the United States as a standard bearer for independence movements occurring in Europe and the Americas.

Following in the tradition of the above studies, my project reveals how (1) views supporting U.S. empire-building in the Spanish-American frontiers circulated from the moment the revolutions began in 1810, but increased dramatically following widespread independence; and (2) the rhetoric their advocates employed echoes that used by the proponents of territorial expansion throughout the 1830s and 1840s, culminating with Jane McManus Storm’s theorization of “Manifest Destiny” in O’Sullivan’s *Democratic Review*. As such, my work interweaves with studies identifying the Monroe

Doctrine of 1823 as a pro-imperialist document foreshadowing Manifest Destiny, as well as transamerican approaches that analyze competing discourses of empire and national identity, particularly juxtaposing Anglophone and Hispanophone print cultures. My intervention into this rich field of critical inquiry—already populated by the dense, thorough studies cited above—lies in locating the capacity for this literary nation- and empire-building in *reinterpretations of the American Revolution* and the *traditions of revolutionary inheritance* Anglophone writers often transposed onto Spanish American revolutions. I undertake this by surveying a range of literary texts, written in both English and Spanish, published between 1810, when the wars for independence began in Spanish America, and 1846, when the United States invaded the independent republic of Mexico. The discussions of Texas and Louisiana employ a model of analysis that examines currents and individuals—such as exiles and filibusters—circulating through a single location or series of entangled locales.²⁴

Several chapters discuss Hispanophone publications alongside contemporary Anglophone texts. In addition to Luis-Brown's study, works by Brickhouse, Gruesz, and others, along with the Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage project, explore the often overlooked history of Spanish-language publications in the nineteenth-century United States.²⁵ Beginning in the late 1810s and early 1820s, authors and editors of these Hispanophone texts advocated the rights of independent Latin America, rebelling against some of the regimes that gained control after the revolutions, while challenging the arguments of exceptionalism and empire-building prevalent in many U.S. publications.²⁶ For instance, in his study of Cuban exile publications of the 1850s, Rodrigo Lazo notes that “writers were in many cases willing to embrace U.S. constitutional principles, if not the United States itself” (*Writing to Cuba* 4). In this way, he argues, Hispanophone authors regularly distinguished between the nation's founding principles, such as its “promise of equality and freedom,” and its current “expansionistic military and economic practices,” many of

which functioned “at the expense of self-determination for indigenous and Latin American populations in the Americas” (7). Crucially, Lazo terms these exile writers “*filibusteros*,” referencing both the history of U.S. filibusters and a New York newspaper founded in 1853, *El Filibustero*. Arguing that “transnational writing” represents “a form of filibustering” (18), Lazo stresses that “many Cubans identified themselves as *filibusteros* and presented their expeditions as examples of republican efforts to bring democracy and egalitarianism to the island” (6).²⁷ In this respect, Lazo’s analysis identifies a discursive form of filibustering related to the military actions of said individuals. My own work attempts to locate comparable trends in the primarily U.S.-supported campaigns against Mexico during the years prior to 1846. The filibustering expeditions led by Gutiérrez, Mina, and others all produced pamphlets, broadsides, articles, and sometimes entire newspapers publicizing their actions. Historians and print culture scholars like Julia Kathryn Garrett and Lota M. Spell have uncovered these documents and explored their contributions to the military actions.²⁸ By contrast, my analysis discusses how several writers with no formal affiliations to these campaigns supported them in print. For instance, two of the authors covered below, Timothy Flint and Richard Penn Smith, never participated in military actions for or against Texas or Mexico, but their novels clearly serve similar ends as the texts produced by those who did.

My project focuses on earlier transnational dialogues, specifically those surrounding early Spanish American revolutions, the Texas Revolution, and the U.S.-Mexican War. For instance, chapter 2 explores competing spheres of print in the U.S. via a comparative analysis of two novels from 1826, Timothy Flint’s *Francis Berrian* and the anonymously authored *Jicoténcal*, “the earliest Spanish-language historical novel of the Americas” (Brickhouse 38). Read together, these texts produce a telling contrast in how Anglophone and Hispanophone publications often represented the independence of Latin America. In the 1830s and 1840s, Hispanophone texts published in the United States continued the goals of the Spanish American Revolutions by endorsing the region’s

independence from imperial control, including that of both European nations and the United States; stressing the rights of the local populations to determine their own forms of government; and supporting social reforms like the abolition of slavery. The publications opposed the views held by prominent groups in the U.S., such as those who defended slavery and rationalized the nation's territorial expansion. There were, however, Anglophone writers who opposed these developments, such as the abolitionist Benjamin Lundy, who criticized the Texas Revolution, and the numerous individuals and groups who opposed the U.S.-Mexican War. But according to my research, from 1810 to 1846, attitudes toward Latin American independence shifted from support or benign aid to open opposition and threatened intervention by U.S. citizens in local affairs, before Polk's actions prompted several groups to oppose the invasion, particularly Whigs and abolitionists.²⁹ The figure of the filibuster offers an intermediary between these two extreme views, since such adventures clearly violated international laws but nevertheless received support from many public commentators. As formal U.S. military intervention loomed, national narratives emerged which prioritized Anglo-American culture over the others coexisting with it. Noting the ascent of this literary empire-building, my project surveys how dialogues within U.S. print culture over two connected hemispheric questions—the independence of Latin America from Spain and power relationships throughout the Americas—created a vision of the United States as an “exceptional” nation in the Western Hemisphere. My argument claims that this process actually began with the American revolutionary war, or more precisely, the manner in which the first generations of U.S. citizens born after independence interpreted the Revolution as a model for subsequent rebellions to follow.³⁰

The three primary locations studied are Northern Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana, particularly the circum-Caribbean city of New Orleans. One chapter also explores connections between Louisiana and Cuba. For instance, almost all of the authors discussed lived in or at least visited New Orleans at some point.³¹ Groups operating in the city were instrumental in funding and publicizing

the Texas Revolution, as well as several previous and subsequent filibustering expeditions.³² As Gruesz's work shows, in addition to being "the country's most linguistically and racially diverse city," New Orleans also contained arguably the most active Hispanophone print culture in the United States (*Ambassadors of Culture* 109). Each chapter also addresses a specific revolution or series thereof attempting to oust local authorities from power, ranging from a 1768 uprising in Louisiana against the institution of Spanish rule, to the revolutions in Spanish America following 1810, and finally to the Texas Revolution of 1836 which separated the province and established it as an independent republic.

Chapter 1 examines how U.S. travelers to Spanish America in the late 1810s and early 1820s depicted the revolutionary forces and young republican governments. Perhaps the most important commentary came from Henry Marie Brackenridge, the secretary to a commission sent by President Monroe to recommend whether the U.S. government should recognize the newly independent republics of Buenos Aires and Chile. Whereas the commissioners submitted their reports directly to Monroe and Congress, Brackenridge composed a detailed, two-volume travel narrative, *Voyage to South America* (1819), intended for a general readership. He celebrated the local patriots for their devotion to republican principles, particularly José de San Martín, the leader he deemed best suited for liberating the continent from Spanish rule. The passion with which Brackenridge supported the revolutions led some commentators, including those affiliated with anti-San Martín factions, to accuse him of being a partisan, rather than an impartial observer. Although largely untrue, these criticisms underscore how visitors from the U.S. were expected to follow the nation's formal policy of neutrality, specifically in relation to foreign governments with which the United States was at peace. Another U.S. traveler to Latin America accused of acting as a partisan, a Philadelphia-born merchant named William Davis Robinson, was captured by royalist forces in Mexico, accused of aiding the insurgents, and imprisoned for over two years. Following his release, Robinson published

Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution (1820), which contains an account of his captivity, an overview of the wars for independence, and a brief biography of Xavier Mina. His book provided the first detailed account of the Mina expedition, based on materials gathered from the survivors. It remains a widely cited resource on Mina's campaign and his activities in Mexico. Comparing *Memoirs* with Brackenridge's narrative, my analysis focuses on how Robinson presents Mina as a transatlantic patriot, who travels to the Americas and joins the Mexican cause out of a selfless devotion to defending liberty across the globe. In the process, Robinson defends foreign citizens intervening in the domestic affairs of other nations, an argument that justifies filibustering campaigns. Characterizations of Mina provide a leitmotif for the subsequent chapters, each of which locates a latter-day evocation of him as a revered model of revolutionary patriotism.

Chapter 2 uses two novels published in 1826, the year which marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, to analyze fictional retellings of revolutions in Spanish America. My discussion begins with *Francis Berrian; or, The Mexican Patriot*, a novel by the Massachusetts minister and frontier writer Timothy Flint, which describes how a U.S. citizen helps liberate Mexico. The novel contains an early account of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, a filibustering campaign against Spanish Texas, launched from New Orleans in late 1812, partially with the help of Toledo.³³ Flint learned about the expedition from one of the participants, his friend Henry Adams Bullard, who inspired the novel's title character. Unlike the expedition's actual veterans, Berrian receives widespread acclaim for his actions, even from a fictionalized version of the current president of Mexico. If we read Berrian as a prototypical filibuster, then Flint's novel registers as a representative national narrative conveying an exceptionalist vision of the United States and its position in the Age of Revolutions. The chapter briefly compares the early portions of *Francis Berrian* to James Fenimore Cooper's *The Prairie* (1827), examining how each presents Spanish American frontiers as spaces conducive to the territorial and ideological expansion of the U.S. nation. The final section discusses

the Spanish-language historical novel *Jicoténcal*, published anonymously in Philadelphia by one or more exiles from Latin America. Whereas Flint suggests that Mexican independence depended upon the assistance of U.S. filibusters, the authorial voice of *Jicoténcal* celebrates members of the republic of Tlascala for attempting to prevent Cortés's conquest of the Aztec empire. In effect, *Jicoténcal* counters the exceptionalist reading of Latin American independence offered by Flint, who views the Mexican wars for independence as proof of both the influence and superiority of the U.S. nation. Instead, *Jicoténcal* stresses that inhabitants of Mexico strove to preserve their liberty long before the American Revolution, objecting to all forms of imperial rule, whether administered by the Aztec leader Montezuma or the Spanish conquistador Cortés. In 1826, this argument held added resonance because in late June of that year, as people across the United States prepared to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of their national independence, representatives from the new Latin American republics met in Panama to discuss forming a pan-American union.³⁴

Some Spanish-language publications did contain propagandistic reports celebrating the United States and attacking specific Latin American republics, particularly Mexico during the Texas Revolution, as enemies of universal liberty, egalitarian government, and other "American" principles.³⁵ For instance, the polyglot newspaper *El Correo Atlántico*, discussed in Chapter 3, was founded in Mexico City but relocated to New Orleans after the editor, a Neapolitan nobleman and avowed republican named Orazio de Atellis Santangelo, was banished for criticizing Santa Anna's government and its responses to early uprisings in Texas. Initially, a group of exiled federalists from Mexico (like Santangelo) funded the newspaper's New Orleans edition, which began its brief run in February 1836, openly criticizing Santa Anna and the centralist reforms. After two months, however, the initial backers withdrew their financial support because they disagreed with Santangelo's editorial positions advocating the region's independence from Mexico. At this point, two U.S. citizens with ties to the Texas government began subsidizing the newspaper. Accordingly, during its final four

months, *El Correo Atlántico* supported the revolution even more passionately and published detailed editorials advocating U.S. government recognition of Texas independence. But ten years later, when Polk ascended to power and his intentions against Mexico became evident, Santangelo authored a series of pamphlets attacking the president, criticizing the invasion as illegal, and speculating that the United States had betrayed its republican principles. By tracing Santangelo's literary activities, the chapter notes how even supporters of Texas independence expressed misgivings about the U.S.-Mexican War, even though the earlier conflict established several precedents that Polk and his supporters took advantage of in the months leading up to the invasion.

As a counterpoint to the commentaries published in *El Correo Atlántico*, Chapter 3 analyzes one of the most popular works on the Texas Revolution published in the nineteenth century, Richard Penn Smith's novel *Col. Crockett's Exploits and Adventures in Texas* (1836). For almost fifty years, this account of the Tennessee adventurer Davy Crockett's journey to Texas, culminating with his heroic death at the Alamo, was regarded as an autobiographical narrative based on his diary. Cobbled together from contemporary accounts and newspaper articles, *Col. Crockett's Exploits* synthesizes popular perceptions of the Texas revolution as an event justified by the chaotic history of independent Mexico. Specifically, Smith reiterates common depictions of the Mexican people as incapable of self-government and in need of assistance from the United States. In the process, Smith elides the fact that Crockett acted as a filibuster, depicting the frontiersman instead as a patriot who died defending "the cause of liberty." The novel thus marks a key contribution to the cultural myths associated with Crockett and the Alamo.³⁶ My analysis discusses *Col. Crockett's Exploits* in relation to several texts also published in 1836, some of which Smith consulted (and even plagiarized), including the Texas Declaration of Independence and an essay on the region by Henry Adams Bullard, the Louisiana judge who inspired the character of Francis Berrian.

Chapter 4 focuses on texts from the 1830s and 1840s depicting the circum-Caribbean world, specifically the island of Cuba and the city of New Orleans. Surveying a range of fiction and travel accounts, it traces a tradition of viewing these places as entangled locales central to debates on the meaning of freedom and slavery in the Americas, including how fears of racial intermixture altered conceptions of republican citizenship. This trajectory coheres with what recent critical works define as ideologies of Anglo-American empire-building. The literary figure of the Cuban, as crafted in such works of 1830s fiction as Catherine Maria Sedgwick's *Clarence; or, A Tale of Our Times* (1830) and Robert Montgomery Bird's *The Adventures of Robin Day* (1839), often registers as a possible threat to U.S. domestic security. In Sedgwick's novel, a wicked merchant from the island attempts to seduce and later plots to abduct a young woman he wishes to marry. Bird's novel follows a young man from the northern U.S., Robin Day, who willingly joins a group of adventurers, commanded by the indomitable Dicky Dare, on a campaign against rebellious American Indians. After the group accidentally invades Florida, echoing Andrew Jackson's attacks on St. Marks and Pensacola in 1818, they are captured by a Spanish garrison. As opposed to his willing association with Dare's proto-filibustering expedition, Robin later unwillingly joins a group of Cuban pirates, led by the malevolent Captain Hellcat Brown. This contrast underscores Bird's depiction of the circum-Caribbean as a zone dangerous to honorable U.S. citizens, yet in the end, Robin learns that he is in fact a Cuban noble. His relocation to the island at the novel's end, for the sake of his wife's health, foreshadows the events of Maria Gowen Brooks's autobiographical novel *Idomen; or, The Vale of Yumuri* (1843). In that work, discussed alongside the previous two novels, the title heroine inherits a coffee plantation on Cuba, where she relocates and rediscovers her creative self, a realization that puts her tragically at odds with the "frigid" societies of Canada and the northern United States. Brooks pairs her celebration of Idomen's love for Cuba with an apology for slavery, rationalizing its continued existence by citing Anglo-Saxon racial superiority.

Chapter 4's latter sections focus on the early works of Joseph Holt Ingraham, who was born in Maine but lived for much of his professional career in Mississippi, where he became one of the most prolific antebellum writers and published several texts set in and around New Orleans. Ingraham's own experiences in the city followed a Caribbean cruise, a journey he recounted in his travel narrative *The South-West, by a Yankee* (1835). That work's criticism of the multi-ethnic population and culture of New Orleans reappears in his novels *Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf* (1836) and *The Quadroone* (1841). In his fictional accounts of the city, Ingraham depicts the assimilation of foreign characters into the national community, a translation dependent upon their first demonstrating fidelity to republican principles. Ingraham reimagines the historical pirate Jean Lafitte as a disgraced European aristocrat who discovers his love for the United States by helping the nation defeat Great Britain in the Battle of New Orleans. *The Quadroone* rewrites the history of a 1768–69 rebellion that expelled the city's first Spanish governor. Following early historical accounts of the events, Ingraham presents the uprising as a prelude to the Age of Revolutions and its overthrow of European empires in the Americas. Ingraham's version follows the actions of the siblings Azèlie and Renault, thought to be quadroons, who in the end discover they are actually descended from European nobility. This revelation recasts the uprising as the product of Creole patriots challenging Spanish tyranny, a conclusion that negates Ingraham's avowed goal of challenging the era's racial stereotypes. Instead, Ingraham presents Louisiana as an early site of the discontent that inspired revolutions in Spanish America several decades later.

Following these case studies of how U.S. print culture represented the independence of Latin America, the conclusion proposes rereading Bernard DeVoto's famous characterization of 1846 as "the year of decision." DeVoto interpreted it as a moment of crisis tied to the nation's territorial expansion, with the U.S.-Mexican War signaling the forthcoming incorporation of the modern-day American West and Southwest. Although his reading offers an apt interpretation of the

war in relation to Manifest Destiny, it overlooks an equally important cultural factor crucial to the events of 1846: how during the thirty-six years since the first Spanish American revolutions, U.S. writers systematically dismissed Latin America's attempts at republican government as flawed and ineffective. By challenging the stability of Latin American republics, writers and public officials justified the actions of those citizens (including many filibusters) who intervened in foreign nations. These incursions established a precedent for Polk and his supporters to argue for invading the *independent republic* of Mexico, equating it with the Spanish imperial government its own revolution had overthrown. Nationalist discourse celebrated the triumphs of U.S. republicanism, contrasting it with the tumultuous history of the Republic of Mexico, which became a microcosm for the alleged larger failure of Latin American independence. From 1810 to 1846, republics formed by Spanish American revolutions shifted from being viewed as the "southern brethren" of the United States, celebrated by even future Whigs like Daniel Webster and John Quincy Adams, to potential sites of national expansion, a transition signified by the invasion of independent Mexico and aided by the private adventurers, both actual and fictional filibusters, who had already traveled south to defend the cause of universal liberty. Thus, a crucial—though often overlooked—component of Manifest Destiny, and the larger project of Anglo-American empire-building, involved the dismissal of Latin American independence as inferior to that of the United States, an argument based on ideas of American exceptionalism, rather than republican principles.

Notes

¹ The pamphlet's full title was *Manifiesto ó satisfacción pundonorosa, á todos los buenos españoles europeos, y á todos los pueblos de América, por un diputado de las cortes reunidas en Cadix* (Philadelphia: n.p., 1811). See Kanellos, "José Alvarez de Toledo" 87. For a discussion of Philadelphia's exile community during this period, see Lazo, "La Famosa Filadelfia" 57–74.

² See Dykstra 281–83; and Kanellos, "José Alvarez de Toledo" 88–91.

³ By 1826, the Spanish empire's overseas territories included only Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and several Pacific islands. For overviews of the revolutions in Spanish America, see Lynch, *Spanish-American Revolutions*; and Rodríguez O., *Independence of Spanish America*.

⁴ Sean Wilentz surveys the contentious, decades-long ascent of democracy in the United States, characterizing its central achievement as “the triumph of popular government and of the proposition—if not, fully, the reality—that sovereignty rightly belongs to the mass of ordinary individual and equal citizens” (4–5).

⁵ The message was authored primarily by Monroe’s Secretary of State, the future President John Quincy Adams.

⁶ Sandra Gustafson claims that in his major speeches presented from 1820 to 1826, including those commemorating the Bunker Hill Monument and supporting the Panama Congress, “Webster transformed revolution and counterrevolution in the Atlantic world into a grand drama of modern liberty,” part of his overarching philosophy of “international republicanism” (120–21). This reading overlooks how Webster *always* described that drama as one led by the United States, crediting the nation with offering “an example” to the world.

⁷ The U.S. recognized Haiti’s sovereignty in 1864.

⁸ Webster develops an elaborate parallel analysis of England’s and Spain’s former American colonies, concluding that “Spain descended on the New World in the armed and terrible image of her monarchy and her soldiery; England approached it in the winning and popular garb of personal rights, public protection, and civil freedom. England transplanted liberty to America; Spain transplanted power” (1: 97). His later observation that “the difference now existing between North and South America is justly attributable, in a great degree, to political institutions in the Old World and in the New” associates the South American republics with European tyranny, including those institutions he celebrates the American Revolution for overthrowing (1: 99).

⁹ Robert W. Johannsen writes, “The War was blamed on the machinations of Mexico’s military, aristocratic and Church leadership, and Americans constantly insisted that they held no animosity against the Mexican people or the common soldiers in the Mexican army.... Polk had made it clear that the fight was not against the Mexican people but only against their rulers who had made a mockery of republicanism” (31–32).

¹⁰ In the second volume of his epic study *The Shaping of America*, the cultural geographer D. W. Meinig surveys how the new territories redefined national space (128–54).

¹¹ According to Linda S. Hudson, the article that coined the phrase “Manifest Destiny” was actually written by O’Sullivan’s colleague, the journalist Jane McManus Storm, under her pseudonym of “Cora Montgomery.”

¹² Gustafson argues for reconciling the nation’s “imperial history” with its continued rhetoric of “democracy”: “During [the period 1815–1835] ‘democracy’ underwent an unprecedented process of institutional elaboration; at the same time, its conceptual tension with ‘empire’ was clarified and strengthened. This process of conceptual and institutional elaboration was profoundly shaped by an Atlantic world context of revolution and counterrevolution” (118).

¹³ See Armitage, *Declaration of Independence*; and Morgan, *Inventing the People*.

¹⁴ For overviews of U.S. filibustering prior to 1846, see May, *Manifest Destiny’s Underworld* 1–14; Owsley and Smith, *Filibusters and Expansionists*; and Warren, *Sword Was Their Passport*.

¹⁵ Stagg defines “the ideology of American continentalism” as “the belief that a secure and independent United States would not so much be ‘the great nation of futurity’ as it should be the successor state to the rival European empires of North America” (5). For a diplomatic history of U.S. continentalism toward the Spanish-American frontiers, focusing on the necessity for the nation to establish “friendly neighbors,” see Lewis, *American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood*. Hietala offers a continentalist conclusion for explaining the origins of the Mexican War: “Jacksonian expansionism was the second front in a long-standing war to preserve a vulnerable nation from enemies domestic and foreign and to safeguard the American people from ominous forces that threatened to subvert or subdue the Union” (9).

¹⁶ See *Manifest Manhood*.

¹⁷ See *Spain’s Long Shadow*.

¹⁸ For example, Bruce A. Harvey “traces the interplay between U.S. national self-thinking,” which he approaches “as discursive communities or nexuses, and authorial (sometimes singular) concerns in respect to the crossing into non-European domains” (6).

¹⁹ Interestingly, Polk did *not* cite the Monroe Doctrine as a justification for the Mexican War.

²⁰ For example, see Amy Kaplan’s *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*.

²¹ David Kazanjian makes a comparable point concerning how the concept of universal equality required instituting a system of “racial and national codification” with which to classify citizens throughout the Americas (5–6).

²² The Treaty was signed in September 1856 by Peru, Ecuador, and Chile, partially with the goal of preventing the continuation of U.S. filibustering missions, such as that of William Walker, who ruled Nicaragua from July 1856 to May 1857. See Brickhouse 7–8.

²³ Luis-Brown discusses this in reference to the late-nineteenth-century Cuban revolutionary José Martí, author of a classic text on transamerican hemispheric consciousness “Nuestra América” (“Our America,” 1891).

²⁴ This model recalls what David Armitage terms cis-Atlantic history, “national or regional history within an Atlantic context” that “studies particular places as unique locations within an Atlantic world and seeks to define that uniqueness as the result of the interaction between local particularity and a wider web of connections (and comparisons)” (“Three Concepts of Atlantic History,” 15, 21). On the notion of “entanglement,” Eliga H. Gould describes the “imperial mission” of the nineteenth-century United States as “a product of [its] deep and longstanding entanglement with Spain’s global lordship,” since “practically every...accession to [the nation’s] empire...involved territory that at some point had been Spanish” (784).

²⁵ See Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture*; Lazo, *Writing to Cuba*.

²⁶ For an overview, see Kanellos and Martell, eds., *Hispanic Periodicals in the United States*. Important early-nineteenth-century Hispanophone texts include Felix Varela’s periodical *El Habanero* (1823), Felix Mejía’s play *La Fayette in Mt. Vernon* (1825), the anonymous novel *Jicoténcal* (1826), Vicente Rocafuerte’s anthologies of revolutionary documents addressed to “the people of the Americas,” Anastasio María de Ochon y Acuña’s poetry collection *Poesías de un Mexicano* (1828), and countless others, including many that we have presumably yet to rediscover. A complete survey of the antebellum period’s Hispanophone print culture remains beyond the scope of my study, which will limit itself to identifying several authors and works that complicate our current understanding of the history of such publications in the United States.

²⁷ Lazo writes, “Because the filibuster aspires to possess a territory, it is a particularly apt metaphor for framing the literary history of writers whose status in the mid-nineteenth century is one of dislocation rather than national position. The filibuster’s condition—simultaneously seeking territory and experiencing the separation from that territory—is akin to the deterritorialized condition of transnational writing” (*Writing to Cuba* 23).

²⁸ For instance, while researching her book on the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, Garrett uncovered copies of Shaler and Toledo’s Texas newspapers, *Gaceta de Texas* and *El Mexicano*. See *Green Flag Over Texas*, as well as her articles from the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* cited in Chapter 3 of this project. For comparable discussions of the impact of print culture on filibustering campaigns (and vice versa), see May, *Manifest Destiny’s Underworld* 66–74; Sibley 3–84; and Spell, *Pioneer Printer* 3–152.

²⁹ On prominent war opponents, see Brack 135–51; and Johannsen 214–18, 270–87.

³⁰ This aspect of my analysis draws on Joyce Appleby’s *Inheriting the Revolution*.

³¹ The following authors whose works are discussed in the body chapters spent time in New Orleans between the years 1810 and 1846: Alvarez de Toledo, Henry Marie Brackenridge, William Davis Robinson, Timothy Flint, Henry Adams Bullard, the anonymous author of *A Visit to Texas*, Mary Austin Holley, Orazio de Atellis Santangelo, Lorenzo de Zavala, Charles Sealsfield (Karl Postl), and Joseph Holt Ingraham.

³² See Miller, *New Orleans and the Texas Revolution*. Chapter 3 alludes to how the Committee on Texas Affairs in New Orleans organized the Tampico expedition commanded by the exiled Mexican patriot General José Antonio Mexía. Additional expeditions launched from or partially plotted in the city included those led by Gutiérrez, Mina, and Narciso López.

³³ Around the time he published his 1811 pamphlet, Toledo collaborated with Gutiérrez on a broadside intended to further incite anger at Spain among the Mexican people. Printed in Philadelphia, the broadside was entitled *Mexicanos, llegado es el tiempo señalado por la Providencia para que sacudáis el yugo bárbaro...*. See Toledo y Dubois, “Mexicans” 517–21; and Kanellos, “José Alvarez de Toledo” 91.

³⁴ As indicated by the recent boom of critical interest in *Jicoténcal*, the novel offers an important counter-narrative to some of the texts published by Anglophone writers, such as the accounts of the Spanish conquest presented in Robert Montgomery Bird’s *Calavar* (1834) and *The Infidel* (1835), as well as William H. Prescott’s widely read *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (1843). For comparative analyses of Bird’s novels and *Jicoténcal*, see Alemán 406–26; and Castillo 15–54. Alemán also discusses Prescott’s history. Brickhouse discusses *Jicoténcal* in relation to another famous novel from 1826, Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans*, as well as Prescott’s work (37–83).

³⁵ For example, Lazo notes how Lorenzo de Zavala’s travel narrative “echoed some of the most insulting and racist accounts of Mexico in the nineteenth century” (“La Famosa Filadelfia” 67).

³⁶ See Clemons 100.

CHAPTER 1

NEUTRAL TOURING: U.S. TRAVEL WRITERS AND THE SPANISH AMERICAN REVOLUTIONS

I went out drinking with Thomas Paine
He said that all revolutions are not the same
They are as different as the cultures
That give them birth
For no one idea
Can solve every problem on Earth.
So don't expect it all to happen
In some prophesied political fashion
For people are different
And so are nations
You can borrow ideas
But you can't borrow situations.
—Billy Bragg, "North Sea Bubble"¹

Published in the July 1817 issue of the *North American Review*, Jared Sparks's essay "Revolution in Pernambuco" provides a representative example of how many U.S. citizens viewed the Wars of Independence occurring throughout Spanish America from the Hidalgo Revolt in 1810 to the Panama Congress of 1826. Sparks establishes a rhetorical solidarity with the provinces challenging the Spanish and Portuguese colonial authorities for control by referring to Latin America as "that part of our continent," which supposedly "has become the scene of the most interesting transactions, that are now taking place in the world" (226).² The proprietary implications of referring to the Americas jointly as "our continent" suggest the willingness of U.S. authors to view the rebel forces as revolutionary brethren joined in a continued struggle to free the Western Hemisphere from European imperial control, described by Sparks as a "contest between established authority and newly conceived rights." Concerning why these ideas have only now impacted South America, the text cites the influence of the American Revolution by claiming that "Our example has animated the South American provinces to declare themselves independent" (Sparks 226).³ For this reason, Sparks elaborates on why U.S. citizens can relate to the revolutions by paralleling them with pre-

revolutionary British America. “The times are fresh in our recollection,” he claims, “when our own enthusiasm and courage were inflamed by the same exclamations of *liberty, rights, independence, tyranny*; and we feelingly remember with what fearful odds the ardour of stripling power wages war against the mature and practiced strength of habitual authority” (226–27). The parallel between the revolutionary Americas thus stems from shared beliefs in such universal principles as “liberty,” “rights,” and “independence,” particularly when restrained by “tyranny,” foundational concepts central to the ideological framework that defined the Age of Revolutions.⁴ In addition to crediting the United States with spreading these ideas to its southern neighbors, Sparks proposes that an additional amount of cultural influence will occur once U.S. citizens travel to the revolutionary areas to aid the struggles for independence. He mentions specifically “the adventurous spirits of our young men, and...the rash speculations of our merchants.” Dismissing the possibility that such activities could qualify as filibustering or profiteering, Sparks stresses that they will benefit South America by spreading cultural models which the newly independent provinces can then emulate, while at the same time facilitating the economic expansion of the United States:

We ought not to grudge the loss of a few enterprising individuals, if their emigration to South America affords them the chance of imparting to the people there something of our skill in the arts of living and of government; and though mercantile enterprise may urge on some few to imprudent and disadvantageous risks, yet we shall probably be great gainers on the whole, by having free access to the resources which a revolution will throw open to our commerce. (227)

A passage like this presents U.S. citizens travelling to South America during the revolutions as an activity that offers potential “gains” for the United States. These include financial profits from increased trade and commerce, as well as the humanitarian benefits of educating oppressed groups on how to attain social autonomy. The U.S. national narrative, or Sparks’s version of it, at any rate, thus constructs the trope of travel to revolutionary South America—along with the closer territories of Central America—as an activity offering adventure, potential financial profit, and an opportunity to spread the nation’s political and social philosophies of democracy and republican government.

This chapter will investigate how texts by U.S. writers translated these interrelated activities into assertions of the nation's exceptional position in the Western Hemisphere. Since official policies dictated neutrality toward the revolutions, the authors discussed here avoided active participation with the patriot forces, serving instead as observers who then reported on the Wars of Independence in texts addressed to the U.S. public. These reports often took the form of travel narratives which allowed the writers to combine their own experiences with researched discussions of the places, events, institutions, and ethnic groups they encountered. Kirsten Silva Gruesz argues that U.S. travellers functioned as “ambassadorial icons of national cultures” who projected their own ideological principles and belief systems as they visited foreign territories (*Ambassadors of Culture* 15). She claims that “To be an ambassador of culture involves reporting and representing, but not enforcing, the authority of that idealized realm of prestige knowledge in a place where it does not rule—whether in the hinterlands or in a cosmopolitan space where many value systems come together in chaotic plurality, as they did in American cities” (18). For the authors of travel narratives—including Henry Marie Brackenridge and William Davis Robinson, whose visits during the key years of 1816–1818 inspired the narratives which serve as this chapter's focus—journeying through Latin America involved representing national models of liberty and sovereignty in regions they hoped would follow the same path to independence as the United States. Gruesz's concept of being “ambassadors of culture,” which she terms “ambassadorship,” offers one means of understanding the interpretive goals latent in antebellum texts describing the wars for independence in Spanish America.

In her discussion of travel narratives by Europeans that discuss South America during and immediately following the revolutions, Mary Louise Pratt observes that they no longer use “a rhetoric of discovery”—as often appeared in the writings of Columbus, his followers, and even Alexander von Humboldt—but instead “a goal-oriented rhetoric of conquest and achievement”:

In many accounts, the itinerary itself becomes the occasion for a narrative of success, in which travel is a triumph in its own right. What are conquered are destinations, not kingdoms; what are overcome are not military challenges, but logistical ones. The travelers struggle in unequal battle against scarcity, inefficiency, laziness, discomfort, poor horses, bad roads, bad weather, delays. Indeed, Spanish American society is mainly encoded in this literature as logistical obstacles to the forward movement of the Europeans. (148)

By contrast, accounts by U.S. writers stress how Latin American territories struggle to free themselves from European influence. The “logistical obstacles” that impede travel are interpreted as signs of Spain’s neglect and mistreatment of its colonies. Rather than just a “goal-oriented rhetoric of conquest and achievement,” then, U.S. authors emphasize how the local populations, mainly the creoles, labor for achieving and then maintaining their autonomy. Rhetorically, the texts stress the importance of popular sovereignty by focusing on regional voices and participants who express their continued pursuit of liberty and equality, both concepts with particular emotional resonance for the reading public in the United States. At the same time, as the products of “ambassadors of culture,” these texts emphasize how the patriots relate to U.S. models of revolution and republicanism, which explains partially why their accounts remain *selective* representations of the events.

In a recent study of imperialism’s impact on emerging national identity, Ian Baucom discusses how concepts of what constituted “Englishness” were forged by using the space of the empire to project cultural ideas central to the nation.⁵ He examines how specific imperial sites, locales, and conditions revealed defining traits of English culture. Although the United States was not yet an imperial nation, citizens visiting Latin America during its independence struggle regarded the region’s supposed emulation of the American Revolution—through central texts like *Common Sense* and *The Declaration of Independence*, influential leadership figures, or forms of republican government—as indications of what U.S. nationhood meant to the rest of the world. Spanish America’s potential to emulate the revolutionary practices pioneered by the United States offered a confirmation of what the nation’s leaders and advocates already suspected, namely that the U.S.

nation represented a new development of world-historical significance. Travelers to Latin America found proof of their homeland's significance, while also feeling a responsibility to conduct themselves as honorable representatives of their national principles. For this reason, Robinson maintains adamantly that he followed the official instructions for U.S. citizens to remain neutral toward the independence movements, yet asserts ultimately that "the independence of Mexico will be an event next in importance, to the whole civilized world, to that of the declaration of independence of the United States" (*Memoirs* 373). In one striking section of his own narrative, Brackenridge chastises visitors who travelled to Latin America but failed to act as U.S. citizens (*Voyage* 2: 35–7). Such positions indicate how writers felt compelled to conduct themselves as cultural ambassadors (to use Gruesz's concept) who provided Latin Americans with examples of democratic citizenship.

Examining U.S. narrative commentaries on the Spanish American revolutions suggests how writers participated in the process of *de-radicalizing* the American Revolution by minimizing its political implications and stressing potential material gains for the United States.⁶ The emphasis Brackenridge, Robinson, and others place on the possibility of acquiring new territories, neighboring states, or citizens undermines their repeated assertions of a humanist, enlightened belief in universal human liberty. As historians and literary critics have argued, the sentiments expressed in the American Revolution's founding documents and basic ideological principles advocating republican democracy should be qualified with a consideration of the nation's ultimate imperial nature.⁷ Antebellum discussions of the Spanish American revolutions offer an opportune context for such analysis because several territories that won independence eventually became sites of U.S. expansionist ventures, some of which succeeded—as with the U.S.-Mexican War's acquisition of a sizable portion of Northern Mexico and subsequent annexation of Texas—and others of which did not, such as William Walker's notorious filibustering campaigns in Nicaragua and the so-called

“Southern dream” of conquering Cuba and other Caribbean islands.⁸ While contemporary scholars stress the American Revolution’s multivalent nature and important contributions to a cosmopolitan discourse of egalitarian liberty, we must also recall that some antebellum writers endorsed the Spanish American revolutions because they believed the region’s independence offered future territorial and financial benefits to the United States.⁹ To facilitate this world view that eventually helped the nation become an empire authors like Brackenridge and Robinson used what Christopher Herbert has termed an “ethnographic imagination” by classifying the revolutions and independent states according to U.S. concepts of national identity and sovereignty.¹⁰ As applied in the travel narratives discussed below, this analytical frame merges the rhetoric of universal human rights with a belief in American exceptionalism.

The sections that follow discuss first the cultural roles played by travel narratives of the Spanish American revolutions as historical documents surveying the regions, as commentaries on how the United States should respond to the independence movements, and as discourses of how to project U.S. national principles throughout the Western Hemisphere. All three goals foreshadow the Monroe Doctrine’s 1823 declaration of the Americas as no longer open to European imperial expansion or influence. After this overview of the cultural impact exerted by such narratives, the chapter focuses on Brackenridge’s *Voyage to South America* (1819) as a diplomatic call to support the revolutions in their struggles for independence. The next section examines Robinson’s *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution* (1820) as a hybridized text that integrates his own travelogue with a biography of a patriot general to produce a speculative history of how the Mexican Revolution might achieve its goals. After analyzing these two detailed commentaries on Spanish American revolutions written when they were still underway, the chapter concludes with a brief consideration of how Joel Poinett’s *Notes on Mexico* (1824) and William Duane’s *A Visit to Colombia* (1826), accounts of these

new nations published after they achieved their independence, challenged the era's earlier optimism about the possibility of spreading egalitarian democracy throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Representing Spanish American Independence: Recognition, Exceptionalism, and the Cultural Roles of Travel Narratives

In his now classic study *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983), Benedict Anderson interpreted the Spanish American Revolutions as the work of “Creole Pioneers” who “shared a common language and common descent with those against whom they fought.” He characterized the independence movements as led by wealthy property owners of Spanish descent who struggled for emancipation from the empire because of their “*fear* of ‘lower-class’ political mobilizations: to wit, Indian or Negro-slave uprisings” (emphasis original, 47–48). According to Anderson, centuries of exploitation by Spain’s colonial administrators, who prevented the creoles from holding leadership positions, forged the people into a revolutionary body intent on establishing its own sovereignty. For Spain, then, the “Creole Pioneers” represented a supposedly unique rebel force because they were “fellow-Europeans” vying against an imperial power: “They constituted simultaneously a colonial community and an upper class. They were to be economically subjected and exploited, but they were also essential to the stability of the empire” (58).¹¹ Although he does acknowledge that both patriot leaders and independent republics abandoned their fears of slave revolts and went on to ban slavery throughout Latin America, Anderson maintains his position that the revolutions themselves constituted the work of European-descended, property-holding creoles with little assistance from the region’s other ethnic groups (49–50). The origins of this argument lie partially in the British historian John Lynch’s influential study, *The Spanish American Revolutions* (1973), which Anderson cites repeatedly as his chapter’s main source. Concerning the creole leadership of the revolutions, Lynch claims that “in so far as there was a nation it was a creole nation, for the castes had only an obscure sense of national identity, and the Indians and Negroes none at all” (25).¹² By contrast, Lester D. Langley’s transamerican history of the Age of Revolution

prioritizes the rising discontent among Spanish-American creoles, yet also notes how people from different ethnic groups questioned if a creole-led rebellion would address their own sufferings.¹³

Recently, however, historians have presented more overarching challenges to the interpretations of Anderson and Lynch by revealing the substantial contributions made to the revolutions by Spanish America's indigenous inhabitants, such as the Indians, *mestizos*, African slaves, and other groups who aided the creoles in expelling the colonial forces. For instance, Eric Van Young challenges the standard social profile attached to the Mexican rebels, which presents them as *mestizos* ("mixed-bloods") who worked as "artisans" and other "skilled laborers," by uncovering "the Indianness of the rebels" and their rural origins (65). He stresses that during the Mexican Revolution, "rural people had their own political and cultural agendas," instead of just functioning as agents for fulfilling the goals of the creole elites (499).¹⁴ Marixa Lasso investigates a comparable trend in Gran Colombia—Bolívar's republic that included modern-day Colombia, Panama, Venezuela, and Ecuador—in which she claims that "racial equality became government policy" and the region "elaborate[d] a nationalist rhetoric of racial harmony and equality" that became "a Spanish American tradition" (11–12). Corresponding studies by Peter Guardino and other scholars emphasize the roles played by peasants, people of African descent, mulattoes, and native tribes in aiding the Wars of Independence and founding the region's new nations, all of which challenge Anderson's "Creole Pioneers" thesis.¹⁵

A 2003 collection of essays appropriately titled, *Beyond Imagined Communities: Reading and Writing the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, focuses specifically on the applicability of Anderson's model to historical and critical analyses of the area's national cultures. In his introduction, editor John Charles Chasteen concludes that Anderson's study has had little impact on interpretations of the region's *specific* nationalisms, but that its overarching theory of print culture's role in facilitating the emergence of national identity has proven useful. According to Chasteen,

Latin Americanists use Anderson's book as a theoretical work on the origins of nationalism, rather than an accurate analysis of what happened on a local level in Latin America during and after independence.¹⁶ Although the majority of the patriot leaders were creoles, their success depended on contributions made by the remaining non-Spanish sections of the population, which Chasteen estimates as roughly four-fifths of the region's inhabitants, consisting of primarily "slaves, mixed-race, and indigenous people." He claims that the creole patriot leaders gained the assistance of these groups by using a "nativist formula—America for the Americans—[that united them] by rhetorically asserting affinities among the vast native-born majority in contradistinction to a vulnerable, neatly defined enemy," either the Spanish or the Portuguese (xv).¹⁷ The image of "Creole Pioneers" thus represents *not* the actual composition of the patriot forces, but instead the complexion its leaders constructed to support their own ambitions for power.

Before merely dismissing Anderson's and Lynch's arguments as the work of older historical paradigms, however, we should note that many U.S. travel narratives describing the revolutions—including Brackenridge's and Robinson's—celebrate creoles as the main forces behind independence.¹⁸ They also approved of the "Americanism" voiced by the patriot leaders and agreed with the characterization of the Spanish as evil. A predominant concern for both Brackenridge and Robinson remained the ethnic composition of the patriot forces. Their texts allocate only nominal attention to the large populations of African-descended slaves and indigenous people from native tribes. Brackenridge asserts that the creoles qualify as the "most numerous and enlightened portion of the community, [and] have a most inveterate hatred of the Spaniards" (*Voyage 2*: 156). The text endorses this hatred by claiming that "the European Spaniards...were a thousand times more important than the English in the United States, previous to our revolutionary war," citing the fact that "they held all the principal colonial offices, ecclesiastical, military, and civil" (1: 36). By presenting the Spanish as more invasive and powerful than the English, Brackenridge appeals to the

U.S. reading public's idealization of the American Revolution as a conflict against an imperial government's exploitation of its colonies. Robinson similarly renders creoles as systematically excluded from positions of local leadership or equality with the Spanish administrators. He writes that any creole inhabitant "found himself cut off from every hope of redress, saw his rights, as a man, prostrated, and all the paths to social distinctions impeded by obstacles he could not overcome. Thus degraded and persecuted, hatred was engendered, and usurped, in his heart the ties of consanguinity" (*Memoirs* 6). With this charting of how the creoles eventually abandoned "the ties of consanguinity" that could have maintained their fidelity to Spain, Robinson constructs a rhetorical parallel to one of the main grievances presented in the *Declaration of Independence* against the colonists' "British brethren." Jefferson cited numerous attempts of the colonists now engaged in the American Revolution to inform their fellow Englishmen of the abuses instituted by King George and parliament, but concluded that "They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and consanguinity."¹⁹ Like Jefferson, Robinson positions the creole revolt as a defense of the natural rights denied by the colonial government. He justifies this break from their "brethren" with whom they are united by "consanguinity" by referencing the higher edict of basic human rights ("his rights, as a man") protected by the age's democratic, enlightened governments. Thus, one of the most noble attributes of the Spanish-born General Xavier Mina, the hero of Robinson's account, becomes his decision to fight in the Mexican Revolution—an event that embodies "the cause of liberty" and universal humanity—instead of maintaining any national loyalty to Spain. Even though his text focuses on a native Spaniard, Robinson emphasizes the importance of patriot leaders receiving support from the local population, yet still maintains that the creoles and other "gentlemen" led the revolutions. But as Latin Americanist responses to Anderson's "Creole Pioneers" thesis suggest, the actual composition of the rebel forces remained far more diverse, even though most U.S. writers appeared unaware of that situation by accepting the dominant narrative of creole nationalism.

Travel narratives produced by writers who visited revolutionary Latin America provided a vital source of information for U.S. readers and public officials curious about the region. In addition to surveying the current state of the independence movements, many texts overviewed the history of Latin America, from the Spanish conquest to the present day. Displaying their extensive knowledge of Spanish American history, authors like Brackenridge and Robinson discussed the existing literature on the subject. These sources included the works of European historians like the Abbe de Pradt and William Robertson; famous travelers to the region, including Humboldt; writers from the area's early colonial period, especially Bartolomé de Las Casas's *Brevisima Relación de la Destrucción de Las Indias* (1552); and writings by Spanish Americans living in or exiled to the United States, particularly Manuel Palacio Fajardo's *Outline of the Revolution in Spanish America* (1817). U.S. periodicals also regularly published reports on the revolutions. The Baltimore editor Hezekiah Niles even dedicated the March–September 1816 volume of his popular *Weekly Register* “to the patriots of Mexico and South America contending for liberty and Independence and to all others struggling to obtain civil and religious freedom” (qtd. in Johnson, *Hemisphere Apart* 1).²⁰ Like Niles, the editor William Duane filled the issues of his newspaper the *Aurora*, published in Philadelphia, with accounts and commentaries on the Spanish American wars for independence. A biographer has claimed that “between 1817 and 1822, when Duane retired as an editor, the *Aurora* was unsurpassed as a source of information on South America” (Phillips 494).²¹ In early October of 1822, only a few days after his retirement from the journal took effect, Duane started on a journey to the now-independent republic of Colombia. The nine-month trip provided the basis for his own travel narrative, *A Visit to Colombia*, a text discussed briefly at this chapter's end.

The U.S. authors who produced travel narratives describing Spanish America from 1810 to 1826 examined the revolutions as rebellions against European imperial governments, considering specifically whether the revolts continued the tradition of the American Revolution. Such an

assessment of whether the colonies of Spanish America followed the example set by their northern neighbors reveals how the writers oriented their accounts with a point-of-view created by U.S. emerging nationalism. For instance, Brackenridge and Robinson appear interested in the local populations primarily in terms of how they might influence future associations with the United States government and the nation's citizens. Allusions to how the revolutions continue a cosmopolitan tradition of egalitarian liberty and popular sovereignty eventually become statements of U.S. exceptionalism by interpreting the events in Spanish America according to models associated with the American Revolution. This explains, for example, why U.S. commentators often tried to determine which leader represented the Spanish American equivalent of George Washington. The most common counterparts included Simón Bolívar and José de San Martín—although at least one U.S. writer, the aforementioned W. D. Robinson, believed that the Spanish-born Mexican patriot leader Francisco Xavier Mina embodied the true spirit of 1776.²² Such obsessive associations of events in Spanish America with the ideas and people who facilitated the American Revolution reveals antebellum U.S. culture's drive to endorse *certain* kinds of revolutions and patriots, while condemning others. For many writers, the American Revolution qualified as a model that all subsequent national rebellions should emulate, but the independence movements in France and Haiti represented dangerous—and potentially flawed—forms of revolution that they hoped Spanish America would avoid. The horrible violence that occurred during the French Revolution disgusted many U.S. citizens, including John Adams and Alexander Hamilton.²³ When praising the indigenous inhabitants of Buenos Aires for “the rare occurrence of violence and bloodshed” during “the sudden changes and revolutions of their government,” Brackenridge contrasts “their mildness of character” to the “scenes [that] occurred in France” (*Voyage 2*: 17). On the other hand, the Haitian Revolution offered the frightening suggestion of future slave rebellions, which could disrupt the nation's economy and challenge the continued existence of slavery as an institution in the United

States.²⁴ Ironically, then, Haiti's example represented a more egalitarian form of revolution than the events of 1776, yet some U.S. citizens feared its potential repercussions if emulated by other rebelling colonies.²⁵ This predominant disapproval of the French and Haitian Revolutions indicates another reason why many officials hoped Spanish America would follow the model established by the United States. But advocating that the rebel forces emulate the American Revolution emphasized the need for clarifying how the United States government should respond to the revolutions and the republics they produced.

Travel narratives describing the Spanish American revolutions often challenged the government's policy of remaining neutral toward the independence movements. The writers plunged into current debates about whether the U.S. should provide formal aid to revolutionary groups or how quickly it should recognize the emancipated republics. These discussions remained a crucial topic in U.S. public affairs from 1810, when Father Miguel Hidalgo's revolt initiated the independence movements in Mexico, to the months leading up to Simon Bolivar's Panama Congress in 1826, an event that it took the U.S. Congress almost five months to reach an agreement on sending delegates to attend.²⁶ Debates on Spanish American independence escalated after late January of 1815, when the War of 1812 ended with a decisive victory that confirmed the nation's sovereignty.²⁷ From this point on, emergent U.S. nation building interpreted Latin America's burgeoning emancipation as an opportunity to spread U.S. national principles, eventually prompting the Monroe Doctrine's declaration in 1823 of the Western Hemisphere as no longer open to European imperial powers. In 1819, President Monroe's Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams, had negotiated the Transcontinental Treaty, also known as the Adam-Onís Treaty, which resolved a lingering boundary dispute between Spain and the United States concerning the lands sold by France in the Louisiana Purchase. Along with acquiring all of Florida—an area it had long coveted and even tried to purchase on several occasions—the United States “extended [its] territorial claim” across the

continent via the treaty's establishment of "a western boundary of Louisiana, a border between the United States and still-Spanish Mexico that would extend to the Pacific" (Nugent 128, 126). The addition of these lands inspired the nation's expansionists to begin looking south, which encouraged U.S. settlement in Texas (then part of Mexico) but would remain impractical as long as Spain retained control of its colonies in the Americas.

The government's interest in Spanish American revolutions reached a peak in 1817, when President James Monroe formed a commission to visit Latin America—specifically the Rio de la Plata (present-day Argentina) and Chile, both areas with flourishing independence movements. On their return, the commissioners were expected to produce reports that would help the President and Congress determine the nation's official diplomatic policies toward the region, the revolutions, and the new republics. Four major reports on South America resulted from this voyage, each of which was published and widely circulated, three by the commissioners themselves—Caesar Rodney, John Graham, and Theodorick Bland—and a final one by the commission's secretary, Henry Marie Brackenridge.²⁸ A native of Pittsburgh, Brackenridge followed in the tradition of his father, the judge and writer Hugh Henry Brackenridge, author of the classic novel *Modern Chivalry* (1792). By the time of his appointment to the commission, Henry Marie had already practiced law in St. Louis, Missouri, served as a district judge in Louisiana, and published a well received study of the area, *Views on Louisiana* (1814). Of the reports, only Brackenridge's utilized the form of a travel narrative, partially because he was not required by the Monroe administration to submit a formal report and instead wrote his account for the nation as a whole. In the Preface to his two-volume *Voyage to South America*, Brackenridge writes, "To the American public, to whom *I make my report*, I address myself with confidence, fully convinced that its sentence will be just, even if against me" (emphasis original, 1: ix). Identifying his audience as the "public" of the United States separates his narrative from the reports submitted by the official commissioners, documents addressed primarily to the private

sphere of President Monroe and Congress. His professed faith in the U.S. public's judgment implies that he writes, supposedly, with no agenda of his own other than to encourage citizens to consider the situation of the nation's southern neighbors. He presents his narrative's role as filling a specific gap he sees in the period's literature on South America. In Brackenridge's view, "What is wanted at present, is not so much a work embracing the necessary information on the subject of South America generally, as one that should create a desire to be informed" (viii–ix). At the center of *Voyage to South America* lies this stated goal of "creat[ing]" in the U.S. reading public "a desire to be informed" about the region's current state. What to do with that information, then, becomes a pressing question for the text's readers, although Brackenridge clearly has his own ideas for how the United States (both its government and citizens) should act toward ongoing revolutions and new republics. As this chapter reveals, Brackenridge advocated that the U.S. aid the independence movements, then establish commercial and diplomatic relationships with the new governments, but always maintain the status of the hemisphere's leading republic.

Like Brackenridge, William Davis Robinson addresses his volume on a revolution in Spanish America, entitled *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution*, to the U.S. reading public, whose opinions he terms "the candid criticisms of his fellow citizens." Although he claims an ability to "regard with frigid indifference the harshest judgments of his European censors," Robinson stresses that he is "tremblingly alive to the favourable opinion of his own countrymen" (xxxii). This marks his text as yet another report designed to inform U.S. citizens about the current revolutions in Latin America—in fact, when Robinson published his account, the rebel groups in Mexico were still actively fighting the Spanish royalists and a formal declaration of Mexican emancipation remained almost a year away. His narrative even contains portraits of several people, including Guadalupe Victoria and Manuel de Mier y Terán, who became pivotal figures in the nation's early decades of independence. Due to his background as a merchant who formerly organized trading agreements between the

United States and Spanish-controlled Venezuela, Robinson emphasizes the potential economic benefits of aiding the revolutions.

Both Brackenridge and Robinson visited locations in Latin America where revolutions were still taking place. They also shared common interests, such as a concern over how the United States should deal with revolutions and the independent countries they produced. The conclusions each author reaches concerning these revolutions display his devotion to emancipating the victims of colonial oppression, along with a persistent belief that the American Revolution had inspired the southern revolts and thus confirmed his nation's superiority in the Western Hemisphere. Since they oriented their texts to appeal to the sympathies of U.S. citizens, Brackenridge and Robinson celebrated the Latin American patriot leaders and groups they viewed as continuing the tradition established by the leaders of the American Revolution, often via direct rhetorical parallels with the leaders, documents, and campaigns that established U.S. independence. For instance, both authors credited Latin American patriots with laboring on behalf of what they described as "the glorious cause," a phrase coined by George Washington in reference to "the defense of the liberties of Americans" (Middlekauff 296).²⁹ Robinson claims directly that his text's main subject—and hero—General Mina labored for "the glorious cause of Mexican emancipation" (51). Both authors describe the revolutions as advocating "the cause of liberty" and praise those who have joined "the patriot cause."³⁰ Since his narrative surveys independence movements in several different provinces, Brackenridge places added emphasis on the necessity of pursuing what he terms "the common cause" of South American independence. This "cause" concerns not just advocating the goal of liberty and freedom from Spanish imperial control, but also uniting with the other provinces to ensure success. Brackenridge cites an intellectual in Buenos Aires who laments the absence of such a union: "Each province, or government, as well as each petty district of such province, although zealous in the common cause, wishes to pursue its own course" (2: 39). Rather than accept the

possibility of each province (or state) establishing its own sovereignty, Brackenridge's correspondent stresses the necessity of a formal union. He endorses attempts by officials in Buenos Aires to use "compulsion and coercion" to force some provinces to comply. Brackenridge's acceptance of this view reveals his belief in models of national union derived from the formation of the United States.

Before producing their travel narratives, Brackenridge and Robinson each wrote pamphlets analyzing Spanish America in terms of its territorial and political relevance to the U.S. nation. Published in 1815, shortly before Andrew Jackson's defeat of the British at New Orleans compounded the impact of the U.S. victory in the War of 1812, Robinson's *A Cursory View of Spanish America* accuses England of plotting to seize Louisiana, Florida, and surrounding territories, while simultaneously defrauding the United States out of lands it acquired via the Louisiana Purchase.³¹ For this reason, Robinson argues for aiding the independence movements in Spanish America because doing so "may inflict a sudden, unexpected and unerring wound on the commerce and designs of England," as well as having the potential "to accelerate and fix the destinies of seventeen millions of people" (11). Crucially, he compares the need to thwart England's future activities in Spanish America with the potential to help extend universal liberty to oppressed regions (which would later become the main rhetorical justification for supporting the revolutions). In fact, the overall tenor of Robinson's early political tract focuses on preventing England from having *any* influence in the Western Hemisphere, which suggests a continuation of the antagonisms that produced the American Revolution and the War of 1812 (still underway at the time he was writing), rather than a belief in supporting Spanish American independence because it represented an extension of the universal principles of freedom and equality.³² Robinson predicts that U.S. citizens entering Mexico to fight in the revolution "would diffuse joy and confidence throughout every part of that important country—the population would be roused from their apathy, we should be hailed as the deliverers of six millions of people from a cruel despotism, and we should instantaneously

discover that the influence and power of Spain would vanish as dew before the rays of the sun.” In support of this assertion that U.S. intervention would produce Mexican independence “instantaneously,” Robinson speculates on the number of troops needed, “fifteen to twenty thousand volunteers accompanied by gallant officers,” who could thus “decide *the fate of all Mexico in less than one year*” (emphasis original, 17). Such *specific* plans for how U.S. citizens could aid the cause of Mexican independence appeared rarely in official publications, since many authors restrained themselves to expressing solidarity with the revolutions. Robinson claims that a formal alliance is “justified by the recent outrages [in Florida] we [the people of the United States] have suffered from Spain,” “dictated by sound policy and enforced by the cries of injured humanity,” an appeal that cites three types of supporting evidence: Spain’s boundary disputes with the U.S., the nation’s need for stable neighboring territories, and a universal belief in humanity’s natural rights (17). In this respect, *A Cursory View of Spanish America* reveals the material and ideological goals entangled with the nation’s potential support of the revolutions. Although many writers expressed primarily an emotional sympathy with the rebel forces motivated by a shared interest in ending colonial oppression, Robinson emphasizes as well the possibility for the nation and its citizens to gain financial profits via increased trade and territorial security: “We may speedily become the great bankers of Mexico, and likewise of South America. The national vaults of the United States and our private coffers, may ere long be considered equally secure places of deposit as the vaults of London and Cadiz have hitherto been for the specie and bullion of the new world” (36). This balance between national and private financial gain reveals the *material* interests central to many arguments advocating Spanish American independence, though few writers rivaled Robinson’s candor about how the United States could profit from its newly emancipated neighbors.

In September and October of 1817, while waiting in Washington to depart with the commission, Brackenridge composed *A Letter on South American Affairs, By an American, to James*

Monroe, President of the United States, a work that advocates openly the need for the U.S. government to recognize the independence of the Spanish American republics.³³ Brackenridge published the pamphlet anonymously because acknowledging his authorship, as William Keller explains, would challenge the commission's status as a neutral "fact-finding commission" (188).³⁴ As the subtitle suggests, Brackenridge addressed the pamphlet to President Monroe, whom he claimed could carry on the tradition of the American Revolution by aiding the southern patriots: "It was given to our immortal Washington to achieve the independence of one half of America, and I most sincerely hope, it may be yours to acknowledge the independence of the other" (2: 359).³⁵ Trying to tempt Monroe with the possibility of following Washington's example reveals the continued veneration of the American Revolution. As expected, Brackenridge identifies the revolutionary war as the main inspiration for the independence movements in Spanish America, which he views as proof that the United States offers a new example to the world of how to overthrow tyrannical governments. He claims, "*Formerly a revolution indicated little more than a change of masters; it now means the establishment of free government,*" an assertion that credits the nation with redefining the very *nature* of what a revolution means (emphasis original, 2: 324). In Brackenridge's view, although the Spanish authorities tried to suppress the circulation of documents pertaining to the American Revolution, the colonists were inspired by the example of the United States to launch their own struggles for emancipation: "The unexampled prosperity of the United States, the knowledge of which could not be concealed from the colonists, furnished the aliment to keep alive the fire [for independence], which had been thus lighted up—their triumph over all their enemies, and their conquest over all their difficulties at last, must render this fire unextinguishable" (2: 324). This passage's passion underscores Brackenridge's excitement over the potential for *all* South America to liberate itself from Spanish control. By 1817, when Brackenridge composed the pamphlet, Buenos Aires had already secured its independence, an event that he celebrates in a manner that anticipates the commission's visit to those young republics

and his enthusiasm over the achievements of its leaders, particularly San Martín. Even before visiting the areas the general helped liberate, Brackenridge proposes in the pamphlet that “What has been related to me of this man, leads me almost to believe that South America, too, has her Washington,” a theory that his experiences in Buenos Aires confirmed (2: 353).³⁶

Brackenridge also asserts that the citizens of the United States possess a unique right to describe themselves with the general—and potentially hemispheric—term of “Americans.” He comments that “as the first of the colonies in forming an independent government, [we] have become peculiarly entitled to the appellation of AMERICANS” (2: 314). Cultural critics have long analyzed the imperialist implications of the United States’ willingness to refer to itself as “America” and its citizens as “Americans,” since the terms logically apply just as well to *all* the countries and citizens of both North and South America.³⁷ Brackenridge’s brief aside thus reflects an emerging strand of U.S. nationalist discourse that would eventually facilitate the transformation of the United States into an imperial nation with colonies around the world. Using the term “America” to refer only to the United States endows the nation with a rhetorically hegemonic status in the hemisphere—suggesting that it is the *one* America—a goal that emerges as an intention latent in travel narratives on Spanish American revolutions. By valorizing the American Revolution as a single event that inspires all subsequent rebellions against European imperialism, instead of conceiving the period as an entangled *series* of such independence movements united by a comparable pursuit of egalitarian liberty and sovereignty, writers like Brackenridge and Robinson promote a vision of the United States as an *exceptional* nation that occupies a unique, superior position in the world. In his pamphlet, Brackenridge claims that the nation lacks *any* imperial ambitions—“we have no colonies,” he observes, “and never will have any”—yet then states directly that “*the United States will be the natural head of the New World*” in a passage that renders American exceptionalism as a “natural” end result of the nation’s superior status, citizens, and government: “The preponderance of the United

States in the affairs of America, will be a natural one, and which can give no offence; it will arise from being the elder state, from having a more numerous, a more homogeneous, a more active, and in general, a more enlightened population; from a greater disinterestedness, regard to justice, and love of peace” (emphasis original, 2: 346). Although he stresses repeatedly that the U.S. should support the patriot groups because “they are Americans,” Brackenridge conveys a consistent belief that his own nation remains the hemisphere’s destined leader and truest fulfillment of the liberating potential of democratic government (2: 345). In this sense, his avowed sympathy with and support for the independence movements of the Spanish American people—whom he describes repeatedly as “our southern brethren”—also asserts that no matter how quickly the new republics develop, the United States will always possess “a distinguished rank among nations,” one of the foundational tenets of antebellum exceptionalism (2: 346).³⁸

The nationalist discourse and exceptionalist rhetoric present in Brackenridge’s and Robinson’s political pamphlets on Spanish America also characterized their accounts based on first-hand experiences in the region. The form of the travel narrative offered Brackenridge and Robinson a unique interpretive frame from which to discuss the implications of Spanish American revolutions. Brackenridge’s experiences as the secretary to the commission sent by the Monroe administration provided him with a more political and at times diplomatic perspective. For Robinson, writing about the Mexican Revolution offered an opportunity to defend himself against those in the United States who accused him of breaking the government’s neutrality laws by aiding the patriot groups, as well as to examine the potential for reestablishing a merchant business like the one he had previously operated in Caracas. The following sections explore how both writers balanced an interest in celebrating the revolutions as inheritors of the nation’s republican principles with a belief that Spanish American independence would facilitate the expansion of U.S. commerce.

**“One America Like Ours”:
Hemispheric Genealogies of Revolution in Brackenridge’s *Voyage to South America***

When Brackenridge finally arrived in Buenos Aires in late February of 1818, after visiting Rio de Janeiro and Montevideo, along with several other prominent South American cities, he found visual confirmation of his already engrained belief that the American Revolution had inspired the current independence movements occurring throughout Latin America. Describing Buenos Aires as “the celebrated seat of liberty and independence of the south,” Brackenridge identified the place’s potential for establishing an efficient republican government by venerating its respect for popular sovereignty (1: 276). He explained, “There is no king here—no hereditary nobility—*the power of the state is acknowledged to be in the people, and in no other*” (emphasis original, 1: 276–7). In his view, even if the future proved tumultuous for the young government, the struggle to establish a functioning democratic government—instead of maintaining the previous “stagnant pool of despotism”—qualified as an act of global significance, a “glorious cause” reminiscent of the American Revolution that had spawned the United States. “Never shall I again behold a scene more sublime,” he stated, “a people not only struggling against oppressive power, but against the errors and prejudices of centuries, and for the happiness of myriads yet unborn.” He perceived the citizens of Buenos Aires, particularly the revolutionaries who had recently overthrown Spain’s colonial administrators, as followers of U.S. republican ideology, “a people who have followed our example, who admire our institutions, and who *may* settle down in rational and free government.” Brackenridge’s tempering of U.S. nationalism with a vision of hemispheric solidarity continued in his personal assertion, “for I view even *the possibility of such a consummation* [of a free government], *as something great*. Yes, they are destined to break the chains of slavery, ignorance, and superstition in the south, as we have in the north” (emphasis original, 1: 277). By paralleling the independence movements of British and Spanish America, Brackenridge expressed a dominant cultural assumption that flourished in U.S. national narratives throughout the nineteenth century—namely, that the American Revolution

provided proof of the U.S. nation's exceptional status by inspiring subsequent rebellions against European monarchies and their colonial empires.

The era's rhetoric of a hemispheric revolutionary genealogy—in which Latin American independence movements stem directly from the American Revolution—reveals the impact of travel writers like Brackenridge, who functioned as partisan advocates of the rebellions.³⁹ According to Brackenridge's description of his visit to “the chief magistrate” of Buenos Aires, Spanish America's new republican leaders acknowledged the influence of the American Revolution and the formation of the U.S. nation. Using a very deferential tone, the director presents a series of parallels between the United States and the new republic of Buenos Aires, prefaced by the claim that Spanish Americans “have ever regarded your country with enthusiastic admiration. We appreciate fully, its high character for justice, disinterestedness and sincerity” (1: 310). His commentary culminates with the assertion that “We inhabit the same portion of the globe, our cause has been once yours, and we are in pursuit of the same objects, which you have so happily achieved” (1: 311). Because of these similarities, he suggests that “a real and unfeigned friendship and sympathy between us” would be “natural” (1: 310–11). The director's proposal foreshadows arguments for a union between the hemisphere's republican governments. In 1823, the Monroe Doctrine constructed a comparable union rhetorically between the nations of North and South America by declaring the Western Hemisphere “off limits” to European imperial ventures.⁴⁰ By repeatedly flattering the U.S. representatives concerning their nation's inspirational example and potentially more developed status, the director reveals the potential for establishing not just simple “friendship” and union, but instead a *paternalistic* relationship in which Buenos Aires and Spanish America's other young republics require assistance to obtain their sovereignty. He emphasizes that the nation is still emerging by claiming that “*We are a people who are just beginning to be*” (emphasis original, 1: 311). The patriots remain determined to ensure their independence, which the director believes Brackenridge

will realize once he observes more of the area and its inhabitants: “I feel confident, however, that when you come to be better acquainted with our country, you will find that the most ardent love of liberty, and independence, pervades every part of this community; that in pursuit of these great objects, we are all united; and that we are resolved to perish, sooner than surrender them” (1: 311). This passage’s rhetoric of continuing to battle for egalitarian liberty attempts to sway the commission—and more importantly, the text’s U.S. readership—to endorse the cause of Spanish American independence. Even though the director’s statement asserts local patriotism, his reference to such sentiments as the “love of liberty and independence” appeals to universal concepts associated repeatedly with the American Revolution, including Patrick Henry’s famous rallying cry, “Give Me Liberty, or Give Me Death!”

Brackenridge states that the patriots labor for “the common cause” pursued also by the United States, which explains why the government should recognize and potentially aid the revolutions. In fact, he even argues directly that the leaders of Buenos Aires should follow the example of the United States by indicating to Europe that its “national existence” is assured and that it can institute a functioning government (1: 305). Thus, Brackenridge’s text presents two interrelated arguments: one asserts that Spanish American revolutions followed the example of the United States, while the other advocates that the republics continue to do so as they work toward ensuring their independence. Stressing the common bond shared by revolutions throughout the hemisphere suggests a potential union against European tyranny. Brackenridge establishes a paradigm for subsequent U.S. narratives describing the revolutions by disregarding the possibility that the uprisings constituted multi-ethnic events including participants from different racial castes and socio-economic positions. Instead, *Voyage to South America* characterizes Spanish American republics as the nation’s revolutionary inheritors by implying that their supposed emulation of the American Revolution reveals a desire for annexation into the United States. Such allusions to a

hemispheric revolutionary tradition—whether in Brackenridge’s first-hand observations or the Monroe Doctrine’s later formulations of U.S. foreign policy—function as rhetorical techniques aimed at obscuring the *imperial designs* of the groups advocating territorial and ideological expansionism.

To emphasize his adherence to the government’s official policy of neutrality, Brackenridge denies that he functions as a partisan of the revolutions, presenting himself as neither a vocal advocate nor a military participant, but instead as an impartial observer. He emphasizes that before travelling to South America, his only investment in the revolutionary cause consisted of his personal “feelings,” since he “was never either directly or indirectly connected with the fortunes of any of the chieftains, or other persons, actually engaged in the patriot cause” (1: x). This assertion suggests that from his perspective just sympathizing with the revolutions does *not* question a writer’s reliability—instead, biased partisanship emerges only when U.S. citizens associate themselves with a specific group’s *private* interests: “If, by any fatality, I should have been enlisted in the private views and interests, of any of these [patriot] chiefs, I would honestly avow myself a *partisan*, and leave to others to judge, *whether my testimony could be impartial*” (emphasis original, 1: x). The distinction Brackenridge presents between public and private “interests” reveals his belief that the revolutions pursue a universal cause that overshadows personal gain. Thus, as a supporter of republican democracy, he should be capable of judging impartially the efficiency with which the rebel groups pursue their independence. As proof of his disinterest in the potential for private profit, Brackenridge cites his criticism of “the whole scheme of privateering in the name of the patriot governments,” practices he describes as “calculated to bring the patriot cause into disrepute with good men” (1: x).⁴¹ His disapproval of this “abominable cause” suggests his ideological association with Spanish American patriots. He objects to profit-oriented activities, such as privateering, because he believes the rebels labor for a higher cause benefitting all humanity.⁴²

The Preface concludes with his explicit endorsement of Spanish American revolutions and the new republics emerging from their victories, which he presents as an attack on those in the United States who disagree with his views: “They are capable of defending themselves, of governing themselves, and of being free, in spite of all that may be said by narrow-minded self-sufficient men. They expect friendship and good will from us, and have a right to expect it” (1: xiv). Those “narrow-minded self-sufficient men” included the Carreristas, a group named after their support of the wealthy leader Vincente Carrera and his brothers who had challenged San Martín and his ally Bernardo O’Higgins for control of Chile.⁴³ They opposed U.S. recognition of Latin American independence and engaged in a paper war with those who supported it.⁴⁴ The Carrerista faction included Theodorick Bland, one of the commissioners to South America, whose report expressed the most skepticism about the benefits of aiding the new republics. Brackenridge attacks their critiques by claiming that they are not representative of the views held by “my country” or “the government of my country” (1: xv).⁴⁵ Such dismissive treatment of his opponents reveals how Brackenridge presents his own perspective as equivalent to that of the United States itself—he assumes his voice represents that of the entire nation. Brackenridge condemns his opponents for attacking “people who believe they are following our glorious example!” (1: xv). His argument suggests that by failing to support the revolutions, critics lack patriotism for the U.S. and sully its reputation as a model for future rebellions against imperial tyranny.

In the Introduction, Brackenridge defines the central questions addressed by his text as, “how Spain has been enabled to establish and maintain this wonderful empire, and why the South Americans have been apparently so tardy and unsuccessful in the accomplishment of their liberties?” (1: 95).⁴⁶ Via repeated parallels with the colonial situation in British America prior to the American Revolution, this section stresses that the environment nurturing U.S. revolutionaries proved more conducive for producing such Enlightenment concepts as egalitarian liberty and self-government.⁴⁷

Brackenridge's underlying condescension toward Spanish Americans emerges when he concludes that a mere knowledge of democratic government will *not* ensure its success. He challenges the notion that introducing "the forms of free government" in a region will immediately prompt the liberation of its people. Instead, he argues that "A people must be educated and prepared for freedom" and claims that U.S. forms of free government "would be useless and inoperative among a slavish ignorant people" (1: 67n). Such conclusions provide Brackenridge's tentative answer for why it took so long for South America to rebel against the Spanish. In his view, printing presses and foreign documents espousing revolutionary principles had informed Spanish Americans about the potential for liberation, yet when he visited in 1817 and 1818 the struggle continued—a factor which emphasizes why the United States should aid the rebellions as much as possible. In a letter to Rodney expressing admiration for Brackenridge's work, Jefferson quoted the above line about the necessity of educating people for freedom, a sentiment with clear implications for establishing a beneficent "empire for liberty" designed to nurture fledgling republics.⁴⁸ The apparent contradiction in combining the concepts of "empire" and "liberty," particularly for a young nation that had only recently gained its sovereignty by re-defeating its former colonial parent, has generated considerable discussion among cultural historians.⁴⁹ Brackenridge embodies the antebellum period's attempt to combine espousals of egalitarian liberty with imperial expansion. Jefferson's concept of an "empire for liberty" elucidates Brackenridge's suggestion that the U.S. should aid its southern brethren however possible in order to prevent the resurgence of European imperialism in the Western Hemisphere, even if that meant transforming the United States into an imperial power.

While recounting his experiences in Brazil, the first South American country the commission visited, Brackenridge displays repeatedly his anti-monarchist views. Still under Portuguese rule, Brazil and its major city of Rio de Janeiro provide him with a case study of how European imperial control stifles South America. Brackenridge emphasizes his anti-imperialist stance by criticizing

Portugal's royal family, several members of which he encounters travelling along a road outside Rio de Janeiro.⁵⁰ When in the presence of these European nobles, he remains unconvinced of their alleged superiority and expresses a preference for his republican brethren:

I have seen much more parade in the great people of our country.... Although I had read a great deal of kings, and queens, and princesses, I had no idea that I should feel so little of that awe and dread, supposed to be produced by *the irradiations of majesty*. Paine observes, "that kings, among themselves, are good republicans;" and being myself of a country where every citizen is a sovereign, I though myself entitled to meet any king or his family, on terms of equality. (emphasis original, 1: 130)

Brackenridge and his fellow travelers display this belief in meeting on equal terms by refusing to bow when the royal family passes. Instead, several members of the ship's crew just tip their hats at the procession. At this point, according to Brackenridge, "Royalty stopped some minutes to contemplate the manly erect figures and open countenances of freemen, glowing with the youth and health of our northern climate; and was no doubt struck with the contrast between these modern Greeks, and its own vile, degraded slaves, of the same calling or occupation" (1: 131). By opposing the totality of "Royalty" with working class U.S. citizens, Brackenridge presents an encounter that represents how republican government—in which "every citizen is a sovereign"—will replace South America's monarchist regimes by transforming "vile, degraded slaves" into "modern Greeks" who embody democratic institutions.⁵¹

Brackenridge's pronounced opposition to monarchy often takes the form of attacks on the Portuguese as a people. He describes them as the only Europeans "who preserve that Moorish jealousy, which has been banished even from Spain" (1: 143). By presenting the Portuguese as more wicked than even the Spanish, classic figures of evil associated with the Inquisition or characterized by myths like the Black Legend, Brackenridge uses ethnocentric stereotypes to further his critique of Portugal's imperial government.⁵² His willingness to perpetuate racist caricatures foreshadows the text's later ambivalence toward the influence of the region's Native American populations. However, Brackenridge does challenge the dominant stereotype of Brazilian women as sexually promiscuous,

which often transformed them into objects of lust in antebellum U.S. texts.⁵³ He focuses instead on how the patriarchy limits their actions, a social structure he describes as “shocking to the mind of an American” (1: 144). Yet Brackenridge appears interested less in refuting the era’s sexist assumptions than on blaming Portugal’s imperial administrators for them. From his perspective, “a free enlightened, enterprising American population,” such as he sees emerging all over South America, can never be ruled by kings (1: 157). The Portuguese empire’s continued presence disturbs him because it reveals “a monarchy set up in our neighborhood” (1: 164–65). Focusing on his time in Brazil (primarily Rio de Janeiro), the first chapter expresses Brackenridge’s belief that a monarchist government cannot last in the Americas, as if the Western Hemisphere possesses an innate aversion to royalty, presumably stemming from the American Revolution’s democratic principles. On this note, he relies on almost militant assertions of U.S. supremacy when he claims that “it is enough for us to know that our own institutions are the best” (1: 164).

Later chapters discussing his visit to Buenos Aires, a city newly independent from Spanish rule, indicate how it provides a more comforting environment for Brackenridge because of the similarities he sees with the United States. Described as “a land of freedom” and “independence” revealing “the plainness and simplicity of republicanism,” the city features “plain citizens, and citizen soldiers,” who add to the overall atmosphere that “remind[s] [him] of [his] own country” (1: 283–84). When onboard the vessel carrying him to Buenos Aires, Brackenridge observes a group of local citizens singing “one of their national songs,” which he compares to what at the time was the unofficial U.S. national anthem, “Hail Columbia” (1: 271). He “joined [the singers] in [his] heart” because the song “breathe[d] the same strong sentiments of liberty and equality, so peculiarly suited to the American soil” (1: 271–2). The significance of this song to Brackenridge’s growing sense of Buenos Aires as a follower of the United States becomes clear when he elaborates on the crucial role such anthems play in uniting a nation. “There cannot be a nation without them,” he writes, because

“when sentiments and thoughts are thus inculcated, they become interwoven with all the fibres of the heart.” Such songs “furnish the best evidence of what is the prevailing wish or inclination of the people; they are proofs a thousand times more convincing than general observations” (1: 272). But despite the fact that “their songs breathe the sublime strains of American liberty,” Brackenridge finds the people themselves unaware of the sacrifices necessary for establishing a functioning democratic government. He laments that “if...they only possessed the intelligence at once to discern and understand the true principles of free government, they would have nothing to apprehend” (1: 272). The superior tone Brackenridge assumes toward the citizens of Buenos Aires reveals his uncertainty concerning their capacity for instituting a republic without the assistance of a more “enlightened” nation like the United States.

Even though Brackenridge finds it easy to associate with many of its inhabitants, he emphasizes repeatedly that because of its Spanish background, South America supposedly lacks the same degree of “civilization” found in the United States, which complicates his attempts at direct comparisons. Concerning the large numbers of “regular and secular clergy” in Buenos Aires, he insists that readers must compare the area to the Catholic nations of Spain and Portugal, rather than the United States: “It must constantly be kept in view, that in order to judge of these people fairly, we are to compare them with Spanish or Portuguese, and *look at what they have been*, not to the state of things in the United States” (emphasis original, 1: 288–89). This passage assumes the superiority of U.S. culture by suggesting that the Spanish background of Buenos Aires prevents its inhabitants from achieving the same level of distinction as people originating from British America.

Brackenridge assesses a region’s “degree of civilization” based on its conformity to European notions of cosmopolitan social development. In reference to the local gauchos, he claims that “The degree of civilization they possess, may be estimated by the distance at which they live from the metropolis, and the frequency of their intercourse with the people of the town” (1: 285n). In fact,

this measures not the population's "civilization" but instead the degree to which it has been Europeanized. By assuming that culture radiates out from metropolitan centers, rather than residing in the outer regions occupied by native inhabitants, he prioritizes the country's civic and economic centers, dominated by local creoles and colonial administrators. Brackenridge chastises his readers for the "strong prejudices" U.S. citizens often have "against Indians and Spaniards," which he claims "the man of sense should endeavor to rise above," yet his text often reinforces the period's ethnic stereotypes concerning indigenous people (1: 292–93). The narrative's underlying elitist perspective reappears when Brackenridge groups the indigenous inhabitants with the city's working classes. After describing "the Indian race" as "generally a very poor, harmless, and indolent people," he asserts that "but for their complexion, and inanimate countenances, they could not be distinguished from the lower orders of the Spanish Americans, such as the laborers, carters, countrymen, gauchos, &c" (1: 292). From Brackenridge's perspective, the true spirit of liberty and rebellion in South America emerges only from creoles who have encountered the "enlightened" views flourishing throughout the hemisphere

The text's most elaborate ethnographic description of an indigenous inhabitant concerns the cook on the vessel that transports Brackenridge to Buenos Aires, a man named Paraguayo, "who derives his name, as is not unusual here, from the country of his birth," Paraguay. Presented as "a fair specimen of the civilized Indians of that country, of the poorer class," Paraguayo also supposedly resembles "the North American Indian" and performs all his actions like an unthinking automaton (1: 274–75): "He seemed to have no more animation than the figure of Red Pol in Peale's Museum, and his eye had not even the fire and expression of the dead image of the North American. Everything he did, appeared to be a slow mechanical movement, as if produced by machinery, and not by intellect" (1: 275).⁵⁴ Presenting him as an object that acts according to established patterns, rather than conscious thought, allows Brackenridge to claim that Paraguayo and

his people lack the capacity for aiding the revolutionaries, because “The storms of the revolution have, probably, occasioned them but little uneasiness; they are, therefore, very indifferent materials for revolutionary purposes” (1: 276). Brackenridge’s biased ethnography parallels his selective representation of the revolutions, as he endorses only the people he views as suitable revolutionary inheritors, while dismissing the rest as inferior. The crew members and passengers on Paraguay’s ship that Brackenridge approves of are the ones reading U.S. texts, such as Paine’s *Common Sense*, the Constitution, and George Washington’s farewell address (1: 235).⁵⁵

Brackenridge admits that the “homage universally rendered” to the U.S. frigate *Congress* carrying the commission pleases his “national pride,” a sentiment that compels him to view the ship itself as an “admirable representative of our national sovereignty” (1: 117). Similarly, Brackenridge presents himself as what Gruesz terms an “ambassador of culture” by claiming that when U.S. citizens travel abroad, their mere presence challenges despotic governments. In his view, this stems from the fact that “as a solitary republic,” the United States provides “a continual tacit censure on monarchy.” Its citizen-travelers carry this rebuke with them into foreign lands, because “every American who goes abroad, has a contempt for royalty and its attendants, and he is only restrained by prudence or good manners from expressing it” (1: 118).⁵⁶ Brackenridge’s travel narrative maintains the nation’s formal neutrality by stressing that the Spanish American patriots desire to emulate their northern neighbor’s republican principles. Initially, Brackenridge claims that the citizens of Buenos Aires hope “to establish a free government, and to be *like* the United States” (emphasis added, 1: 270). As his voyage nears its end, however, he reveals a growing weariness of the southern republics, even as revolutionary successes continue. Shortly before learning of San Martín’s victory at Maipú, which achieved Chilean independence in April of 1818, Brackenridge admits that he would live only in the United States. He explains his unwillingness to expatriate himself by describing Buenos Aires as “far removed from the civilized world,” citing such examples

as, “the difference in the municipal laws, the remains of Spanish despotism, the want of that feeling of comfort and security in private life, perhaps known only among us,” along with the belief that “there is no certainty that some faction will not league with the military and overturn the government.” Such situations prompt Brackenridge’s conclusion that “There is but one America like ours,” a statement that reveals his underlying endorsement of U.S. exceptionalism (2: 300–1).

**Why Mina?:
Speculative History in Robinson’s *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution***

Like Brackenridge’s travel narrative, Robinson’s *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution* associates Latin America’s emerging republican governments with the hemispheric principle of expanding universal freedom and egalitarian liberty. Concerning his narrative, Robinson comments that “All the preceding suggestions, respecting the facility of invading and emancipating Mexico, are not offered with a view of inviting the attention of desperate adventurers, but with the hope of their being useful, at no distant day, to the governments of the republics of Colombia, Buenos Ayres, and Chili” (275–76). By denying that his text aims to inspire filibusters to join the Mexican Revolution, Robinson expresses an interest in guaranteeing Latin America’s continued independence, instead of advocating specific actions for private citizens or the U.S. government. Yet he admits that if “foreigners” must help achieve Mexican independence, then he hopes they are United States citizens. Robinson rarely acknowledges the presence of the other republics in South America that have already been forged by successful revolutions that expelled the Spanish. He does so in the above passage, but then immediately asserts his belief that the United States should help the Mexican people gain their independence. When arguing for the U.S. to establish commercial relations with the Latin American republics, he repeatedly rationalizes why such actions would have universal benefits, rather than strictly national ones.

Throughout, Robinson disguises his role as an advocate for mercantile expansion in Mexico and the rest of Spain’s former colonies by claiming that his main interest remains in guaranteeing

their freedom. He asserts that “we are living in an age of revolutions, when the happiness of man is the great purpose and end of society.” Thus, his support of the Mexican Revolution “is not only a natural desire on the part of a citizen of the United States, but would be on that of every liberal mind throughout the civilized world.” Predicting that the Americas will soon have to defend themselves “against the ambitious and antisocial schemes of the Old World,” he argues that U.S. and Mexican citizens should make it “*their policy and interest to form a political and commercial alliance*” (emphasis original, 276). He regards the present age as one of revolutions laboring for liberty from the Old World’s imperial powers, a struggle that he believes all enlightened citizens should endorse, citing as evidence the career of Xavier Mina, a Spanish noble turned Mexican patriot general.

In the Introduction, Robinson presents an account of his own experiences in Mexico, including how he was captured by royalist forces in late July of 1816, accused of being an insurgent fighting with the patriots, and subsequently imprisoned for over two years before being shipped to Spain in January of 1819 for trial.⁵⁷ Prior to this trip, Robinson ran a merchant business in Caracas, Venezuela, from 1799 to 1806, when he went bankrupt due to what he describes as the fraudulent practices of the Spanish administrators, an experience he discusses in the appendix.⁵⁸ He presents his subsequent trip in 1816 as prompted by a commission to collect payment for several outstanding debts owed by prominent Mexican officials to U.S. businessmen. This led to his meeting Don Manuel de Mier y Terán, a prominent patriot general who paid some of the debts and allowed Robinson to travel with his forces before returning to the United States.⁵⁹ During this time, he also met Dr. John Hamilton Robinson, a U.S. citizen serving as a brigadier general with the Mexican patriots, “who had long been a very obnoxious individual to the Spanish government” (viii).⁶⁰ While travelling with Terán’s forces on an expedition against the Spanish-held port of Guasacualco, from which Robinson claims he planned to depart for the United States, he was captured on the outskirts of Playa Vicente after a royalist attack. Describing the early stages of his captivity, Robinson

surmises that the royalists felt threatened by him, while the masses expressed solidarity with his oppressed position, regarding him as another victim of Spanish tyranny. When his captors place him in a cell, they claim it is for his own protection from the local populace, whom they believe might attack him. But Robinson asserts that he received sympathy from the townspeople. He observes that “indeed all classes of society appeared to take an interest in [the author’s] situation, expressing their regret that he was not at liberty,” which suggests that only the royalists oppose his presence (xiii). From this contradiction between official claims and his own observations, Robinson speculates that the royalists are trying to prevent him from having too much contact with the locals (xiii–xiv).

During his later imprisonment in Vera Cruz, Robinson uncovers a more extensive attempt by the Spanish government to control how he might inform his fellow citizens of the current situation in Mexico. He claims that a reliable source—who must remain anonymous because of potential retribution from Spain—provided him with a document revealing how the viceroy planned to have him imprisoned for life. In “this curious paper,” labeled “secret and confidential” and dated May 21, 1817, royalist authorities supposedly stated that Robinson had “attained such a knowledge of the actual state of the insurrection in this country, and of the real dispositions of the Mexican subjects, that it would be highly dangerous to his Catholic majesty’s interest ever to give the said Robinson an opportunity to publish such information abroad” (xvii–viii). By reprinting this potentially forged “official” document, Robinson claims authority for his text as an accurate representation of the Mexican Revolution, while also implying that the information it contains possesses the potential for inspiring further actions against Spain’s imperial authorities. Robinson presents himself as more than just an enemy of Spain, but instead a person who knows too much about the real state of affairs in Mexico and is thus a danger to the established powers trying to maintain their authority.

Throughout the introduction, however, Robinson emphasizes that during his time in Mexico he always remained neutral and never assisted either the royalists or patriots.⁶¹ He states directly that he “has not in any one instance violated his neutral obligations as a citizen of the United States” (vii). Instead, he even acknowledges that as a U.S. writer commenting on the Mexican Revolution, he could potentially have clear biases in favor of those fighting for their independence, yet “he has endeavoured to divest himself of those prejudices which a citizen of the United States may be supposed to entertain in favour of a people struggling against oppression” (iv). The neutral position he must maintain as a traveler thus translates into a supposedly *objective* narrative perspective. Robinson’s enduring personal grievances against the Spanish government eventually override his attempts at rational distance, transforming his text into an endorsement of the patriot cause. Concerning his reluctant authorship, Robinson emphasizes that “in extenuation of all his literary faults, he begs the reader to bear in mind that an individual, compelled by misfortune and Spanish treachery to seek a subsistence for the last fourteen years by his own enterprise, cannot have enjoyed much time for the cultivation of letters.” This comment reinforces that he writes partially to vent his immense anger at the royal administrators he blames for his business failures.⁶² He has “no pretensions to the honours of an author” and like Brackenridge, “submits his work to the candid criticisms of his fellow citizens,” which identifies his intended audience as the U.S. reading public who must consider whether the nation should remain neutral toward the revolutions occurring in Latin America, especially if they do pursue ideas similar to that of the United States (xxxii). Robinson’s own beliefs include an obvious sympathy with the patriot groups: “[The author] does not hesitate to declare, that while he respects the individual character of the Spaniard in Europe, yet he views with abhorrence his conduct towards the American Creole and Indian, and feels not the least commiseration for his loss of power and influence in the New World” (xxxix). All previous claims of neutrality or objectivity have disappeared due to the violent nature of Spain’s imperial rule.

As an enlightened citizen who values liberty, Robinson must endorse Mexico's struggle for independence, a view he hopes his text will convince readers to adopt as well.

Much of *Memoirs* consists of a biographical sketch of General Mina, a native Spaniard who joined the patriot cause and led an expedition from April to October 1817 before being captured and executed.⁶³ Historians identify Robinson's text as the first published account of the Mina expedition and still cite it as a relatively reliable authority.⁶⁴ But Robinson's motives appear to extend beyond merely recounting the events, instead citing the general's actions to endorse the idea of foreign citizens intervening to aid the Mexican struggle for independence. For instance, Robinson stresses that if Mina had received the necessary support from the patriot leadership, he could have defeated the royalist forces and liberated Mexico.⁶⁵ He prefaces his mini-biography by describing the general as "a hero, worthy of occupying, on the page of history, a distinguished rank among the martyrs of liberty" (42).⁶⁶ Although he fought against Napoleon's forces occupying Spain, Mina received no gratitude from the Spanish monarch, King Ferdinand, who opposed his advocacy of "a constitution...founded on the basis of a meliorated and limited monarchy" (49). As Robinson explains, Mina's views were representative of "the liberal opinions of enlightened Spaniards" during the period, who objected to Ferdinand's recent policies, which included "the persecution of the Cortes," the country's governing legislature; "the prohibition of foreign books and journals"; and "the revival of the Inquisition, with its demon train of judicial murders and midnight tortures" (48–9). Mina subsequently plotted a military campaign designed to defend the right of the Cortes to assist in governing the Spanish people, which prompted his arrest by the French and escape to England. While there, "his attachment to the cause of freedom throughout the world" earned him the respect of the U.S. General Winfield Scott and several unnamed English gentlemen (51). The latter subsidized his Mexican campaign by supplying him with a ship, arms, funds, and supplies.⁶⁷

Robinson introduces Mina's decision to fight for Mexican emancipation as an extension of his previous actions against the Spanish monarchy. He claims that Mexico represented "the quarter whence the most severe blow could be struck against the tyranny of Ferdinand" and that "Mina, in drawing his sword in favour of the independence of Mexico, considered he was espousing a cause, consonant with those sacred principles, for which he became an exile" (51). Because of these reasons Mina "devoted himself to the cause of liberty in America," a decision that prompts Robinson to associate him with prominent figures from the American Revolution: "He boldly entered on a dangerous and desperate path of toil, bearing in his view the prospect of that fate, which once menaced a Hancock and a Washington; and which overtook a Fitzgerald and a Emmett" (52). This suggests that by joining "the glorious cause of the emancipation of Mexico," Mina consciously positioned himself in the hemisphere's history of rebellions against European imperial powers. Robinson expands this assumption into a broader conclusion concerning how the revolutionary ideology projected by the American Revolution will spread through not just Mexico, but all of Spanish America, illustrated by his claim that "the voice of that spirit which echoed along the Allegany in '76, has already been heard on the Table Land of Mexico, is now rolling along the Andes, and will, ere long, break the chains of servitude for ever [*sic*]" (51–2). However, Robinson tempers his expressions of solidarity with the patriot forces by emphasizing that the nations which will emerge from the former colonies will remain inferior to the United States.

The "reflections" following Mina's death move beyond his individual significance to extrapolate on the future potential for Mexican independence, which Robinson frames in terms of the larger emancipation of Spanish America. This indicates that he views Mina's actions as offering a possible way to defeat the Spanish royalists. Mina's campaign provides him with a case study of how to wage a successful revolution—he can identify the tactics that proved unsuccessful, as well as the ones that would have worked if Mina had received the support he needed from the other patriot

leaders.⁶⁸ Robinson emphasizes that Mina's troops were utterly devoted to him, but claims the other leaders felt threatened by him because he lacked aspirations for personal gain. In *Memoirs*, Mina's campaign represents a microcosm of the Mexican Revolution as a whole, while the general himself emerges as a martyr for the cause of liberty.

According to Robinson, Mina's failure stems not from his own mistakes, but rather the fact that the other patriot leaders supposedly lacked his selfless devotion to the cause of universal liberty, including the emancipation of Mexico. At one point, Robinson argues explicitly that "the Spanish government owes its existence at this day in Mexico, entirely to the *ignorance, jealousy, ambition, and venality*, of certain chiefs among the patriots, and that, had their efforts been directed by union and system, the patriots might, at any one period for nearly seven years, have established the liberty of their country" (emphasis original, 168). The self-serving nature of many patriot leaders, whom Robinson presents as "alive to self-interest" and amassing wealth during the revolution, contrasts with Mina's unflagging devotion to fighting for Mexican independence (165, 167).⁶⁹ After the general's execution, Robinson summarizes his significance by arguing that "His short but brilliant career entitles him to a distinguished place on the list of those heroes who have shed their blood in bold and generous exertions to break the tyrant's scepter, and to extend the blessings of freedom among the human race" (260).⁷⁰ Robinson's recurring speculations on what could have happened if the other leaders had followed Mina's example, or realized his potential, allows him to propose his *own* version of the revolution, instead of the one that unfolded. The text constructs a hypothetical presentation of the Mexican Revolution, based on Robinson's theories of how the patriots *should* have pursued their independence. Since he never met Mina, Robinson's advocacy of him as a "martyr of liberty" also emphasizes how he attempts to appear as an objective, unbiased commentator on the revolution. In this sense, his depiction of Mina is allegedly uninfluenced by any

personal experiences he had with him, but instead purely the result of his rational analysis of the events in Mexico's struggle for independence.⁷¹

Rather than a patriot leader who defeated the royalist forces and established a republic, Robinson insists on celebrating Mina as a misunderstood hero, despite the failure of his campaign. Praising Mina allows him to criticize other patriot leaders, some of whom were still active in Mexican politics while he was writing. Robinson often details how the masses endorse Mina's actions, such as following his defeat of a vicious royalist commander, Colonel Don Felipe Castañon, at San Juan de los Llanos: "From town to town, the praises of Mina were echoed. The blessings of heaven were implored upon his head, by the widows and orphans of the victims of Castañon. Old and young, from Sombrero to the environs of the city of Mexico, and from San Luis Potosi to Zacatula, were chaunting [*sic*] hymns in honor of their deliverer" (149). Robinson's survey of how different towns praised Mina stresses his capacity for uniting disparate groups toward a common cause. Amid Mina's growing popularity, even the royalists supposedly comprehended the ease with which he could conquer Mexico, since peasants would join his forces and many royalist troops would desert in order to fight with him. In Robinson's view, "This was the critical moment, when it may be truly said, the destinies of the Mexican nation, were in the hands of Mina" (149). He claims that with the necessary forces, then readily available, Mina could have won the revolution and established Mexican independence. Robinson again blames the fact that this did not occur on the remaining patriot leaders, who "began to thwart all [Mina's] measures" instead of supporting him. Their denial of Mina's potential prompts the conclusion that these patriots were *not* "actuated by a genuine love of country, and devoted to its interests and independence" (149–50). According to Robinson, the main characteristic that differentiated Mina from the other patriot leaders was that he lacked any ambition to profit financially from the revolution. Mina thus represents a leader interested in universal liberty, rather than just emancipation. As such, he embodies the idea of a

form of patriotism free from individual interests—it is thus *de-nationalized*, displaying no local biases or loyalties; *transamerican* by being devoted to helping Mexico achieve its independence, just as other Spanish American colonies have; and even, in his case, *transatlantic*, since he is a Spanish military officer who crosses an ocean to fight in the Mexican Revolution.

Mina also embodies a more conventional—and less radical—type of revolutionary hero because of his social background. Of the general's personal character, Robinson comments that “to all the qualities of the soldier he united the manners and accomplishments of the gentleman” (260). Characterizing Mina as a gentleman differentiates him from “the uneducated classes” of patriot leaders that Robinson also blames for the revolution's possible failure.⁷² He claims that after 1817, leadership roles “fell into the hands of the most illiterate of the Mexican population, men whose sole aim was power, that they might by its aid acquire wealth,” which explains the origins of the patriots who impede Mina's actions. Supposedly at this stage, “Men of education, principle, or talent, among the revolutionists, were no longer respected. Any attempts made by them to establish order, were decried as tending to despotism” (136). Robinson's valorization of Mina reveals that he prefers *genteel* revolutionary leaders, who embody socially acceptable characteristics and descend from respectable backgrounds.

For instance, Robinson stresses that when Mina searched and seized materials from the Hacienda del Jaral, owned by a wealthy royalist, he prevented the widespread destruction and violence other leaders would have condoned: “Supposing Don Pedro Moreno, or any other of the patriot chiefs, had entered the Jaral as victors, what would have been the consequences, according to the uniform practices of the patriots and royalists on such occasions?... Would private property have been respected; or the disorders of the soldiers restrained?” (157). From Robinson's perspective, although Mina raided the hacienda, he did so in a civilized manner, befitting a gentleman. Unlike the royalists, presented as frequently mistreating and even murdering prisoners,

Mina avoids needless violence: “Mercy marked every step of his progress, and he invariably treated an illiberal enemy with a generosity they little deserved” (157). Robinson even defends Mina against accusations of stealing some of the money found buried at the hacienda. The honorable actions of Mina and his troops make their deaths all the more tragic for Robinson, who criticizes the royalists for executing many of them after their capture. He asserts that even though Mina and his compatriots broke the law, they deserved honorable treatment, rather than the “inhumanity” they suffered, “inhumanity the more outrageous, as the conduct of the victims had been marked by honour, justice, and clemency;—inhumanity which can only be equaled by the wild and savage inhabitants of unexplored countries;—a degree of inhumanity which adds its mite to the load of infamy with which the annals of Spanish history are already burthened” (322). Through obsessive detailing of how the royalists punished the captured patriots—culminating with Mina’s execution on November 11, 1817—Robinson seeks to elicit sympathy from his U.S. readers. “We feel confident,” he states, “that there does not exist an American citizen, from the Sabine to the Passamaquoddy, whose breast burns not with indignation against a nation which, in the present day, can sanction deeds of so heart-rending a nature” (322).⁷³ Concerning Spain’s condoning the execution of prisoners, he asks, “Where is the citizen of the United States, where is *the lover of liberty*, or where is the man possessing *even a spark of humanity*, whose bosom does not throb with indignation against a policy such as that of Spain?” (emphasis added, 322). These rhetorical questions claim Spain’s policies violate the core principles of liberty and humanity valued by U.S. citizens.

Robinson appeals to the common assumption among U.S. citizens that their revolt was “just” and as Jefferson explained it in the *Declaration of Independence*, defensible based on humanity’s natural rights, yet he then asserts that Spanish America has endured even more oppression.⁷⁴

Because of this, he attacks the U.S. citizens who have sided with the royalists, instead of the patriots:

Yet, strange and incredible as it may appear, there are in free North America many who, far from sympathizing with their southern brethren, or even wishing success to

a cause in which they themselves have contended successfully,—condemn the exertions of those who are imitating their example in striving to obtain the blessings of freedom, support Spain with all the weight of argument, and are almost brought to deprecate the independence of Spanish America. (323)

This passage stresses the parallels between North and South America by describing the citizens of Spanish America as the “southern brethren” of the United States who are “imitating” its “example” so they can “obtain the blessings of freedom.” Robinson believes that because of this common goal, those citizens who do *not* support the independence movements endorse Spanish oppression and trivialize the sufferings of the people living in the colonies. He goes so far as to suggest that such views are comparable to treason against the United States, since they “should be found only in the satellites of crowned heads” (323). Although he blames this partially on the false reports circulated by Spain’s agents, Robinson emphasizes how dismaying he finds it “when we behold some of our own citizens espousing the cause of Spain, with as much zeal as if their very existence depended upon the continuance of her wide-extended dominion in the western hemisphere” (323). The opponents of Spanish American independence qualify for Robinson as unenlightened citizens incapable of sympathizing with the oppressed or even understanding “the blessings of security and plenty” they enjoy as part of their freedom.

He criticizes specifically those U.S. writers who have echoed the views of Luis de Onís, the Spanish minister, by arguing that “*the independence of Mexico would be injurious to the commercial interests of the United States*” (emphasis original, 373).⁷⁵ Onís claimed that because wheat and other crops could be grown more productively in Mexico, U.S. citizens would immigrate there after its independence and weaken their native land. Instead of challenging Onís and his supporters on the basis of economics or agriculture, Robinson stresses the immorality of their claims, namely “the absurdity and iniquity of sacrificing the happiness of millions of the human race, at the shrine of political ambition and mercantile calculation” (373).⁷⁶ By emphasizing the inhumane implications of opposing a colony’s freedom because of potential profit loss, he reiterates the rhetoric of universal

humanitarianism associated with republicanism. Elsewhere, Robinson himself stresses the commercial benefits a free Mexico will offer for the United States. His arguments attempt to convince skeptics that the United States should support Mexican independence on ideological grounds, even though he still values the financial gains he believes would result from aiding the revolts. For instance, stressing the necessity of a quicker route from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, he advocates building a canal across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Mexico. Detailing how it would benefit world commerce, Robinson emphasizes its potential value for the United States, such as by improving communication with the nation's northwestern territories and facilitating the delivery of products from China and the East Indies to the Mississippi River and Florida (363). Since he plans to reestablish himself as a merchant after the colonies become independent, Robinson's arguments recall the actions of the patriot leaders he often critiques for focusing more on self-interest (namely financial profits and political power) than the universal goal of egalitarian liberty.

Visits after Independence: Poinsett, Duane, and Fears of Government Instability

In *Notes on Mexico* (1824), the first U.S. minister to the southern republic, Joel Roberts Poinsett, offers an alternative depiction of Mina from Robinson's rendering of him as a mythic patriot.⁷⁷ From Poinsett's perspective, Mina qualified instead as a private filibuster who had no right "to invade Mexico." In this work, based on an 1822 trip as a special envoy to the area shortly after independence, Poinsett critiques Mina for unlawfully entering Mexico with his troops by challenging claims that the general helped liberate its people: "In their zeal to release the people from the tyranny under which they groaned, [Mina's forces] have desolated the fairest portion of the kingdom, and have attempted to spread the light of liberty by brandishing the torch of destruction" (180). He dismisses the parallel Mina's defenders claim between the general's actions in Mexico and the foreign forces that assisted in fighting the American Revolution. On the surface, Mina bears a compelling resemblance to those foreign patriots, Europeans who travelled to the Americas to join

the revolutionary cause, such as the Marquis de Lafayette. But Poinsett stresses that these soldiers belonged to nations formally allied with the colonies, or were naturalized into the American forces: “The noble spirited, gallant men, who at that time left Europe for the purpose of aiding the cause of liberty in the new world, belonged either to the armies of our allies, or joined our standard, and served under our chiefs.” He differentiates them from Mina and his companions, whom he depicts as agents of a foreign invasion:

[The Europeans who aided the American Revolution] did not enter the country at the head of a predatory band, without discipline, and without resources, to recruit their forces from among those, who are ever disposed to follow a daring leader, and who engage, in hopes of plunder, or from a love of the adventurous life of a soldier; obliged to assist their troops by rapine, and to connive at their depredations, because they have no other means of paying them, or of rewarding their services. (180)

Poinsett presents Mina as a filibuster with private goals stemming from “the merchants” who funded his expedition.⁷⁸ His narrative thus effectively challenges previous depictions of Mina as a selfless patriot by attributing to him the type of material self-interest Robinson praises him for lacking. Later historians present a more complementary view of Mina, similar to the one Robinson presents, but Poinsett’s focused attack on the general reveals a common technique utilized by U.S. writers during the early years of Spanish American independence—questioning claims that the area’s patriots equaled those of the American Revolution.⁷⁹

During Poinsett’s 1822 visit, Mexico became the second Latin American government (after Colombia) to receive official recognition from the United States. This action angered Poinsett, who had been sent there by Monroe to assess whether such recognition should occur (Whitaker 389–91). He planned to recommend waiting until after the government resolved the internal crises he saw as detrimental to its future sovereignty. Poinsett’s narrative openly questions the impact of independence by emphasizing the population’s discontent: “Every man with whom I have conversed, expresses his abhorrence of the despotism exercised by the Emperor.... Many respectable Creoles have declared to me, that they regret having assisted to shake off the yoke of

Spain, which bore lighter on them, than the imperial government of Iturbide” (185). During his visit, Emperor Augustín Iturbide’s constitutional monarchy governed Mexico, yet by the time he composed his narrative a subsequent revolt had deposed the leader and instituted a new government according to a republican model. Poinsett avoids discussing the new administration in detail, however, focusing instead on how Iturbide’s regime became more oppressive than the previous colonial authorities of Spain.⁸⁰

Poinsett’s underlying ambivalence about the sustainability of the region’s new governments echoed the sentiments of several prominent U.S. commentators on Latin America shortly after its independence. After visiting Colombia in 1826, the retired newspaper editor William Duane wrote to Jefferson that its citizens “have a passionate desire to imitate the U.S.—*only where some habit has rendered it convenient not to follow it too closely,*” citing “trial by jury and freedom of the press” as two concepts they nominally valued, but in his estimation failed to institute effectively (qtd. in Phillips 526).⁸¹ Previously one of the most vocal supporters of the revolutions, who regularly published accounts of them in the Philadelphia *Aurora*, Duane now questions how closely the new governments will follow the U.S. model that supposedly prompted their quest for independence. The discontent evident in this letter remains largely absent from *A Visit to Colombia*, Duane’s narrative account of his journey published shortly after his return in 1826, which displays a continued optimism about the region’s potential.⁸² Ultimately, however, much of Duane’s enthusiasm stems from his belief that the recent change in U.S. public opinion of the revolutions—embodied most clearly in the government’s systematic acknowledgement of the new states from 1822 to 1826—vindicates his previous impassioned defense of them. The preface credits the nation’s “free press” with allowing him to express his views, while also chastising his former opponents:

A free press enabled me to communicate my anticipations and conceptions, which I continued to make known, even though laughed at—and by persons too who are

now as zealous *friends*, as they were before skeptical, hostile, and—worse. The generous love of liberty in a free nation, however, triumphed over insidious and open enmity to the new republics, and procured for my essays and my opinions a more rational reception. (emphasis original, iii–iv)

This passage suggests that as with most travel accounts, Duane’s narrative reveals more about himself than the independent republic of Colombia. For instance, when describing a dance held in honor of Bolívar’s birthday, Duane emphasizes his own response to the spectacle. “I treasure nothing upon such occasions unless it be honorable and agreeable; my memory has no place for anything else,” he writes, “and it was with sincere delight, of which time has not diminished the remembrance, that I saw on that occasion a scene of concord and liberality, good sense and propriety, which the enemies of the revolution had pretended to be impossible.” The repeated emphasis on his own perception overshadows the content of the image he sees, which concerns people of different ethnicities interacting in a manner deemed impossible by “the enemies” he critiques. Duane further indicates that attacking his opponents proves more important than representing Colombia when he observes that “the enemies of that revolution are the enemies to liberty everywhere, whatever they may pretend to” (104). Such a statement reemphasizes the universal character of the age’s revolutions, associated with “liberty everywhere,” as opposed to facilitating an analysis of a specific local environment. Considering his later evident skepticism about whether Colombia really followed the tradition of the American Revolution, Duane appears willing in his travel narrative to foreground his own experiences to provide a final refutation to his critics and additional support for his previous public defenses of Spanish American independence.

Suggestively, at the end of *A Visit to Colombia*, Duane and his family wait for their return trip to the United States at Robinson’s home in Cartagena. This allows Duane to comment on how his old friend has been mistreated.⁸³ “Much injustice has been done,” he remarks, “and mere justice would be sufficient to render the memory of this man, who lately died at Caracas, respected by every good heart. An occasion may yet present itself to offer that tribute to this worthy man” (622). That

“occasion” never came and Duane’s brief eulogy for Robinson offers one of the few commentaries on him to appear after his death. Although Brackenridge never commented on Robinson or his writings, he did deliver in August of 1826 a eulogy on Adams and Jefferson, who had both died on July 4 (Keller 313–15).⁸⁴ In that oration, Brackenridge revealed again his enduring love of the American Revolution and its leaders, along with a belief that eulogies on their passing were unnecessary because the revolutionary generation’s influence on the nation remained evident. “That eulogy,” he claimed, “will be no episode in the history of our nation, for their actions will constitute the very materials of that history,” a sentiment that Duane could presumably have applied to Robinson’s activities as an advocate of “the glorious cause” of Latin American independence (qtd. in Keller 314).⁸⁵ Even though both Brackenridge and Robinson remain relatively unknown today, the ideas about Latin America that their works helped formulate—that its independence stemmed from the “example” of the United States and thus conferred upon the nation a leadership role in the hemisphere—facilitated the emergence of an imperial ideology in the U.S. that impacted *all* the Americas.

Notes

¹ Lyrics cited as they appear on Bragg’s website: www.billybragg.co.uk.

² Although its specific subject is a revolt in Portuguese-held Brazil, the article begins by discussing South America as a whole, before focusing on Pernambuco’s unique situation. In the end, Sparks’s comments on South America pertain more to Spanish America, a much larger portion of the continent that featured more revolutionary activity than Brazil. My discussion of Henry Marie Brackenridge below will address the differences between Portugal’s and Spain’s American colonies. This chapter focuses primarily on Spanish America because of the region’s pronounced influence on the U.S. nation’s diplomatic policies during and after the revolutions, which generated more interest than Brazilian independence.

³ Arthur Preston Whitaker characterizes this essay as expressing the “majority” opinion of U.S. citizens by claiming that “the writer discussed the independence movement in that region with the usual sympathy for the Latin Americans’ cause and the usual skepticism about their ability to make good use of their independence, if they won it” (187). Anna Brickhouse discusses Sparks’s numerous publications on Latin America that appeared in the *North American Review* during the 1820s (3–4).

⁴ The classic discussion of these ideas, including their sources in Enlightenment philosophy, remains Bernard Bailyn’s *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. For more recent studies, see Maier 189–201; and Wilentz 13–39.

⁵ “Over the past 150 years the struggles to define, defend, or reform Englishness have, consequently, been understood as struggles to control, possess, order, and dis-order the nation’s and the empire’s spaces. Because those simultaneously

literal and metaphorical spaces have been understood as synecdoches of the nation's space (even when they are physically present in imperial territory), and because nationalist discourse, as Benedict Anderson suggests, expresses a will to synchronic *and* diachronic coincidences of identity, a will to homogenize the present by submitting it to the sovereignty of the past, these spatial struggles...have also been apprehended as temporal contests, primarily as struggles to determine the meaning and the authority of the 'English' past and to define the function of collective memory in a discourse of collective identity" (4).

⁶ See Wood, *Radicalism of the American Revolution* 3–8; Nash, *Unknown American Revolution* 423–55; and Bouton, *Taming Democracy*.

⁷ A helpful overview of this critical debate appears in Gustafson 107–33.

⁸ For discussions of these expansionist ventures, see Robert E. May's *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire* and *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*.

⁹ Betsy Erkkilä offers a succinct description of “the multiple, other, and more radical revolutions we have come to know as *the American Revolution*”: “The Revolution was not fixed, formalized, or settled as consensus historians and literary critics from Alexis de Tocqueville to Louis Hartz to Sacvan Bercovitch have argued: it was multiple, dialogic, and ongoing” (emphasis original, “Radical Jefferson” 277).

¹⁰ Focusing on Victorian England, Herbert's *Culture and Anomie* explores how culture emerges from a group's urge to endow its material desires with an abstract, symbolic value. The ethnographic imagination I discuss defines Spanish America's new states in terms of pre-established—i.e., U.S.—constructs of what constitutes an “American nation.”

¹¹ See Lynch, *Spanish American Revolutions* 16–20.

¹² Subsequent historians have challenged Lynch's claim by noting that the manner in which the groups referred to themselves stressed their common origins.

¹³ For example, Langley notes how “in Nueva Granada,” the Spanish viceroyalty that became the modern-day nation-states of Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela, “Indians, slaves, mestizos, mulattoes, and the castas doubted their misery would be alleviated if power fell into the hands of Creole patricians” (*Americas in the Age of Revolution* 153).

¹⁴ Describing the independence movement's “official” history as the product of “nationalist ideology and creole triumphalism,” Van Young's analysis effectively questions why the masses—primarily “rural, peasant, and non-Spanish” inhabitants—would aspire toward “an elite-articulated vision of an independent Mexico” (3–4).

¹⁵ Guardino examines how peasants from rural areas were central to the “local struggles and alliances that created Mexico's national political system,” specifically the working classes' use of “popular liberalism,” which he claims functioned as an “ideology of opposition” used by the poor to defend their rights against the rich and political elites who would often “justify their power” via “liberal republicanism” (2, 219–20). See also Blanchard, *Under the Flags of Freedom*.

¹⁶ “Reference to the chapter on Creole pioneers rarely appears in Latin Americanist citations of Anderson. Instead, Latin Americanists cite *Imagined Communities* to invoke the book's overall interpretive project and...draw on his theorization of the central role of the print media in imagining national communities. Almost always, Latin Americanists are pursuing something that Anderson left out of the Creole pioneers chapter altogether—not the territorial outlines but the specific content of Latin American nationalisms” (Chasteen xxi).

¹⁷ Yet although “anti-Spanish and anti-Portuguese sentiments were something (Latin) Americans of all social classes did indeed share,” the disturbing fact remains that the “patriot leaders were members of the native-born white minority who sought, not to remake colonial society, but to assume control of it themselves” (Chasteen xv).

¹⁸ Lasso cautions against the dangers of reading nineteenth-century texts, written with a political bias and intent, “as documentary evidence” (5). She attributes this flawed approach with influencing the earlier models challenged by her study and the ones cited above. My analysis approaches such texts as literary works, meant to craft specific ideas and

impressions for their readers, rather than as reliable documentary accounts, even though the authors often presented them as authoritative.

¹⁹ The full passage reads, “Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity” (Jefferson 105).

²⁰ The dedication prefaced volume 10 of *Niles' Weekly Register*.

²¹ Duane befriended several exiled Spanish American patriots living in Philadelphia, including Pedro Gual and Manuel Torres, both eventual diplomatic representatives for the Republic of Colombia under Bolívar (Phillips 498–500). For more on the *Aurora's* support of the revolutions, see German 110–30.

²² In a review of Richard Bache's *Notes on Colombia* (1827), a critic lamented the fact that “the author dwells somewhat upon the hackneyed parallel between [Bolívar] and our own Washington,” concluding that the “absence of the strong unextinguishable humanity, the profound conscientiousness, the moderation and the modesty of Washington, from the mind of Bolívar, are enough to reduce the resemblance between them principally to the circumstance, that each was the sagacious and fortunate leader in the struggle of a revolted country with its old masters.” *The United States Review and Literary Gazette* 1.6 (March 1827): 426.

²³ See Herring 65, 84; Wilentz 55–7; and Wood, *Empire of Liberty* 174–208. Concerning Jefferson's repeated support of the French Revolution, as opposed to the critiques of it by Adams and other prominent U.S. citizens, Michael Hardt comments that “Jefferson's support of the French Revolution often serves in his mind as a defense of republicanism against the monarchism of the Anglophiles.... Jefferson's own political fortunes and those of all who would soon be called republicans had been buoyed by positive reports about France, and the interests of his opponents, who would soon be known as federalists, are supported by negative news from France” (63–4).

²⁴ See Langley, *Americas in the Age of Revolution* 128–9.

²⁵ In the end, the newly independent Latin American republics replicated the Haitian Revolution's anti-slavery doctrine. Each of the republics outlawed slavery—and Bolívar made the policy a key point in the Panama Congress—yet U.S. citizens, such as those who immigrated to Texas in the 1820s and 1830s, often found ways to circumvent the laws and keep their slaves upon entering free territories like Mexico (Nugent 138–40). Lasso argues that “in Colombia, the Revolution transformed racial equality into an unchallenged nationalist principle” (157).

²⁶ For discussions of the congressional debates on attending the Panama Congress, see Brickhouse 5–6; and Schultz 12–13.

²⁷ A detailed study of this aspect of U.S. diplomatic history is James E. Lewis's *The American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood*. A limitation of Lewis's analysis, however, stems from his antagonistic response to those historians and cultural critics who associate this period with an emerging interest in imperial expansion on the part of the United States. He asserts persuasively that diplomatic agreements like the Adams-Onís Treaty and policies like the Monroe Doctrine ensured U.S. stability and prevented attack from bordering nations, yet avoids discussing how these actions simultaneously facilitated the territorial expansion that occurred with the annexation of Texas, the U.S.-Mexican War, and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

²⁸ For information on the publication of these reports, including their reprinting in such prominent periodicals as the *National Intelligencer* and the *Aurora*, see Whitaker 249n.

²⁹ Middlekauff uses the phrase “the glorious cause” as a central point of his analysis of the Revolution, concluding that “the Americans, the ‘common people,’ as well as the soldiers and great leaders, who made the Revolution against Britain believed that their cause was glorious” (vii).

³⁰ Representative quotations appear in Brackenridge, *Voyage* 1: x, 30, 311; 2: 23, 28, 33, 39, 99; and in Robinson, *Memoirs* 51–2, 54, 56, 58, 91, 137, 141, 161, 217, 306, 323, 344.

³¹ The pamphlet's full title is *A Cursory View of Spanish America, Particularly the Neighboring Vice-Royalties of Mexico and New Grenada, Chiefly Intended to Elucidate the Policy of an Early Connection between the United States and Those Countries* (1815). The Anglophobia of Robinson's argument illustrates Whitaker's claim that "one of the chief emotional devices of the propagandists was to capitalize on the traditional, deep-seated antagonism towards Great Britain in the United States by stressing the theme of Anglo-American rivalry over Latin America" (165). For a brief discussion of Robinson's pamphlet, see Whitaker 173–4.

³² Representative passages include the following: "If assisting in the emancipation from tyranny of seventeen millions of our fellow species constitute an object of glory and interest to the United States, the importance of that object is further augmented, provided it can be demonstrated that while we are aiding the progression of civil liberty over those countries, we are at the same time striking Great Britain, our present open and bitter enemy, a more deep and vital blow than it is possible for us to inflict by any other means" (13). "The *independence of this new world will alone arrest the ambition and influence of Great Britain.*—This event would give birth to a new and auspicious order of things not only over the Western Hemisphere, but throughout the whole world; but the advantages to the United States would be as instantaneously felt, as they would be solid and permanent" (emphasis original, 20). Such passages effectively convey Robinson's tripartite interest in Spanish American independence as a challenge to Great Britain, a projection of liberty throughout the hemisphere, and a strategic benefit to the territorial situation of the United States.

³³ Whitaker argues that the pamphlet represents an efficient synthesis of the dominant ideas circulating "in well informed liberal circles" concerning Spanish American independence which later influenced the formulation of the Monroe Doctrine (180–81).

³⁴ Keller explains, "He did not dare to admit publicly the authorship of the pamphlet, for that would jeopardize, if not at once destroy, the supposedly impartial character of the mission. He was, however, one American citizen trying to convince another, who happened to be the President, of the merit of a particular cause" (188). Keller's observation emphasizes the public nature of debates concerning the recognition of the republics. By publishing the pamphlet, which he based on detailed research in the Library of Congress, Brackenridge also clearly addressed the nation as a whole, aligning himself as a clear proponent of extending republican democracy throughout the hemisphere. Concerning the author's anonymity, Keller claims that several newspaper editors, including Niles, quickly identified Brackenridge as the author (194).

³⁵ Brackenridge reprinted the pamphlet as the first Appendix to the second volume of *Voyage to South America* (see pp. 313–59). That is the text cited here.

³⁶ John Lynch's recent biography of San Martín emphasizes the patriot leader's advocacy of monarchist governments, since he "equated republicanism with popular government, which was anathema to him," a political viewpoint that makes Brackenridge's praise of the leader puzzling (*San Martín* 153). Although Brackenridge never met San Martín, he did stay briefly with the general's wife and father-in-law, María de los Remedios de Escalada and Antonio José de Escalada. Noting how Remedios worried about her husband's safety and describing her father as "what we should have called, in our revolutionary war, a *true whig*," Brackenridge presents the household as a paragon of republican domesticity that prompts his admiration of San Martín. "These private and unobtrusive virtues in the family of San Martín," he writes, "gave me a very favorable opinion of the man; the excellence and purity of private life, is, after all, the best foundation of public confidence. There can be no dignity of character without them" (*Voyage* 2: 13–14). Yet Lynch notes that the socially elite family regarded San Martín as "plebeian" and his father-in-law often referred to him as "that soldier fellow" (*San Martín* 44). He describes the couple's relationship as relatively estranged, citing the fact that the longest time they spent together was a 2-year period in Mendoza, Argentina, circa 1815–16. For discussions of the marriage, see Lynch, *San Martín* 43–4, 74, 101, 200–1.

³⁷ See Brickhouse; Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture*, and Levander and Levine 1–17. Throughout this study, I use the keywords "U.S." and "United States" when referring to the nation and its literature, rather than the generic and oversimplifying "America" and "American."

³⁸ For references to Spanish America as the U.S. nation's "southern brethren" or "our brethren of the south," see *Voyage* 2: 327, 329, 331, 354. This chapter discusses several texts that influenced the production of that image of Latin America, which received its most famous iterations in the Monroe Doctrine and Webster's 1825 "Bunker Hill Monument Address."

³⁹ My use of the term "hemispheric genealogy" derives from Ralph Bauer's essay "The Hemispheric Genealogies of 'Race': Creolization and the Cultural Geography of Colonial Difference across the Eighteenth-Century Americas," in Levander and Levine's *Hemispheric American Studies* collection.

⁴⁰ For a discussion of the imperialist goals embedded in the Monroe Doctrine, which presumed to speak for *all* the nations in the Americas, see Murphy, *Hemispheric Imaginings*.

⁴¹ Both the U.S. and British governments formally opposed the privateering activities—which they viewed as piracy—supported by the patriot leaders (Johnson, *Hemisphere Apart* 116–19). For instance, in the Monroe Doctrine, as John Johnson explains, "[the President] felt obliged to devote more space in the message to the question of illegal seizure of U.S. vessels and the methods to control the responsible parties than to the now famous doctrine itself" (*Hemisphere Apart* 118).

⁴² Brackenridge cites with disapproval recent defenses of privateers in U.S. newspapers, editorials written by "friends of the practice" that received a "tide of public reprobation" in response, indicative of the supposed widespread national disapproval for privateering activities (1: x–xi). Such publications constituted part of the so-called "paper war" debating U.S. responses to the Spanish American revolutions.

⁴³ Brackenridge dismisses the suggestion that the Carrera faction favored the U.S., while O'Higgins the British, describing such claims "merely as a bait, for the purpose of catching our national feelings, or, at least, for the purpose of enlisting the republican party of the United States" (2: 33). In his analysis, he remains focused on *the Chilean people*, since he believes the Carreras pursue personal rather than public aims. Speculating on what message U.S. support of the Carrera party would send to the Chilean people, he proposes it might suggest that "the only obstacle in the way of our acknowledgement of their independence, is their exclusion from the government" (2: 34).

⁴⁴ Led by John Stuart Skinner, the U.S.-based Carreristas controlled the *Maryland Censor* and several other journals, which they used to challenge the pro-recognition opinions expressed in such periodicals as the *Aurora*, the *Baltimore Patriot*, and Selleck Osborn's *American Watchman* (Keller 220–1).

⁴⁵ One Carrerista, Baptis Irvine, published a book-length response to Brackenridge's narrative, *Strictures on a Voyage to South America, as Indited by the "Secretary to the Late Mission" to La Plata: Including Observations on the Capability of the Spanish Americans for Civil Liberty...* (Baltimore: Richard J. Matchett, 1820), which openly challenged his representation of Spanish America and pointed out several technical inaccuracies (Keller 232–3). Lewis Hanke notes that Irvine "was probably the only citizen of the United States to have protracted dealings with Bolívar" and one of the few who recorded his experiences with the general (363).

⁴⁶ Thoroughly researched and 80-pages long, the introduction qualifies as one of the most substantial treatments of the history of South America published in the nineteenth-century United States.

⁴⁷ Brackenridge writes, "How different were the circumstances under which the sages and heroes of our revolution were reared! There were no schools in South America *in which to form great men*, by giving them a practical knowledge of political life. Our colonial legislatures were schools for statesmen; we had a free press, and we shared besides in the political disputes which agitated Great Britain. Our colonial wars, made known to us our Washington—our colonial affairs, called forth the talents of a Franklin—our bar trained up a number of eloquent men to assert the cause of their country" (emphasis original, 1: 50).

⁴⁸ The letter was dated January 2, 1820. See Keller 231–2.

⁴⁹ Peter S. Onuf argues that Jefferson's "empire for liberty" represented a benign conception of "empire" that advocated "an expanding union of republics," rather than an early form of the territorial expansion and Manifest Destiny doctrines that flourished in the nineteenth-century United States (2). From his perspective, Jefferson's vision of empire advocated

republican government, the lack of a metropolitan center, no empowered or privileged groups, and “a consensual union of self-governing states” (190–1). Noting how Jefferson initially described the United States as an “empire of liberty,” but later shifted to an alternate phrase, “empire for liberty,” Richard H. Immerman claims this change in terminology “signaled a commitment to a more aggressive, proactive extension of that sphere of liberty—and hence a greater American empire” (5). Critical studies devote considerable attention to these twin phrases equating “empire” with “liberty.” See Gustafson 111–13; Reynolds, *America* 73–82; and Wood, *Empire of Liberty* 357, 376.

⁵⁰ For instance, he describes the Princess Leopoldina by claiming that he “saw nothing remarkable in her appearance” and believes “there are thousands of my country-women [he] would choose in preference for a wife.” He then mocks her for supposedly feeling uncomfortable “in this barbarous land, a land removed so far from *the commonwealth of courts*, and seemingly fitted only for vulgar republicanism” (emphasis original, 1: 130).

⁵¹ Similarly, Brackenridge describes how the U.S. minister to Brazil, Thomas Sumpter, refuses to perform the customary deferential actions toward Portugal’s royal family, which include dismounting and removing one’s hat until the entire procession passes. Since his “republican pride could not be brought to stoop to this degradation,” Sumpter salutes the Queen instead, an act that she finds insulting (1: 132).

⁵² For a discussion of the Black Legend, see DeGuzmán, *Spain’s Long Shadow*. Although Brackenridge’s text suggests otherwise, John Johnson claims that U.S. writers and politicians vilified the Portuguese less than the Spanish (*Hemisphere Apart* 54–5).

⁵³ A detailed analysis of this cultural stereotype appears in Amy Greenberg’s *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*, which examines how U.S. travel writers represented Latin American women as objects of lust and lurid sexuality (see especially ch. 3).

⁵⁴ Brackenridge alludes here to a wax figure displayed by Charles Willson Peale in his Philadelphia natural history museum of Red Pole, a Shawnee warrior also known as Painted Pole who was a member of Blue Jacket’s Northwestern Confederation (Sellers 92; Bank 42). For information on Blue Jacket and Red Pole, see Calloway 109–32.

⁵⁵ Brackenridge’s references to patriots in Buenos Aires reading *Common Sense* offers a potential challenge to recent claims that as late as the 1890s, Paine occupied a marginal position in commentaries on the revolutionary generations written by U.S. writers. See Edward Larkin’s argument in *Thomas Paine and the Literature of Revolution*, especially pp. 149–77. For a discussion of the influence of Paine’s writings on the independence movements in Spanish America, including how his texts were circulated in both English- and Spanish-language editions, see Aldridge 139–47.

⁵⁶ These observations emerge from Brackenridge’s recollection of how he responded to seeing “several American flags” displayed prominently in the port of Rio de Janeiro, which suggests that foreign locales can stir his nationalist sentiments by just containing a symbol of his native land. In fact, he even acknowledges in this moment that U.S. citizens might be “*the most national people in existence*,” an assertion that coheres with his tendency to sentimentalize the signs he encounters of potential U.S. influence (emphasis original, 1: 118). Note: The first edition of 1819 uses the word “rational” here, but subsequent editions—including the 1820 London edition published by John Miller that featured Brackenridge’s own revisions—emend this to “national.” The passage’s content suggests that “national” is the correct reading.

⁵⁷ For a discussion of Robinson’s life, including his experiences in Mexico, see Eduardo Enrique Rios, *Robinson y su aventura en México*, especially pp. 5–40.

⁵⁸ The Spanish minister to the United States, Luis de Onís, told Secretary of State John Quincy Adams on January 15, 1819, that Robinson was “a very bad man, [who] had been guilty of extreme misconduct in Caracas” (Adams 4: 221).

⁵⁹ Arthur L. Devolder claims that Robinson actually traveled to Mexico with “a cargo of 4000 muskets for Mier y Terán,” which marks his journey as one consciously designed to aid the insurgent forces (30). However, most historians, including Virginia Guedea and Jamie E. Rodríguez O., accept Robinson’s claim that he travelled to Vera Cruz at the request of Joseph Nicholson, an arms dealer based in New Orleans, to collect debts from Mier y Terán and Guadalupe Victoria (“How Relations” 24).

⁶⁰ On this Dr. Robinson, with whom W. D. was sometimes confused, see Narrett, “Liberation and Conquest.”

⁶¹ Other commentators, including John Quincy Adams, questioned Robinson's "neutrality," believing that contrary to his claims, he was in fact an insurgent. On January 14, 1820, Adams described Robinson in his diary as "essentially an adventurer," whom he possessed "no confidence in." Although Robinson had already "written [him] a quire of paper" concerning "the important secrets" alluded to above, Adams remained "cold and reserved in all...communications with him" (4: 503).

⁶² His eventual arguments for the United States to enter into commercial relations with an independent Mexico thus contain a degree of self-interest. Such policies could presumably help him—as a ruined merchant—recoup his financial losses by entering into new business ventures.

⁶³ In a strange coincidence, the same column on "Spanish America" in *Niles' Weekly Register* cited the *New Orleans Gazette* as confirming Mina's execution, which it termed "the exit of the gallant Mina," then in the next paragraph mentioned Robinson as one of the prisoners onboard the Spanish frigate *Iphigenia* when it docked unexpectedly at the Bay of Campeche in the Gulf of Mexico. See "Foreign Articles," *Niles' Weekly Register* [Baltimore], April 18, 1818: 132. Mina's execution occurred on November 11, 1817, yet this report did not appear for another five months.

⁶⁴ See Guedea, Introduction vii–xlv; and Spell, *Pioneer Printer* 10n8.

⁶⁵ Virginia Guedea and Jaime E. Rodríguez O. credit Robinson's text, published in Philadelphia in 1820, as "the first writing to give a general view of the insurgent movement," noting that "Even though Robinson's basic objectives were to persuade his country to intervene directly in the affairs of New Spain and to testify to the wickedness of the Spanish government, his book is also indispensable to an understanding of the Xavier Mina expedition" ("How Relations" 25).

⁶⁶ For a recent scholarly discussion of Mina and his expedition, see Martínez, *Xavier Mina*. Robinson's text provides a generally accurate survey of the broad outlines of Mina's life and career.

⁶⁷ On the meeting between Mina and Scott, see Warren 149–50.

⁶⁸ Concerning the impact of Mina's expedition, Timothy J. Henderson argues that although "the presence of Anglo-Americans among the invading party raised Mexican suspicions regarding the expansionist proclivities of the United States...in the end, the episode had virtually no impact on the course of the rebellion" (159). Henderson cites Robinson's text twice for accounts of this period of the revolution, describing its author as an "enthusiastic chronicler" (158).

⁶⁹ Elsewhere, Robinson complains of one patriot stronghold that "the commandants were not only illiterate men, but unfortunately men who entered into the cause of their country, as into an adventure of speculation, and who made their own convenience or personal views paramount the success of the revolution, or the interests of their country" (216–17).

⁷⁰ Mina's selfless patriotism reflects the nineteenth-century belief in universal heroes who value the cause itself over individual pursuits. See Thomas Carlyle's *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1841).

⁷¹ Although Robinson never met Mina, he did meet several of the expedition's survivors while imprisoned at San Juan de Ulúa in late 1817. As the main source for the material on the military campaigns discussed in his narrative, Robinson cites the journal of James A. Brush, who traveled with Mina from England to Mexico and later served as his commissary general. Brush supposedly gave his journal to Robinson. Additional sources mentioned include Robinson's personal experiences and observations; biographical facts on Gen. Mina provided by John E. Howard from Baltimore; Mina's personal correspondence "with various distinguished individuals in Europe and the United States," provided by Gen. Winfield Scott; and gazettes published in Mexico, Havana, and Madrid (*Memoirs* iii).

⁷² Gordon S. Wood discusses how antebellum U.S. culture valued the figure of a "gentleman," as opposed to that of a "commoner" or "middling man" (*Empire of Liberty* 22–31). He explains that holding the status of a gentleman "meant being cosmopolitan, standing on an elevated ground in order to have a larger view of human affairs, being free of the prejudices, parochialism, and religious enthusiasm of the vulgar and barbaric, and having the ability to make disinterested judgments about the various contending interests in the society" (24).

⁷³ The geographic area referenced in this passage—from the Sabine river on the Texas-Louisiana border to the Passamaquoddy Bay on the border between the U.S. state of Maine and the Canadian province of New Brunswick—encompasses the nation’s current territorial scope at the time in which Robinson was writing. As such, it illustrates that his comment refers to all citizens living inside the United States.

⁷⁴ Robinson writes, “If the causes which arrayed the colonies of North America in opposition to the authority of Great Britain, have been proclaimed by the world to be just,—with how much greater reason may the colonists of Spanish America appeal to the universe for approbation and support, during their present struggles for emancipation from Spanish thralldom!” (322–23).

⁷⁵ James E. Lewis stresses that Onís had long questioned whether the attitude of the U.S. government toward the Spanish American revolutions was really neutral. According to Lewis, the minister issued numerous “complaints about American partiality for the rebels even before Madison formally accepted his credentials in December 1815,” yet the government repeatedly rejected his “demands that the United States close its ports to colonial ships and end privateering and filibustering” (81).

⁷⁶ In a review of *Memoirs, The Port-Folio* critiqued Robinson’s overemotional commentaries and particularly his criticism of Onís, which it found unwarranted and disrespectful: “The author suffered great injustice from Spain, and this has made him a *good hater* of that wretched nation. But he should not have permitted his feelings so far to overcome his judgment, as to lead him out of his record. There is no ground for the grave imputations which he has thrown upon the character of Don Onís, and the rashness with which his accusations are made, will necessarily detract from the weight of the author’s statements on other occasions.” See “Intelligence in Literature, Arts, and Science,” *Port-Folio* 10.2 (Dec. 1820): 510, emphasis original.

⁷⁷ The text’s full title is *Notes on Mexico, Made in the Autumn of 1822; Accompanied by an Historical Sketch of the Revolution, and Translations of Official Reports on the Present State of that Country* (Philadelphia: H.C. Carey and I. Lea, 1824). On Poinsett’s life and diplomatic career, see Rippey, *Joel Poinsett*.

⁷⁸ Poinsett cites three main sources of funding for Mina’s expedition: “the British merchants, who set it on foot”; unnamed agents in Baltimore; and “the adventurous spirit of a merchant of New Orleans” (181). He excludes the individual most responsible for providing Mina with the necessary financing, Father Servando Teresa de Mier, a leading figure in Mexican liberal politics. On Mier’s role, see Henderson 157. I have found no evidence suggesting that Robinson helped subsidize Mina. For example, see Rios, *Robinson y su aventura*, especially pp. 10–15, 33. In *La Gran Breaña y la Independencia de México, 1808–1821*, Guadalupe Jiménez Codinach argues that because of its extensive support from British merchants and politicians, Mina’s expedition posed a greater danger to Spanish imperial control than most historians claim.

⁷⁹ As evidence of his continued status as a national hero in Mexico, Mina is one of the patriots whose remains are buried in a mausoleum under the Angel of Independence monument in Mexico City’s Paseo de la Reforma (Henderson 214–16).

⁸⁰ Poinsett summarizes the views of a school teacher in the village of San Isidro: “He is not satisfied with the present order of things, and made some sarcastic observations on the change of masters, which the people had undergone; contrasting the colonial government with that of Iturbide, very much in favour of the former” (190).

⁸¹ The letter was dated June 20, 1826, two weeks before Jefferson’s death on July 4. Phillips comments that “Duane became a member of a tacit fraternity of former enthusiasts for the Revolution who had become disillusioned through their own experiences in South America” (526). Schoultz notes how Henry Clay’s once avid enthusiasm for Latin American independence waned during the late 1820s after he received several reports from U.S. representatives to the area (13).

⁸² *A Visit to Colombia, in the Years 1822 and 1823, by Lagunayra and Caracas, over the Cordillera to Bogota, and Thence by Magdalena to Cartagena* (Philadelphia: Thomas R. Palmer, 1826). Duane’s son-in-law, Richard Bache, accompanied him on the trip and published his own account, *Notes on Colombia, Taken in the Years 1822–3: with an Itinerary of the Route from Caracas to Bogotá; and an Appendix* (Philadelphia: H.C. Carey and I. Lea, 1827).

⁸³ For more on Duane’s friendship with Robinson, see Phillips 496, 527.

⁸⁴ On July 4, Brackenridge had also delivered an oration at Pensacola's jubilee celebration praising the revolutionary war's surviving patriots, including Adams, Jefferson, and Lafayette.

⁸⁵ The text was also published as a pamphlet, *A Eulogy, on the Lives and Characters of John Adams & Thomas Jefferson...* (Pensacola: W. H. Hunt, 1826).

CHAPTER 2

LOCATING NATIONAL PATRIOTS IN 1826: TIMOTHY FLINT'S *FRANCIS BERRIAN* AND THE REVOLUTIONARY AMERICAS

You have frequently listened, fellow-citizens, on this proud anniversary, to the eventful story of our revolution. It was a revolution unparalleled in the annals of time, and in the highest degree honorable to our national character.

—Timothy Flint, *An Oration Delivered at Leominster, July 4, 1815...*¹

In 1826, U.S. citizens celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Crowds flocked to watch parades, to hear speeches by public figures like Daniel Webster and President John Quincy Adams, and to attend ceremonies honoring revolutionary war veterans and the “founding fathers” credited with creating the republic. “In the jubilee year,” Andrew Burstein observes, “there was no greater pursuit of purity, no greater gift of perfection, than the Revolution as it was being revived in the collective imagination” (*America’s Jubilee* 288). A poem entitled “The Jubilee,” published in the October 1826 issue of the *United States Review and Literary Gazette* and signed “Rowena,” encapsulates the year’s significance via a commentary on one of its most famous events, the deaths of both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson on the Fourth of July. Surveying the nationwide celebrations, the poet writes, “Here mingling see a various group;/ Grey veterans lift their kindling eyes,/ And sanguine youth, a shouting troop,/ Hail the pure light of Freedom’s skies” (60). By juxtaposing veterans with the nation’s youth, the poet emphasizes the Jubilee’s multi-generational significance, implying that all are uniting to celebrate the foundational principles of the United States.² Any potential tragedy present in the deaths of Adams and Jefferson disappears via the continuing projection of U.S. principles to the world, which the poem’s final stanza locates in the image of a single, unnamed “living saint of liberty”:

But thou, who standest in thy years
Sublime amidst thy dead compeers,
A lonely pillar laurel-crowned
With kindred columns crumbling round;
To thee a grateful nation turns,
Each eye grows bright, each bosom burns,
Gazing on thy majestic age,
Warm thanks our flowing griefs assuage:
Death need not aim his hallowing dart,
Already canonized thou art;
And patriot pilgrims hail in thee
The living saint of Liberty. ("Jubilee" 62)

This conclusion indicates how citizens focused their idealization of the Revolution and its principles in individual figures, specifically national patriots who defended "the cause of liberty." Although this "saint" goes unnamed, it is presumably the Marquis de Lafayette, the French-born hero of the American Revolution and "adopted son" of George Washington, who had returned in August 1824 and embarked on a thirteen-month tour, during which he traveled roughly 6,000 miles and visited every state in the union.³ Many towns organized celebrations in his honor, while the press reported constantly on his journey. All of this confirmed Lafayette's status as a national hero revered for his service in the revolutionary war and devotion to republicanism.

According to George Ticknor, editor of the influential *North American Review*, Lafayette arrived not just "at the express invitation of the entire people" and thus "literally the 'Guest of the Nation,'" but as a symbol to current citizens of the revolutionary generation's achievements (177). For Ticknor, Lafayette's visit unified the nation under a common ethos valorizing the principles of republican liberty and government.⁴ "It brings," he surmised, "our revolution nearer to us, with all the highminded patriotism and selfdenying virtues of our forefathers." Like the jubilee of 1826, Lafayette's tour reminded the current generation of what Ticknor termed its responsibility "to transmit yet one generation further onward, a sensible impression of the times of our fathers," and thus pass on an understanding of the importance of the American Revolution (179).⁵ Ticknor outlines an historical problem Joyce Appleby describes as "inheriting the revolution" and associates

with U.S. citizens born between 1776 and 1800. In her view, this “first generation of Americans” faced the daunting task of deciding on the Revolution’s true significance, since what they inherited were in fact vaguely defined abstract principles that had to be translated into specific institutions and belief systems.⁶ Such an interpretive process illustrates how the American Revolution has never possessed a stable meaning within national consciousness, but has instead fluctuated from one generation to the next.⁷ On July 4, 1826, the U.S. public reified the Declaration of Independence as a symbol to the world of a global revolution against monarchical government and imperial oppression, even while the nation’s formal policies—such as the Monroe Doctrine of 1823—supported empire-building both across the North American continent and throughout the Western Hemisphere.⁸ While interpreting the global significance of the American Revolution, U.S. citizens evaluated the Haitian and Spanish American revolutions, often judging them *less successful* because of the political turmoil that emerged after independence, especially in Mexico.⁹

From June 22 to July 15, 1826, as U.S. citizens celebrated their national jubilee, delegates from the newly independent republics of Spanish America met in Panama to discuss forming a pan-American union. Organized by Simon Bolívar, the Panama Congress represented an alternative celebration of “American independence,” a hemispheric acknowledgement of how by 1826, revolutions had occurred throughout Spanish America that expelled European colonial rule and established sovereign states, many of them republics allegedly inspired by the United States. But no U.S. representatives attended this meeting.¹⁰ After almost three months of debate, the U.S. Congress voted to send a delegation to the summit, but one envoy died of fever while on his way there, which prompted the other to remain in the United States (Schoultz 12). When planning the Panama Congress, Bolívar “envisaged a league, or confederation, of Spanish American nations” so they could protect each other from foreign incursion, including attempts by Spain to reinstitute its empire (Lynch, *Simon Bolívar* 213).¹¹ The union would also guarantee that all citizens received equal

protection under the laws.¹² The month before the Panama Congress convened, Bolívar drafted a proposed Constitution for the republic of Bolivia, a document that conveys his ideas about governing the newly independent nations of Spanish America.¹³ Describing “equality” as “the law of laws,” Bolívar cautioned, “Without this, all guarantees, all rights perish” (“Address” 61). He then elaborated on the importance of equality, implicitly challenging the U.S. Constitution and its failure to address slavery: “The sacred doctrine of equality must never be violated. Can there be slavery where equality reigns? Such a contradiction would demean not so much our sense of justice as our sense of reason; our notoriety would be based on insanity, not usurpation” (62).¹⁴ Although the Panama Congress failed to produce a pan-American Constitution, Bolívar’s impassioned plea for abolishing slavery was followed by *all* the new republics.¹⁵ Bolívar concluded his address by praising Spanish American revolutionaries for “the ardor with which [they] craved possession of [their] rights,” including “the right to practice political virtue, to acquire luminous capacities for self-government, and to enjoy being fully human,” all of which indicated that they “were entitled to the greatest of Heaven’s blessings—popular sovereignty—the sole legitimate authority of nations” (64).¹⁶ Locating governmental authority in the people themselves, Bolívar reiterated his belief that a union of Spanish American republics could withstand future aggression from Europe or potentially even the United States. In contrast to Webster’s 1825 claim that Spanish America “followed [the] example” of the United States and thereby qualified as the nation’s “southern brethren,” the Bolivian Constitution and the Panama Congress asserted that the inhabitants had pursued *their own* drive for independence and should determine *their own* form of government. As such, Bolívar directly challenged the Monroe Doctrine, which attempted to transform the new republics into protectorates of the United States.

Amid these dueling celebrations of American independence, a reverend from Massachusetts named Timothy Flint published his first novel, *Francis Berrian; or, The Mexican Patriot*. Born in 1780 to

a family whose roots in Massachusetts dated back to the 1630s, Flint had traveled west in pursuit of a ministerial position and spent ten years in the Mississippi River Valley, including visits to New Orleans and Natchez, before establishing a permanent residence with his family in Alexandria, Louisiana.¹⁷ His account of this trip, published several months before *Francis Berrian* and entitled *Recollections of the Last Ten Years in the Valley of the Mississippi* (1826), became an important resource for subsequent visitors to the region.¹⁸ Before his death in 1840 at age 60, Flint published three more novels and several prominent works on the West, including the popular *Biographical Memoir of Daniel Boone* (1833). He also edited a literary journal *The Western Monthly Review* (1827–30), for which he authored roughly three-fourths of the content, and *The Personal Narrative of James O. Pattie* (1831), which contains a captivity subplot reminiscent of one in *Francis Berrian*.

Often cited as the first novel published in the United States that used Mexico as a setting, *Francis Berrian* provides a suggestive case study for analyzing the transition of Latin American republics from the U.S. nation's "southern brethren" to a hostile enemy in the Mexican War.¹⁹ Flint remains one of the few antebellum U.S. novelists who dealt directly with Mexico's recent wars for independence, particularly addressing how many commentators connected them with the American Revolution. Published in the same year that the nation celebrated the Declaration of Independence's fiftieth anniversary and Bolívar's Panama Congress attempted to establish a Pan-American union among Spain's former colonies, Flint's novel addresses the hemispheric implications of Spanish American revolutions by arguing that their success depended on U.S. filibusters, an influence personified by the title character. Specifically, Flint draws on the historic Gutiérrez-Magee expedition of 1812–13, a joint filibustering venture into Spanish Texas led by Mexican and U.S. citizens that seized control of San Antonio for several months before being expelled by royalist forces. This chapter examines how *Francis Berrian* defines Spanish American frontiers as spaces conducive to the territorial and ideological expansion of the United States. Flint's contribution to the

frontier novel tradition becomes clear when comparing his rendering of southwestern lands with James Fenimore Cooper's in *The Prairie* (1827). Both novels pair their depictions of frontier geography with subplots in which Spanish Creole women endure periods of captivity, culminating in their rescue and marriage to Anglo-American men, suggestive of a symbolic incorporation into the U.S. nation. In its conclusion, the chapter juxtaposes *Francis Berrian's* version of revolutionary history with the one presented in a Spanish-language novel from 1826, *Jicoténcal*, which chronicles a series of events leading up to Cortés's conquest of the Aztec empire. Published anonymously in Philadelphia by one or more exiles from Latin America, *Jicoténcal* reveals the exceptionalist assumptions evident in Flint's representation of Berrian as "the Mexican patriot." By the end of *Francis Berrian*, readers likely wonder why Flint opted against identifying Berrian as "the American patriot," a title that seems a more apt characterization of both his local role and transnational status, since the novel presents Berrian as a patriot supposedly for *all* the Americas.

**"For a man to know the force of his patriotism...":
Friends and Filibusters in the Texas Borderlands**

In mid-January of 1825, Flint began the last phase of his ten-year tour of the Mississippi Valley by accompanying his friend Henry Adams Bullard to the town of Natchitoches, Louisiana. Recounting the trip in his travel narrative *Recollections of the Last Ten Years in the Valley of the Mississippi* (1826), Flint informed his readers of the town's historical pedigree, observing that "Natchitoches is a very ancient town, settled, I believe, originally by Spaniards from the internal provinces. It is said to be more ancient in its origin than Philadelphia" (264). More than just another instance of his notoriously inaccurate sense of historical chronology—Natchitoches was settled circa 1714, Philadelphia received its charter from William Penn in 1701—Flint's claim for the Louisiana town's precedence reveals his advocacy of the western frontier as a central location for U.S. expansion.²⁰ By comparing Natchitoches's origins with Philadelphia's, Flint allocates to Louisiana a prominent role in the hemisphere prior to its 1812 annexation into the union. He then dismisses any potential

objections to displacing the town's Spanish founders by revealing that the present inhabitants are predominantly "French and [U.S.] American":

The village is compact, larger than Alexandria, [Louisiana,] and composed of Spanish, French, and American houses, and a population composed of these races together, with a considerable mixture of Indian blood. There are many respectable families here, and a weekly newspaper in French and English. From its position, this must be a great inland town. At the head of steam-boat navigation, the last town westward towards the Spanish frontier, and on the great road to that country and to Mexico, it has already a profitable trade with that country. The Spanish come there for their supplies, as far as from the Rio del Norte [Rio Grande].... The relations of this place with the interior of the state, and of New Spain, must necessarily be extended, and this must ultimately become a place of great trade. (264)

Although it alludes to a portion of the population being of Spanish heritage, Flint's presentation focuses instead on "the Spanish" who visit the town for commercial purposes, which suggests the potential for economic prosperity if the U.S. capitalizes on the already flourishing "profitable trade" with Mexico. Such a plan for commercial expansion implicitly positions U.S. culture as the main force in Natchitoches, continuing the passage's presentation of the Spanish and Native American inhabitants as extraneous to the town's overall character. Flint's suggested developments entail expanding its commercial potential by developing new trade routes and thus strengthening U.S. influence in the frontier regions of Texas and Mexico. As "the last [U.S.] town westward towards the Spanish frontier," Natchitoches represents here a gateway for U.S. cultural expansion.

Rather than idealizing the environment, Flint stresses that the town still contains all the dangers associated with frontier regions: "Being, as they phrase it, the 'jumping off place,' it is necessarily the resort of desperate, wicked, and strange creatures, who wish to fly away from poverty, infamy, and the laws, and those who have one, from conscience" (264–65). These observations appeal to contemporary stereotypes of frontier inhabitants as violent and uncultured, yet Flint suggests these vulgar traits are relegated largely to the town's past. He presents a mini-history of Natchitoches that foregrounds its progression through "different stages of a pastoral, hunting, and commercial existence," each associated with an ethnic group that lived there. Thus,

Flint mourns his inability to provide adequate descriptions of “its Indian *pownwows*, its Spanish *fandangos*, its French balls, and its American frolics, the different epaulets of the Spanish, French, and American officers, and the character, costume, and deportment of the mottled damsels that attended them” (265). The uncouth frontier inhabitants referenced before are replaced here by representative images of genteel society. That Flint views this sequence as evidence of cultural progress becomes explicit in his formulation of the changes that occurred “from the period when [the region’s] navigation was conducted in canoes, hollowed from trees, to the stately steam-boat,” an invention embodying the technological advances of antebellum U.S. culture (265).²¹ While denying his authority as a chronicler of the region, claiming that only a ten-volume history could provide an adequate survey, Flint casts himself as a sympathetic appreciator of the groups that founded the town. Continuing his depiction of Natchitoches as a site forged by multiple cultural traditions, Flint remarks, “I wandered to its ancient graveyard, and experienced indescribable emotions, in trying to retrace mouldering [*viz*] monuments, where the inscriptions were originally coarse, and are now illegible, where Spanish, French, Americans, Indians, Catholics and Protestants lie in mingled confusion” (265). The graveyard reveals the town’s hybrid cultural heritage, but only via decaying and unreadable texts lacking the type of coherent narrative Flint has already provided. By giving form to the “mingled confusion” of Natchitoches’s history, he instead projects his own image of U.S. territorial and ideological expansion, a goal that appears throughout his *Recollections* narrative.

After spending two weeks in Natchitoches, Flint and Bullard travel further west, heading toward the Sabine River, a journey which provides additional visual evidence of how U.S. citizens have moved into the Spanish frontier. Although Flint expects to encounter “a continued and uninhabited forest,” he observes instead that “our great country is found to have enlarged herself on every side” during his trip to a garrison post roughly twenty-five miles east of the Sabine (267). Here he repeats his predictions for Natchitoches by projecting that soon commercial and communication

routes will move fluidly through the region. But at this point, Flint's own journey ends, a fact which prevents him from including in his narrative a description of Texas, then still part of Mexico.

Instead, he alludes to the "materials" he initially planned to include, all of which he had presumably compiled from Bullard and other sources, since Flint never traveled extensively in Texas: "My object was to have interwoven a narrative of the ill-fated expedition to that country, in 1811, in which many spirited and intelligent young men from the United States were engaged."²² After elaborating that he "would have added some account of Col. [Moses] Austin's settlement under the Spanish auspices, on the Brassos [*sic*] and the Colorado," Flint concludes, "but all these details must be reserved for another time, and a firmer hand" (269). That other time was 1826 and that "firmer hand" was his own, as revealed in his first novel, *Francis Berrian; or, The Mexican Patriot*, published four months after his *Recollections* narrative.

The novel draws extensively on that "ill-fated expedition" of 1811, which actually occurred in 1812 as a filibuster into Spanish Texas led by José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara, a colonel in the Mexican revolutionary forces, and Augustus Magee, a former lieutenant in the U.S. Army.²³ Together they organized in Natchitoches a troop of over 300 volunteers, "the first significant military alliance between Mexican insurgents and American adventurers" (Narrett, "Liberation and Conquest" 29).²⁴ In early August of 1812, the expedition invaded Spanish territory, eventually defeating the garrison at San Antonio de Bexar on April 1, 1813. This victory prompted Governor Manuel de Salcedo to turn over power to Gutiérrez, who quickly assumed the governorship and issued a formal declaration of Texas independence. On April 3, a group of Mexicans and Tejanos affiliated with the expedition executed Salcedo, along with sixteen royalist soldiers, allegedly with Gutiérrez's approval. David E. Narrett notes that this event proved controversial because "U.S. volunteers perceived the killings as unjustifiable murder, while Bernardo Gutiérrez could not abide the foreigners' criticism of what seemed just retribution" ("Liberation and Conquest" 33).²⁵ Over the next few months, internal

tensions increased, many U.S. troops deserted, Magee died of undetermined causes, and a U.S. agent named William Shaler collaborated with the Cuban revolutionary exile José Álvarez de Toledo on two newspapers, *Gaceta de Tejas* and *El Mexicano*, both printed in Natchitoches and designed to foster disapproval of Gutiérrez's leadership.²⁶ This campaign succeeded and Toledo took over command in late June. On August 18, 1813, however, Spanish troops commanded by Colonel Joaquín de Arredondo won a decisive victory at the Battle of Medina, after which the remaining filibusters quickly fled back to Louisiana.

In *Recollections*, Flint offers a brief summary of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, specifically praising the U.S. filibusters who joined the revolutionaries:

The object was, under a Spanish republican leader, to revolutionize the internal provinces. By the royal force under Col. Arredondo they were defeated, after they had obtained many successes. Even the last action the Americans contested gallantly, and would have gained it, but for the cowardice and treachery of their Spanish allies. Many were slain, and the rest endured inconceivable hardships in arriving at the American frontier. Among the most distinguished men in Louisiana, are some of the men that escaped from this defeat. (269)

By stressing that the filibusters suffered “inconceivable hardships” because of their dedication to the cause, Flint revives a common trope from the American Revolution and the antebellum romance of it—the willingness of patriots to sacrifice themselves in the name of republican liberty.²⁷ That such patriots still inhabit the frontiers becomes evident in his claim that the veterans of this failed rebellion include some of Louisiana's “most distinguished men.” One of these was Bullard, Flint's friend and travelling companion, who passed on details of the expedition, allegedly providing some of the main source materials for *Francis Berrian*.²⁸ Flint himself acknowledges this by dedicating the novel to Bullard, whom he describes as “a patriot soldier of fortune...[who] surveyed the region over which my hero travels” and informed him of his experiences there, even though the author admits that “no inconsiderable portion” of the plot is fictional (1: iii). In fact, *Francis Berrian* directly echoes Flint's earlier description of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition. Volume 2 opens with Berrian

summarizing the origins of the expedition, “the materials, the character, and the fate of that interesting body of young men, who were now united with the *Mexican patriots*, and many of whom at this moment *fill the first offices in Louisiana*” (emphasis added, 2: 3).²⁹ Concerning the U.S. filibusters, Berrian reports, “Their avowed object was to aid the Patriot natives in communicating to this oppressed and beautiful country, the entire freedom of their own” (2: 5). Flint contrasts these “gallant and high-minded men” with his fictional version of Gutiérrez, a character associated with “self-denominated patriots,” since “it was difficult to ascertain which element preponderated in him, revenge, or a love of liberty, cupidity and ambition, or a desire to liberate his country.” Denying that such conflicting motives might also drive U.S. filibusters, Flint condemns Gutiérrez, claiming that “He was destitute alike of genuine moral, and physical courage, was of limited understanding, savage in his temperament, and coarse and repulsive in his manners” (2: 4).³⁰ Overall, Flint’s representations of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, both in his personal travel narrative and *Francis Berrian*, celebrate Anglo-American bravery, opposing it to Spanish “cowardice and treachery,” while implying that U.S. citizens joined the rebellion because of its interest in spreading “republican” principles.

Flint’s defense of filibustering, formulated in reference to the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, provides an orienting frame for interpreting *Francis Berrian*, which presents a U.S. citizen as a “Mexican Patriot.” The novel remains one of the few works of fiction from the antebellum period set in the Spanish-American frontiers, a region that proved central to the territorial expansion of the United States.³¹ In addition to Bullard’s experiences, Flint utilized the limited information available in periodicals to acquire a rudimentary knowledge of key events and participants in the Mexican Wars for Independence.³² Rather than just a thinly researched historical romance, however, *Francis Berrian* contains a foundational contribution to the U.S. national narrative via its elaborate interweaving of several dominant antebellum literary genres, including western travel narratives and revolutionary war romances, to enunciate its own vision of a suitable inheritor of the nation’s

republican principles. The novel opens with a focus on youthful adventure, western travel, frontier geography, captivity, and other familiar topics from antebellum U.S. literature, but then integrates an imaginative history of the Mexican Revolution, which Flint transforms into an endorsement of U.S. nationalism and a vision of the American Revolution as an “exceptional” event.

The plot of *Francis Berrian* follows the title character on a series of adventures over several years after he leaves his family home in Massachusetts to explore the American West. Travelling first through the Mississippi Valley, Berrian eventually becomes involved with traders working around Louisiana. He subsequently moves farther west, approaching the Rocky Mountains, in the vicinity of which he encounters Spanish landlords and Comanche Indians. Here his first crucial adventure occurs when he volunteers to rescue Doña Martha, the daughter of a wealthy Spanish royalist, Conde Alvaro. Following the dramatic rescue, in the course of which Berrian kills the imposing Comanche warrior holding Martha, he stays at the family mansion for a period of time, at first to recover from his battle wounds and then to serve as an English tutor. This sojourn provides an opportunity for the Conde to express his gratitude to Berrian, who subsequently falls in love with Martha. Also during his stay, Berrian meets the novel’s two primary villains: Father Josephus, a diabolical Catholic priest who tries repeatedly to convert him; and Don Pedro, a young Spanish noble with a privileged position in the family who is also courting Martha. Father Josephus and Don Pedro both conspire against Berrian, convincing the Conde that he plans to poison the Spanish territories with his republican principles. These attempts prompt Berrian’s banishment from the Conde’s residence, at which point he joins a group of U.S. filibusters in Texas—part of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition—who are assisting local rebels in their fight against the Spanish.

Berrian steadily rises in position among the rebels, assisting in the victory at San Antonio and ultimately becoming second in command of the Mexican forces. When a later revolution succeeds and establishes a new government under Augustín Iturbide, Berrian and his cohorts soon decide the

new administration represents merely an extension of Spanish rule. This prompts a counter-revolution that deposes Emperor Iturbide and establishes a “true” republic, led by Berrian’s old friend and future president of Mexico, Guadalupe Victoria. By this point in the narrative, Berrian has finally escaped the multiple attempts on his life by Father Josephus and Don Pedro, who are literally torn apart by a mob of Mexican citizens. The Conde realizes Berrian’s inherent nobility, at which point he becomes a republican and blesses Berrian’s marriage to Martha. At the same time, Berrian turns down a prominent leadership position in the new Mexican republic—Flint suggests that Berrian could even have become President—because he believes that local leaders should govern the Mexican people. Victoria’s government rewards Berrian with a large ranch in Durango, but he and Martha plan to split their time between Mexico and Massachusetts. The novel’s end finds Berrian travelling back to Durango after a triumphal return trip to visit his family in Massachusetts, now a national hero in both Mexico and the United States.

In January of 1827, the *North American Review* claimed that the novel’s plot would appear ridiculous to readers familiar with the well-publicized history of the Mexican Revolution:

The adventures of Francis Berrian are of themselves sufficiently marvelous, but when they are related as happening in the years 1821 and 1822; when we are informed (vol. II p. 235.) that though Santa Anna held the supreme command, Berrian possessed coordinate authority (a distinction not extremely clear); when we are further told, that Mr. Berrian really originated every measure, which overthrew the despotism of Iturbide, our thoughts are driven in spite of ourselves, from the tale before us to actual history, and we are compelled at every step to recollect the discrepancy between them. (“*Francis Berrian*” 211)³³

In addition to illustrating the reviewer’s close reading abilities, such criticisms underscore the outlandishness of the novel’s plot, but also suggest that Flint’s intentions extend beyond mere historical accuracy.³⁴ If the general reading public could easily recognize Berrian’s achievements as implausible, then Flint presumably aimed for a larger resonance within popular consciousness.

Accounts of Spanish American revolutions filled antebellum periodicals, often celebrating the supposed debt such events owed to the American Revolution.³⁵ For instance, an article in the same

issue of the *North American Review* claimed that U.S. foreign relations interested readers because the nation represented the “establishment of a new empire in the western hemisphere,” achieved via “that extraordinary revolution” and solidified with “the formation of the institutions peculiar to this new republic,” both of which exerted considerable “influence...on the civilized world” (“Diplomacy of the United States” 92). By assuming that the American Revolution inspired later revolts, these statements suggest an alternate approach to *Francis Berrian*, since the novel presents a version of U.S. foreign relations that the journal finds less convincing. Continuing its critique of Flint’s novel, the reviewer predicts how the nation would respond if Berrian’s actions actually occurred:

Every line suggests to us, that if any citizen of Massachusetts had performed, in any part of Mexico, one half the warlike achievements of Francis Berrian, and then returned homeward through our Western countries, all the inhabitants of the states through which he passed, would have been thoroughly acquainted with his story, and eager to manifest their sense of his heroic valor. He would have been escorted from town to town by independent militia companies, would have received the degree of Doctor of Laws from a dozen colleges, and been compelled to go through a long campaign of public dinners, far more dangerous to life and health, than all his Mexican adventures. (211)

This wry, speculative history of how a real-life Berrian would be received suggests the extent to which the antebellum U.S. celebrated the type of hero evoked by Flint’s character. Berrian thus fills a void in the nation’s popular consciousness for such revolutionary heroes. The reviewer also evokes the communication network capable of disseminating news about the frontiers throughout the United States. That a story like Berrian’s would have been covered by antebellum periodicals once again acknowledges that the reading public desired such tales of “heroic valor” and patriotic devotion to republican liberty. Thus, the review provides a possible interpretive opening for understanding the novel’s genesis. To an extent, Flint offers his old friend Bullard as a forgotten patriot worthy of receiving the national acclaim suggested by the *North American Review*.

In its early sections, *Francis Berrian* offers two central definitions of what constitutes a national patriot. The first stems from Berrian’s defense against listeners who might critique his

narrative as inaccurate by viewing his “true history... [as] little short of a romance.” He claims that this results from a trend in the antebellum U.S. to dismiss “romance” as an inauthentic representation of life: “You matter-of-fact people here in the states, are, I am sensible, inclined either to ridicule romantic feeling and adventure, or, still worse, to view it as having immortal tendencies, and tending to unnerve the mind, and unfit it for the severer and more important duties of life” (1: 12). To this complaint, the narrator—who will soon become merely the mediator of Berrian’s narration of his adventures—expresses his own devotion to romantic philosophy, “the higher and holier matters of the intellectual world,” which he presents as an escape from the suffocating nature of material culture (1: 12).³⁶ “Strike out the poetry of existence, the romance of creation,” he ruminates, “and what remains but the dull routine of eating and drinking, sleeping and dying? You sear the feelings, bronze the heart, and leave no other pursuit or hope, but miserable and incessant calculations of pounds, shillings, and pence” (1: 13). Moving beyond the classic assertion that patriotism represents just a fervent devotion to one’s country, Flint depicts it as a transcendent principle classifiable as a “noble conception” and “holy thought.” More than just an escape from “the mere mercenary details of existence,” romantic thought offers the narrator an opportunity to reaffirm his own “dreams of patriotism”—a goal that associates his perspective with Berrian’s and crafts the novel’s narrative structure as a semiotic network for asserting their “willingness to devote all, and die for our country” (1: 12–13). For Flint, the historical romance as a literary form provides a framework for asserting Anglo-American imperial ideology, which in this novel recasts Mexican independence as evidence of U.S. exceptionalism.

Flint’s second definition of patriotism makes its nationalist function even more explicit. Shortly after Berrian begins his stay at the Conde Alvaro’s household, he witnesses several discussions in which the governor and his noble guests—all of whom are “staunch royalists”—openly insult the United States and its republicanism. These “instinctive enemies to every form of

republican government...[are] contemplating with horror and disgust the development of republican principles” in such a way that forces Berrian to confront his own devotion to the U.S. nation (1: 103). Even though Berrian left Massachusetts just a few months earlier because of his discontentment there and desire to experience frontier adventures, he challenges the Spanish royalists’ misunderstanding of republicanism via an endorsement of U.S. exceptionalism. “To judge if we are a happy people,” he explains, “you must traverse, as I have done, the Union from one extreme to the other, and see every where the increasing comfort, knowledge, and opulence of ten millions of people, among whom property, equal rights, comfortable existence, contentment, cheerfulness, and hope are, as I believe, more generally and plentifully diffused, than among any other people of the same numbers on our globe” (1: 105). By referencing his own travels as support for his nationalist sentiments, Berrian suggests that leaving his Massachusetts home to explore the Spanish frontiers was an essential act that allowed him to grasp U.S. superiority. With their attacks on the United States, the Spanish nobles complete this transformative process by allowing Berrian to realize that “For a man to know the force of his patriotism, it is necessary that he should be in a foreign country, and hear his own vilified” (1: 104). Flint claims then that it is only when confronted with critiques of his nation that Berrian becomes a fully-formed patriot. The role Berrian ultimately assumes in the novel—that of “the Mexican Patriot”—suggests Flint’s conception that U.S. republicanism offers such a transformative contribution to the world that one of its representatives can function as a national patriot for other countries. As “the Mexican Patriot,” Berrian remains indelibly a U.S. citizen, devoted to the nation’s foundational principles, a characterization that literalizes the cultural assumption that the American Revolution was in fact a global rebellion against tyranny that could spread its influence to any oppressed group.³⁷

Although Flint’s contemporary (and modern-day) critics mocked the novel’s absurd refashioning of the Mexican Revolution, its definitions of “patriotism” cohere with the American

Revolution's alleged transnational significance. For instance, the type of local celebrations honoring a national hero evoked in the *North American Review's* critique occurred throughout 1824–1825 during the Marquis de Lafayette's tour of the United States. *Francis Berrian* contains only a brief reference to Lafayette, but it is easy to superimpose the General into the novel, which posits the title character as a hero of Mexican independence.³⁸ The Mexican republic's supposed celebration of Berrian recalls Lafayette's impact on antebellum U.S. citizens. As a Frenchman—and participant in the French Revolution—Lafayette endorsed the common assumption that all subsequent revolutions would follow the American model. Some commentators, including Lafayette himself, even argued that the American Revolution marked the beginning of a new epoch in world history.³⁹ *Francis Berrian* shows that viewing the Revolution from such an exceptionalist perspective became particularly common in reference to Spanish American revolutions. A central assumption for U.S. writers like Flint was that the American Revolution projected a model of hemispheric republicanism that rebels like the ones involved in Mexico's independence movements sought to emulate. Despite its contrived nature, then, Flint's novel represents a foundational world-view central to antebellum U.S. literary culture. By accepting the American Revolution as an exceptionalist event, writers facilitated views of cultural superiority that culminated in the territorial expansion of the 1830s and 1840s. *Francis Berrian* reveals how antebellum U.S. writers used the hemispheric republicanism supposedly spawned by “the Exceptional Revolution” as an endorsement of the nation's latent desire for expanding into southern and western territories.⁴⁰

Nation-Building Geographies: Captives and Conflict on the Spanish-American Frontiers

As the reviews discussed above suggest, contemporary critics quickly recognized the novel's misrepresentation of the history of the Mexican Revolution, including the impact of U.S. filibusters. These same critics, however, were generally complimentary of Flint's descriptions of the places

visited by Berrian. The *North American Review* celebrated his “talent for description” and claimed that only Washington Irving had “painted American scenery with equal power” (212), while the *United States Review and Literary Gazette* concluded that Flint’s literary renderings of the frontier were so “forcible and eloquent...[that they] impress[ed] one with a belief of their exactness” (94). Not surprisingly, recent studies note that the novel’s representation of frontier geography is just as inaccurate as its version of the Mexican Revolution. Critics like James K. Folsom and Robert Edson Lee chronicle the numerous errors in Flint’s descriptions of the western frontier.⁴¹ These readings dismiss *Francis Berrian* as an unreliable survey of the American West—and it is, geographically—but the novel also reveals how the Spanish-American frontiers impacted the national imaginary, foreshadowing the early stages of U.S. territorial expansion.⁴²

The puzzling geography described in Flint’s novel, which sends Berrian on a path that cannot be mapped based on textual information, becomes indicative of the competing modes for surveying the American Southwest. By merging his own limited experiences with published accounts surveying the frontiers, particularly the journals of Zebulon Pike’s and Stephen Long’s exploring expeditions, Flint reiterates these sources’ biased assumptions.⁴³ Before unpacking the novel’s rewriting of the Mexican Revolution from the perspective of U.S. literary nation-building, this section analyzes how the early sections—which detail Berrian’s travels through the western frontier, including such literary tropes as fighting natives and rescuing white captives—echo the period’s often unreliable geographic texts. Focusing on the novel’s cartographic imaginary, particularly its interpretation of the west as a space conducive for territorial expansion, reveals Flint’s endorsement of the geographic imperialism latent in narratives of the western and southern frontiers.

The section also compares *Francis Berrian* with a novel published the following year, James Fenimore Cooper’s canonical *The Prairie* (1827), to expose the pro-expansionist arguments conveyed in Flint’s representations of the American Southwest and its Hispanic culture. Each novel includes a

brief captivity narrative in which a U.S. citizen, or group thereof, rescues a Spanish American (Creole) woman abducted by Indians. When editing James O. Pattie's *Personal Narrative* for its 1831 publication, Flint added a similar scene emphasizing Spain's alleged inability to govern its territorial possessions in the Americas. After her captivity, each female character sides with her U.S. rescuers, a plot arc that Flint and Cooper present as suggestive of how the United States could gain control of Spanish lands. Rather than just a romantic imagining of the region, then, *Francis Berrian* offers a conjectural synthesis of what former Spanish territories, particularly Mexico, could mean for the expanding U.S. nation, both ideologically—by spreading republican liberty—and geographically—by identifying new lands, territories, and groups of people for inclusion in the nation.

Contemporary maps and other documents, many of which Flint was apparently familiar with, either left unknown areas blank or filled them in with (often outlandish) conjectures of what was there. William Goetzmann's work has uncovered how antebellum exploring expeditions, including those led by Pike and Long, produced maps and texts that omitted a substantial portion of the American Southwest (*Exploration and Empire* 36–78).⁴⁴ For instance, faulty images of the western territories generated the antebellum concept of “the Great American Desert,” which presented the Great Plains as uninhabitable wastelands unfit for civilization.⁴⁵ These maps and travel accounts became source materials for writers like Flint and Cooper, who then endowed their novels with inaccurate geographies.⁴⁶ Ironically, Flint always dismissed Cooper's frontier works as unreliable, asserting that they lacked valid insights about the western territories. Flint explained his decision *not* to review *The Prairie* upon its publication in 1827 by claiming that the novel's “choice of a subject...[was] an error of judgment” because the author lacked first-hand experience of the region. For that reason, Flint's brief commentary concluded, “We shall read [Cooper] with pleasure only, when he selects scenery and subjects, with which he is familiarly conversant” (“To Correspondents” 308).⁴⁷ Cooper apparently never commented on Flint's works.⁴⁸ Although Flint had traveled farther

west than Cooper, his own works reflected a similar unfamiliarity with the region's peoples and geography.⁴⁹

Berrian replicates Flint's real life departure from Natchitoches, "the last village in Louisiana towards the Spanish frontier," but in this fictional version the journey prompts a series of ruminations on the nature of that neighboring frontier far more speculative than the account provided in his earlier travel narrative (1: 39). Whereas Flint the traveler lamented his inability to describe the Spanish frontier for a U.S. audience, citing his lack of first-hand knowledge, Flint the novelist allows his hero-narrator Berrian to analyze the very nature of the territories lying beyond the nation's borders. Concerning his journey, Berrian remarks that he "had occasion to experiment [*sic*] the truth of the remark, that in travelling towards the frontier, the decreasing scale of civilization and improvement exhibits an accurate illustration of inverted history." His "experiment" reinforces the stereotype of frontier peoples as inferior to eastern civilization, which prompts his observation that "Improvements decrease in the order of distance, as they have increased in the order of time. We travelled down six centuries in as many days." Flint emphasizes the decline of "civilization" into "savagery" via a parallel structure that emphasizes how the travelers progressively "lost sight of" people wearing fancier clothes—as "men dressed in articles of imported fabric" give way to "*vachers* [herdsmen] and shepherds, with their blanket-capotes," then "the half savage white inhabitants, the intermediate race between savage and civilized man" (1: 39). Discouraged by this experience, the travelers rejoice upon encountering a U.S. Army garrison, complete with "the cheering sight of the spirit-stirring stars and stripes." At this moment, Berrian remarks, "We joined to admire the genius of a country yet so young, and which has thus early learned to stretch her maternal arms to these remote deserts, in token of efficient protection to the frontier people from the terrors of the ruthless savages" (1: 39–40).⁵⁰ The comfort such sights prompt in Berrian, who feels warmed by this visual evidence of the republic's "maternal arms," suggests an early version of Manifest Destiny and the

argument that U.S. nation-building protects groups of people perceived as weak or endangered.⁵¹ With this early allusion to the nation's territorial expansion, Flint reveals the imperial ambitions lurking beneath his representation of the frontiers, which he depicts as locales that would benefit from incorporation into the United States. The passage affirms the inevitable expansion of the U.S. nation, figured here as already providing frontier inhabitants with protection from "the ruthless savages" native to the region. Berrian follows his mini-survey of frontier inhabitants by describing his first encounter with the southwestern prairies, locations whose expansive spaces occupied a central position in the antebellum imagination. He emphasizes the dual nature of these "boundless grassy plains" as both physical and imaginative frontiers by commenting that they "stretch beyond the horizon, and almost beyond the imagination" (1: 40). Thus, as Berrian approaches the end of his journey's first phase, which places him on a mule-trading expedition to a Comanche tribe in the southwest, his narration has already presented a vision of frontier territoriality that prioritizes U.S. nation-building over scientific or geographic observation.

Whereas *Francis Berrian* opens as a *bildungsroman* chronicling the protagonist's youthful adventures on the Spanish frontiers and awakening to his national identity, Cooper's *The Prairie*, the third novel published in the Leatherstocking series, begins by detailing what the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 suggests about the expanding scope of the United States. The novel's first paragraph describes the acquisition of Louisiana as a means of securing the nation's sovereignty against its potentially intrusive neighbors:

Much was said and written, at the time, concerning the policy of adding the vast regions of Louisiana, to the already immense, and but half-tenanted territories of the United States. As the warmth of the controversy however subsided, and party considerations gave place to more liberal views, the wisdom of the measure began to be generally conceded. It soon became apparent, to the meanest capacity, that, while nature had placed a barrier of desert to the extension of our population to the west, the measure had made us the masters of a belt of fertile country [the Mississippi Valley], which, in the revolutions of the day, might have become the property of a rival nation. (9)

Cooper's oblique reference to the Age of Revolutions gains added resonance via the novel's composition in the year 1826—as the U.S. celebrated its own founding revolution, while also debating how to respond to the newly independent republics spawned by Spanish American revolutions. At the time of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, “the revolutions of the day” included the French and Haitian Revolutions—the latter of which provided residents with explicit fears of slave rebellion travelling to the North American continent.

But by 1826, Cooper's comment that due to “the revolutions of the day, [Louisiana] might have become the property of a rival nation” evokes rising U.S. concerns about future relations with its new neighbors, namely Mexico and the Caribbean islands. Viewed in this context, Cooper's observation concerning how debates over acquiring Louisiana ended when “party considerations gave place to more liberal views” recalls the resolution that the U.S. government should send representatives to the Panama Congress, a decision reached only after several months of impassioned debates. James E. Lewis, Jr., argues that “[President John Quincy] Adams and [Secretary of State Henry] Clay viewed the Panama Congress as a unique opportunity to bring all of the new states to adopt a North American model that seemed essential in order to alleviate the problem of neighborhood created by the collapse of the Spanish empire” (198). Cooper's novel reveals a crucial phase of antebellum geographic consciousness by identifying how the Louisiana Purchase facilitated the nation's expansion over the rest of the continent.

The Prairie's opening paragraph continues by delineating the exact territorial gains provided by Louisiana. Cooper clarifies that the lands offer a resolution to what Lewis terms “the problem of neighborhood” by assuring U.S. sovereignty, while also providing an outpost for future empire-building ventures in the western and southern regions:

[The Louisiana Purchase] gave us the sole command of the great thoroughfare of the interior, and placed the countless tribes of savages, who lay along our borders, entirely within our control; it reconciled conflicting rights, and quieted national distrusts; it opened a thousand avenues to the inland trade, and to the waters of the

Pacific; and, if ever time or necessity shall require a peaceful division of this vast empire, it assures us a neighbor that will possess our language, our religion, our institutions, and it is also to be hoped, our sense of political justice. (9)

By celebrating the newly acquired “sole command” of the territories, including the consigning of the native inhabitants (“savages”) as “entirely within our control,” Cooper employs a discourse of domination to emphasize U.S. proprietary rights. The passage also maps a future U.S. continental empire by equating the incorporation of new territories with the extension of republican principles.

Francis Berrian reveals a comparable aspect of Anglo-American imperialism by reducing Spanish territories to inevitable sites of U.S. cultural expansion. As Flint’s protagonist moves through the southwest, he vocally espouses the principles of republican liberty which will soon precipitate his joining the Mexican Revolution. A key moment early in the novel suggests Berrian’s ultimate task of converting Mexico to U.S. republicanism, while simultaneously overpowering the remaining native tribes: Berrian’s rescue of Doña Martha from Menko, or “The Torrent,” a violent Comanche war-chief holding her captive. Berrian learns of Martha’s captivity while visiting the tribe with the intention of trading for animals and other goods. Once he finally encounters her, his descriptions present her via the rhetoric of old-world romance as “a vision, as fair as the poet’s dream; a very young lady, whom my imagination had pictured as disheveled, subdued, the image of terror and despair, sitting rather stately and erect, with buoyant hope and spirit in her eye, and self-estimation and command impressed upon her whole person” (1: 64). From Berrian’s perspective, Martha’s composure amid her frightening situation reveals her superior European heritage, such as her “eyes of that black and lustrous brilliancy, that so struck Lord Byron, as the peculiar trait of a fine Spanish woman” and her “European Spanish” attire that displays “an air of splendor and fête unaccountable in her condition” (1: 65). Martha provides an explicit contrast with Berrian’s other potential love interest in the novel thus far, “Arci, or The Red Heifer, a young, stout, and finely formed squaw” whose affections Berrian unwillingly attracts. The novel presents Arci’s pursuit of

Berrian as a flattering revelation of his sexual attractiveness—the supposed lust that Anglo-Americans prompt in darker racial groups, “the havoc which [he] was afterwards to make among hearts in this region”—rather than a possible union that could ever occur (1: 61).⁵² In opposition to Arci, Martha appears as a refined European lady appropriate for a U.S. citizen to marry and incorporate into the nation.

Flint also reveals immediately that Martha views Berrian as a suitable compatriot capable of helping her escape. During their first meeting, she expresses her belief that Berrian qualifies as “the only being in this valley to whom I could have a thought of appealing, under my deplorable circumstances, for protection” (1: 66). She explains the reasons for this response by appealing to Berrian’s assumed belief in racial solidarity and enlightened humanism: “You are of our race. You are instructed, and must be a man of humanity.... Whatever motives detain one of your pursuits in this place, they could not but operate to induce you to such an act of honor and humanity” (1: 68). As the subsequent comment that “this was the very scene for the visions of romance” suggests, Berrian emerges here as a metaphorical knight-errant of the U.S. nation destined to help this Spanish Creole captive escape from the evil “savage” tormenting her. Flint’s repetition of the word “humanity” suggests that Berrian aids Martha out of a devotion to the principles of universal humanism, a foundational concept of republican democracy. In this sense, the bloody struggle on the frontier in which Berrian kills Menko reveals his devotion to protecting the very bond Martha extends toward him during their first meeting, even though she is almost transferred peacefully back to her father before he has a chance to play the hero by rescuing her.

The manner in which Berrian stubbornly pursues his self-prescribed role as her savior reveals his unwillingness to associate himself with any group he views as inferior. After a Spanish officer brokers a deal with the Comanches for her ransom, Berrian learns of a plot by Menko to “run away with all the money which was the ransom of the captive...and to carry her off with it, that

night, and fly to the Appaches [*sic*].” This revelation redefines Menko as “a bad and treacherous warrior...[capable of] the basest treason against the tribe,” which suggests the potential for Berrian to ally himself with the Comanches against a common enemy as a means of ensuring Martha’s safety (1: 76). But Berrian becomes determined “to achieve the exploit [of her rescue] unaided and alone,” explaining that he “placed this lovely girl, in all the beauty of her interview with me, full before my eyes. I imagined the agony and despair of the helpless victim completely in the power of the lawless and brutal savage” (1: 78). This explanation of his actions projects a clear image of Berrian as the region’s only true “man of humanity,” who will ensure that Martha is “set at liberty,” a task he fulfills by informing her upon their safe arrival in a Spanish village that “we are free” (1: 68, 84). Following his self-sacrificing rescue of her, Martha becomes enamored of Berrian—and by extension, the U.S. national principles that he represents—which predicts both her future conversion to republicanism and their subsequent marriage. By the novel’s end, Flint transforms Martha into the type of ideal domestic partner antebellum writers presented as central to guaranteeing national expansion.⁵³

The image of the Spanish captive as a future embodiment of U.S. domesticity appears also in *The Prairie*, where Duncan Middleton pursues his wife Inez, daughter of a wealthy Spanish lord, into the frontier after her capture by Abiram Bush, a land-hungry U.S. settler. According to Stephanie LeMenager, Cooper’s novel indicates that “the problem of the imperfectly national captive is particularly evident in narratives set in places that had long been subject to conflicting geopolitical claims” (60).⁵⁴ Cooper reverses a captivity narrative’s typical formula, depicting a Creole woman held hostage by U.S. settlers, instead of the familiar representation of settlers enduring captivity by “savage” natives. But through Inez’s pre-existing marriage to Middleton, a U.S. Army officer, Cooper suggests that the process has already started which would transform Spanish America’s (later Mexico’s) northern territories into the American Southwest. The readers’ sympathies are clearly

directed toward Inez, but not because of her Creole background—instead, her captivity prompts a crisis for Natty Bumppo’s companions because she is the wife of a U.S. citizen. María DeGuzmán comments that “The daughters of hidalgos...were, in fiction and social history, objects of appropriable and redeemable alien whiteness. If, like Doña Inez,...she was an inheritor of vast chunks of land in the Southwest and West of North America, then she was treated as a ‘valuable’ asset to the Anglo-American hero who, through his marriage to her, helped to fulfill the territorial goals of Manifest Destiny” (77). Both LeMenager and DeGuzmán overlook a second captivity Inez endures after Natty Bumppo, Middleton, and the others rescue her from the Bush clan. Shortly following this escape, Inez and her rescuers are captured by the text’s dominant villain, the malevolent Sioux chief Mahtoree.

This second confinement recalls earlier readings of her as a victim of U.S. imperial aggression, but also returns to the captivity narrative’s dominant framework of Anglo-Americans tormented by violent natives. Reunited with her husband and his fellow U.S. citizens, Inez has been integrated into the national community, only to suffer next the terror of being forced to join Mahtoree’s lodge. Cooper unconsciously replicates the captivity plot of *Francis Berrian* by depicting the chief’s desire to make Inez his wife—the same desire Flint’s Menko expresses toward Martha. The most vocal objection Mahtoree receives to his plot comes from his Sioux wife Tachechana. After Mahtoree expresses his intention that Inez “will stay in the lodge of a valiant warrior for ever,” referring to himself, Tachechana confronts him with the viciousness of his actions toward her, citing her noble heritage as “the daughter of a chief” whose “brothers [were] braves” and their son, whom “the Dahcotahs will [soon] follow...to the hunts and on the war-path,” as proof of her fidelity (291–93). Mahtoree responds to Tachechana’s objection by drawing her attention to Inez’s “sweet countenance,” offering the Creole captive as an image of Anglo cultural superiority that even a Sioux chief respects. Cooper notes that Mahtoree “allow[ed] his wife to contemplate a loveliness, which

was quite as excellent to her ingenuous mind, as it proved dangerous to the character of her faithless husband.” Then, after “abundant time had passed to make the contrast sufficiently striking,” Mahtoree “raised a small mirror that dangled at her breast, an ornament he had himself bestowed, in an hour of fondness, as a compliment to her beauty, and placed her own dark image in its place” (293). By forcing Tachechana to confront her own “dark” complexion, Mahtoree replicates the Anglo characterization of white skin as more desirable, a gesture that locates Inez as an object—she never appears in the novel as an active agent, but instead just a stereotype of passive femininity—lusted after by men of different races. This puzzling scene foregrounds Cooper’s interest in Inez as a character embodying the capacity for incorporating Spanish Creole culture into the national community. Mahtoree’s gesture parallels what Middleton has already done, married Inez for her symbolic value as a beautiful object offering wealth.

But Cooper reveals that the central role in this exchange belongs to Tachechana, who voices the gendered imperial aggression taking place. Although Tachechana accepts her own supposed inferiority to Inez, she also offers a narrative projection of how their encounter foretells future frontier events. In a startling scene designed to elicit readers’ sympathies for her, she begins by silently transferring her material possessions to Inez: “Tachechana first stripped her person of every vestige of those rude, but highly prized ornaments, which the liberality of her husband, had been wont to lavish on her, and she tendered them, meekly and without a murmur, as an offering to the superiority of Inez” (294). These “highly prized ornaments” include numerous pieces of jewelry, as well as, in a particularly shocking moment, her son. The passive acceptance her actions connote contrasts with the elegiac speech she utters concerning her son’s future. Even though Inez cannot understand her, Tachechana renders her situation to the reader as a moment representative of the dual racial and gender oppression she suffers, yet also suggests a potential future in which her image will remain embodied on the Spanish American frontier:

“A strange tongue will tell my boy the manner to become a man. He will hear sounds that are new, but he will learn them and forget the voice of his mother. It is the will of the Wahcondah, and a Sioux girl should not complain. Speak to him softly, for his ears are very little. When he is big, your words may be louder. Let him not be a girl, for very sad is the life of a woman.... When he goes to hunt, the ‘flower of the Pale faces’,” she concluded, using in bitterness the metaphor which had been supplied by the imagination of her truant husband, “will whisper softly in his ears, that the skin of his mother was red, and that she was once the Fawn of the Dahcotahs.” (294)

The child’s situation parallels Inez’s position as a Creole woman being incorporated into U.S. culture. Through her determined belief that Inez *will* transmit this information, Tachechana offers a potential counter-narrative to the hegemonic displacement being enacted upon her. Her discourse’s forceful nature contrasts with Inez’s inactivity, as Tachechana issues a protest by asserting that her son will in fact remember her true identity. The possibility of Tachechana remaining influential suggests that attempts to incorporate diverse ethnic groups into a generic Anglo-American nation face potential challenges from the very peoples it hopes to suppress. In the end, Tachechana’s instructions to Inez prove irrelevant since the Pawnee chief Hard-Heart defeats Mahtoree before he can enact his plan. Hard-Heart’s rescue of the captives provides an appropriately unconventional conclusion to Inez’s second captivity. But at the novel’s end, Inez settles into a complacent domestic existence with Middleton—a position equivalent to the one Martha assumes with Berrian. By contrast, Tachechana has joined the Pawnee tribe led by Hard-Heart, married one of his sons, and given birth to another child (380). Like Martha, Inez accepts her prescribed role as an agent of “republican motherhood” within the U.S. nation.⁵⁵

As the novels of Flint and Cooper reveal, antebellum national narratives asserted a vision of Spanish captives rescued by citizen-soldiers from the United States to foreshadow the dissemination of republican principles throughout the Southwest. Modeled after the period’s frontiersmen, these masculine embodiments of supposed U.S. cultural superiority—such as Francis Berrian and Duncan Middleton—appear in explicit contrast to the Spanish men who are depicted as incapable of rescuing their own captives. This cultural stereotype becomes especially clear in *The Personal Narrative*

of *James O. Pattie* (1831), a text edited by Flint. Although scholars remain unsure of how much original material Flint contributed, Pattie's *Personal Narrative* contains a scene that replicates Berrian's saving of Martha and their subsequent romance.⁵⁶ In it, Pattie rescues Jacova, a Spanish governor's daughter, who reappears several times later but never succeeds in convincing him to abandon his frontier adventures for a life at her father's house. The scene in which Pattie and the frontiersmen led by his own father, Sylvester, defeat the natives holding Jacova captive provides an explicit caricature of the Spanish soldiers as cowards. They flee the initial encounter "after one discharge from their fire arms" and participate in the subsequent pursuit of the native warriors only while "taking especial care not to come near enough to the Indians, to hurt them, or receive any injury themselves." After the conflict, Pattie presents the Spanish soldiers as dishonorable via the revelation that they "had killed an Indian already wounded, and were riding over the dead bodies of those on the ground, spearing them and killing any, who still breathed" (43). These savage acts end only when Pattie's father threatens violence against the soldiers. When the Spaniards demand custody of Jacova and another unnamed female captive, Sylvester Pattie replies that "if the rescued women preferred to accompany [the Spanish officer], rather than remain, until he should have buried his brave comrades, who fell in their defence, and accept his protection, he had nothing to say." Jacova's response recalls Martha's gratitude at her rescue, suggesting as well a growing respect for U.S. power: "Nothing would induce her to leave her deliverers, and that when they were ready to go, she would accompany them, adding, that she should pray hourly for the salvation of those, who had resigned their lives in the preservation of hers" (44). By siding with the frontiersmen over her fellow Spaniards, Jacova reveals a growing acceptance of U.S. ideology, a shift in national allegiance that Pattie encourages by describing the rescue of the captives as a *natural* act stemming from universal—rather than national—principles. "Not attaching any merit to the act, I had performed," he claims, "and considering it merely *as a duty*, I did not know how to meet her acknowledgments,

and was embarrassed” (emphasis added, 44). Pattie’s embarrassment over Jacova’s unawareness that such actions are expected foregrounds how U.S. republicanism supposedly educated “unenlightened” foreign citizens.⁵⁷ The off-hand nature of Pattie’s comment—coupled with the growing affection his rescue prompts from Jacova—provides a suggestive opening for explaining why Francis Berrian fights for Mexico’s independence. As Flint makes clear, the revolution constitutes an event that Berrian, as a true republican citizen, *must* support.

Revolutionary History as Hemispheric Discourse: *Francis Berrian, Jicoténcal, and Universal Republicanism*

Francis Berrian elaborates on claims for U.S. revolutionary influence throughout the hemisphere by following the hero’s growing involvement with Mexico’s early independence movements, including the subsequent insurrection that deposed the independent nation’s first leader, Emperor Augustín Iturbide. Early in volume two, Berrian explains, “I have seen and survived the horrors of the different Mexican revolutions, changes almost as fruitful in treachery and unnatural crime, as the revolution in France. I have acted my own part in these revolutions, the true character of which has been so little known abroad” (2: 78). Berrian’s testimony endows the revolts with a savage nature potentially counterproductive to their espoused principles. His own “part” thus becomes the republic’s prominent savior, a figure so devoted to the principles of liberty—which he describes with the universal appellation, “the cause of man”—that he rejects numerous offers to assume a leadership position in the new government, instead remaining content with “having seen the nation restored to the full possession of its liberties” (2: 243). Echoing George Washington’s actions at the end of the American Revolution, Berrian thus, “extolls the rare example of a victorious general, resigning his command to the peaceful representatives of the people” (2: 244). This respect for popular sovereignty differentiates Berrian, according to Flint, from Mexico’s first wave of leaders, including the constitutional monarch Iturbide, who value instead their own power

and represent an extension of the tyranny exercised over the Mexican people by Spain's imperial administrators. The general population refers to Berrian as "The Liberator," a title that establishes an explicit parallel with Bolívar, an icon celebrated across the Americas for helping overthrow Spanish rule (2: 230–1).

Berrian's patriotism emerges initially as a response to the Conde Alvaro and other Spanish royalists, who criticize the U.S. "as a nation of pedlars and sharpers, immoderately addicted to gain, and sordid in the last degree...a kind of atheistic *canaille* [proletariat]...without models of noble and chivalrous feeling; in short, a kind of fierce and polished savages, whose laws and institutions were graduated solely with a view to gain" (1: 103). To these criticisms, Berrian responds that they provide an accurate summary of how "the less informed classes" in the U.S. view the Spanish, both in the old and new world, except with potentially even more "contempt," while mitigating that "all the informed classes felt and appreciated the Spanish character" (1: 104). This reversal associates the Spanish nobility with what Berrian describes as "the lowest of the people" in the U.S., a connection that emphasizes the extent to which his model of republican government prioritizes property and social position over popular consensus. Although Berrian claims his support stems from Mexico's mass populace, that group remains conspicuously absent from Flint's novel. Instead, most descriptions are limited to such vague terms as "the people" or "the crowd" that agree to Berrian's proposals or support his actions. The novel's characters instead include a parade of Spanish aristocrats, manipulative Catholic priests, historical and fictional revolutionary leaders, and anonymous U.S. adventurers who display a striking consistency in their national loyalties. Berrian's most vocal supporters in fact are local Creoles of aristocratic European descent.

Flint depicts the collective forces of local Mexican patriots as potentially destructive agents that Berrian must control to prevent them from wreaking violent revenge on the families of prominent royalists.⁵⁸ This suggests that Mexican revolutionaries possess a self-serving patriotism,

similar to the constitutional monarchy later instituted by Iturbide, and thus the opposite of the pure, selfless strand embodied in Anglo-Americans like Berrian. Flint emphasizes this contrast in his retelling of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition and its occupation of San Antonio.⁵⁹ Throughout the occupation of San Antonio, Berrian emphasizes that “Our Spanish allies were too much inclined to cruelty, and to the exercise of all the dreadful rights of conquest,” as opposed to “how a different spirit was manifested by [his] own countrymen,” whom he observes “performing the noblest offices of humanity” (2: 13). These scenes foreshadow the execution of Governor Salcedo and, in the novel’s version, six other royalist prisoners.⁶⁰ However, from these isolated, though admittedly horrifying events, Flint concludes that *all* the Spanish-Americans rebels are barbarous monsters.⁶¹ After the initial defeat of the Spanish garrison, Berrian expresses shock at how the local insurgents exploit the townspeople:

It was a painful discovery, to find that our allies were destitute, to a most humiliating degree, of all subordination and genuine tenderness, and that they indulged their cruelty, cupidity, and lust too often without restraint. The town was frequently a scene of riot, and brutal excess. All discipline was relaxed, and all fear of the reaction of public feeling, and of the resuscitation of the royal cause, was thrown to the winds. Complaints of outrage and violence came to us continually, for the wretched people soon learned, that they had little redress to expect from their own countrymen. (2: 19)

This perverted form of republican government, embodied in nominal patriots willing to attack innocent civilians, allows Flint to reinforce an exceptionalist reading of the American Revolution’s founding principles, which emerge here as purer than Mexico’s. To emphasize the contrast in the patriot groups, Flint interpolates another murder plot alongside the one that executes Salcedo and the prisoners.⁶² This parallel scheme targets the Conde and his family, including Martha, but Berrian and his comrades thwart it. After the rescue, the Conde remarks that though the U.S. filibusters “were nominally Patriots, such intrepid and generous young men, as he was pleased to call us, could have nothing in common with the assassins, from whom we had rescued them, and to

whom circumstances had attached us” (2: 36). Entirely Flint’s creation, this additional murder plot reinforces the contrast between the selfless Berrian and the corrupt, violent Mexican insurgents. The assistance Berrian provides for the Conde’s family and the civilians in San Antonio offers a potential allegory for Anglo-American empire-building in the Spanish-American frontiers—suggesting that U.S. agents seek only to protect the inhabitants from dangerous local institutions.⁶³

Despite his outrage at the executions, Berrian stays in Mexico and works to overthrow Iturbide’s government, instituted by the first wave of reforms, while preserving the holdings of several royalists recently converted to the patriot cause. In the end, Berrian concludes that the revolution needs uncorrupted patriots, a view endorsed by several Mexican nationals, including the historical character Guadalupe Victoria, who at the time of the novel’s publication was the current president of the Mexican Republic. Flint has Victoria explicitly endorse U.S. filibustering missions to aid the Mexican independence movements, saying that he “welcomed there, with a full heart, every native of the country of Washington, that the cause called not for mere mercenary and unprincipled adventurers from that or any other country, but for educated and well principled young men, who had imbibed the free air, the independence, and freedom of that great and rising country” (1: 155). This moment, in which the current Mexican president out-nationalizes even Berrian, provides a clear indication of the hemispheric hegemony Flint’s text advocates by claiming that Mexican independence can succeed only with U.S. support.

The novel presents Victoria as a mirror-character for Berrian: both meet first as exiled patriots hiding from Spanish royalist forces, then later unite over their mutual dissatisfaction with Iturbide’s government, and at the end are celebrated as heroic revolutionary leaders.⁶⁴ Victoria’s national loyalties remain focused on his native country, but he presents repeated celebrations of Anglo-American liberty, locating the U.S. as its progenitor and still purest expression during the Age

of Revolutions. In one particularly outlandish speech, he tells Berrian that the English language itself represents a *lingua franca* for independence:

I love even the language in which Washington and his great compatriots spoke. That dialect is the consecrated idiom of freedom, and of independent and noble thinking. The day will come, when over the globe, he, who shall speak that language, will claim the same exemptions and immunities, in consequence, which he demanded in the ancient days, who said, "I am a Roman citizen." (2: 99)

Victoria's celebration of the American Revolution endorses the nation's potential ascent to the status of a new global empire in the tradition of Rome's, suggesting even that his own republic would benefit from incorporation into the U.S.

By assigning this formulation to the Mexican republic's current president, Flint reveals a key tenet of antebellum nationalism—namely, that the U.S. possesses a predestined responsibility to protect its "southern brethren" from foreign tyranny. The Monroe Doctrine had already made this claim explicit to Europe in a gesture that subsequent scholars have identified as an early phase of U.S. empire-building.⁶⁵ Flint justifies the nation's protection of its Southern neighbors as necessary by claiming that the new republics forged by Spanish American revolutions must be incorporated into the U.S. nation, rather than allowed to remain independent. Here exceptionalist rhetoric produces an argument for *paternalism* toward Latin America, suggesting that the new republics require protection from the United States. This indicates that a substantial change has occurred in U.S. national narratives, which facilitates the nation's future territorial expansion and anticipates the forthcoming doctrine of Manifest Destiny.

Victoria's declaration of fidelity to U.S. models of independence signals his ideological incorporation into the nation, particularly if it represents an "imagined community" united by a shared world view.⁶⁶ The assumption of U.S. hemispheric exceptionalism thus remains unchallenged, as the novel suggests that Latin American republics must be incorporated into the United States, rather than remain independent. Flint rationalizes this ethnocentric position by claiming that even

the local rebels are not pure enough in their revolutionary fervor to survive, and thus need U.S. aid to guarantee their independence. That the southern republics supposedly require protection from the United States indicates that they are no longer “brethren,” or equal members of a hemispheric family, but instead children of U.S. independence still in need of support. The novel ends by embracing even the former Spanish nobles, including Doña Martha’s prominent family, as worthy “American” citizens, but only after they recant their previous criticisms of Berrian and sanction his union with Martha. Flint presents the true villains as Iturbide, whose constitutional monarchy lacked the devotion to freedom and liberty available via republicanism, and his minions, particularly the vicious Don Pedro and the Catholic priest Father Josephus.

Berrian’s foremost nemeses throughout, Don Pedro and Father Josephus, suffer a grisly end when they are killed by a mob of angry Mexican citizens. Martha explains that “these bad men had...become peculiarly obnoxious to the populace, and as they were liberated at the gate of the palace where the junta were [*sic*] in session, some factionist gave the signal of marking them out for the fury of the populace. They were literally torn in pieces” (2: 245). Her disgust at this event, which elicits her “pity,” despite the fact that “they deserved their fate,” reveals again Flint’s implicit dislike of the masses. Martha clarifies that “Fifty thousand of the *miserable populace* have, in too many instances, taken justice into their own hands” (emphasis added, 2: 245). The mass populace’s use of mob violence contrasts with Berrian’s more “civilized” approach to justice, such as when he repeatedly spares the life of Don Pedro so that he can turn him over to the republican authorities for trial. But even though he disapproves of the mob’s actions, Don Pedro’s and Father Josephus’s ignominious end provides a symbolic representation of the populace’s support for Berrian—as a popular uprising destroys the forces perceived as endangering the republic’s autonomy. That these forces are monarchists and Catholics indicates how the novel merges the nation’s hatred of old

world government forms with Flint's own prejudices against Roman Catholicism for its alleged potential to corrupt moral citizens.⁶⁷

Flint's characterization of Victoria also presents an argument for monolingualism by suggesting that populations throughout the hemisphere should unite under the banner of "American Independence," with English as "the consecrated idiom of freedom" capable of disseminating its beliefs. Using Victoria in this way emphasizes how U.S. national narratives could exclude conflicting tongues by silencing them entirely, relegating them to the margins, or transforming them into supporters of the nation's own goals. Flint's novel is itself a monologic text in which all the dominant voices express a universal acceptance of Berrian and his goals, which are also those of the U.S. nation. The novel thus attempts to challenge the criticisms of those readers who might claim it lacks authority, just as Flint said Cooper's frontier novels contained inauthentic images of the prairies, by presenting a cacophony of voices from different groups—a U.S. narrator from the southwest, a local Creole damsel in love with Berrian, her aristocratic father, native tribes, an Irish servant, and even the current president of the Mexican republic—all of which express a complete endorsement of Berrian as a national patriot.

Berrian's name itself evokes Francis Marion, a prominent figure from the American Revolution famous for conducting guerilla warfare campaigns in South Carolina.⁶⁸ In a gesture that echoes Berrian's capacity for inspiring multiple social classes to join the patriot cause, the South Carolina novelist and historian William Gilmore Simms claimed Marion provided a crucial symbolic value to the continental army's working-class citizen-soldiers: "His name was the great rallying cry of the yeoman in battle—the word that promised hope—that cheered the desponding patriot—that startled, and made to pause in his career of recklessness and blood, the cruel and sanguinary Tory" (10). Near the end of *Francis Berrian*, Martha asserts that without Berrian's assistance the revolutionary struggle would collapse, citing his constant restraint of the other leaders: "It is a hard

thing to keep these stupid generals from quarreling among themselves. My general [Francis Berrian] is constantly throwing water on their fire. Sant[a]? Ann[a] confessed to my father to-day, that but for the North American general, they would all fall together by the ears, and the cause would fail” (2: 242). Martha’s reference to an actual Mexican leader, Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna, as support for her claims about Berrian’s central role calls attention to Flint’s distortion of hemispheric revolutionary history. Instead of historical verisimilitude, *Francis Berrian* offers a self-consciously romantic rendering of the Mexican Revolution, which reinterprets it as an event supporting U.S. exceptionalism, particularly the widespread assumption that republican principles could liberate the entire Western hemisphere from imperial oppression. In the process, Flint reconfigures republicanism’s egalitarian ideals into an argument for empire-building that suggests a future expansion of the U.S. nation into the Spanish-American frontiers.

By suggesting that the independence movements which gained Mexico’s emancipation from Spain and later established it as a republic succeeded only because of U.S. participation, Flint perpetuates the biased claim that Mexico’s—and by extension, Spanish America’s—revolutions were inspired mainly by the events of 1776. As Rodrigo Lazo reveals, however, Hispanophone writers publishing texts in support of the revolutions during the 1810s and 1820s acknowledged the influence of more than just U.S. sources, advocating instead “an anticolonial mentality, or hemispheric commonality, spanning roughly fifty years and in certain respects collapsing the 1770s with the 1820s” (“Famosa Filadelfia” 59). Lazo’s theorization of a “hemispheric commonality” underscores the transnational character of the Age of Revolutions, even though Anglophone U.S. writers typically prioritized their own nation. For instance, David Armitage argues that beginning around 1815, U.S. writers and intellectuals began a process of reinterpretation that removed the *Declaration of Independence* “from its cosmopolitan contexts” so it could be “made into something specifically [U.S.] American.”⁶⁹ But during the same period, Latin American writers supporting the

rebellions against the Spanish empire did *not* view the American Revolution in exceptionalist terms. Instead, they presented the *Declaration of Independence* and other founding documents as universal texts offering a vision of cosmopolitan liberty: “While Hispanophone writers proclaimed that the authors of the *Declaration of Independence* and the U.S. Constitution had bestowed on the Americas (and the world) documents that would bring ‘light’ to places still under colonial rule, they emphasized the hemispheric dimensions of the word ‘American’ and situated themselves in a Creole community with the likes of [Thomas] Paine” (Lazo, “Famosa Filadelfia” 59).⁷⁰ For example, the Ecuadorian exile Vicente Rocafuerte translated Paine’s *Common Sense* (1776) and included it in his *Ideas Necesarias a Todo Pueblo Americano Independiente, Que Quiera Ser Libre* (1821), a volume whose collection of texts emphasizes the hemispheric concept of “independence” being elaborated by Latin American writers supporting the revolutions in Spanish America.⁷¹ Actually, Rocafuerte was at least the third author to translate *Common Sense* into Spanish, and as Chapter 1 revealed, Brackenridge’s experiences in South America indicate the popularity of Paine’s writings among the revolutionary groups.⁷²

In his introductory essay, Rocafuerte characterizes Paine’s text as a central document for facilitating the hemisphere’s overthrow of monarchist governments. He claims that with *Common Sense*, Paine “contributed more than anyone else to wrest the despotic scepter from its real holders: the intrepid American broke and destroyed the ribbons and other insignia of the monarchy, so it could never again be restored in this beautiful part of the world, destined by nature to be the regenerator of freedom, the promoter of virtue, and the asylum of happiness” (my translation, *Ideas Necesarias* 11–12). By labeling the English-born Paine as an “American,” Rocafuerte suggests how the author’s works influenced independence movements throughout the Americas, rather than just in the United States. Rocafuerte presents Paine as a voice advocating universal republican principles that will facilitate the spread of “freedom,” “virtue,” and “happiness” over the globe, and particularly to the rebelling Spanish American colonies.⁷³ As the remainder of his text reveals,

Rocafuerte conceives “this beautiful part of the world” as the entire Western hemisphere, which he hopes will unite against the potential encroachment of European imperial aggression. In a moment that echoes Flint’s claim (via a fictional Guadalupe Victoria) that English speakers will soon occupy a cultural position equivalent to Roman citizens, Rocafuerte defends Secretary of State John Quincy Adams against his critics, describing the future president as, “a true scholar, a virtuous and illustrious patriot, who at the capitol in Washington, a fitting temple of independence, rendered to sublime liberty an homage more pure, more noble and selfless than Cicero could render in the capitol of Rome, or Demosthenes in the Parthenon of Athens” (my translation, *Ideas Necesarias* 14). By comparing Adams to such famed classical orators, Rocafuerte risks endorsing Flint’s characterization of English as a forthcoming *lingua franca* of independence, yet the textual nature of his collection proves otherwise. The explicit goal of *Ideas Necesarias* remains translating pivotal texts that conceptualize cosmopolitan liberty and republican government for a Spanish American readership.

Works emphasizing republicanism’s “hemispheric commonality,” including Rocafuerte’s anthology and the Spanish-language novel *Jicoténcal*, offer an oppositional perspective to the arguments for U.S. exceptionalism endorsed by Flint. Published anonymously in Philadelphia and often cited as “the earliest Spanish-language historical novel of the Americas” (Brickhouse 38), *Jicoténcal* projects an alternate image of Mexico’s capacity for rebellion by describing events prior to Cortés’s conquest of the Aztec empire.⁷⁴ The first review of *Jicoténcal* came from the U.S. poet and Hispanophile William Cullen Bryant, who stressed its relevance to current affairs in Spanish America and noted how the novel’s “just and enlightened notions on political government” could prove “useful” if applied to the young republics (336–37).⁷⁵ Bryant also argued that Spanish American revolutionaries learned from neighboring nations how to achieve independence. “One cause which tends greatly to improve the character of a people thus struggling for its liberties,” he claimed, “is the relation in which it stands to the nations that surround it,” because “it cannot fail to learn from

its neighbours many important truths.” As an integral part of this process, Bryant credited “adventures from other countries, [who] enroll themselves under the banners of the nation that fights for freedom” with encouraging these pursuits of liberty: “The virtues of these men are admired and copied, and impress something of their character upon the nation.” With his praise of foreign patriots, Bryant offered an implicit defense of filibustering, since he depicted these individuals as “disinterested, full of noble sentiments, and capable of noble actions,” thus assuring his readers that any such “adventurers” from the United States acted purely from selfless motives (345).⁷⁶ In the end, Bryant’s review interprets the novel from a viewpoint sympathetic to U.S. nation-building, including even the actions of filibusters, a reading that overlooks the hemispheric perspective of *Jicoténcal*.⁷⁷ Specifically, the novel tells the story of a *failed rebellion* against Spain and its allies in the pre-conquest Americas.

By chronicling how a group of citizens, often referred to with the generic term “Americans,” from the Mexican “republic” of Tlaxcala opposed their nation’s alliance with Cortés, *Jicoténcal*’s author addresses not a specific nineteenth-century revolutionary moment, but instead the transnational character of Latin American independence.⁷⁸ Thus, *Jicoténcal* challenges the American Revolution’s allegedly exceptional status by locating Mexico’s quest for national independence *before* the Spanish conquest. As Anna Brickhouse observes, the novel “effectively countered the narrative prevailing in the U.S. public sphere of its own national constitution as a model of democratically federated government for the hemisphere’s newly liberated Spanish-American nations, envisioning instead a specifically Mexican and more broadly Latin American heritage of federated republicanism” (46). From its opening pages, which detail the republic’s origins, *Jicoténcal* emphasizes the voices of the people in determining the modes of government. The title character’s “pure, disinterested patriotism” contrasts with the more self-serving aims of his opponents, who ultimately endorse an alliance with Cortés (*Xicoténcatl* 9).⁷⁹ At one point, Teutile, a general from a neighboring

nation, tells Jicoténcal, “There is no one better than you to save the present and future generations from their imminent desolation.... Your homeland is no longer Tlaxcala; humanity calls upon you for your services, and an entire world turns to you as its liberator” (84). By making him the figurative precursor of Bolívar, the author casts Jicoténcal as a potential savior for all of Spanish America—but one who has supposedly been stripped of his national loyalties, possessing instead a transnational patriotism devoted to defending “humanity” and “an entire world” from European domination. This trajectory, in which Jicoténcal shifts from a local to a cosmopolitan patriot, opposes the one advocated by many U.S. writers, which forecast a paternal responsibility for U.S. patriots to aid “the cause of liberty” pursued by Spanish American revolutions. Although they often used rhetoric espousing cosmopolitan liberty, such filibusters frequently operated, as Flint’s *Francis Berrian* suggests, from a perspective that prioritized U.S. nationalism over egalitarian principles. The hemispheric lens offered by *Jicoténcal* thus facilitates a reconsideration of how U.S. national narratives, including Flint’s novel, alter the foundational concept of popular sovereignty to formulate an argument for American exceptionalism.

To ensure popular sovereignty, *Jicoténcal* advocates forming an international union to repel the Spanish conquistadors. The novelist clarifies how Cortés’s potential conquest threatens city-states already suffering oppression under the Aztec emperor Montezuma. In an early scene, Cortés explains that “a victory of Tlaxcala will assure for us the conquest of the entire continent,” a statement foreshadowing future events (29). Jicoténcal and his allies realize that Montezuma’s tyranny would simply be replicated by the Spanish. As such, the author issues an explicit call for *all* such young nations—in 1826, presumably the former colonies of Spanish America—to unite toward the common goal of ensuring their independence:

When internal divisions destroy the unity of a people, they inevitably become the victims of their enemies, and more so if the practitioners of political shrewdness and craftiness are able to take advantage of that discord. I call on all nations! If you love your freedom, gather together all your interests and your forces and learn that, if

there is no power that will not fail when it collides against the immense force of your union, neither is there an enemy so weak that it will not defeat you and enslave you when you are disunited. (79)

From this perspective, Jicoténcal and his father reveal themselves as patriots by pursuing the goal of unification against imperial aggression, a goal reminiscent of Bolívar's plans for the Panama Congress. They fail to form such a union, supposedly because of their political opponents' lack of devotion to "freedom," which identifies the Jicoténcals as tragic heroes whose foresight remains misunderstood by their contemporaries. In this respect, the novel suggests countering Spanish imperial aggression by embracing fervent nationalism—embodied in the "love of country" and "true patriotism" that prevent Jicoténcal and his father from abandoning their plans for a Mexican union (79). In an inverted form of the imperial aggression implied by Flint, *Jicoténcal* conceptualizes national patriotism as a means of ensuring state sovereignty.⁸⁰ As Teutile tells Jicoténcal, "our common interest leaves us no other alternative than to choose between our destruction and our union" (82). The novel's plea for a unified Mexican nation positions itself in opposition to the tyrannical governments associated with both Montezuma's current reign and Cortés's potential despotism. Teutile describes Montezuma as "the leader who tyrannizes twenty nations, any one of which would suffice to annihilate these foreigners [the Spanish]. But these nations are divided between irritated malcontents, who are tired of so much tyranny, and timid and degraded slaves; the former allow themselves to be won over by that astute captain [Cortés], and the latter tremble at the sight of their weapons and animals of war" (83). The formula Teutile proposes for preventing the "dissolution" of their "immense empire" entails a distinctly republican model of government that "takes the side of justice and equity" and advocates such "models" of social order as "moderation," "wisdom and virtue" (83). His conclusion that Jicoténcal possesses the potential for establishing such a government explains his characterization of him as the land's possible "liberator."⁸¹

Tlaxcala's eventual collapse, however, results *not* from Jicoténcal's inadequacy as a republican leader, but rather the failure of other groups—most notably his political opponents—to support his campaign. Once Tlaxcala allies itself with Cortés against the Aztecs, the republic becomes one of Spain's imperial possessions. *Jicoténcal's* author views this colonial status as a form of slavery that destroys the republic's very nature:

The chain of events that fate had disposed against [Tlaxcala's] republic had made it pass, in a very short time, from the high rank of a worthy and respectable nation to the debasement of slaves sold out to a fortunate newcomer. Social bonds were broken, authority prostituted, betrayal dominant and rewarded, patriotism and merit spurned, rights trodden, and laws affronted; in a word, the whole edifice, which the colossal power of the Mexican emperors had never been able to conquer, in tatters. (128)

This passage effectively renders the colonial situation as representing the collapse of republicanism's foundational principles. According to Jesse Alemán, the fall of the Tlaxcalan republic comprises the novel's primary subject, "suggesting that the conquest of Mexico occurred because empire was already within the hemisphere," which produces a "haunting sense of sameness instead of difference between republicanism and empire" (421). The ambivalence between Montezuma's pre-existing empire and Spain's future one foregrounds the *tragic narrative* unveiled by the author, since a republican leader fails in his attempt to prevent the Spanish conquest.⁸² Instead of a contradiction, then, Jicoténcal's doomed rebellion identifies a drive for liberty and rebellion against colonialism as indigenous to the Americas, long before 1776. In the end, Jicoténcal's death in a final uprising against Cortés, coupled with the Spanish army's imminent advance toward the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán in the final scene, forecasts the inevitable conquest of Mexico and the establishment of Spanish imperial rule.⁸³ Tlaxcala's failed union constitutes a warning to the region's new republics about the risk of losing their sovereignty and being returned to colonial status.

Jicoténcal's argument for maintaining national sovereignty against the encroaching threats of neighboring empires—Spain in the novel's plot, the United States in 1826—proposes a compelling

counter-narrative to Flint's arguments for viewing Spanish American republics as the children of U.S. independence. The hemispheric hegemony that *Francis Berrian* expresses as a central focus of its national narrative, even going so far as to memorialize a U.S. filibuster as the dominant force in achieving Mexican independence, achieves his goal from *Recollections of the Last Ten Years in the Valley of the Mississippi* of writing a history of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition. In Flint's view, after all, "The object of [the expedition] was, under a Spanish republican leader, to revolutionize the internal provinces." By 1826, Spanish American revolutions had in fact achieved this goal—officially transforming the former colonies into new republics—but *Francis Berrian* presents the revolts instead as evidence of U.S. exceptionalism. In *Jicoténcal*, Montezuma sends Teutile to Tlaxcala with an offer of unification against the Spanish, a union that proposes "peace and a perpetual alliance between the two nations, freedom of trade, and communication of common interests, provided that you take up arms against the Spaniards, and asks that you join him in a common cause against the common enemy" (110). This proposed transamerican alliance, which Jicoténcal endorses but Tlaxcala's governing body rejects, suggests a more equitable union than the one depicted in *Francis Berrian*, which depicts Mexico's current president as in favor of transforming the Western hemisphere into an "empire of liberty" led by the United States. *Jicoténcal's* author presents Montezuma as a foolish tyrant abusing all of Mexico, yet as Jicoténcal explains, his offer of unification would allow each nation to retain its sovereignty (110–11). This egalitarian proposal contrasts with Victoria's supposed endorsement of transforming the hemisphere into a replica of the U.S. republic, complete with English as "the consecrated idiom of freedom," a supposed universal discourse of independence that prioritizes U.S. interests over those of the region's other republics.

Although Flint's contemporary reviewers found his representation of the Mexican Revolution absurd, claiming that most antebellum readers would immediately recognize its blatant historical inaccuracies, the novel ends by suggesting that the revolution in Mexico is in fact not

complete. While touring the country with Martha, Berrian reveals an evident discontent concerning its present condition, viewing Mexico as, “a country so delightful in climate, so grand in scenery, so inexhaustible in resources, and yet...abounding in misery, want, and ignorance, swarming with beggars and *leperos*, famishing amidst the exuberance of nature, merely from the blighting influence of oppression.” To this critique, Martha responds that the new republic has already begun changing the lives of its inhabitants: “The government of the Patriots is constantly acquiring strength. The peaceful labors of agriculture are resumed. The people look cheerful and full of hope.” Yet Flint stresses that the U.S. filibuster Berrian remains a selfless universal-American patriot who would willingly aid a subsequent rebellion if the current republic proves inadequate to the people’s needs. Berrian expresses this sentiment with a rhetorical unification of all such patriots under the cause of a possible future struggle to achieve freedom for Mexico’s populace. “Who,” he asks, “would not pour his best blood to free such a great and beautiful country, to cause her to rise in the strength of her resources, and burst the chains of her oppressors and hurl them back in their faces?” (2: 260). The U.S.-Mexican War fulfilled Berrian’s offer of assistance against future “oppressors” of Mexico—since twenty years after the novel’s publication, the United States invaded the independent republic. At the conclusion of the war in 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ceded roughly 525,000 square miles of territory to the United States, a crucial acquisition for ensuring the young nation’s expansion across the North American continent. In his study of the war’s cultural significance, Robert W. Johannsen emphasizes that President Polk and his supporters rationalized the conflict as an attempt to liberate Mexico’s population (31–32). As a representative text in the history of the antebellum novel, Flint’s *Francis Berrian; or, The Mexican Patriot* reveals that the potential for explaining territorial aggression as a defense of universal republicanism existed in the national narrative at least twenty years before the events of 1846.

Notes

¹ The text's full title is *An Oration Delivered at Leominster, July 4, 1815, Before the Washington Benevolent Societies of Lancaster and Sterling and of Leominster and Fitchburg* (Worcester: William Manning, 1815). The quotation appears on p. 5.

² See David Waldstreicher's analysis of the "reciprocal influence of celebrations and print," which discusses how "Celebrations and printed accounts of them embodied and emboldened a nationalist ideology that made consensus the basis of patriotism" (*In the Midst* 18).

³ For discussions of Lafayette's tour, see Burstein, *America's Jubilee* 8–33; Gaines 439–47; and Kramer 185–226.

⁴ Concerning Lafayette's impact on U.S. popular consciousness, Burstein observes that "as they thrilled to the activities of the touring French general, Americans were busier than ever before and, at the same time, willingly caught in their romantic reconception of the Revolutionary past" (*America's Jubilee* 32).

⁵ Lloyd Kramer argues, "The receptions for this most famous European friend became a means for Americans to show that they were grateful, virtuous republicans... , that they were the successful children of the heroic revolutionary generation, and that they were united in seeking to preserve the legacy of American independence" (192).

⁶ Appleby writes, "Working out the terms of democracy and nationhood became a self-imposed task for the first generation because the United States had been formally united with nothing but abstract notions about either. It fell to those born after the Revolution to mold national sentiments around their own unique experiences of opinion-forming and consensus-building, but these were not uniform" (53).

⁷ See Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party*.

⁸ For instance, Gretchen Murphy argues, "The Monroe Doctrine's geographic construction of a Western Hemisphere and its relative locations of Europe and North and South America were crucial to the formation of an ideology of American exceptionalism that both claimed a radical separation from European colonialism and enabled cultural, military, and economic dominance" (6).

⁹ Lester Langley notes how by the early 1830s, "[North Americans] had taken the measure of the revolutionary age in the New World and found the Haitian and Spanish struggles wanting in virtually every respect." This translated the American Revolution into an "Exceptional" event, since only the United States "demonstrated that the authority of law and democratic society were capable of coexisting" and "escaped dictatorship or militarism" (*Americas in the Age of Revolution* 218).

¹⁰ Anna Brickhouse describes the Congress as "the first flourishing of a hemispheric consciousness" and, as discussed in this project's introduction, speculates on what the absence of any representatives from the United States suggests about U.S. literary history (2). In her analysis, "the failure of U.S. representatives to attend the Congress in Panama marked the de facto ascendance of a predominantly national frame of cultural analysis over an inter-American one" (6). Bolívar originally planned not to invite the United States at all because he remained "openly skeptical of the U.S. model of federal government as well as of its political and economic interests in the Spanish-American states" (Brickhouse 43).

¹¹When the congress met, Bolívar stayed in Lima, Peru, "refusing to put any pressure on the delegates" (Lynch, *Simon Bolívar* 214).

¹² See Bolívar's "Thoughts on the Congress to Be Held in Panama."

¹³ Lynch describes the Bolivian Constitution, which Bolívar submitted on May 25, 1826, as "the culmination of his political thought, his 'great idea,' written in his maturity, when the war was over and the peace waiting to be established" (*Simon Bolívar* 201).

¹⁴ Lynch notes Bolívar's preference for the British Constitution (*Simon Bolívar* 121, 239). For an interpretation of the U.S. Constitution as a fundamentally pro-slavery document, see Waldstreicher, *Slavery's Constitution*.

¹⁵ In *The Americas in the Age of Revolution*, Langley describes Bolívar's initial abolitionism in Venezuela as a necessity for organizing an army that consisted of soldiers from different races and mixed racial backgrounds (195–96). After independence, Bolívar experienced misgivings about abolishing slavery across the Americas, which Langley credits to a concern “that victorious Creoles could not create united nations from slave societies” and “the prevailing contradictions within societies whose leaders professed egalitarian beliefs yet wished to preserve the old privileges” (243–44). Citing the Bolivian Constitution, Lynch describes Bolívar's “commitment to absolute abolitionism” as “uncompromising” (*Simon Bolívar* 153).

¹⁶ Gustafson questionably identifies popular sovereignty as part of what Bolívar “rejected” from “North American democracy” as “inappropriate to the new republics of the south” (123), yet his proposed Constitution directly evokes it here as a goal for independent Spanish America. Lynch also documents how part of what Bolívar valued in the British Constitution was how “it recognized popular sovereignty” (*Simon Bolívar* 121).

¹⁷ For a biography of Flint, see Kirkpatrick.

¹⁸ Later travelers who cite Flint's account include: the popular U.S. writer J.H. Ingraham, who claimed an anecdote in *Recollections* inspired his first novel, *Lafitte; or, The Pirate of the Gulf* (1836); the English author Frances Trollope, whose *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832) contains several complimentary references to Flint's works; and Lorenzo de Zavala, an exiled Mexican revolutionary and later first vice president of the Republic of Texas, whose 1834 account of his journey to the United States quotes Flint's descriptions of New Orleans. Ingraham and Zavala are discussed in chapter 4 of this study.

¹⁹ Frederick S. Stimson discusses *Francis Berrian's* status as the first U.S. novel set in Mexico, particularly its influence on subsequent depictions of Latino cultures (511–16). For an analysis of the regional diction and idioms that Flint's novel introduced into antebellum literary culture, see Krumpelmann. 135–38. See also Gaston 33–34.

²⁰ *The North American Review* echoed Flint's sentiments about the Mississippi Valley and western territories providing a crucial testing ground for U.S. principles of republican government. The reviewer of Flint's travel narrative described the region as “the scene of the future trial of those broad principles of freedom of governments, and of toleration in religion, assumed as the basis of our national constitution, never before put to the test of actual experiment in any country” (“Flint's Valley of the Mississippi” 356). For a recent assessment of Flint's depiction of the Mississippi, see Smith, *River of Dreams*, especially pp. 3, 60–61.

²¹ On the cultural significance of Robert Fulton's invention of the steamboat, see Howe 214–15; and Smith, *River of Dreams* 52–53, 65–66, 70–72.

²² For information on Bullard, see Bonquois, “The Career of Henry Adams Bullard”; and Kirkpatrick 165–66.

²³ For discussions of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, see Chipman 234–37; Garrett, *Green Flag Over Texas*; Narrett, “José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara”; Stagg 142–64; and Warren, *Sword Was Their Passport* 1–72.

²⁴ See also Stagg 149–50, including 271n63.

²⁵ Narrett elaborates that “Gutiérrez especially detested Manuel Salcedo because the latter had presided in 1811 at the trial and execution of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, the renowned revolutionary leader” (“Liberation and “Conquest” 33n33). Gutiérrez was an early and avid proponent of the Hidalgo rebellion (Stagg 142).

²⁶ See Stagg 162–63; and Kanellos, “José Álvarez de Toledo” 92.

²⁷ Concerning the actual expedition, Félix D. Almaráz observes that “the filibusters” referred to their “motley crew” of volunteers as “the Republican Army of the North,” a name designed “to enshroud their activities with the trappings of legality and thus encourage enlistments” (151–52).

²⁸ See Kirkpatrick 165–166; Folsom 115–18; and Lee, *From West* 45–7. For information on Bullard's participation in the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, see Bonquois 1000–2.

²⁹ Berrian joins the expedition after it has already entered Texas. He learns of its origins from another member, a former “classmate” of his who joined the group in Natchitoches. Clearly, this “classmate” constitutes a fictional surrogate for Flint’s own fellow student at Harvard, Henry Adams Bullard. For the novel’s background information on the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, see *Francis Berrian 2*: 3–10.

³⁰ Flint identifies Gutiérrez as “Don Jose Bernardo Gutierrez [*sic*],” referring to him throughout as “Bernardo” (2: 3). The novel does, however, correctly note Gutiérrez’s fidelity to Hidalgo, travel to Philadelphia, and volunteer-raising activities in Natchitoches. For a later depiction of Gutiérrez as treacherous and potentially complicit in the murders of Salcedo and the other royalist prisoners, see *Francis Berrian 2*: 19.

³¹ See Stagg 3–6.

³² For example, Stagg cites several reports from northern U.S. newspapers on the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition’s capture of San Antonio (277n126).

³³ Writing in the *United States Review and Literary Gazette*, another critic found the novel’s plot similarly implausible and chastised Flint for misrepresenting the efforts of the U.S. Americans who aided the rebels: “It is certainly indiscreet to tell such a story as this, as having happened to a real, live, born-citizen of Yankee-land. It is setting all reality at defiance; for we suppose it matter of notoriety, that no citizen of this country actually did rise to such high rank in the Mexican revolution” (“*Francis Berrian*” 97).

³⁴ The English travel writer and novelist Fanny Trollope described *Francis Berrian* as “a little wild and romantic, but containing scenes of first-rate interest and pathos,” before concluding that the novel was “excellent” and “delightful” because “there is a vigour and freshness in [Flint’s] writing that is exactly in accordance with what one looks for in the literature of a new country; and yet, strange to say, it is exactly what is most wanting in that of America” (135, 244).

³⁵ Representative publications from just the *North American Review* concerning the Spanish American revolutions include: “South America,” *NAR* 12.31 (April 1821): 432–43; “Mexico,” *NAR* 14.35 (April 1822): 420–55; and “South America,” *NAR* 19.44 (July 1824): 158–209.

³⁶ Robert W. Johannsen writes, “Flint found romance in Mexico’s war for independence, but most writers who were attracted to Mexico went further back in time” (179). He then overviews “the literature of the Spanish conquest” produced by antebellum U.S. writers—including novels like Robert Montgomery Bird’s *Calavar* (1834) and *The Infidel* (1835), as well as William H. Prescott’s epic *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (1843)—which exerted a tremendous “impact on popular thought” and “through its successful appeal to the reading public...promoted an awareness of Mexico’s past and provided a yardstick by which the ‘second conquest’ [in 1846] could be measured” (Johannsen 183). Reading Bird’s conquest novels alongside Prescott’s *History* and the Hispanophone novel *Jicoténcal* (discussed below), Jesse Alemán observes that they “become gothic in the context of ‘inter-Americanism’ because each work exhumes the legacy of conquest and racial rebellion that haunts the U.S.’s hemispheric presence.” He then concludes that this form of “trans-American gothic emerged in the first place because republicanism became empire in the Americas” (410). For another comparative analysis of Bird’s novels and *Jicoténcal*, see Castillo 15–54.

³⁷ See Langley, *Americas in the Age of Revolution* 217–38.

³⁸ Flint compares the elaborate welcome Berrian receives upon returning to Massachusetts with Lafayette’s tour: “Nothing could equal [the village’s response], *parva componere magnis* [to compare small objects with great ones], but the rush about La Fayette [*sic*] the past summer” (2: 274).

³⁹ Speaking in Philadelphia on October 2, 1824, Lafayette explained how the American Revolution benefited the entire “civilized world”: “Within these sacred walls [of Independence Hall], by a council of wise and devoted patriots, and in a style worthy of the deed itself, was boldly declared the independence of these vast United States, which...has begun, for the civilized world, the era of a new and of the only true social order founded on the unalienable rights of man, the practicability and advantages of which are every day admirably demonstrated by the happiness and prosperity of your populous city” (qtd. in Kramer 201).

⁴⁰ The term “the Exceptional Revolution” comes from Lester Langley (*Americas in the Age of Revolution* 218).

⁴¹ See Folsom 48–80; and Lee, *From West* 50–53.

⁴² Derek Gregory comments on how “imaginative geographies...are global as well as local. They articulate not simply the differences between this place and that, inscribing different images of here and there, but they also shape the ways in which, from our particular perspectives, we conceive of the connections and separations between them” (203–4). This section examines comparable “imaginative geographies” of the Spanish-American frontiers presented in *Francis Berrian* and *The Prairie*.

⁴³ Flint later compiled several influential geographic texts surveying the Mississippi River Valley and surrounding territories, including *A Condensed Geography and History of the Western States, or the Mississippi Valley* (1828) and its extensively revised second edition, *The History and Geography of the Mississippi Valley* (1832). In 1827, Flint began editing his ambitious journal *The Western Monthly Review*, which during its three-year run collected sources, reports, tales, and other texts related to the American West. See Kirkpatrick 180, 307.

⁴⁴ See also Goetzmann, *Beyond the Revolution* 165–83.

⁴⁵ In his 1821 map, Long labeled the Great Plains as “the Great American Desert.” Stephanie LeMenager argues that this concept impeded national expansion: “Nineteenth-century narratives of the West’s arid lands offer significant alternatives to versions of Manifest Destiny that depend on ideas of assimilable or easily expendable western peoples and open, arable country” (29).

⁴⁶ For example, although *The Prairie* opens with a description of the Louisiana Purchase and contains several allusions to Lewis and Clark’s exploring expedition, Cooper’s main source was in fact Edwin James’s account of Long’s 1819–20 expedition. See Overland 65–8.

⁴⁷ Flint also presumably regarded Cooper as a competitor.

⁴⁸ The fact that Cooper’s letters and journals also lack any reference to the works of James Hall, Flint’s foremost competitor in the field of western literature, suggests a potential disinterest on Cooper’s part in following the publications concerning that section of the continent. See the standard scholarly edition of Cooper’s *Letters and Journals*, edited by James Franklin Beard, 6 vols. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1960–68).

⁴⁹ Folsom observes that both authors shared the same basic subject, “an examination of the progress of civilization,” but that their central heroes reveal an underlying contrast in the two authors’ views of frontier history: “Where Flint’s theme is the triumph of civilization, Cooper’s is the price one must pay for progress” (103).

⁵⁰ In his own travel narrative, Flint makes a similar comment concerning what this garrison on the Kiamesia plains—which George R. Brooks identifies as Fort Towson, Oklahoma—reveals about U.S. territoriality. Flint cites the supposed distance of 900 miles (the actual one is roughly 250) between it and Natchitoches as providing “a magnificent idea of the extent of our country!” (*Recollections* 238). For Brooks’s editorial annotation identifying the actual garrison, see *Recollections* 325n5.

⁵¹ Flint’s image of the young nation as a woman “stretch[ing] her maternal arms” toward adjacent territories (“these remote deserts”) anticipates John Gast’s famous 1872 painting *American Progress*, which depicts western expansion as a tide of settlers moving across the land, complete with covered wagons, stagecoachs, and farming implements. Hovering above this scene is a white female figure who carries a bound volume in one hand and lays telegraph wire with the other. For a more detailed discussion of this image’s gendered representation of Manifest Destiny, see Greenberg 1–3.

⁵² For discussions of the prevalent cultural stereotype in the antebellum U.S. that claimed Latin American women found themselves uncontrollably attracted to Anglo-American men, see Pike 10–13; and Greenberg 123–34.

⁵³ Amy Kaplan’s concept of “Manifest Domesticity” explores “how the ideology of separate spheres contributed to creating an American empire [because] the concept of domesticity made the nation into home at a time when its geopolitical borders were expanding rapidly through violent confrontations with Mexicans and Native Americans” (26). Unpacking an alternate version of this cultural dynamic in Flint’s works, Annette Kolodny argues that in his *Biographical*

Memoir of Daniel Boone, Flint deliberately suppresses the role Boone's wife, Rebecca Bryan, played in several crucial frontier encounters so he can instead "project an [image of] acceptable femininity" among frontier women (86).

⁵⁴ LeMenager also observes that Inez's relative "invisibility" for much of the novel complicates Cooper's potential exploration of U.S. imperial anxieties. Every character that encounters her creates an alternate image of what her body represents for the national consciousness: "Inez's almost ridiculous multiplicity, as a figuratively black/white, Spanish/American, lady, slave, wife, and (possibly) whore, makes it clear that Cooper was not yet willing to limit his imagination about what kind of Euro-American culture would be brought into lands west of the Mississippi" (62).

⁵⁵ On the concept of "republican motherhood," see Kerber 269–88.

⁵⁶ Richard Batman denies that Pattie's account of the rescue is derived from Flint's novel, or that Flint added the scene into the text entirely on his own, claiming that the two stories derive from different sources (115–19).

⁵⁷ LeMenager argues for re-reading Pattie's *Personal Narrative* as a text presenting the manner in which Mexican citizens "frustrated" U.S. expansionist ambitions by "holding desperately to their territory with a flurry of bureaucratic instruments" (68). Yet although Pattie's own story ends with him lacking any land or money, the *Personal Narrative* nevertheless advocates the necessity of spreading U.S. republicanism, as evidenced by his claiming a leadership role in suppressing the rebellion led by General Solís (see 202–10).

⁵⁸ When the novel's version of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition captures San Antonio, Flint emphasizes that "the unfortunate Royalists were only anxious to get under the protection of the Americans." Thus, since "the prisoners had made it a term that they surrendered to the Americans," Berrian reflects that he and his fellow U.S. adventurers "insisted that our honor was concerned, [and] that they should not be placed out of the reach of our protection" (2: 20).

⁵⁹ Narrett notes, "During the mid-nineteenth century, Anglo-American historians of Texas portrayed Gutiérrez as the villain of 1813. He was the alleged opportunist and despot who damaged the Republican cause through engineering, or at least approving, the killings at Salado Creek" ("José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara" 196). Flint's novel offers a similarly demonized version of Gutiérrez.

⁶⁰ In the novel, a group of "infamous villains" perform the "massacre" in a way that displays "every trait of cold-blood cruelty": "They shot governor Salcedo, who resisted them. The six other chiefs they bound, and cut their throats, and threw their bodies into a ravine" (2: 40). The manner in which "the six"—instead of the actual sixteen—are dispatched eerily recalls what apparently happened, as a recent historian reports that Salcedo and the others were taken "to a creek outside the city," where the soldiers "slit their throats" (Narrett, "Liberation and Conquest" 33). For a grislier account, see Almaráz 171–72; and Chipman 236.

⁶¹ Narrett provides a more detailed account of how the troops reacted to the executions ("José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara" 212–13). For Berrian's elaborate commentary on the murders, see *Francis Berrian* 2: 39–40. In the end, he explains, "I determined that if this outrage was generally approved by the Spaniards, and even winked at by the Americans, I would wash my hands of any farther participation of the cause" (2: 40).

⁶² After Berrian foils this plot, he comments on its connection to the executions, concluding that he "had counter-acted a most important part of their plan" (2: 39).

⁶³ As opposed to the "cruelty" displayed by their "Spanish allies," Berrian observes a more humane "spirit" among his "own countrymen": "Wherever I went, I saw them sheltering the aged, protecting the women and children, and performing the noblest offices of humanity. Wherever an American went, the Spanish women flew to him, as to an asylum from their own countrymen" (2: 13).

⁶⁴ The manner in which the real historical figure Victoria praises Berrian recalls Georg Lukács's observation of how in Sir Walter Scott's historical fiction, "leader figures, who are directly interwoven with the life of the people, in general are more historically imposing than the well-known central figures of history" (38). Flint achieves a similar effect by making Berrian, a representative of U.S. filibustering, an "imposing" character revered by all the others.

⁶⁵ See Murphy 1–31.

⁶⁶ The phrase “imagined community” refers to Benedict Anderson’s concept of a nation as “an imagined political community” that is “imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (6).

⁶⁷ Much of the previous criticism on the novel focuses on its blatant anti-Catholicism, an aspect only tangentially relevant to my analysis of Flint’s rewriting of frontier geography and revolutionary history. For a representative earlier reading, see Folsom 111–15. David S. Reynolds argues that anti-Catholic fiction emerged from “increasing xenophobic outrage on the part of nativists who felt that the growth of Roman Catholicism in America” represented “a malicious threat to democratic ideals” (*Faith in Fiction* 180). The novel’s representation of Catholics as evil enemies of liberty recalls “the Black Legend” and its view of Spaniards (particularly given Spain’s status as a Catholic empire) as natural villains capable of corrupting innocents. See DeGuzmán xi–xxvii.

⁶⁸ Marion’s role in the Revolution provided a popular subject for antebellum writers. Prior to Flint’s novel, two widely celebrated accounts of the general’s life appeared, one by M. L. Weems (1809), which utilized source materials provided by Brigadier General P. Horry, one of Marion’s compatriots; and another by William Dobein James (1821). The South Carolina man of letters William Gilmore Simms used Marion as a pivotal figure in his novel *The Partisan* (1835) and later wrote his own biographical account, *The Life of Francis Marion* (1844). For a discussion of how antebellum writers depicted Marion as a non-traditional icon (including his vegetarian diet), see Tamarkin 104–9. Surprisingly, Tamarkin misdates *The Partisan* as being published in 1853, which leads her to analyze Simms’s biography of Marion as preceding his fictional representation of the general (105).

⁶⁹ Armitage elaborates, “This effort of domestication would have two equal and opposite effects: first, it would hide from Americans the original meaning of the Declaration as an international, and even a global, document; second, it would ensure that within the United States only proponents of slavery, supporters of Southern secession, and anti-individualist critics of rights talk would be able to recall that original meaning” (*Declaration of Independence* 64).

⁷⁰ Focusing his analysis on the multiple Spanish-language publications circulating out of Hispanophone Philadelphia, Lazo comments that the site “reminds us of the multinational and multilingual dimensions of the independence movements and debates over republicanism in the hemisphere” (“Famosa Filadelfia” 58). Philadelphia’s Hispanophone presses and Latin American exiles examined the significance of U.S. democratic principles for all the Americas, comparable to the literary culture produced by the city’s community of free African Americans. For a discussion of the latter topic, see Otter, *Philadelphia Stories*.

⁷¹ In the brief excerpt included in *Herencia: The Anthology of Hispanic Literature of the United States*, ed. Nicolás Kanellos et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), Pablo Peschiera translates the title of Rocafuerte’s text as *Necessary Ideas for All Independent People of the Americas Who Want to Be Free*. Rocafuerte’s anthology of revolutionary documents also included translations of the U.S. Constitution and texts by John Quincy Adams. For a discussion of Rocafuerte’s use of Philadelphia as a symbolic location, see Lazo, “Famosa Filadelfia” 64–7. A thorough analysis of his role in advocating Spanish American Independence appears in Rodríguez O., *Emergence of Spanish America*.

⁷² See Aldridge 139–47; and Kanellos, “José Álvarez de Toledo” 86, 96.

⁷³ Rocafuerte’s conception of Paine echoes Goetzmann’s recent assessment that “Considering himself a citizen of the world, [Paine] was not concerned solely with America, but first with mankind, and then America as it offered an experiment or model to the rest of the world” (*Beyond the Revolution* 5).

⁷⁴ For a discussion of *Jicoténcal* as a historical novel, see Acosta 15–42. The exact identity of the novel’s author remains unknown. In their edition for the *Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage* series, editors Luis Leal and Rodolfo J. Cortina attribute authorship to Félix Varela, a Cuban priest and exile responsible for some of the earliest Hispanophone publications in the United States, including the New York newspaper *El Habanero* (1824–26). See Leal and Cortina, Introduction vii–xxxvii. Subsequent critics, however, have challenged Varela as the text’s sole author. For instance, Anna Brickhouse argues that the novel resulted from “a transnational collectivity” of co-authors, citing Rocafuerte as one of the collaborators (51–57).

⁷⁵ Bryant’s review appeared in the *United States Magazine and Literary Gazette* 1.5 (Feb. 1827). For discussions of Bryant as Hispanophile, see Brickhouse 57–58, 132–34, 139–43; Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture* 36, 52–55; and Williams 2: 122–51.

⁷⁶ In the following lines, Bryant shifted to personal pronouns as he addressed his U.S. readership directly, a rhetorical technique suggesting his text's nationalist perspective. "We should never fear," he concluded, "that too much of *our* sympathy will be given to an oppressed and suffering people, struggling to break the long-worn chain of its bondage, since *we* may be certain that, ere the struggle is at an end, that sympathy will be amply deserved" (emphasis added, 345). Brickhouse notes how this passage outlines "a transmission of 'moral qualities' that catalyzes a dialectic of progress and freedom for the entire American hemisphere," but overlooks that it also justifies the actions of filibusters—a term Bryant softens to "adventurers"—as necessary starting points for this "transmission" of values (42).

⁷⁷ Gruesz argues that Bryant's review "echoes" the Monroe Doctrine but "implies that the U.S. role is less that of enforcer than of sympathetic exemplar" (*Ambassadors of Culture* 55). Nevertheless, by defending the actions of U.S. "adventurers," Bryant elides the history of filibustering expeditions, many of which lacked the "noble sentiments" and "noble actions" he attributes to them.

⁷⁸ For references to Jicoténcal as an "*americano*," see *Jicoténcal* 39, 50, 106, 111, 124, 129.

⁷⁹ Except where noted, quotations from *Jicoténcal* refer to the translation by Guillermo I. Castillo-Feliú, *Xicoténcatl: An Anonymous Historical Novel about the Events Leading up to the Conquest of the Aztec Empire* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999).

⁸⁰ Yet as Jayson T. Gonzales Sae-Saue notes, the novel's version of patriotism is also a strictly masculine one, since "the text codifies a subjugated female subjectivity and conservative gender ideology into the consciousness of its contemporary nineteenth-century social order through a thinly disguised political discourse on post-independence Mexico" (191–92). Concerning "the exclusion of women as active participants," Rodrigo Lazo comments, "Most of the known authors of Spanish-language books and pamphlets published in the United States during Latin America's wars of liberation were men, and their attempt to develop a vertical geographic continuity with U.S. revolutionaries reflected a connection based on democratic masculinity" ("Hemispheric Americanism" 317–18).

⁸¹ Lazo notes how Jicoténcal "embodies republican resistance to excessive authority" ("Hemispheric Americanism" 317). In a late scene, the novel's author describes Jicoténcal as a "generous and valiant American [who] was planning a noble vengeance, one worthy of a republican spirit; like another Brutus, he swore that he would see the tyrant [Cortés] dead" (*Xicoténcatl* 117). This plot fails, of course, but Jicoténcal's status as a republican patriot continues untarnished.

⁸² As Debra A. Castillo observes, "The nobility of the indigenous protagonist...is measured by his honorable and stoic endurance in the face of a defeat that the readers know is inevitable" (28).

⁸³ While staying at a palace in the neighboring state of Texcoco, Cortés speaks the last line, which reads in the original, "Mañana salimos para Méjico" (*Jicoténcal* 144). Castillo-Feliú's translation and Brickhouse's study interpret the use of the word "Méjico" here as a reference to Tenochtitlán as "Mexico City." See *Xicoténcatl* 156; and *Transamerican Literary Relations* 39. By connecting Tenochtitlán on the eve of the conquest with its modern-day equivalent, Mexico City, the author draws attention to how the plot echoes recent events, namely Mexico's independence from Spain.

CHAPTER 3

“THE CAUSE OF LIBERTY AND LAND SPECULATIONS”: REPRESENTATIONS OF TEXAS INDEPENDENCE IN U.S. PRINT CULTURE CIRCA 1836

“On the plains of Texas [he] joined the brave spirits who poured out their blood in the cause of liberty and land speculations.”

—Charles F. Briggs, *The Adventures of Harry Franco*¹

The above description of a character’s death in Texas, presumably during the 1836 revolution that ended Mexican rule, suggests how antebellum U.S. writers depicted the region’s independence. With this off-hand remark summarizing the fate of a minor character, Briggs encapsulates two of the central topics associated with Texas throughout the 1830s and 1840s: the extent to which its independence from Mexico represented a “cause of liberty,” potentially carrying on the tradition of the American Revolution; and the possibility that U.S. settlers could pursue “land speculations” there, acquiring property holdings for themselves and after annexation, new territories for the United States. By 1836, when Texas became an independent republic, both topics were well-established points of debate, addressed in periodicals and other publications printed by Anglophone and Hispanophone presses. Daniel Walker Howe notes the prominence of these issues, which emerged prior to the revolution, but became increasingly pertinent as discussions of annexation escalated throughout the early 1840s (658–700). When Texas joined the United States in late 1845, shortly before the outbreak of the U.S.-Mexican War in April of 1846, it entered as a slave state populated primarily by Anglos, along with sizable portions of Tejanos and other people of Mexican descent, Native Americans, Germans, slaves, and a few free blacks.² One argument used by President Polk and his supporters to rationalize invading Mexico claimed that its population needed liberation from an oppressive government. As Thomas R. Hietala and Robert W. Johannsen have shown, however, these claims obscured a baser drive for territorial conquest, facilitated by deeply engrained beliefs in Anglo-American racial superiority.³ The U.S.-Mexican War also proved

extremely controversial, as this project's conclusion will explore by re-interpreting Bernard DeVoto's designation of 1846 as "the year of decision." Whereas the next chapter analyzes how 1840s depictions of the circum-Caribbean world contain clear ideologies of Anglo-American empire-building, this one focuses on debates over Texas independence in the previous decade, specifically in the seminal year 1836. Literary representations of Texas independence—circulated in travel accounts, works of fiction, periodicals, and other popular texts—reveal how even opponents of territorial expansionism and the cultural doctrines that facilitated the U.S.-Mexican War often defended the Republic of Texas.

The sections below chronicle how commentators on Texas—operating in both Anglophone and Hispanophone print cultures—supported the region's independence by depicting the Mexican government as a despotic regime. This meant eliding the fact that Mexico was actually an independent republic, previously praised as one of the "southern brethren" following the example of the United States. Many accounts celebrated the activities of filibusters, especially the U.S. citizens and other individuals who traveled to the region as adventurers or members of private armies. Robert E. May emphasizes that the term "filibuster" also applies to people who planned and funded these expeditions, even if they did not actually participate in military actions (*Manifest Destiny's Underworld* 52–54).⁴ Additionally, Rodrigo Lazo's work on Cuban exile publications of the 1850s identifies a discursive form of filibustering, focusing on how "many Cubans identified themselves as *filibusteros* and presented their expeditions as examples of republican efforts to bring democracy and egalitarianism to the island." For them, Lazo proposes, "filibustering had both a textual and a military component; it was both a metaphor for the writer as activist and a historical movement" (*Writing to Cuba* 6). Supporters of Texas independence performed a similar function by praising the U.S. citizens who arrived in late 1835 and early 1836 as volunteers for the rebel army.

Arguably the most famous of these recruits, the Tennessee frontiersman Davy Crockett, was immortalized in a faux memoir, *Col. Crockett's Exploits and Adventures in Texas*, published several months after his death at the Alamo by a Philadelphia playwright named Richard Penn Smith, who had neither met Crockett nor visited Texas. The previous chapter's discussion of Flint's *Francis Berrian* indicates that sympathetic portrayals of U.S. citizens aiding foreign revolutions circulated long before 1836. In fact, Flint composed his novel partially as a defense of such adventurers, including his old friend Henry Adams Bullard. But *Col. Crockett's Exploits* reveals a new phase of pro-filibustering sentiment, which the first part of this chapter unpacks by contextualizing Smith's immensely popular novel in relation to contemporary commentaries on Texas. Smith's refashioning of filibustering as an unequivocally patriotic act coheres with the justifications of the republic presented in its *Declaration of Independence*, as well as contemporary travel accounts of the region. Tellingly, Smith consulted these sources while writing the novel, sometimes even plagiarizing entire passages from them. By accusing the Mexican government of having betrayed republican principles, writers and public officials justified U.S. citizens aiding a rebellion against another independent republic. A common rationalization for U.S. intervention, which Polk and his supporters revived in the months leading up to the 1846 invasion, described the Mexican people as incapable of self-government and in need of assistance from their northern neighbor.

Alongside these Anglophone publications, Hispanophone presses in New York, Philadelphia, and New Orleans commented on Texas independence. Historically, Spanish-language newspapers played a crucial role in Texas politics. In fact, the earliest "Texas" newspapers were two single-issue, Spanish-language periodicals printed in Natchitoches, Louisiana, by a U.S. citizen sent to the region under orders from President Madison: William Shaler, who collaborated on the publications with an exiled Cuban revolutionary, José Alvarez de Toledo y Dubois.⁵ Together they authored and published *Gaceta de Texas* (May 1813) and *El Mexicano* (June 1813), which criticized

Gutiérrez de Lara's administration of the newly declared republic located in and around San Antonio.⁶ The authors achieved their goal of prompting Gutiérrez's resignation from the governorship and installing Alvarez as his successor, the latter event occurring shortly before Mexican troops defeated the republicans at the Battle of Medina. These early Texas newspapers indicate how Hispanophone presses—whether located in Texas, Louisiana, or elsewhere in the United States—participated in local political debates, engaging with and often challenging the information disseminated by Anglophone print culture. A publication illustrating these competing spheres of print is the New Orleans weekly newspaper *El Correo Atlántico*, which during a brief, six-month run in the city from February to August of 1836 was funded by two distinct groups of financial backers: first, by a coalition of exiles from Latin America who reestablished it as an organ for defending the Texas colonists and for challenging the commentaries published in *La Estrella Mejicana*, a paper allegedly supported by Santa Anna's government; and later, by representatives of the city's Committee on Texas Affairs which took over the funding of *El Correo Atlántico* after two months and prompted it to advocate more openly pro-U.S. views, including arguments for the nation to recognize Texas independence and consider annexing the republic. The latter portion of this chapter focuses on *El Correo Atlántico* and its editor, Orazio de Atellis Santangelo, a native Neapolitan and naturalized U.S. citizen, who was also a longtime republican exiled from Mexico twice. His at times contradictory positions on U.S.-Mexican relations offer an opportune case study for examining how an exile press participated in debates stemming from the Texas Revolution.⁷

New Orleans offers a key location for analyzing interactions between the nation's Anglophone and Hispanophone print cultures because of its dual status as a U.S. city and Spanish-American periphery. The city also had a long-standing relationship with Texas, often influencing and publicizing events in the region. As the historian Edward L. Miller shows, New Orleans citizens formed the Committee on Texas Affairs to aid the revolution by collecting funds, raising troops, and

sending supplies.⁸ Even in Smith's stitched-together novel, two of the companions Crockett enlists in his cause and brings with him to Texas have spent time in New Orleans. Miller emphasizes the role of Anglo-American merchants in organizing aid for the Texan rebels, but as *El Correo Atlántico* reveals, the city's community of Latin American exiles offered similar support for those opposing the Mexican government.⁹ The Texas Revolution prompted a debate over whether the U.S. should acknowledge the region's independence, annex it as a state, remain neutral, or decry its attack on the "friendly nation" of Mexico.¹⁰ In her influential study *Ambassadors of Culture: The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*, Kirsten Silva Gruesz claims that New Orleans possessed the most active Hispanophone print culture in the nineteenth-century United States, surpassing even New York and Philadelphia, two other publishing centers with large exile communities (111–12, 240). Between 1806 and 1861, at least twenty-three Spanish-language periodicals were published in New Orleans, many of them for only a few months. *El Correo Atlántico's* relatively brief run, which coincided with the Texas Revolution, shows New Orleans as a site of what Anna Brickhouse terms "transamerican literary relations," the interaction between different linguistic and national cultures coexisting in the same space and engaging in dialogues facilitated by the medium of print culture.¹¹ *El Correo Atlántico* and its impassioned, cosmopolitan editor indicate how New Orleans influenced the debates over national expansion and cultural identities circulating in the antebellum United States. Santangelo's decision to make Spanish the periodical's primary language, as opposed to English, French, or even Italian—all of which he could also read and write fluently—underscores *El Correo Atlántico's* position in the city's thriving Hispanophone print culture.¹² Thus, although ultimately sympathetic to U.S. interests in Texas, the paper offers a partial counter-narrative to Smith's synthesis of popular accounts of the region and its independence. Whereas Smith collected his materials from publications widely available in Philadelphia, Santangelo often filled *El Correo Atlántico* with accounts from right across the border in Texas.

Davy Crockett, Filibuster: Defending Adventurers to Revolutionary Texas

Understandably, the events of 1836 prompted a publishing boom of books, pamphlets, reports, and news articles about Texas and its newfound status as an independent republic now free from Mexican tyranny. Alongside new works like David B. Edward's pro-Mexican *History of Texas* and Joseph Emerson Field's narrative of his experiences as a volunteer in the Texan army, presses reissued earlier accounts of the region and its colonization.¹³ Two of the most influential, Mary Austin Holley's *Texas* (1833) and the anonymously authored *A Visit to Texas* (1834) appeared in new editions updated to reflect Texas independence. These texts addressed an audience of potential "American Settlers" to the region, detailing how to travel there, acquire property, and possibly pursue a more lucrative future. A cousin of the local leader and land agent Stephen F. Austin, Holley authored her new volume as the revolution's climactic events occurred, anticipating the imminent moment "when Texas [would] stand proudly among the nations of the earth, as an independent republic, [and] the constitutional liberty of the land" would serve "as a monument of the noble devotion" and "the distinguished merit" of those who fought for its independence (248).¹⁴ The original version of *Visit* was far more skeptical than Holley's account concerning the benefits of Texas immigration. After independence, the revised edition of *Visit* included additional materials on the recent war and concluded with a reprint of a proclamation from the Texas congress offering land and other rewards to volunteers from the United States.¹⁵

In addition to these new and revised works, Richard Penn Smith's novel *Col. Crockett's Exploits and Adventures in Texas* appeared in the late summer of 1836 from the Philadelphia publishing house of Carey and Hart.¹⁶ Smith presents the text as Crockett's own narrative, claiming that a Mexican soldier recovered the frontier hero's diary from the Alamo, after which a Texan volunteer confiscated it following the Battle of San Jacinto and sent it to a New Orleans attorney, Alex J. Dumas (a pseudonym for Smith), who arranged its publication (2–3).¹⁷ For roughly 50 years,

critics and readers accepted Smith's novel as the work of Crockett himself, rather than a product of Philadelphia's flourishing penny press. In his introduction to the Penguin Classics edition, John Seelye regards the novel as "a tour de force of literary amalgamation" and "a self-conscious attempt to construct a narrative out of contemporary popular materials" (xxxiv, xxxvii).¹⁸ Smith used (and sometimes plagiarized) a variety of sources on Crockett and Texas, including Holley's 1833 book and *A Visit to Texas*. Late in the novel, Crockett even quotes from the Texas Declaration of Independence—roughly a month before the congress issued that document. Smith mimics his subject's voice effectively enough, at least in the early sections, to convince readers—and early biographers—that the text came from Crockett's own hand. The novel also implicitly endorses filibustering campaigns as respectable, patriotic undertakings central to achieving Texas independence, an opinion in harmony with many of the region's Anglo-American colonists.

On March 2, 1836, a convention of delegates from across Texas meeting at the suggestively named town of Washington (later Washington-on-the-Brazos) issued a Declaration of Independence from Mexico.¹⁹ This occurred in the midst of the Texas Revolution, four days before troops under General Antonio López de Santa Anna overran the 200 plus soldiers defending the Alamo, and over a month and a half before Texan forces won a decisive victory at the Battle of San Jacinto by decimating Santa Anna's army and capturing him, thus securing independence and solidifying the republic of Texas.²⁰ Authored primarily by George C. Childress, a recent immigrant from Tennessee, the text was "patterned on the American Declaration of Independence" and "argued that Mexican violations of the Constitution of 1824 had caused the revolt and necessitated separation as a matter of 'self-preservation'" (Campbell, *Gone to Texas* 147). Childress's Declaration contains explicit rhetorical and ideological parallels with the U.S. version. For instance, the concluding paragraph of the Texas version begins, "We, therefore, the delegates, with plenary powers, of the people of Texas, in solemn convention assembled, appealing to a candid world for the necessities of our condition,

do hereby resolve and declare, that our political connection with the Mexican nation has forever ended” (216).²¹ Childress justifies this separation by accusing “the Mexican government” of breaking its agreement with “the Anglo American population of Texas,” formed “under the pledged faith of a written constitution, that they should continue to enjoy that constitutional liberty and republican government to which they been habituated in the land of their birth, the United States of America” (“Texas Declaration” 212–13). With this accusation, Childress suggests that, in essence, Anglo-Americans wanted to settle in Texas but still retain their rights as U.S. citizens, rather than adhere to Mexican policies. All immigrants who accepted government-approved land grants from empresarios like Stephen F. Austin agreed “to become Mexican citizens, and therefore Catholics,” but many resented this forced conversion, as well as the government’s attempts to restrict slavery (Nugent 138). Yet Childress describes the colonists’ “grievances” against Mexico as stemming from the denial of “their inestimable and inalienable rights” as republican citizens—specifically, the “liberty” they became accustomed to in the United States (“Texas Declaration” 212, 211).²²

Prior to 1836, two rebel groups authored comparable documents declaring Texas independent from Mexico. On May 4, 1813, one month after the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition seized control of San Antonio de Bexar and its environs, the governing council instituted by José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara and his “Republican Army of the North” issued “the first Texas declaration of independence.” Written in Spanish, this text “reveals Anglo-American as well as Mexican influences,” according to David Narrett, who observes how “its early sections beam with Jeffersonian rhetoric of 1776” and were reprinted (in an English translation) by the influential Baltimore editor Hezekiah Niles in his *Weekly Register* on July 13 (“José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara” 214–16).²³ As discussed in Chapter 2, Timothy Flint rewrote the history of this failed republic in *Francis Berrian* (1826), condemning Gutiérrez and his allies for their harsh treatment of the local citizens, specifically the execution of several royalist prisoners, including Governor Manuel Salcedo.

Less than six months after the publication of Flint's novel, the Republic of Fredonia—"a coalition of Anglo Americans and Cherokees" near the east Texas town of Nacogdoches—declared itself independent of Mexico on December 21, 1826 (Reséndez 40). The Fredonian Declaration accused "the Government of the Mexican United States" of having "reduced the White and Red emigrants from the United States of North America...to the dreadful alternative of either submitting their freeborn necks to the yoke of an imbecile, faithless, and despotic government, miscalled a Republic; or of taking up arms in defence of their unalienable rights and asserting their Independence" (109). In June of 1827, Flint published an account of the Fredonian Revolution in his literary journal *The Western Monthly Review* and later reprinted it as an appendix to James O. Pattie's *Personal Narrative* (1831).²⁴ The article notes how a group of Texas "emigrants," angered at the appointment of Mexican officials to help administer land granted to the Edwards brothers, "promulgated a declaration of independence, adopted national banners and insignia, swore the customary oaths, pledged their 'lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor,' earnestly invoked the aid of their fellow citizens of the United States, [and] formed their constitution" (Flint, "Downfall" 70).²⁵ As indicated by the passage quoted earlier, the Fredonian Declaration imitated Jefferson's text, but the article (most likely written by Flint) interpolated an additional parallel, directly associating the republic's founders with the signers of the American version, who embraced a similar tripartite "pledge" in 1776. While these documents reveal an emerging discontent with the Mexican republic, as well as a desire to associate rebellions in Texas with the American Revolution, Childress's text offers a more forceful, evocative plea for recognition from the United States.

The Texas Declaration of 1836 evokes the heritage of revolutionary Spanish America by strategically addressing the chaotic history of independent Mexico, what Flint's Francis Berrian dubbed "the horrors of the different Mexican revolutions." To emphasize that the Texas rebellion constitutes a new American Revolution—following the tradition of 1776, rather than the wars for

independence than created the beleaguered republic of Mexico—Childress depicts Spanish American revolutions as patently inefficient, unsuccessful attempts at guaranteeing liberty. As David Armitage notes, the Texas Declaration is “unique” in nineteenth-century history for “marking the cession of one people from another that had already declared its independence” (*Declaration of Independence* 122).²⁶ Childress justifies this break with a series of bold assertions, accusing “the Mexican people” of being complicit “in the destruction of their liberty, and the substitution therefor [*sic*] of a military government,” from which he draws the shocking conclusion “that they are unfit to be free, and incapable of self-government” (“Texas Declaration” 215–16). Such dubious claims echo commentaries on Mexico’s “failed” or “flawed” attempt at independence, which appeared in U.S. print culture over the previous two decades. Specifically, several groups of U.S. citizens, including many nativists and expansionists, questioned the stability and effectiveness of Latin American governments. Certainly Flint’s *Francis Berrian* contributed to these ideas with its depiction of the selfless, idealistic patriotism represented by the Anglo-American protagonist, in contrast to the corrupt, tyrannical one exemplified by many leaders of the Mexican insurgency.

As Childress’s Declaration suggests, commentaries on the republic of Texas and the revolution that created it often denigrated not just the Mexican government, but specifically the nation’s independence. This required dismissing the Mexican wars for independence as less successful than the American Revolution, and in the process, abandoning prior commentaries that praised the rebellions for continuing the tradition of the revolutionary war. Instead, in arguments foreshadowing Polk’s rationalization of the U.S.-Mexican War, many writers and public commentators claimed that Mexico had failed to establish a true republic and that Texas colonists were suffering under an oppressive government. Alluding to the Centralist Reforms by which Santa Anna’s government revised the Constitution of 1824, Childress characterizes relations between Mexico and Texas by accusing the new administration of abandoning “the federal republican

constitution of their country” and “forcibly” converting the nation “from a restricted federative republic, composed of sovereign states, to a consolidated central military despotism.” In the same passage, Childress argues that under Santa Anna, “every interest is disregarded but that of the army and the priesthood, both the eternal enemies of civil liberty, the ever ready minions of power, and the usual instruments of tyrants” (“Texas Declaration” 211). By describing the Mexican government as despotic, these claims present Santa Anna as a tyrant comparable in villainy to the ones overthrown by previous revolutions.²⁷

Santa Anna’s defeat at the Battle of San Jacinto in April 1836 virtually assured Texas independence, though it did take several months for a treaty agreement to be signed, as well as for Mexican troops to vacate the region. That July, the *North American Review* published a long article entitled “Mexico and Texas,” which surveyed the history of relations between the two republics. The author of this essay was Henry Adams Bullard, the former filibuster and veteran of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition who inspired his former classmate Timothy Flint’s character Francis Berrian, the hero of the 1826 novel that bore his name.²⁸ By 1836, Bullard was an associate justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court, living in New Orleans, from where he had eagerly followed recent events in Texas. His article purported to offer an assessment of three recently published works related to Texas—*A Visit to Texas*, Holley’s *Texas* (1833), and a March 1836 “Address” presented by Stephen F. Austin in Louisville, Kentucky. Like many contributors to the *North American Review*, however, Bullard devoted little space to the works in question (only the final paragraph and an earlier footnote mention them), but focused instead on the broader topic of Texas independence.²⁹ He also included one of the earliest historical accounts of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, an event then (as today) regarded as a little known episode in Texas history, especially when compared to the revolution of 1836.³⁰ Bullard aspired to provide a context for U.S. readers to understand the importance of Texas independence, reviewing events from the Hidalgo rebellion of 1810, through the Constitution of

1824 and its creation of a federal republic, to the empresario contracts that allowed Austin to issue land grants to U.S. settlers, then culminating with the colonists' anger at Santa Anna's administration and the events of the revolution.³¹ Overall, Bullard explains what he believes caused the failure of republican government in Mexico. Specifically, he asserts that Mexico's federal system "was a blind imitation of the United States, under circumstances totally different." In his view, "the great mass of the population of Mexico were absolutely ignorant of the simplest elements of popular self-government," so "the same system...which has for nearly half a century secured the greatest tranquility and prosperity to the United States, had failed to produce the same results in Mexico" (229). Bullard's biased perception of the Mexican people as inferior to U.S. citizens, who presumably possess an innate capacity for governing themselves, mars his historical overview of the struggle for Texas independence.

The historian Robert E. May describes the Texas Revolution as "the most successful filibuster in American history" due to the high number of "private American military companies [that] hastened to Texas, once word of the uprising arrived in the United States." To support this claim, he cites the startling statistic that "more than three of every four soldiers in Texan rebel armies from January to March 1836 crossed the border after October 1835" (*Manifest Destiny's Underworld* 9).³² These private soldiers included Crockett, as well as the companies dispatched by the Committee of Texas Affairs in New Orleans.³³ A former filibuster himself, Bullard emphasizes how these adventurers aided the Texan cause, and he predicts that they will continue to operate in the region until the United States formally recognizes the republic's independence. Concerning the reasons for these filibustering expeditions, he suggests their motives encompass both idealistic and material goals: "Volunteers will continue to go, whether with [the U.S. government's] connivance, or in its despite. They will go, we say, because they have gone, under circumstances less favorable, as to their impunity, than what now exist" (253). Bullard's text presents filibustering as an expected

occurrence—especially given the frequency of such campaigns in the region—as well as one capable of protecting U.S. economic interests.³⁴ In fact, Bullard hints at possible complicity between U.S. officials and filibusters, noting how “the contest in Texas weighed heavily on the prosperity of our contiguous States,” so he finds little reason to suspect “the government [will] find itself under stronger motives to exercise a rigid restraint” and work actively to prevent future expeditions (254).³⁵ Instead, Bullard predicts that the stability of the new republic will actually *depend* on volunteers from the United States. “That Texas will be overrun by a volunteer American force,” he believes inevitable, so readers should dismiss their fears about Mexico recapturing the region (254). With this argument, Bullard invites future adventurers into Texas by suggesting that they can help guarantee the republic’s sovereignty and prevent its falling again under Mexican tyranny.³⁶ These possible immigrants, then, constitute part of the essay’s implied audience, as it informs them of past events in the region, while also assuring them that their efforts will be celebrated both in Texas and the United States.

Alongside his celebration of filibustering, Bullard advances another proposition supporting U.S. immigration into Texas by critiquing the original colonists. His main censure claims they erred in expecting the Mexican people to follow the Constitution of 1824. Echoing cultural stereotypes, he remarks that “in such a country as Mexico” and “with such a people, the written constitution is but little better than a dead letter” (252).³⁷ This reiterates his earlier description of Mexican citizens as incapable of self-government, while also allowing him to attack the current administration as an “essentially military” one headed by a “nominal President,” José Justo Corro, but actually led by Santa Anna, whom Bullard associates with the emperor Caesar Augustus, who reportedly “kept up the show of consuls and a senate, long after he had become master of the destinies of Rome” (253).³⁸ Along with another opportunity to depict Santa Anna as a despotic ruler, this line of analysis allows Bullard to defend U.S. volunteers going to Texas as a means of preventing another flawed

social contract, like the one which assumed a rigid implementation of the 1824 Constitution. The inevitable influx of immigrants makes such concerns irrelevant, since the colonists will not be, as Bullard puts it in clichéd terms, “left to fight their own battles,” but will instead benefit from the guidance of U.S. citizens volunteering to help protect the republic (255).

To provide additional authority for his descriptions of contemporary Texas, Bullard dismisses the previous literature on the region, including *A Visit to Texas* and Holley’s *Texas*, by noting that both “publications...throw but little light on the political events of the day.” He does, however, praise Holley’s descriptions of “the natural features of the country” as “in substance, correct.” He then recommends *Visit* for its account of how some companies swindled prospective immigrants with faulty “land speculations,” such as the fictitious claim sold to the narrative’s author by a New York agency.³⁹ Acknowledging that *Visit* remains ambivalent about Texas settlement, Bullard reminds his audience that such opinions distract from more important concerns, namely “the ardor we should feel in the cause of free principles, struggling against antiquated bigotry and the grasping ambition of a ferocious soldier” (257). Here, as elsewhere, in a moment of great irony, Bullard appears unaware that he possesses the “bigotry” he perceives in Mexico’s citizenry. With these final rhetorical attacks on the Mexican government in general, and Santa Anna in particular, Bullard offers his overview of recent events in Texas—including the revolution and its creation of the republic—as a counterpoint to earlier commentaries on the region. Bullard was apparently unaware that in the months following the publication of his essay, *Visit* and Holley’s *Texas* would be republished in new editions with materials pertaining to what he claimed they were irrelevant to, “political events of the day.”⁴⁰ Nevertheless, his piece reveals the increased interest in Texas spawned by the revolution. The new editions of *Visit* and *Texas* emphasized the region’s importance to the future of the United States, specifically encouraging new immigrants and sometimes even volunteers for the Texan army. Like Bullard’s essay and the Texas Declaration of Independence,

these influential early narratives depicted Mexico as a failed republic, implicitly and often explicitly contrasting it with the United States.⁴¹ The Appendix to the 1836 edition of *Visit to Texas* opens with a bold assertion of Mexican prejudice against U.S. immigrants, claiming that they “have always been regarded with great jealousy by a large portion of the Mexicans” (166). By contrast, Gene M. Brack’s study of what caused the U.S.-Mexican War suggests that instead of “jealousy,” many Mexicans actually regarded the United States with “fear and mistrust,” especially after the Texas Revolution “confirmed suspicions that Americans would resort to intrigue and even exercise main force to acquire Mexican territory” (55). From this perspective, Mexico’s tighter colonization contracts and limits on U.S. immigration in the early 1830s attempted to slow down the looming conquest of Texas, which many citizens (in both nations) saw as imminent.

Overall, Bullard’s discussion of Texas, presented as a supplement to *Visit* and Holley’s *Texas*, reveals the climate of pro-Texas sympathy that Richard Penn Smith appealed to when fulfilling his commission from the Philadelphia publishing house of Carey and Hart “to produce a book attributed to Crockett that would exploit his recent martyrdom” (Seelye xi).⁴² Smith presented his work of fiction, *Col. Crockett’s Exploits and Adventures in Texas*, as an authentic memoir based on the hero’s diary. The title page identified the text as “the narrative brought down from the death of Col. Crockett to the battle of San Jacinto, by an eye-witness.” Amazingly, the novel was accepted as the work of Crockett’s own hand for almost 50 years, partially because of the elaborate editorial apparatus devised by Smith to make the account appear legitimate.⁴³ A member of the American Whig party, Smith incorporated in his narrative a critique of Jacksonian democracy, including the policies of Andrew Jackson and his successor, Martin Van Buren. Crockett objects to Jackson’s open advocacy of Van Buren succeeding him, claiming that “It is treating the nation as if it was the property of a single individual, and he had the right to bequeath it to whom he pleased—the same as a patch of land for which he had the patent” (13).⁴⁴ By associating Jackson with a monarch

bequeathing the throne to his chosen successor, Smith echoes the sentiments of many Whigs, who formed the party partially as an anti-Jackson group focused on challenging his policies.⁴⁵ Early in the novel, Crockett opines that “Jacksonism is dying here faster than it ever sprung up, and I predict that ‘the Government’ will be the most unpopular man, in one more year, that ever had any pretensions to the high place he now fills” (6). When this fails to happen, Crockett departs for Texas. His experiences on the way there occupy the first half of the novel, as Smith chronicles Crockett’s activities in the frontier towns of Little Rock, Arkansas; Natchez, Mississippi; and finally Natchitoches, Louisiana, from where he departs with his new-found companions, crossing the Spanish-American border. Throughout, Smith ignores the possibility of viewing Crockett as a filibuster, even though his actions recall those of the period’s private military adventurers.⁴⁶

Instead, Smith presents Crockett as a martyr patriot who died while defending “the cause of independence.”⁴⁷ The first sentence allegedly written by Crockett frames his story as one offering a moral lesson to U.S. citizens, noting how “in a country where, according to the Declaration of Independence, the people are all born free and equal, those who have a propensity to go ahead may aim at the highest honours, and they may ultimately reach them too, though they start at the lowest rowel of the ladder” (5). In this opening statement, Smith pairs the founding principles of the United States, including the Declaration, with Crockett’s own (oft-repeated) motto, “Go ahead,” to suggest the familiar idea that anyone can succeed if they take advantage of the country’s atmosphere of civil liberty. Throughout the novel, the injunction “to Go Ahead” becomes Crockett’s rallying cry, uttered whenever he sallies forth into another adventure or experiences an obstacle to his plans. In the final days of the Alamo, it echoes among his fellow defenders. “We were all of the same mind,” he claims, “‘Go ahead!’ cried I, and they shouted, ‘Go ahead, Colonel!’” (117). Crockett’s final entry parallels his first, but distills his principles to their pure form, as with the sounds of gunfire in the background, he scrawls, “Go ahead!—Liberty and independence for ever!” (117). Two

days earlier, on March 2, Crockett notes the meeting of the “general convention at the town of Washington, to frame our Declaration of Independence.” This event resonates for Crockett, who describes his “sincere wish,” four days before his death, as a hope “that the sacred instrument [i.e., the Texas Declaration] may never be trampled on by the children of those who have freely shed their blood to establish it.” He then continues his instruction to the nation’s future generations: “Universal independence is an almighty idea, far too extensive for some brains to comprehend” (116). Those “brains” presumably belong to Mexico’s leaders, whom Crockett critiques one last time before sacrificing himself for that “almighty idea,” a gesture which parallels the sacrifices of the revolutionary generation. Such patriotic exclamations are far from unique, but Smith contributes to the period’s rhetoric of republican liberty a suggestive evocation of Crockett’s motto, “to go ahead,” as an instruction for U.S. citizens to do as he did and “Go to Texas.”

The phrase “Gone to Texas” became a common means of expressing one’s desire to visit or relocate to the region.⁴⁸ Neither Crockett nor Smith coined this catchphrase, but the novel reprints one of its most famous iterations. Before his departure, Crockett concludes a farewell speech by informing his listeners “that they might all go to hell, and I would go to Texas” (15).⁴⁹ Smith emphasizes that Crockett joins the Texas Revolution because of his devotion to defending “freedom” against oppressors. “Well, I was always fond of having my spoon in a mess of that kind,” the hero explains, “for if there is any thing in this world particularly worth living for, it is freedom; any thing that would render death to a brave man particularly pleasant, it is freedom” (17). Along with foreshadowing Crockett’s death at the Alamo, this declaration elides any questions of whether U.S. citizens should openly join the Texan cause, actions which would conflict with the nation’s neutrality policy. Instead, Smith implies that fighting on the Texan side constitutes a patriotic act in defense of a group struggling for independence, a familiar argument in the antebellum period. Crockett’s intention “to give the Texians a helping hand, on the high road to freedom,” then,

suggests that Texas functions as a new version of the nation's "southern brethren." Whereas that phrase earlier referred to the independent republics of Spanish America, particularly in the public addresses of Webster and Adams, it now concerns the Texas colonists who have revealed a comparable intention to "follow the example" of the United States.

Col. Crockett's Exploits reveals a similar change in the depiction of patriots travelling to foreign territories to aid insurgent forces. As noted in the first two chapters of this study, during the 1810s and 1820s, accounts of adventurers like the historical figure Xavier Mina and the fictional Francis Berrian contained implicit (and sometimes explicit) defenses of their subjects from accusations of violating international agreements, especially neutrality laws prohibiting citizens from engaging in military activities against "friendly" nations.⁵⁰ In effect, Robinson's *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution*, with its celebration of the Mina expedition, and Flint's *Francis Berrian*, in which the protagonist becomes a crucial leader in the Mexican wars for independence, supported filibustering campaigns by presenting these private military ventures as justified interventions on the behalf of an oppressed populace. Robinson and Flint acknowledge that their subjects could be regarded as filibusters, and thus agents acting illegally against a foreign nation. Whereas these earlier authors presented their heroes as adventurers travelling into foreign regions, often realizing that their actions put them in conflict with international law, Smith depicts Crockett as simply a patriotic U.S. citizen who chooses to help a group fighting for independence.

Throughout *Col. Crockett's Exploits*, Smith never suggests that U.S. citizens are anything but justified in joining the Texan cause. Instead, even characters who decline to accompany Crockett support his belief that the inhabitants display a fidelity to the United States. For instance, concerning how the residents of Little Rock view the region, Crockett reports that "they looked upon Texas as being part of the United States, though the Mexicans did claim it; and they had no doubt the time was not very distant when it would be received into the glorious Union" (34). One reason observers

viewed Texas annexation as inevitable was because of the large number of Anglo-Americans who had already immigrated there.⁵¹ Smith's source materials—which included *A Visit to Texas*, Holley's 1833 *Texas* volume, Edward's *The History of Texas*, and countless newspaper accounts—noted the region's changing demography, sometimes even suggesting that it facilitated the region's independence and possible annexation.⁵² In turn, Smith emphasizes the attraction of Texas to U.S. adventurers, especially Crockett and the companions he assembles during his journey.

Crockett professes his stay in Texas will last only “until such time as honest and independent men should again work their way to the head of the heap,” at which point the Whig party would have presumably come to power and defeated the Democrats (17). Thus, although historians stress that Crockett travelled to Texas at first only to look for a farm where he could move with his family, Smith's character goes there purely to aid the rebellion.⁵³ On the way, he convinces a motley band of frontiersmen to join him, claiming they can redeem themselves for past crimes by aiding the Texans. “Accompany me to Texas,” Crockett tells one future volunteer, “Cut aloof from your degrading habits and associates here, and in fighting for [the Texans'] freedom, regain your own” (60). In one scene, the former riverboat gambler Thimblebrig, himself a recent addition to the journey, encourages a new recruit with the prediction that “he would be a man among men in Texas, and no one would be very particular in inquiring about his fortunes in the states” (67).⁵⁴ Smith depicts the realization of these hopes, as Crockett's companions die heroically at the Alamo, released from the ignominy associated with their criminal pasts and possessing “a sense of better things” (118). The novel's conclusion celebrates the Texas patriots and condemns the Mexicans as “monsters that freemen have had to contend with, to maintain their freedom” (125). This emphasis on Crockett and the other volunteers as defenders of “freedom” suggests why the novel's early Whig views disappear in favor of a more generally nationalist perspective praising *all* U.S. adventurers. On this point, Seelye argues convincingly that “as a political document,” *Col. Crockett's Exploits* “is divided against itself,

expressing Whiggish hostility toward the Democratic party while championing the Democratic cause of Texan freedom from Mexican rule” (xli). But this contradiction occurs because Smith stages the Texas Revolution as a contest relevant to the entire U.S. public, rather than to a single group. Echoing the Texas advocates in the Democratic party, Smith presents the Texan cause as one in sympathy with the nation’s founding principles, what Crockett dubs the “almighty idea” of “universal independence.” For this reason, Smith suggests, both the Whigs and Democrats should agree on the heroic nature of those U.S. citizens who aided the Texas Revolution. The initial opposition between Whigs (Crockett) and Democrats (Jackson and Van Buren), then, transforms into a struggle between Texas and Mexico. Smith’s version of Texas, however, is populated primarily by U.S. citizens—historically, Tejanos played a crucial role in the revolution, but they appear rarely in the novel—so the contest registers as one between the United States and Mexico.⁵⁵ Once Crockett enters Texas, he no longer rants against Jackson and Van Buren, since he has entered an arena where national loyalty trumps party (or sectional) divisions.

Instead, Crockett’s anger shifts to Santa Anna because of his abuses against the Texas colonists. Offering a slanted summary of the Mexican wars for independence, Crockett cites two filibustering campaigns as evidence of how “Americans” carried on “the revolutionary spark,” and later “the spark of independence,” during periods when the insurgents allegedly lacked morale and organization. He praises the Gutiérrez-Magee filibuster, referred to as “the war of Texas, in 1813,” and “the expedition of Mina, and his three hundred American Spartans, who perished heroically in the very heart of Mexico” (101–2). With these references to U.S.-funded interventions against Spanish rule, Smith tellingly overlooks the fact that both were led and planned by individuals born outside North America, the Mexican noble Gutiérrez and the Spanish expatriate Mina. Smith contrasts these noble filibustering expeditions with the manner in which “the Mexicans obtain[ed] their independence at last.” Not “by their own virtue and courage,” he claims, but instead “by the

treachery of one of the king's generals [Iturbide], who established himself by successful treason.” Smith suggests that Iturbide seized power via a military coup, as opposed to a democratic revolution. This interpretation leads Smith to echo the ethnocentric view that because of the “constant commotion” of regime changes in independent Mexico, its inhabitants “are unfit to govern themselves” (102). Smith could have encountered that argument in the Texas Declaration of Independence, a document from which he plagiarizes two whole paragraphs in the following passage.⁵⁶ The lines Smith’s fictional Crockett quotes almost verbatim include the assertion that Mexico promised the colonists they would still “enjoy” the forms of “constitutional liberty and republican government” they became accustomed to in the United States, but subjected them instead to “the combined despotism of the sword and the priesthood.” Crockett utters these lines several days before the Texan congress issued the Declaration—an event that he even acknowledges when it occurs on March 2. The seamless manner in which Smith interpolates two passages from the Texas Declaration into Crockett’s fake manuscript underscores the shared beliefs conveyed by the two texts. Each supports the adventurers (both colonists and filibusters) who challenge Mexican rule, while condemning its republican government as a despotic regime.

**Covering the Texas Revolution in *El Correo Atlántico*; or,
Why a Neapolitan Noble Published a Newspaper in New Orleans**

The preface to *Col. Crockett’s Exploits* credits a New Orleans lawyer named Alex J. Dumas, another faux narrator devised by Smith (and an obvious reference to the famous author of French adventure novels), with receiving Crockett’s diary from a Texan volunteer who recovered it after the Battle of San Jacinto (3). A pseudonym for Smith, Dumas is also allegedly responsible for arranging the book’s publication. He describes the soldier who sent him the diary as Charles T. Beale, a “worthy and talented young man [who] was well known in New Orleans,” before his “romantic” sentiments prompted him to pursue a “roving life,” which ultimately led him to Texas, where he

“selected a plantation in Austin’s colony,” and later fought in the rebel army (1–2). Rather than just part of the editorial apparatus devised by Smith to perpetuate his hoax, these New Orleans connections acknowledge how the city played a crucial role in the Texas Revolution.⁵⁷ For instance, on his way to Texas, Crockett encounters a survivor of “the fatal expedition” against Tampico, which was “fitted out from New Orleans” and departed in November 1835 (108).⁵⁸ The group responsible for organizing this filibustering campaign consisted primarily of Anglo-Americans and called itself the Committee on Texas Affairs in New Orleans.⁵⁹ It formed in mid-October 1835 with the stated goal of determining the most effective means of aiding the Texan colonists suffering under Mexican rule. Edward Miller stresses, however, that it actually “possessed in part an agenda to politically change the region for speculation and commercial exploitation.” To further these multiple ends, the Committee held several “public meeting[s] to garner citywide support for the Texian rebellion” (3).⁶⁰ At the first of these, the local merchant and committee co-founder George Fisher singled out the experiences of one attendee in particular, Orazio de Atellis Santangelo, as evidence of “Santa Anna’s ruthless plans” and repeated treacheries against ordinary citizens (Miller 60–61).⁶¹

Santangelo arrived in New Orleans from Mexico two months earlier, exiled from the country for the second time in ten years. On August 12, 1835, the *New Orleans Bee* ran a brief notice announcing his arrival, which celebrated him for publishing a newspaper in Mexico City, *El Correo Atlántico*, until he became “obnoxious to the government” due to “some free remarks” and was forced to leave the country.⁶² In the next day’s edition, the *Bee* corrected several factual errors from the previous report—primarily its misspelling of his name and the inaccurate claim that he worked with a coeditor at the paper—and published a series of documents (provided by Santangelo) detailing his banishment.⁶³ The *Bee* included a brief editorial outlining the significance of these documents, which it hoped would “awaken the attention of the general government and the public to the melancholy condition of the American citizens resident in Mexico.” It concluded with an

explicit appeal for the U.S. government “to consider minutely and maturely our relations with Mexico,” implying that the nation should consider altering its formal policies or suspending relations (2). Over the next ten years, Santangelo published commentaries on current events in Mexico, first in the brief run of the New Orleans edition of *El Correo Atlántico*, then in a series of pamphlets he authored on debates central to U.S. international relations during the 1830s and 1840s, including Texas annexation, the election of 1844, and the U.S.-Mexican War.⁶⁴ While in New Orleans, Santangelo’s opposition to Mexico’s centralist government—particularly Santa Anna—intensified to the point of advocating a preemptive war against the nation, a position he abandoned prior to the 1846 invasion.

As indicated by the *Bee*’s appeal for intervention on the behalf of the “American citizens” in Mexico, many New Orleans newspapers openly supported the Texas Revolution and criticized the Mexican government. Another Italian who visited Mexico and the United States during this period, Carlo Barinetti, noted the intensity of the criticism emerging from New Orleans. He commented that although publications “throughout the whole American union” regularly “abused and trampled upon” Mexico, the attacks were always “much more so in New Orleans, whose presses cannot refrain from rushing, in every way, against Mexico and the Mexicans; whom they load with the most despicable epithets, whenever they happen to speak of, or make any allusion to them” (1).⁶⁵ When he arrived in 1835, Santangelo was sixty-one years old and had, by his own estimation, “forty-five years of experience in *revolutionary* matters” (emphasis original, *Statement of Facts* 100). This referred to his diverse roles as a participant in, advocate for, and commentator on rebellions against despotic governments, both in Europe and the Americas. By the time he moved to New York in 1824, Santangelo had already campaigned in his native Naples for the establishment of a “Democratic Republic” that would reunite all of Italy and fought with Colonel Olini in Catalonia “in defence of the Spanish Constitution.” Shortly after arriving in New York, he and his son moved to Mexico City,

where Santangelo interacted with prominent members of the government, including Santa Anna, who started as his ally but soon became a bitter enemy; the revolutionary hero and future president Vicente Guerrero; and the federalist politician Lorenzo de Zavala, who later became the first vice president of the Republic of Texas.⁶⁶ Santangelo also became a close friend of the U.S. minister to Mexico, Joel Poinsett. Santangelo's first banishment stemmed from a series of pamphlets on the Panama Congress, which he wrote at de Zavala's suggestion and published in early May and late June of 1826.⁶⁷ In the second installment, he stressed the need for the newly independent republics to protect themselves against possible future invasions from Spain. President Guadalupe Victoria's administration perceived the pamphlet as a criticism of its foreign policies and promptly ordered Santangelo's expulsion from the country.⁶⁸

Santangelo founded *El Correo Atlántico* as a bi-weekly newspaper during his second residence in Mexico City, where he edited it from May 2 to June 24, 1835. It ceased publication when he was banished from the country again, but this time for his avid skepticism toward reports of the revolt in Texas circulated by Santa Anna's administration.⁶⁹ After moving to New Orleans, he revived the newspaper there on February 29, 1836, with the financial support of a group he described as "a number of Mexican federalists, who had been the victims of Santa Anna's centralizing fury, and who [had] fled to this city" ("Petition" 146). With their funding, he "supported the 'Texans' right to independence on constitutional grounds" by claiming that "Santa Anna had violated the Mexican federal Constitution of 1824" (Rusich, "Marquis of Sant'Angelo" 17).⁷⁰ *El Correo Atlántico* was intended to challenge the views expressed in *La Estrella Mejicana* and *L'Echo de la Louisiane*, two New Orleans newspapers purportedly funded by Santa Anna's government and published by A. Crébassol.⁷¹ The *Correo* repeatedly expressed its objections to the reforms which dissolved the federation of independent states to form a centralized governing body. After two months, Santangelo caused his federalist backers to withdraw their financial support by, as he explained it,

supporting Texas's "absolute independence" after the colonists "declared themselves free" ("Petition" 146). Shortly afterward, Santangelo procured new funding from George Fisher, the same man who praised him at the Texas Committee meeting, and another merchant, Thomas Toby, who was also a commissioned "Texas agent" responsible for organizing aid to the struggling government.⁷² They subsidized the newspaper until it ceased publication on August 15 (Santangelo, "Petition" 147). With this change in backers, *El Correo Atlántico* also became more supportive of U.S. national expansion, both territorial and economic. So much so, that by the end of its New Orleans run, although still publishing the majority of its contents in Spanish, the paper functioned as an outlet for U.S. propaganda on the recognition and possible annexation of the Republic of Texas.

El Correo Atlántico's official title, which Santangelo translated as "*The Atlantic Courier, a polyglot, commercial, political, literary periodical,*" conveys its willingness to incorporate materials from sources connected to multinational topics and stemming from no single national or linguistic center.⁷³ Each issue indicated that "Communications will be received in Spanish, English, French, Italian and German, provided they be written in a proper style" (Santangelo, *Statement of Facts* 87).⁷⁴ Although the majority of the text was written in Spanish, issues typically included several articles or announcements in English and French, as well as at least one brief entry in Italian. A typical issue featured two main sections, one devoted to "America," the other to "Europe," with subsections focused on individual countries, particularly the United States and Mexico. Most issues also allotted an entire section just for news from Texas. For instance, issue number 19, published on March 14, 1836, devotes over a quarter of its length to reprinting three sections of the "Seven Laws" instituted under Santa Anna that revised the original Mexican Constitution of 1824 and created a centralist government. Although published during a key period of the Texas Revolution, this issue devotes a sizable portion of its space to the Mexican Constitution.

Santangelo prefaces the official documents with an extended, impassioned editorial criticizing what he terms, “the new constitution given by the rascals of the good Señor de Santa Anna, which he personally assembled in the constituent congress” (my translation, 73).⁷⁵ He mockingly acknowledges that “such a political organization of civil society is a true *chef-d'oeuvre* [masterpiece] worthy of its author, who has committed an injustice by failing to honor” the policies of republican government, which Santangelo describes as “a *brevet d'invention* [patented form],” already instituted by several nations. After reprinting over half of the revised constitution, Santangelo then includes a letter from the French consul to Mexico. Written in French, the document echoes the editor’s concerns that the new laws will leave Mexico “without a proper constitution” and necessitate so many future revisions—to fill the “holes” constructed by Santa Anna’s agents—as to question “when, how, and for whom they have made these laws.” For this reason, Santangelo claims that the consul’s comments will “inspire the most lively sympathy in the heart of all free men” (my translation, 73), a goal that remained central to the cultural work of *El Correo Atlántico* even after Fisher and Toby began financing it.

The paper’s seven-month run coincided with the conclusion of the Texas Revolution, including the colonists’ victory over Santa Anna and creation of an independent republic. After the Battle of San Jacinto, *El Correo Atlántico* followed closely the debates concerning whether the United States government would recognize the independence of Texas or condemn the rebellion as an unwarranted attack on legitimate authority. Issues twenty-eight to thirty-one, published from mid-May to early-June of 1836, offered a condensed narrative history of the Texas Revolution, reaching a climax with Santa Anna’s defeat at San Jacinto, his capture, and the new urgency this provided to the recognition question. A major point emphasized by the contributors accused Santa Anna of violating the “Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation” between the United States and Mexico ratified on April 5, 1832, specifically its provision that the nations would provide each other’s

citizens with “complete security and protection,” particularly during commercial activities and periods of residence.⁷⁶ Citing the precedent set by his violations of the treaty, editorials published on May 16 and June 6 speculated that Santa Anna planned to challenge the United States for control of the Texas border region, and potentially even invade U.S. territory. In one article, Santangelo claims that when confronted with violating the treaty, Santa Anna said he would soon sign another with the United States, but this time “with the tip of [his] sword” and “on the banks of the Sabine,” the river separating U.S.-Mexican territory on the border between Louisiana and Texas (my translation, “Texas y los E. U.” 123).⁷⁷ His *Statement of Facts Relating to the Claim of Orazio de Atellis Santangelo, a Citizen of the United States, on the Government of the Republic of Mexico...*, published five years later in 1841, reports a similar boast occurred in a dialogue between Santangelo’s wife, Mary, and Santa Anna on June 26, 1835. Santangelo depicts the meeting, which he did not attend, as a seduction scene. After clarifying that the order of banishment does not apply to her, Santa Anna stresses that if she stays, Mary “will enjoy [his] special protection” (102). To this suggestive offer, she replies that “as an American,” she seeks only the “protection” outlined in “the treaty between my country and yours.” Santa Anna then responds, “That treaty is too old, Señora.... I shall soon sign another in Washington, with the point of my sword.” In both iterations, the promise to sign a new treaty with his sword depicts Santa Anna as plotting to challenge the United States by using force, which threatens the public’s sense of domestic and national security.⁷⁸

The paper often reprinted and commented on discussions of Texas independence published in newspapers from the northern United States.⁷⁹ Its New Orleans location made *El Correo Atlántico* an authority on these topics because of its proximity to Texas, faster access to reports, and readily available source materials. For instance, the May 23rd issue reprinted portions of an article from the *National Gazette* challenging claims that the Texas rebels followed the tradition of the U.S. nation’s “own glorious revolution.”⁸⁰ Instead, the author accuses the Texans and their supporters of trying to

convince the United States and other nations of the rebellion's legitimacy. Terming the Texas Revolution an "*unlawful revolt* against constituted authority," the editorial compares it to someone who rents a room in a boarding house, uses it as a meeting place "for black-legs and blackguards [gamblers/swindlers, generally disreputable characters]," then when the landlady objects, he "declare[s] himself *independent of her control*" and tries to "*maintain possession*" of the room (emphasis original, qtd. in "Noticias de Tejas" 114). Santangelo believed the article, attributed to "Columbus," was written by the Mexican minister in Washington, Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza.⁸¹ To indicate the danger posed by such arguments, Santangelo referenced an article from the *New York Commercial Advertiser*, reprinted in the *Louisiana Advertiser*, which cited the *Gazette's* editorial as evidence that the United States should refuse the aid requested by the Texan leaders. Santangelo devoted a full column of print space to critiquing the *Gazette's* article, challenging its claims by defending the rights of the Texans and the validity of the revolt. In the end, he proposes the existence of a "formidable conspiracy" among several U.S. newspapers supporting "rich Santa-Anna." This reveals how, under Santangelo's editorship, *El Correo Atlántico* challenged the accounts circulated by newspapers sympathetic to Mexico's centralist government, countering them with partisan defenses of the Texas Revolution.⁸²

On June 6, 1836, Santangelo ran a long editorial—presumably of his own authorship—entitled "Texas y los E. U. de America" ["Texas and the United States of America"], which synthesized the views toward the region's independence developed by the periodical over the previous months. The article argued strongly that the United States should recognize the independence of Texas, addressing each of the nation's major concerns about the act's possible repercussions. Its opening paragraph stresses that the citizens of Texas share with those of the United States such common bonds as "national origin, language, customs, [and] religious principles," a parallel that emphasizes the state's Anglo-American population, while neglecting the Mexicans and

Tejanos still living there.⁸³ Presenting the Texans as “victims of a horrible tradition” and “the most brutal ferocity,” Santangelo attempts to sway the emotions of U.S. readers by stressing that these abuses have occurred “in your house” [*“en su casa”*].⁸⁴ The identity of that “house” remains unclear, but it presumably refers to North America, the Western Hemisphere, or even the portions of the continental United States bordering Texas. In either case, by stressing the proximity of Mexico’s actions to U.S. territory, Santangelo appeals to the sense of national unity and common brotherhood that prompted hundreds of citizens to form volunteer companies and enlist with the Texans. At the same time, the editorial attempts to win the sympathies of the Tejanos who worried about Texas being overrun by U.S. citizens bent on acquiring land and money. To allay these fears, Santangelo presents the United States as a more benign power, or possibly even empire, than Mexico.

Santangelo also addresses the U.S. government’s concern over whether recognizing the independence of Texas would violate the nation’s treaty with Mexico and begin a war between the two nations. He exculpates the U.S. by presenting Texas as a willing member in a confederation of sovereign Mexican states—“independent of one another”—which possessed the legal right to withdraw from the union whenever it chose. The editorial reiterates *El Correo Atlántico*’s objection to the reforms, which dissolved the federation of independent states to form a centralized governing body.⁸⁵ As Santangelo describes it, “the sword of a reckless conspirator”—a clear reference to Santa Anna—destroyed “the knot of the federation.” Ignoring the fact that the territory of Yucatán also rejected the centralist reforms in 1836, he praises Texas as the only one “to resist the coup” by defending the Constitution of 1824.⁸⁶ Claiming that Mexico’s centralist government impinged on the sovereignty of the Texans, Santangelo urges that they then possessed the right to revolt, secede from the union, and become an independent republic. Accordingly, Santangelo presents Texas as a smaller territory threatened by the larger power of Mexico, which he equates with an imperial governor. By

this logic, the United States can rationalize breaking its treaty with Mexico on the grounds of helping a group of patriots defend their rights as sovereign citizens.

Immediately following the editorial, *El Correo Atlántico* reported on political turmoil in two former Spanish American colonies, Veracruz and Bogota.⁸⁷ The article concludes with a negative generalization about Latin America's independent nations, which claims that "pusillanimity, ignorance, intrigue, personalities, *et cetera*...are the distinct characteristics of all the Spanish colonies," even though the inhabitants "describe their respective countries with the classical grounds of knowledge, of patriotism, [and] of heroism" (my translation, "Republica de Bogota" 124).⁸⁸ The issue's sequence of materials on Texas, the United States, Mexico, and Bogota suggests which republic's example the Texans should emulate. Devoted to recent events in Europe, the issue's subsequent section extends this generalization to include countries across the Atlantic by surveying social upheavals in Greece, Russia, Ireland, and Austria.⁸⁹ By criticizing conditions in Europe and the former colonies of Spanish America, *El Correo Atlántico* implies that despite any concerns raised by the on-going debate over whether to recognize Texas independence, U.S. republicanism still represents the most enlightened form of government. Implicitly, the United States displays "the classical" traits of "knowledge," "patriotism," and "heroism" that others only claim to possess. Thus, *El Correo Atlántico* urges Texas to follow in the tradition of the United States, rather than that of any other independent nation in the Americas.

Santa Anna and Polk: Santangelo's Opposition to the U.S.-Mexican War

As the U.S.-Mexican War approached, Santangelo shifted to a more ambivalent view of the U.S. nation's actions, specifically President Polk's planned invasion. He authored pamphlets questioning Texas annexation, supporting Henry Clay's presidential candidacy in 1844, and opposing both Polk's campaign and his actions as president.⁹⁰ These texts reveal his aversion to the doctrines of Manifest Destiny and its implicit territorial conquests. In the process, Santangelo redirected his

earlier anger at Santa Anna to a new opponent, Polk, whom he disparaged with many of the same epithets he applied previously to the Mexican leader. For instance, when accusing the U.S. president of providing false justifications for the invasion, Santangelo compared Polk to a “crowned tyrant” and a “military despot” (*Claimants* 12).⁹¹ Published in February of 1847, his pamphlet *The Two or Three Millions: No Appropriation Recommended* condemns Polk’s actions, terming the war “malicious” and founded on a “false pretext” aimed only at increasing the president’s own “glory” (2, 18). He depicts Polk as a violent dictator concealing the evidence of his abuses: “Viewing this affair under the mildest aspect possible, Mr. Polk would appear to act the part of *a brutal school-master*, who after having broken the legs of a child for *disobedience* to one of *his insane injunctions* endeavors to prevent it from screaming, by placing a sweet cake in its little hands, to avoid being lapidated by the rest of his indignant pupils, or sent to the penitentiary” (my emphasis, 2). By characterizing Polk as “a brutal school-master” issuing “insane injunctions,” Santangelo inverts his earlier depiction of U.S. imperialism as beneficial to Latin America, suggesting instead how a group can use its authority for personal gain, rather than humanitarian principles. The pamphlet focuses on Polk’s request for an appropriation of two or three million dollars to negotiate a peace with Mexico. After reiterating his opposition to the war as a “criminal injustice,” Santangelo speculates that the funds constitute a conspiracy “to *bribe* Mexican leaders to obtain through their influential power, the acquiescence of the whole Mexican nation to our lawless depredations” (emphasis original, 3). He believes Polk plans to pay Santa Anna to “overthrow” the current president of Mexico, Mariano Paredes Arrillaga, then “re-conquer the dictatorship,” “exercise without control all the functions of an absolute sovereign,” and “restore by his own authority the peace between the two republics” (5). As predicted by his constant critiques of Santa Anna, Santangelo opposed any such agreement involving the U.S. government.⁹² In 1839, Santangelo briefly supported a preemptive war intended to help U.S. claimants against Mexico recover their personal losses, while also providing a moral lesson

concerning Mexico's failed attempts at republican government.⁹³ During the highly contested election of 1844, he opposed the war plotted by Polk because it pursued an alternative set of objectives—namely, the acquisition of new territory for the United States, rather than prompting the payment of Mexico's debts.⁹⁴

Despite his objections to the U.S.-Mexican War, Santangelo remained critical of the Mexican people. His anti-Polk pamphlet reveals his prejudices by dividing the population in terms of skin color. According to Santangelo, the population consists of “a mass of seven millions of [*sic*] ignorant Indians, and other colored automata,” who follow “blindly” the instructions of the “white population,” a minority consisting of “nearly another million ...Spaniards and Creoles.” Santangelo's belief that Mexico's population remains incapable of self-government stems from his assumption that the majority of inhabitants—“Indians” and other people of color—lack the agency to determine their own actions. Instead, they become indoctrinated by the Spaniards and Creoles, a situation that renders the entire population, in his view, “a set of corrupt, revengeful, mistrustful, hypocritical, treacherous thieves, tho' prodigal, gay and sociable fellows, not without courage, and decidedly good soldiers if well commanded” (*Two or Three* 10). With this critique, he returns to his previous arguments for the United States to spread its form of government and cultural beliefs to Mexico, potentially via military action and a brief period of administrative control.

Santangelo's racialized rhetoric asserts a need for U.S. intervention comparable to the one he criticizes Polk for launching in the U.S.-Mexican War. By dismissing the local population as corrupt and lacking the cognizance necessary for self-government, he suggests that the United States establish a paternalistic relationship with Mexico to spread freedom and egalitarian democracy. From the beginning of the Spanish American revolutions, U.S. expansionists and nationalist ideologues advocated forms of aid to Mexico and the rest of Latin America. This assistance often served a baser drive for territorial acquisition and financial profit, reaching a climax with the doctrine of Manifest

Destiny and the U.S.-Mexican War. Filibustering campaigns often masqueraded as benign attempts at aiding oppressed populations, but in fact established precedents for U.S. citizens (and later the government) to intervene directly in the affairs of foreign nations. Although Richard Penn Smith denies that Davy Crockett acted as a filibuster, his novel celebrates the frontiersman as a martyr patriot who died defending “the cause of liberty.” He contextualizes Crockett’s campaign within contemporary accounts of Texas—including the republic’s Declaration of Independence—and reiterates the assumption that since the Mexican people are “incapable of self-government,” then U.S. citizens should help liberate the region. Despite his Whig sympathies, Smith endorses Texas independence and possible annexation, policies advocated by Jacksonian Democrats. Santangelo’s publications from the 1830s and 1840s reveal how even a former resident of Mexico and an avowed republican could echo the expansionists’ rhetoric of racial and national superiority. In the end, Santangelo accepts the central tenets of U.S. empire-building and the cultural doctrines responsible for the U.S.-Mexican War, contradictory to his advocacy of a cosmopolitan republicanism free from allegiance to any imperial power.

Notes

¹ See Briggs 1: 99.

² For precise population estimates showing “the spectacular growth” that occurred in the decade between the revolution’s end and annexation, see Campbell, *Gone to Texas* 159.

³ See Hietala 152–66 and Johansen 270–96.

⁴ In addition to the actual soldiers, May applies the term “filibuster” to “any individual complicit in an expedition,” including “organizers, recruiters, suppliers, and financial backers” (*Manifest Destiny’s Underworld* 54).

⁵ Julia Kathryn Garrett clarifies that although printed in Natchitoches to prevent possible retaliation by Gutiérrez or his supporters, *Gaceta de Texas* was still “the first newspaper prepared in Texas, the first newspaper to have its type set within the limits of Texas, and the first newspaper addressed to Texans and devoted solely to Texas affairs” (“First Newspaper” 215).

⁶ See Garrett, “First Newspaper” 200–15; Kanellos, “José Alvarez de Toledo” 92; and Sibley 15–17, 21–27.

⁷ The New Orleans edition of *El Correo Atlántico* functioned as what Nicolás Kanellos and Helvetia Martell describe as an “exile press” since it used “the U.S. tradition of a free press to offer...uncensored news and political commentary” (6).

⁸ See *New Orleans and the Texas Revolution*.

⁹ Gruesz's analysis of *La Patria's* opposition to both the Mexican War and the possible annexation of Cuba reveals how the exile community opposed U.S. territorial expansion (*Ambassadors of Culture* 115–17, 142–45).

¹⁰ The debates echoed those in the early 1820s over the recognition of the independent republics formed by Spanish American revolutions. The May 16 edition of *El Correo Atlántico* stressed this parallel by noting how Robert J. Walker, a pro-expansionist senator from Mississippi and Polk's future Secretary of the Treasury, advocated the annexation of Texas by citing Henry Clay's arguments in favor of "the recognition of the South American States" (110). Walker's speech occurred in Washington on April 26, 1836. For information on Walker and his support of Texas annexation, see Sturdevant 188–202.

¹¹ See Brickhouse 2, 8, 23–32.

¹² Discussions of the equally important Francophone culture of New Orleans, undertaken by many historians and literary scholars, often ignore or marginalize the city's Spanish background and Latino population. Antebellum New Orleans featured newspapers published in English, French, and Spanish. Although several published articles in multiple languages to reach as many sections of the city's population as possible—evidenced by the *Bee's* English- and French-language sections from 1830 to 1872—few rivaled the range covered in *El Correo Atlántico*.

¹³ See Edward, *The History of Texas; or, The Emigrant's, Farmer's, and Politician's Guide to the Character, Climate, Soil and Productions of that Country: Geographically Arranged and from Personal Observation and Experience* (Cincinnati: J. A. James, 1836); and Field, *Three Years in Texas: Including a View of the Texan Revolution, and an Account of the Principal Battles, Together with Descriptions of the Soil, Commercial and Agricultural Advantages, &c* (Greenfield, MA: Justin Jones, 1836). Laura Lyons McLemore describes Edward as the "first revisionist historian" of Texas, since he argued that the colonists "had been duped by self-serving adventurers into a foolish and faithless revolution" (30, 27). For an overview of antebellum historians of Texas, see McLemore 18–40.

¹⁴ McLemore emphasizes that Holley's 1833 volume "made no pretense of being anything other than promotional," while the 1836 text qualifies as "the first Anglo-American history of Texas" and "concentrated on the Anglo-European settlement of this vast region," including "its forcible separation from Mexico" (21). See also Lee, *Mary Austin Holley*, especially pp. 223–84.

¹⁵ The proclamation appeared in the appendix to the 1836 edition, which reprinted it from the New Orleans *True American*. See *Visit to Texas*, 3rd ed., 177–80. McLemore describes *Visit* as one of the texts published to capitalize on interest in Texas that "emphasized what Texas was, its present and future prospects, not how it had come to be" (39).

¹⁶ The firm issued the novel under the name of a fictional publishing house, T.K. and P.G. Collins. Discussing how Carey and Hart published four ghostwritten Crockett books, Alexander Saxton suggests that "they brought out the last two under dummy imprints...to avoid linking the vernacular hero too closely to a firm well-known for its Whig connections" (82).

¹⁷ The Penguin Classics edition (2003) adds the "On to the Alamo" title. See "Note on the Text," in *On to the Alamo*, p. xlix. This chapter refers to the novel by its original title, *Col. Crockett's Exploits and Adventures in Texas*, often shortening it to *Col. Crockett's Exploits* for the sake of brevity. End notes, however, reference the Penguin edition's short title, *On to the Alamo*.

¹⁸ The manner in which Smith composed *Col. Crockett's Exploits* recalls Michael Denning's discussion of "the production of dime novels as a fiction factory" (26).

¹⁹ For an overview of the convention, see Lack 75–95.

²⁰ Note on usage: during the nineteenth century, the term most often used to refer to residents of Texas was "Texian." However, instead of that earlier, archaic form, this chapter uses its contemporary equivalent, "Texan," since it sounds more natural to modern readers.

²¹ By comparison, the final paragraph of the American Declaration begins, “*We, therefore*, the Representatives of the United States of America, *in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our Intentions, do*, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, *solemnly Publish and Declare*, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States....” (emphasis added, Jefferson 105). Like the American Declaration, Childress’s text included a list of grievances against the colonial government, presented via a parallel structure of “It has” clauses directed at “the Mexican nation,” echoing the American version’s “He has” accusations against England’s King George. A more unsettling replication occurs in Childress’s claim that Mexico “incited *the merciless savage*...to massacre *the inhabitants of our defenceless frontiers*” (emphasis added, “Texas Declaration” 215). This language recalls Jefferson’s assertion that the king “endeavoured to bring on *the Inhabitants of our Frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages*” (emphasis added, 104).

²² In a detailed critique of the document, Benjamin Lundy identified this claim as one of Childress’s “unwarrantable assumptions,” since the colonists agreed to follow “the regulations which the constituted authorities should from time to time see fit to make” (16–17). A passionate abolitionist, Lundy opposed Texas independence and annexation because he feared it would facilitate the spread of slavery. See his *The War in Texas: Instigated by Slaveholders, Land Speculators, &c. for the Re-establishment of Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Republic of Mexico* (Philadelphia: Merrihew and Gunn, 1836), especially pp. 3–15, 23–33, 39–48; and Campbell, *Empire for Slavery* 35–36.

²³ The declaration had been preceded by “the first constitution of Texas” on April 17, which “consolidated power on a local level” and “gave supreme authority to the governor over the army, foreign relations, and the execution of laws” (Narrett, “José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara” 216, 217). See also Garrett, “First Constitution” 290–308.

²⁴ See “Downfall of the Fredonian Republic,” *Western Monthly Review* 1.2 (1827): 69–71; and Pattie 260–62.

²⁵ Flint refers to the rebellion’s leader as “a Mr. Edwards,” suggesting he might not have known there were actually two men named Edwards involved, the brothers Haden and Benjamin. For an overview of the Republic of Fredonia, including the land disputes that inspired its creation, see Reséndez 40–45.

²⁶ Armitage does *not* mention the Texas Declarations of either 1813 or 1826, presumably because the republics later collapsed, although each text still illustrates his basic point.

²⁷ For example, some commentators cited how Santa Anna gave himself the title of “the Napoleon of the South.” See “Notes on Texas,” *Hesperian* 1.5 (Sept. 1838): 355.

²⁸ See Henry Adams Bullard, “Mexico and Texas,” *North American Review* 43 (1836): 226–57. For earlier studies that attribute the article to Bullard, see Bonquois 1000n10 and Sibley 20.

²⁹ In fact, the article contains no reference to Austin’s Address, while (as discussed below) both *Visit* and Holley’s *Texas* receive only minimal attention.

³⁰ Prior to Bullard’s essay, accounts of the expedition appeared in Flint’s novel, as well as an article by the frontier geographer and editor William Darby published in *Niles’ Weekly Register* on August 7, 1819. See McLemore 19–20, 103n6. Holley’s 1836 volume also provided a brief narrative of the expedition, based on an account by Henry Marie Brackenridge that I have not located (303–9).

³¹ Bullard indicates early on that his survey will include an account of the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition, which he alludes to as “some occurrences in the internal provinces of New Spain, of which no authentic account has ever been given” (227). In the course of his discussion, he makes a suggestive reference to “the meteor inroad of Mina,” echoing the widespread idealization of the general’s campaign (228).

³² May’s reading of the revolution as a filibuster contrasts with those historians who read Texas independence as the result of, to use a description from Walter Nugent, “an irreversible demographic inundation, completely overwhelming the Spanish-speaking population, the *tejanos*, by 1830 and subverting Mexican governance soon after” (131). The discussion of the novel *Col. Crockett’s Exploits* below addresses this demographic interpretation.

³³ See Lack 110–36, especially p. 133, table 8; and Miller 3–5, 203–4.

³⁴ For example, Bullard defends the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition as an attempt by U.S. citizens to hasten the resolution of the border disputes that would be resolved by the Adams-Onís treaty in 1819 (234).

³⁵ Bullard's belief in possible collusion between government officials and filibusters could have been influenced by his experiences in the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition. One of its active supporters, William Shaler, was actually an executive agent sent there by President James Madison (Stagg 10–11, 142–52). Bullard references Shaler and his role in the expedition (234, 239).

³⁶ Bullard includes repeated negative characterizations of Mexico and its population, such as to “the atrocities committed by Santa Anna in the flush of his short-lived victories” (253), presumably referring to events at the Alamo and Goliad, and to how the colonists suffered under “the weight of power, and the caprices of a revolutionary government and bigoted people” (255).

³⁷ Specifically, Bullard offers this critique as a rejoinder to one of the “grievances” listed in the Texas Declaration of Independence. For his review of the document, see Bullard 251–52.

³⁸ Concerning Santa Anna's role in Mexican politics during this period, see Fowler 133–83 and Krauze 135–43.

³⁹ For comments on the frauds carried out by these “New York land speculators,” see Henson 130.

⁴⁰ Holley's new *Texas* volume appeared in July of 1836, the same month as Bullard's essay (Lee, *Mary Austin Holley* 276).

⁴¹ Thomas Hietala observes that “in the view of racially conscious Protestant Americans, miscegenation and Catholicism in Mexico had prevented the Mexicans from forming a progressive society or a democratic government” (152).

⁴² The novel's modern editor, John Seelye, notes that the publishers believed the faux memoir would “help the sales of another book credited to the famous Tennessee congressman, *An Account of Colonel Crockett's Tour of the North and Down East*, issued by Carey and Hart the year before” (xi). The scheme apparently worked and “emptied their shelves of unsold copies of *Col. Crockett's Tour?*” (Seelye xxxiv).

⁴³ Seelye claims the novel was attributed to Smith by 1884 (xi). For Smith's apparent Whig sympathies, see Seelye xl.

⁴⁴ In later speeches, Crockett refers to Van Buren as “the Little Flying Dutchman” and “the Little Non Committal Magician,” accusing him of “seeking the presidency, principally for sordid gain, and to gratify the most selfish ambition.” Due to his affiliation with Jackson and the Democratic party, Van Buren is dubbed “the candidate of the office holders and office expectants.” Crockett also draws an explicit parallel between his own actions and that of the incoming president, noting that Van Buren “never took up arms in defence of his country, in her days of darkness and peril” (Smith, *On to the Alamo* 46–47).

⁴⁵ See Howe 390; and Watson, *Liberty and Power*, especially pp. 158–59, 184–85. On how Whigs contributed to the image of Crockett as “a vernacular hero,” see Saxton 77–84.

⁴⁶ Later in the nineteenth century, Jeffrey James Roche had no qualms about identifying Crockett as a filibuster. He even reprinted Smith's novel, which he believed was an actual memoir written by Crockett, as an appendix to his *The Story of the Filibusters* (New York: Macmillan, 1891). This book places Crockett in the same tradition as the century's other famous filibusters, including Aaron Burr, Narciso López, and William Walker.

⁴⁷ In a comparison of the actual Crockett with his mythic-heroic counterpart, Richard Flores exposes how the construction of Crockett as patriot-hero endorsed a pro-elite social agenda that the man himself vehemently opposed. Flores thus associates the mythic Crockett “with a form of patriotism that elides the real conditions of history for constructed notions of the nation” (152).

⁴⁸ See Campbell, *Gone to Texas* ix, 102.

⁴⁹ Historians cite the origins of Crockett's famous phrase as a notice from the *Louisville Journal*, reprinted in *Niles Weekly Register* on April 9, 1836.

⁵⁰ For an explanation of why filibustering qualified as a crime, see May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld* 6–7.

⁵¹ The Mexican government invited this population into Texas as part of what Walter Nugent describes as a faulty buffer policy. The empresario system granted land to all “settlers who would become loyal Mexican citizens,” but this policy “was actually welcoming a legal, peaceable Anglo influx” that proved disastrous: “If the buffers, in this case Anglos from the United States, did not assimilate and become loyal citizens, then they would prove to be the very people the policy was supposed to buff” (134, 140). On April 6, 1830, the Mexican Congress passed a law intended to curb this tide of immigrants, which in fact hastened the revolution (Nugent 148).

⁵² On Smith's source materials, see Seelye xxxviii.

⁵³ On Crockett going to Texas to look for a farm, see Seelye 135n1.

⁵⁴ Contemporary travel accounts acknowledged the frequency with which criminals entered Texas. In a scene eliminated from the 1836 edition, *Visit's* author notes how “at the breakfast table one morning, among those who were seated with me, [there were] four murderers who had sought safety in this country; and a gentleman assured me, that on one occasion, he had set down with eleven” (*Visit to Texas*, 1834 ed., p. 214). Smith incorporates this scene from *Visit to Texas* in *Col. Crockett's Exploits*, as Thimblebrig recounts having breakfast at a table with “eleven [men] who had fled from the states charged with having committed murder” (71). In the same paragraph, Smith plagiarizes verbatim a passage from *Visit*. It runs from “So accustomed are the inhabitants...” to “a crime against life or property” (71). For the original, see *Visit to Texas*, 1834 ed., p. 215. To Smith's credit, his interpolation of this commentary from *Visit* works well as an exposition of background information on current affairs in Texas. It also indicates his familiarity with contemporary Texas documents and his ability to integrate materials from them into the novel for maximum effect.

⁵⁵ See Teja 1–10 and Ramos 133–65.

⁵⁶ Smith combines two consecutive paragraphs from the Texas Declaration into a single paragraph. The quoted passage runs from “The Mexican government, by its colonization laws...” to “the combined despotism of the sword and the priesthood” (102). Smith's only alterations include adding several commas and using “Santa Anna” in place of the general's full name and title. For the original, see “Texas Declaration” 212–13.

⁵⁷ The novel contains several additional references to New Orleans, as Crockett encounters characters—including Thimblebrig and the bee hunter—who have spent time in the city. See Smith, *On to the Alamo* 23, 53, 67, 122.

⁵⁸ Commanded by the exiled Mexican federalist José Antonio Mexía, the Tampico expedition proved disastrous, culminating in the capture and execution of 28 soldiers. The event also further enraged pro-Texas advocates in New Orleans. See Miller 85–107.

⁵⁹ In 1815, a similar committee known as the New Orleans Association, again composed largely of Anglo-American merchants, funded the Gutiérrez-Magee expedition (Miller 4).

⁶⁰ For an account of the meeting, see Miller 56–61.

⁶¹ Miller misidentifies Santangelo's first name as “Octave” (59–60). The *Bee's* coverage of the meeting mentions Santangelo's presence. See “Texas,” *New Orleans Bee* 14 Oct. 1835: 2. Santangelo later claimed that he was the first to sign the list of volunteers for the expedition (“Petition” 144).

⁶² The full story read, “St. Angelo arrived here yesterday. It appears that in connection with another, he had published a newspaper in the city of Mexico, but becoming obnoxious to the governments from some free remarks, he was advised to decamp in 12 hours after notice. His coadjutor was exiled to California. St. Angelo proposes to publish notes on Mexico.” Santangelo was the only editor of *El Correo Atlántico*, and after issuing the official order of banishment on June 14, 1835, the Mexican government granted him several extensions. He did not actually leave the country until six weeks later on July 27, when he and his family sailed from Vera Cruz on a ship bound for New Orleans. This information is

based on Santangelo's documentary history of his life, *Statement of Facts Relating to the Claim of Orazio de Atellis Santangelo, a Citizen of the United States, on the Government of the Republic of Mexico, Preceded by Some Explanatory Remarks, and Followed by a Specified List of the Accompanying Documents* (Washington: Peter Force, 1841), especially pp. 97, 116.

⁶³ The issue devotes over a full column of print space (in broadsheet) to materials concerning Santangelo's banishment. See *New Orleans Bee* 13 Aug. 1835: 2. Before this, Santangelo had contact with the paper's editorial staff from October 1832 to February 1833, when he published several articles in the *Bee*, including a biographical sketch of Santa Anna, prior to his second residence in and eventual banishment from Mexico. See "Considérations sur la Convention conclue à Zavaleta," *L'Abeille* 24 Jan. 1833: 3; "Elections Mexicaines," *L'Abeille* 20 Feb. 1833: 3; and Santangelo, *Statement of Facts* 66, 68.

⁶⁴ For a bibliography of Santangelo's writings, see Rusich, *Carbonero molisano* 117–20.

⁶⁵ Barinetti praised Santangelo as "one of the most distinguished and learned foreigners who have [*sic*] ever resided in" the United States and singled out his pamphlet *A Lesson to Mr. Jesper Harding, Editor of "The Pennsylvania Inquirer and Daily Courier," Philadelphia...* (New Orleans: Benjamin Levy, 1839) for the exemplary manner in which it "chastised the editor" for his views (37–8).

⁶⁶ Concerning Santangelo's federalist views, Maurizio Isabella argues that "it was the abolition of all military and ecclesiastical privileges, a legacy of the despotic and centralized Spanish colonial period, that would strengthen the federal system and stabilize the republic [of Mexico]. In [his] view, federalism thus represented the only system compatible with equality of rights as against privilege and oligarchy" (53).

⁶⁷ See *Las cuatro primeras discusiones del Congreso de Panamá, tales como debieran ser* (Mexico: Oficina de la testamentaria de Ontiveros, 1826). Santangelo wrote the pamphlets in French, then gave them to Zavala, who translated them into Spanish.

⁶⁸ Zavala described the circumstances surrounding Santangelo's banishment in his history of the Mexican wars for independence (*Ensayo Histórico* 1: 356–9). An indefatigable chronicler of his own press, Santangelo translated an excerpt from this text and included it in his *Statement of Facts* (57).

⁶⁹ Santangelo claims his banishment resulted from questioning editorials published in the *Gaceta of Monterrey*, a periodical backed by the Mexican government that accused the United States of conspiring to steal Texas. In the *Correo* of June 13, 1835, Santangelo ran an editorial requesting that the journal provide documents to support its claims. This article included the controversial assertion that "It hitherto appears that, not the North-American Colonists of Texas, but the *anonymous* letters [from] Matamor[o]s are provoking an *aggression, an injustice, a war...* by means which the impartiality, hospitality, and good sense of every worthy Mexican, cannot help reprobating" (emphasis original, *Statement of Facts* 95).

⁷⁰ See also Rodríguez O., "Constitution of 1824" 71–90.

⁷¹ See Rusich, *Carbonero molisano* 61–3 and "Marquis of Sant'Angelo" 17. *La Estrella Mejicana* was published weekly by A. Crébassol for several months in 1836. According to Kanellos and Martell, there are no extant issues of the periodical (*Hispanic Periodicals* 189). Crébassol also published *L'Echo de la Louisiane* triweekly in English and French from June 19 until at least October 16, 1836. Santangelo claimed *L'Echo* was founded to offer opposing views ("a check") to his *Correo*, but instead presented only "an echo of imaginary sounds and unreal voices" ("Petition" 148).

⁷² For background information on Fisher, see Miller 36, 88–91. For a discussion of Toby's activities as an agent for Texas affairs, which included organizing shipments of supplies and selling land grants, see Miller 182–99.

⁷³ In his brief discussion of Santangelo, the historian Andrés Reséndez refers to him as "eccentric," "notoriously combative," and a "radical," terms that overlook the transnational perspectives engaged by his work (146, 201).

⁷⁴ Each issue of both the Mexico City and New Orleans editions reprinted this description of the paper in the same box detailing subscription rates, editorial policies, submission guidelines, *et cetera*.

⁷⁵ Concerning the centralist reforms, Fowler notes, “Although [Santa Anna] has been blamed for the change to centralism, he was not actually present during any of the deliberations that led to the abolition of the federalist charter or the elaboration of the 1836 Constitution” (158). For Santangelo, Santa Anna’s absence reveals his method of using puppet administrators to pass his own policies.

⁷⁶ See Article III of “A Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation Between the United States of America and the United Mexican States. Concluded April 5, 1831; Ratifications Exchanged April 5, 1832.” This treaty also confirmed the Sabine boundary line established by the Adams-Onís treaty of 1819 (Rives 1: 417, 662).

⁷⁷ The original passage reads, “*Reconvenido en junio del año último el presidente Santa-Anna, en Tacubaya, de una escandalosa violacion del art. 14 de aquel tratado, dijo: ‘Dentro de poco iré á firmar con la punta de mi espada otro tratado con los E. U. de América, sobre las orillas del Sabina...’*”

⁷⁸ By paralleling the threat of territorial invasion with an attempted sexual conquest of his wife, Santangelo connects the safety of the nation’s borders with the sanctity of its domestic households, both of which he accuses Santa Anna of trying to violate. For discussions of the association between national space and the domestic sphere, see Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*; and Nelson, *National Manhood*.

⁷⁹ For a discussion of this practice’s centrality to antebellum U.S. print culture, see McGill.

⁸⁰ See “Noticias de Tejas,” *El Correo Atlántico* 29 (23 May 1836): 114.

⁸¹ For information on Gorostiza’s activities as minister, see Spell, “Gorostiza and Texas.”

⁸² In addition to *El Correo Atlántico*’s New Orleans rivals *La Estrella Mejicana* and *Echo de la Luisiane*, other newspapers sympathetic to the Mexican government included the *American* [New York], the *Courrier des Etats Unis* [New York], the *National Intelligencer* [Washington, D.C.], and the *New York Atlas* (Spell, “Gorostiza and Texas” 453).

⁸³ Historians claim that by this time the population of Texas consisted predominantly of Anglo-Americans, some citing a ratio as high as “nine [U.S.] Americans for every Mexican” (Fowler 162). See also Campbell, *Gone to Texas* 110; Meyer and Sherman 335–36.

⁸⁴ See “Texas y los E. U. de America,” *El Correo Atlántico* 31 (6 June 1836): 123. This article was published in Spanish. All translations from it are my own.

⁸⁵ On the centralist reforms enacted by the Constitution of 1836, see Meyer and Sherman 327–28.

⁸⁶ For information on how Yucatán and Texas “rejected the new centralist Constitution,” see Krauze 139.

⁸⁷ See “Republica de Mejico” and “Republica de Bogota,” *El Correo Atlántico* 31 (6 June 1836): 123–4.

⁸⁸ Original passage: “*Pusilanimidad, ignorancia, intrigas, personalidades &c. hé aqui la características distintivas de todas las colonias españolas; y todas describen su país respective como tierras clásicas de saber, de patriotismo, de heroicidad.*”

⁸⁹ See “Europa,” *El Correo Atlántico* 31 (6 June 1836): 124.

⁹⁰ See the pamphlets *Clay or Polk* (New York: n.p., 1844) and *The Texas Question: Reviewed by an Adopted Citizen, Having Twenty-One Years of Residence in the United States* (New York: n.p., 1844).

⁹¹ See Blaisdell 257–8; and Rusich, “Marquis of Sant’Angelo” 23–4.

⁹² As an interpretation of the war’s conclusion, this conspiracy theory regarding an agreement between Polk and Santa Anna continues today in some popular accounts of the conflict. Depictions of Santa Anna as “a despicable traitor, who deliberately lost the war... for a significant sum of money” began in 1847 with accusations presented by Ramón Gamboa (Fowler 282).

⁹³ Addressing a meeting of New Orleans citizens on February 2, 1839, Santangelo advocated a war with Mexico to avenge its offenses against U.S. citizens and international laws. He claimed that “Mexico has never ceased to heap wrongs upon wrongs of the most ferocious character upon the government and citizens of the United States,” so an invasion would be “*lawful, dutiful*, and far from its being ungenerous, extremely *benevolent*” (emphasis original, *Address* 6–7, 36). Santangelo could have been inspired to adopt this extreme position by reports of Mexico’s recent victory over France, including Santa Anna’s role in the Battle of Veracruz on December 5, 1838. As Will Fowler explains, the event spurred Santa Anna’s “resurrection as a national hero” and marked the beginning of his return to the presidency (194). Santangelo potentially foresaw the likelihood of his old nemesis regaining power, reacting against it.

⁹⁴ Santangelo speculated that although the president had already “*conquered, nay annexed* to our country nearly half of the Mexican empire,” “the blood of his countrymen shed abroad is not enough for the complement of Mr. Polk’s glory; he wants also to bathe in their tears at home” by paying Santa Anna three million dollars, instead of pursuing the debts owed to U.S. citizens (emphasis original, *Two or Three* 18). Blaisdell reads Santangelo’s opposition to the Mexican War as “identical with his own self-interest” (258).

CHAPTER 4

LEGACIES OF SPANISH RULE: NARRATIVES OF ANGLO-AMERICAN EMPIRE IN THE CIRCUM-CARIBBEAN

Only “within the last ten years,” wrote Edward Henry Durell in 1845, has the city of New Orleans “been relieved from those scenes of violence whose memory even now colours its reputation, and makes vogue the reports of transient visitors [*sic*], who judge without examination, and give to the world as facts the results of a morbid imagination” (21). A future U.S. district judge for Louisiana, who also served a brief term as mayor of New Orleans in 1863, Durell positions his own travel account, suggestively titled *New Orleans As I Found It*, as a more accurate survey of the city. But his depiction in fact conforms to emerging nationalist visions of an Anglo-American empire, partially because Durell, like many previous and future commentators on New Orleans, approaches the city from what Mark L. Thompson characterizes as a perspective “embedded within a national narrative of the U.S. that treats the city as exotic and exceptional—‘un-American,’ in essence” (306).¹ Durell notes the city’s polyglot culture and intermingling ethnic groups, but dismisses them in favor of an argument for Anglo-American imperial expansion.² He readily attributes the city’s alleged progress over the past decade to the expanding population of Anglo citizens, viewing this as evidence proving Anglo-Saxon racial superiority. “That race alone colonizes with success,” he surmises, “and never recedes from the soil upon which it has once placed its foot” (21). The alleged permanence of Anglo-American empire contrasts with the general state of decline nineteenth-century U.S. writers believed present in Europe’s New World colonies. For instance, Washington Irving’s 1828 biography of Christopher Columbus, a text central to shaping early representations of the Caribbean, differentiates Columbus’s form of conquest from the one administrated subsequently by Spain. Irving associates Columbus with “liberal views” and “enlightened legislators,” but describes later voyagers as “desperate adventurers” and “avaricious conquerors,” signaling the deterioration of European imperial rule (566).³ Durell’s ethnocentric

thesis echoes this view by citing the history of New Orleans, specifically its background as a European colony, which he dubs “the successive feeble rule of the Spaniard and the Frenchman.” He opposes these decaying Old World empires with Louisiana’s incorporation into the United States, when it became “the possession of a people who, unlike their predecessors, grow stronger with age; and who, rather than curtail their wants, create the means of supplying them” (21). With its endorsement of U.S. empire-building, this statement illustrates what Thomas R. Hietala describes as the nation’s “elaborate ideology of republican empire,” which justified territorial expansion as a means of protecting “democratic values” and “contended that Anglo-Americans possessed an innate genius for self-rule that made it possible to reconcile individual liberty with empire” (173, 177–78). That vision reiterated exceptionalist ideas to rationalize Anglo-American empire as a means of liberating oppressed peoples, differentiating it from the legacies of European imperialism visible throughout the Caribbean.

Although Durell praises Spanish influence upon Louisiana’s legal codes, he remains openly antagonistic toward the current residents of Spanish descent. “There never existed a people more heroic in action than were the people of Old Spain,” he claims, “and there never existed a people more degraded in condition than are at this time their descendants” (28). Durell avoids clarifying the exact identities of these “descendants,” but they presumably include creoles with ancestors from *both* Spain *and* Latin America, as well as the exile communities that fueled the thriving Hispanophone print culture of New Orleans. Tellingly, Durell references only one newspaper, the blatantly pro-U.S. and nativist *True American* (21).⁴ Periodicals like *El Correo Atlántico*, with its polyglot contents and participation in hemispheric debates over national sovereignty, indicate a more linguistically and ideologically diverse city than revealed in Durell’s account. The multiple audiences addressed by Santangelo’s newspaper—Latin American exiles, Louisiana creoles, U.S. citizens, Texas filibusters,

Tejanos, European visitors, *et cetera*—reveal the distortions required to produce an account like Durell’s, which assumes a primarily Anglo-Saxon readership.⁵

This chapter approaches New Orleans as a circum-Caribbean city, employing Joseph Roach’s designation of it as such, and compares its literary representations by Anglo-Saxon U.S. writers to their depictions of Cuba, Spain’s last major colonial possession in the Americas.⁶ This approach exposes the cultural imaginings that positioned nineteenth-century New Orleans inside a U.S. “national narrative,” which as Thompson notes, rendered “the city as exotic and exceptional.”⁷ Sean X. Goudie’s recent study of early U.S. literary culture stresses the impact of the Caribbean on the nation’s writers by revealing how “the shadowy presence of creole American identities,” rampant in a city like New Orleans, “underlies anxious efforts to construct exceptional U.S. ‘American’ identities and literary and cultural traditions” (9).⁸ Geographically, nineteenth-century U.S. writers often discussed New Orleans in relation to the Caribbean, emphasizing the city’s position in what Roach describes as a network of “circum-Atlantic cultural exchange” (5).⁹ Their texts also connected it with the Mississippi River Valley by focusing on the “great river” and the surrounding frontier territory.¹⁰ These dual trajectories—circum-Atlantic and continental—overlapped because Caribbean voyages frequently docked at New Orleans, where the travelers disembarked and continued up the Mississippi via steamship. The path taken by Mexico’s Lorenzo de Zavala, author of a travel narrative discussed below, indicates how visitors from Central and South America stopped in the city on journeys to the United States, landing there and then travelling north.¹¹ Conversely, many U.S. residents regarded New Orleans as a starting point for voyages to Cuba, the Caribbean islands, and even Mexico. These coexisting pathways illustrate Kirsten Silva Gruesz’s description of New Orleans as a hub in “the Gulf of Mexico System,” since the city “is both a locus of power from which U.S. hegemony over much of Latin America has been extended, and an abjected place within the national body of the U.S.” Her reading posits the Gulf as “a system of transnational cultural

exchange” and “a supersaturated site for nineteenth-century visions of the Spanish imperial past, as well as the commerce-driven U.S. empire of the future” (“Gulf of Mexico” 470). She identifies the city’s “Latinness” as a product of both its Spanish background and position in a circum-Caribbean space featuring interactions between people and cultures from across Europe and the Americas.¹²

Matthew Guterl’s work on the “American Mediterranean” similarly approaches “the nineteenth-century U.S. South as a messy, complicated borderland of sorts between North America and the Caribbean, a transitional region of the hemisphere with conflicting and overlapping political, economic, social, and cultural identities” (11). For example, he interprets Southern slaveholders as *both* U.S. citizens and members of “a complicated tropical topography, *criollos* in a composite imaginary, and culturally hybrid philosophers of chattel bondage” united by a conception of “African slavery as a universal system of labor for the Americas” (6). Adam Rothman notes how “the slave trade to Louisiana was thriving at the very moment of the Louisiana Purchase,” estimating that from 1790 to 1810, “the transatlantic currents of commerce and politics carried almost eighteen thousand slaves from Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States into lower Louisiana,” a region encompassing New Orleans and its surrounding areas (83–84). The interrelationship between the U.S. South and the circum-Caribbean world became apparent when juxtaposing Havana and New Orleans, as many visitors and writers did, noting how both cities featured comparable slave economies, commercial ports, and cultures forged by colonial institutions.¹³ Adding another dimension, David Luis-Brown emphasizes that Mexico occupied an equally pivotal position in regard to U.S. relations with the Caribbean, as illustrated by the U.S.-Mexican War and its annexation of roughly half of Mexico’s territory.¹⁴

In the wake of Latin American independence, New Orleans and the Caribbean became crucial testing grounds for U.S. national narratives to address the entangled relationship between slavery and freedom in the Americas. Ignoring Haiti and its successful slave revolt whenever

possible, writers focused on areas with ties to the Spanish empire, including Cuba and Louisiana, with particular emphasis on New Orleans.¹⁵ After 1826, Cuba remained Spain's last major colonial possession in the Americas, gaining its independence in 1898 with assistance from the United States. Well before then, however, exiles from the island published texts in the U.S., including over seventy newspapers, based in cities like New York, Philadelphia, and New Orleans. In a detailed study of these print communities, Rodrigo Lazo reveals "how exiles' texts displayed both Cuban proto-nationalism and the connections to Anglo-American expansionist politics and culture" (*Writing to Cuba* 16). For example, in 1834, the Cuban revolutionary and political theorist José Antonio Saco published a pamphlet in New Orleans defending the establishment in Havana of a Cuban Academy of Literature.¹⁶ Jerome C. Branche observes that "In the atmosphere of colonial suppression, [this defense] signaled liberal Euro-Creole determination to have independent opinions about art, politics, and a wide range of subjects, and to express these opinions" (124). The pamphlet's New Orleans imprint indicates the influence exerted by the exile community there, both to impact public opinion in Cuba and advance the creole population's on-going struggle against Spanish colonial rule.¹⁷

Cultural historians have shown how U.S. intervention on behalf of Cuban independence marked another phase of the nation's empire-building across the Americas. Amy Kaplan uses the Spanish-American War (1898)—the conflict which resulted in Spain ceding Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States, at the same time that "Cuba achieved nominal independence under U.S. occupation and subsequent domination"—as a focal point in her analysis of how U.S. culture represented the nation's growing imperialist designs from the mid-nineteenth to early-twentieth centuries (2).¹⁸ Her argument reveals "how international struggles for domination abroad profoundly shape representations of American national identity at home, and how, in turn, cultural phenomena we think of as domestic or particularly national are forged in a crucible of foreign relations" (1). Noting how domestic fiction's "visions of imperial expansion as marital union carried

with them the prospect of racial amalgamation,” Kaplan stresses that “political debate over the annexation of Mexico hinged on what was agreed to be the impossibility of incorporating a foreign, racially-mixed people into the domestic nation imagined as Anglo-Saxon” (27).¹⁹ Robert W. Johannsen associates this debate with how proponents of the war (including writers, politicians, and soldiers) envisioned that incorporating Mexico into the United States would help spread republicanism, increasingly associated with Anglo-American racial superiority (288–92). On this point, studies by Paul Foos and Shelley Streeby emphasize how the U.S.-Mexican War impacted both U.S. foreign policy and domestic politics regarding race and class, signaling the nation’s emergence as an imperial power, as well as the prominence of debates over abolishing slavery.²⁰

As part of this project’s examination of the cultural imaginings that facilitated the U.S. invasion of Mexico in 1846, this chapter explores how texts published in the 1830s and 1840s posed situations in which Anglo-American culture could figuratively overpower Hispanic influence in the circum-Caribbean. The next section surveys depictions of Cuba and Louisiana from works of fiction and travel published in the 1830s and 1840s, placing particular emphasis on their contributions to—or evasions of—debates on the meaning of freedom and slavery in the Americas, including how fears of racial intermixture altered conceptions of republican citizenship. Works discussed include travel narratives by foreign citizens attentive to Louisiana culture, as well as novels by Robert Montgomery Bird, a Philadelphia doctor and ardent nationalist; Catherine Maria Sedgwick, New England’s preeminent domestic novelist; and Maria Gowen Brooks, an Anglo-American poet who lived for several years on a Cuban *cafetal* (coffee plantation). Overall, literary representations of Cuba and Louisiana in the 1830s and 1840s reveal cultural biases against non-Anglo citizens, particularly those of African and Latino/a descent. Identifying dominant tropes in literary depictions of the circum-Caribbean prior to the U.S.-Mexican War, the chapter establishes a context for analyzing several early works of Joseph Holt Ingraham, the U.S. writer who arguably wrote the most about

New Orleans during the 1830s and 1840s. Although he lived primarily in Natchez, Mississippi, Ingraham wrote about New Orleans repeatedly because he realized its importance to the growth of the United States as a nation, both culturally and geographically. Three of his first five publications—the densest and longest works he produced during his career—address the city, its past, and its current state in substantial detail. Largely forgotten today, Ingraham became one of the most popular writers in the antebellum U.S., due to his immense productivity and the range of his subject matter. Ingraham’s works also reveal how national narratives project models of citizenship and regional identity to the reading public. For instance, Ingraham shows in *Lafitte* the European-born pirate Jean Lafitte redeeming himself as a true republican citizen and U.S. national hero by helping win the Battle of New Orleans. The mixed race characters who challenge Spanish colonial administrators in *The Quadroone*, however, must first be cleansed of any non-Anglo characteristics, particularly that of African descent, before they become acknowledged citizens of the nation.

Travelling the Circum-Caribbean: Race, Empire, and National Identity

During his 1830 visit to the United States, the exiled Mexican statesman Lorenzo de Zavala described New Orleans as consisting of “two distinct cities divided not by some river, or district, or other similar object, but by the type of buildings, customs, language and class of society.” He attributed this diversity to Louisiana’s origins as a former French colony controlled briefly by Spain, then ceded back to France and sold to the U.S. in 1803 (*Journey* 9). Two years earlier, the German traveler and novelist Karl Postl, writing under his pseudonym of Charles Sealsfield, agreed with Zavala about the city’s “heterogeneous” character, but suggested that the inhabitants “all agree in one point—the pursuit after—‘money’,” citing Louisiana’s productive plantation economy (179, 217). Comparatively, works of fiction by antebellum U.S. writers generally reference New Orleans as an exotic place that characters talk about travelling to, but never reach.²¹ The city functions as an ideal—and often romantic—location in the narratives, which use it as a vague symbol rather than a

concrete place. In John Neal's *Randolph* (1823), characters mention journeying to New Orleans in route to South America, yet never visit either place.²² Similarly, James Kirke Paulding's *John Bull in America* (1825) concerns a "stranger [who] was an Englishman, travelling to New Orleans on business," but he keeps boarding stagecoaches and steamships going north (vi).²³ Among the novelists whose characters actually reached the city, Charles F. Briggs devotes two chapters of *The Adventures of Harry Franco* (1839) to the hero's experiences trying to buy cotton for a New York merchant. The novel evokes the city's cosmopolitan environment and Latin American character, as Franco remarks that "Some of the streets reminded me of the dark *Calle* [streets] which I first entered in Buenos Ayres, and some of the houses were facsimiles of those in that city." But after this, he describes "the jingling of silver," "motley assemblage of men," and abundant alcohol present at "a gambling house" on St. Louis Street, reiterating popular perceptions of the area (2: 203).²⁴ Like Sealsfield, Briggs emphasizes Louisiana as a site of future financial prosperity, stemming from its plantations, the active port of New Orleans, and the city's thriving commercial district.

In their travel accounts, Sealsfield and Zavala offered radically oppositional perspectives on one of Louisiana's dominant institutions—slavery. According to Walter Johnson, New Orleans contained the "largest slave market" in the antebellum United States, where "travelers and curiosity-seekers converged" when visiting the city (2). Sealsfield opens his travel narrative *The Americans As They Are* (1828) by noting how over fifty years have passed since U.S. independence, during which time he has perceived the "important influence of American liberty throughout the civilized world." He cites France and South America as evidence of "the influence of [the U.S.] example in raising the standard of freedom," praising the nation with a fervor reminiscent of ardent nationalists (ii–iii). Enamored of the nation's contributions to the cause of universal liberty and freedom, Sealsfield fails to recognize the hypocrisy in its continued acceptance of slavery. Instead, he describes "the black race" as possessing "a cruel and malignant disposition," along with an aptitude for physical labor,

even when performed in hot climates, such as Louisiana's (176). Sealsfield devotes roughly one third of the book (74 of its 218 pages) to a description of Louisiana, particularly the potential for New Orleans to become "the first commercial city, and the emporium of America," a goal that appears feasible since all activities seem "subordinate to the all-powerful desire of 'making money'" (164, 186).²⁵ Based on the region's commercial potential, Sealsfield declares the Louisiana Purchase the "most important" event since the American Revolution and speculates that it "may be called a *second revolution*" (emphasis added, 212). Noting the region's dependence upon slaves to fuel its plantation economy, however, he regards emancipation as "impossible," since it would hamper Louisiana's (and the South's) ability to produce crops at the same rate. For Sealsfield, Louisiana plantations constitute "sources of wealth far superior to the gold mines of Mexico," so he believes slavery should continue (177, 217). This view echoes apologists who defended the institution as a vital resource to the economy of the U.S. South.²⁶

On the other hand, Zavala bemoaned slavery's proliferation in the United States, viewing its harsh realities in New Orleans as disturbing evidence of a potential contradiction in the nation's self-image. Contrasting "the Mexican Republic" with "the states which permit slavery in our sister republic," Zavala praised his native land for having "abolished this degrading traffic [in 1829] and caused to disappear among us the vestiges of so humiliating a condition of the human race" (20). Although he often voiced skepticism toward independent Mexico's governmental policies—and visited the United States during a period of exile—Zavala consistently opposed the types of injustices represented by American slavery. After celebrating freedom from colonial rule, Zavala also endorsed abandoning any national institutions (such as slavery) that restrained the rights of individuals or treated people inhumanely. The Prologue indicates that Zavala intended his narrative to inform his "fellow citizens" of Mexico about "the manners, customs, habits and government of the United States, whose institutions they have copied so servilely" (*Journey* 1). John-Michael Rivera

emphasizes Zavala's use of the word "servilely," or in "the spirit of slavery," to describe Mexico's adoption of U.S. political principles. In Rivera's view, Zavala's critique of slavery in the body of the narrative presents Mexico's "servile" adherence to U.S. models as a dangerous precedent. Instead, Rivera argues, "Zavala instructs the Mexican people to avoid reproducing a strict copy of U.S. democracy but rather to become inspired by the U.S. to create its own representative version, one informed by Mexico's own aesthetics of democratic peoplehood" (429, 438). Examining Zavala's commentaries on Louisiana's slave institutions reveals his objections to slavery on moral and ideological grounds but also shows his shocking willingness to rationalize *why* the U.S. might condone the practice's continued existence. His descriptions of slavery in New Orleans focused on the "extremely antiliberal provisions" contained in the laws issued on March 7, 1830. These laws threatened punishment for anyone found educating slaves or free people of color resident in the city, or inspiring "discontent" among them. Individual provisions barred teaching slaves to read or write, as well as performing any activity that could "induce rebellion" (Zavala, *Journey* 21). After citing these laws, Zavala remarks, "Sad indeed is the situation of a state where its legislators consider necessary such offensive measures of repression against the rights of man" (22). With this crucial insight, he critiques the continuation of slavery in the United States by citing the republican principles (signaled by the phrase "the rights of man") that the nation prides itself on disseminating throughout the world.

In a detailed analysis of this passage, Stephen J. Mexal focuses on Zavala's understanding of the laws as "antiliberal" (95–99).²⁷ Mexal argues that Zavala "confronts the continued legality of U.S. slavery" by showing how "in an ideal liberal polity, the consent of the individual should...trump the rule of the majority" (99). Although Mexal helpfully unpacks how the text critiques slavery as contrary to liberal democracy, he ignores Zavala's inexplicable suggestion that the city's quadroons, or female concubines of mixed racial heritage, are partially to blame for the laws. Speculating that

“an inevitable necessity...obliges [legislators] to sanction such laws,” Zavala details how “an invincible prejudice” prevents a legislator (or any resident) from marrying his quadroon mistress:

There are those among these legislators who go from the halls of their sessions to pay homage and adoration to the beautiful quadroons, with whom they would bind themselves in the sacred bonds of matrimony if an invincible prejudice did not interpose itself to prevent such unions. I have known respectable persons who lived condemned to an involuntary celibacy because they could not unite with the women who because of their charms, beauty and affectionate solicitude had made captive their wills. (*Journey* 22)

This Anglo-centric explanation of *plaçage* blames the state’s anti-literacy laws in part on the seduction of legislators by quadroon women, an interpretation that reiterates prevalent stereotypes of female sexual ardor and avoids exploring the roots of cultural prejudices against mixed-racial marriages. By offering a convoluted explanation for why legislators might pass such laws, Zavala deflects the force of his previous critique. His comments appear especially surprising given his prior protest against the sufferings endured by slaves and the willingness of government officials to commit “acts of notorious injustice towards a group of individuals of the human race,” namely slaves and free people of color (22). With his comments on *plaçage*, Zavala flatters U.S. readers and other authorities by rationalizing such deplorable laws, inviting sympathy for the wealthy legislators prevented from marrying their quadroon mistresses, rather than for women of color trapped in sexual bondage and non-citizenship, or for the thousands of slaves prohibited from learning to read or write, expressing their discontent, or otherwise challenging their subjugation.²⁸ Despite this, Zavala remains “more critical of U.S. slavery than any other author of a travel narrative at this time” (Rivera 438). Yet he still offers possible defenses for the institution’s continued existence—such as blaming the quadroons for holding “captive [the] wills [of legislators]”—which suggests how many people regarded slavery as an integral component of the circum-Caribbean world.

At the opposite end of the Gulf of Mexico, Cuba possessed another circum-Caribbean slave culture, marking Havana as a figurative counterpart of New Orleans, as travelers, merchants, and

other agents associated the two places together. Noting that “Louisiana and Cuba were for each other nearby possible worlds,” Rebecca J. Scott observes that “the stories of [both locales] also overlapped and intersected, making comparison a matter of daily experience” (2).²⁹ While the Louisiana Purchase transferred New Orleans to the United States in 1803, Cuba remained a Spanish colony until 1898. Louis A. Pérez, Jr., argues that long before gaining its independence, “Cuba entered the North American imagination as the ‘tropics,’ . . . the opposite of what the United States was” and “specifically what it was not,” so travelers regarded the island as a locale suggesting “a simpler time,” providing “recuperation and rejuvenation,” and offering a possibility for starting “life anew” (*On Becoming Cuban* 22). All these qualities marked Cuba as an environment redolent of romance, a trend that several novelists capitalized upon by using the island as a setting, or sometimes even the source of a character’s background (as with Sedgwick’s *Pedrillo*). Cuba also provided a potential new territory—or ally—for the nation, especially since it represented one of the last European colonies in the Americas. Foreshadowing future attempts to acquire Cuba, such as Narciso López’s filibustering expeditions from 1849 to 1851, U.S. writers depicted the island as possessing valuable resources—such as sugar and coffee plantations—yet in need of liberation from its imperial parents.³⁰ To promote future U.S. commercial and cultural interest in Cuba, writers emphasized the beauty of its landscape and the willingness of its populace to aid foreign travelers.

Along with the island’s regenerative potential, antebellum texts often stressed the dangers Cuba posed to respectable Anglo-American citizens. As one of Spain’s last remaining colonies in the Americas, Cuba suggested the possibility of Old World values corrupting the United States. For instance, Rosamond Culbertson’s 1836 captivity narrative recounts in lurid detail a series of abuses she reportedly suffered at the hands of Catholic priests in Cuba.³¹ Culbertson and Samuel B. Smith, her editor (and probable ghost writer), focus on attacking Catholicism, rather than offering a detailed depiction of Cuba’s natural environment or social institutions, but the text still reiterates prevalent

fears about the savagery and corruption allegedly prevalent in the Spanish colonies. Cuba also posed a danger to characters travelling through the Caribbean because of pirates like Jean Lafitte (prior to his 1812 conversion) who attacked ships no matter what their country of origin. For instance, several popular fictions, including Henry William Herbert's sensationalistic *Ringwood the Rover* (1843), recounted how pirates wreaked havoc around the Florida Keys, often dwelling on violent gore and the sufferings of captured maidens.³² Hannah F. Gould's "The Pirate of Key West" (1846) claims that "the crimes committed by [the pirates] who have infested that coast...no flood can wash out," citing such grisly images as "the footprints of the murderer on the sand" and how "the blood he has shed is so lost in the great waters" as evidence of the toll wrought by Caribbean buccaneers (172).

In *The Adventures of Robin Day* (1839), the Philadelphia doctor-turned-author Robert Montgomery Bird depicts the title character's capture by Spanish forces in East Florida (amid accusations of filibustering), escape under mysterious circumstances, and unwilling conversion into a pirate operating from Cuba.³³ With the arc of the plot, Bird evokes the history of U.S. expansion through Florida and into the Caribbean, particularly the territorial conflicts in the 1810s that culminated with the Adams-Onís Treaty (1819), which ceded Florida to the United States.³⁴ Robin travels to Florida with a group known as "the Bloody Volunteers," "a sort of *guerilla* or independent troop, attached to no particular regiment of their district, and without any authority," founded in Tennessee and commanded by Captain Dicky Dare (emphasis original, 2: 94).³⁵ Bird emphasizes that the Volunteers invaded Spanish territory unintentionally, thus defending them against accusations of filibustering. After capturing the troop, Spanish authorities interrogate them to discover if they entered Florida "under the orders of General Jackson, or any other American commander." Dare responds "that neither his government nor commanding general had the least idea of violating the territory of their Spanish friends," and then describes "the invasion" as "an affair of accident, attributable solely to him, and to him only on account of his ignorance of the Spanish boundaries."

Concerning this explanation, Robin notes with approval how Dare “said every thing necessary to allay the suspicions that might be entertained by the Governor as to any sinister movements of the American army, in progress or designed, against his little Intendancy” (2: 144). By including an implicit reference to Andrew Jackson’s invasion of Florida in April 1818, Bird suggests the general inadvertently seized St. Marks and Pensacola, contemplated an attack on St. Augustine, and violated the peace treaty between Spain and the United States.³⁶ Bird’s underlying endorsement of filibustering reappears in his account of Dare’s death in Mexico while serving “with the celebrated [Xavier] Mina,” the general glorified in Robinson’s *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution* (from Chapter 1). Robin notes that Dare “would have had the honor of being shot [along with Mina] as a *heroic freebooter*,” but he instead achieved “a more glorious grave” by attempting “to liberate the Mexican nation on his own account,” which resulted in his being “cut to pieces,” along with fifty soldiers under his command (emphasis added, 2: 266).³⁷

A group of pirates led by the demonic Captain Hellcat Brown rescue Robin from the Spanish garrison and force him to join their crew. Robin becomes a pirate under threat of death, observing Captain Brown and his associates murder anyone who refuses to follow their commands. With his depiction of the evil captain, Bird presents Caribbean piracy as a final refuge for the region’s murderers and criminals. Brown explains that he prefers a pirate’s life because “he had tried the land, d[am]n his blood, in every way he could take it; he had swindled and cheated; robbed houses and nigg[e]r-traders; taken scalps, and three wives among the Indians; cut thief-takers’ throats and play’d the quack-doctor; but after all, blast him, it was nothing; the sea was the only place for a jolly dog, a freebooter’s life the only life of a gentleman and man of honor” (2: 194).³⁸ He then illustrates his belief “that a pirate must be a man of honor” by ordering that a violent whipping be administered to Captain Duck, who betrayed him earlier. Although Robin has “cause to hate” Duck for prior abuses, he recoils from the savage beating and intercedes on the condemned man’s

behalf, describing “the atrocity, the horrible severity of the punishment” as “a more brutal murder than any I had witnessed” (2: 195). When the ship arrives in Cuba, Brown horrifies Robin again by selling all the black crewmen into slavery and replacing them with “fifteen cut-throat islanders, selected from a number who begged the honor of making their fortunes under [the captain’s] diabolical auspices.” Robin’s remark concerning how this group “truly...approved themselves, in the end, worthy of their leader” embodies the novel’s depiction of Cuba as a place conducive to piracy’s violent agenda (2: 199).³⁹ Ultimately, Robin rebels against the pirates by rescuing the daughter of the Spanish commander who interrogated the Volunteers in Pensacola, discovering afterward that she is his sister. Amid these coincidences, Robin learns of his identity as Juan Aubrey, the only son of a loyalist who “emigrated from South Carolina in the war of the Revolution,” “entered the Spanish service in Cuba,” and “rose to wealth by espousing a Spanish heiress,” but fled after participating in a “treasonable project or conspiracy to subvert the Spanish power in the island” (2: 231). This discovery transforms Robin into a wealthy Cuban noble and he later immigrates to the island for his wife’s health, yet Bird avoids exploring the implications of this movement, presumably because Robin’s devotion to the United States remains unaltered.

Another novel with a denouement unveiling a character’s true parentage, Catherine Maria Sedgwick’s *Clarence* (1830) presents a more incisive commentary on Cuba’s centrality to Anglo-American consciousness. The novel’s villain, Henriques Pedrillo, presented originally as “a rich Spanish merchant from Cuba,” tries to corrupt a young New England woman, Emilie Layton, by convincing her to abandon life in the Northern United States and return with him to the island (Sedgwick 2: 211). Concerning this seduction plot, Sedgwick associates Pedrillo with Satan tempting Eve in the Garden of Eden. When Pedrillo observes Emilie and her true love walking together, “as happy as spirits of paradise,” Sedgwick compares his gaze with “that oblique and evil eye, that Satan bent on our first parents in their blest abode—that eye of mingled and contending passions, that

expresses the ruined soul” (1: 284).⁴⁰ Pedrillo blackmails Emilie’s father into supporting their marriage, claiming that he can prove Mr. Layton fraudulently won a large sum of money by cheating at cards (1: 218–22).⁴¹ When Pedrillo’s intentions become clear, Emilie expresses discomfort at the idea of marrying him. “I do not, and never can love Mr. Pedrillo,” she explains, in a speech that associates his affections with how Spanish explorers used gifts to obscure their plans for conquering the Caribbean.⁴² Concerning “splendid bracelets” he gave her, Emilie observes that wearing them reminds her “of the natives of Cuba..., who thought, poor simpletons, that the Spaniards were only decorating them with beautiful ornaments, when they were fastening manacles on their wrists” (1: 267). By implying that the marriage would make Emilie a slave, Sedgwick uses Spain’s conquest of the West Indies as a metaphor for the “foreigner” Pedrillo’s attempted seduction of a U.S. heroine. Eventually, Pedrillo plots to abduct her and have a marriage ceremony performed by a Catholic priest while in route to Cuba (2: 217).⁴³ Family friends thwart this plan by helping Emilie escape to the New Jersey countryside, where Pedrillo fights with her protectors and dies by his own hand.

Near the end, Sedgwick reveals Pedrillo’s true identity as Isaac Flint, the son of a respectable U.S. family, but “a misdoer from the cradle” who, when still a teenager, “fled from his father’s roof, and his country’s violated law” after committing a violent robbery (2: 213–14). The novel presents Pedrillo as so evil that the narrator cannot explain how “such an inexplicable wretch as Pedrillo is found in the bosom of an honest family” (2: 213). Later, Mrs. Clarence offers a possible answer by describing Pedrillo as “a man unfettered by principle, *without ties or responsibilities to the country*, and stimulated by love, disappointment, and resentment” (emphasis added, 2: 245). According to this, Pedrillo’s villainy stems *not* from a Spanish heritage, but instead his betrayal of the land of his birth, the United States. Multiple characters emphasize how—despite being descended from an honest American family—Pedrillo displays no fidelity to the country, its citizens, or principles. Pedrillo describes himself as “a wretch,” “an outcast, a solitary vagrant on earth, working mischief to the

only being I love—and loved myself by none” (2: 257). In the novel’s conclusion, Mr. Flint declines the “countless gold” bequeathed by his son, even though Pedrillo suggests using the money for philanthropic purposes, such as to “build hospitals and churches, [because]—they may—hereafter—get my soul out of torment” (2: 266). Instead, Mr. Flint disowns Pedrillo, an act that emphasizes his expulsion from the imagined community of U.S. national identity (2: 270–72). Prior to the revelation of his true parentage, however, characters readily accept that such a villain came from Spain. Pedrillo’s decision to disguise himself as a Spaniard underscores cultural biases against people of Spanish descent. In the novel, Emilie maintains that she has “always hated Spaniards,” which explains part of why she resists Pedrillo’s courtship, despite the fact that “he does not look at all Spanish” (1: 267).⁴⁴ On this point, her mother suggests, “he is probably descended from one of the Irish Catholic families that emigrated to Spain,” a remark that evokes fears about the Catholic institutions established in Spanish colonies (1: 267–8). One reviewer even described the villain as “a dashing foreigner, whose home is that common-sewer of the nations, the Spanish West Indies” (Rev. of *Clarence* 86).⁴⁵ Such negative depictions of the circum-Caribbean indicate how *Clarence*, a novel set entirely in New England, codifies the era’s dominant stereotypes of Cuba and the Spanish Caribbean. Disowned by his father and the nation, Isaac Flint changes his identity to Pedrillo—willingly associating himself with Cuba—because he regards the island as a suitable location for launching his villainous schemes.

Whereas Pedrillo profits from Cuba’s merchant houses and pirate bases, the heroine of Maria Gowen Brooks’s *Idomen; or, The Vale of Yumuri* (1843) embraces the tropical environment as a place of self-discovery and personal regeneration, free from the constraints of U.S. and Canadian models of social behavior. Best known as a poet under the pen name “Maria del Occidente,” Brooks lived in Cuba sporadically for over 20 years, which inspired *Idomen*, her only novel.⁴⁶ As Brooks herself did in 1823, *Idomen* travels to Cuba after her husband dies and an uncle bequeaths her an

estate there. Her widowhood and inheritance coincide with her depression over a thwarted love affair with Ethelwald, a British Canadian military officer and focal point for Idomen's romantic ideals. Early descriptions present Idomen as "a being full of passions" which "had never been awakened," so "she had yet to learn that happiness existed, unless in those scenes of fiction, which beguiled her hours of loneliness" (15–16). Indicative of this, she believes Ethelwald resembles "some creature of mythology, with flesh composed of ambrosia and ichor instead of mortal blood," with "the sublime and beautiful united and personified in him" (26).⁴⁷ The death of Idomen's husband and her uncle's bequest of the plantation provides her with an opportunity for social mobility. According to her friend Dalcour, a Frenchman who lives in Cuba and recounts her tale, "Idomen was now at liberty to love, but Idomen was now a wanderer" (37–8). Gossip and rumors prevent her from marrying Ethelwald, since circles of Canadian aristocrats object that "this paragon of the country be monopolized—and perhaps, even carried off by a stranger whom nobody knew" (111).⁴⁸ After attempting suicide, Idomen returns to Cuba, the place "where [her] soul had first waked to consciousness" (76). She finds the island's natural environment rejuvenating, but its remnants of European culture and social decorum too restraining. After a friend of her uncle criticizes "her present way of living" as "ruinous, not only to herself, but disgraceful to her child and to all her relations in Canada," Idomen kills herself by jumping into the Yumuri River, from which her body is never recovered, an act emphasizing her immersion into the Cuban landscape (204).

Brooks opposes Idomen's life in Cuba to her upbringing in the northern United States and her later experiences visiting Canada. Dalcour meets Idomen in Portland, Maine, a location rendered as a generic U.S. city, identified only as "P---d, the most northern capital of the still new American republic," rather than by name, and a place whose citizens are defined by "caution and coldness" (12, 52). This depicts U.S. society as stagnant and unwelcoming toward Idomen's growing awareness of herself as an independent woman who aspires to write poetry. By contrast, the Prologue opens by

claiming that travelers from North America will immediately respond to the island's tropical climate: "A stranger newly transported from the snows of the north, and placed in a piazza not far from the shores of Cuba, becomes, if he has the least sensibility, inebriate with warmth and fragrance" (1).⁴⁹ By contrasting the frigid northern territories with the Cuban tropics, Brooks echoes how contemporary travel accounts presented the island as a place for personal recuperation.⁵⁰ A key portion of the novel is set in Canada, around the St. Lawrence River, where Idomen encounters a renewed form of the stifling social conventions she experienced in Maine. Crucially, the telling of Idomen's story occurs *in Cuba*, where she narrates it in English to Dalcour, who later recounts it in French to Hernan Albrecht, the author of the German manuscript that Brook's unnamed narrator translates back into English for the novel's readers.⁵¹ By mediating Idomen's "story" via a series of narrators, languages, and places, Brooks creates a narrative structure oriented around Cuba as a hub of hemispheric consciousness. Like the U.S.-born Idomen, the Europeans Dalcour and Albrecht discover a new sense of self in Cuba, which explains why her story reminds them of their own experiences. Living in Cuba helps each character escape from a world view molded by a single, fixed national identity, yet also displays their acceptance of Anglo-American racial superiority.

Idomen, Dalcour, and Albrecht consequently refuse to question the legality of slavery, either in moral or civil terms. Instead, the novel provides an idealized depiction of slave life in Cuba—and by extension, all the Americas—with views indicative of continuing pro-slavery apologetics in the United States. On this point, Gruesz identifies the novel's central contradiction as "the repressive effort it takes to argue forcefully on behalf of women, Indians, and unjustly subjugated people, on one hand, while painting African chattel slavery as a natural and benevolent institution, on the other" (*Ambassadors of Culture* 68). Acknowledging Brooks's "outright apologism," Gruesz summarizes its position as "portraying life on the coffee plantation as a model of just government and as an Edenic paradise for both whites *and* blacks" (emphasis original, 65, 67). But Brooks's

apologist argument also focuses on repressing the revolutionary history of the circum-Caribbean world, specifically the Haitian slave revolt. The preface speculates on how society would devolve into chaos if everyone received liberty:

Were every individual perfectly “free and equal,” every individual would soon be far more wretched than slaves are now, even with a bad master. Arts would cease, and barbarism deface the fairest countries; many even would groan and die; for who could long endure the severe and sordid toil which would fall on every individual, *if condemned, unassisted, merely to supply the daily wants of his own nature?* (emphasis original, xiii–iv)

To allay these fears, Brooks depicts slavery as prescribed by nature (referencing the Bible) and presents people of African descent as naturally conditioned to the types of physical labor required in the Caribbean. According to the preface, in “a state of...perfect equality,” natural divisions (presumably between races) would emerge, so that “it would soon be perceived that some could think, and organize, while others could do nothing but toil under their direction,” illustrating the incompatibility of the “idea of external equality” (xiv). Although this passage lacks any specific references to race, the novel supports it in racialized terms via master-slave relations in Cuba. Concerning life on her uncle’s coffee plantation, Idomen tells Dalcour, “The limbs of the negroes that passed to and fro among the trees were round and glossy with health, their labors were light and cheerful, and their far native land forgotten. Singing, in low hum, rude songs of their own composing, they lived all day among the flowers of an eternal spring.” She then claims dark skin allows slaves to work in the sun longer than people with fairer complexions, since “the noonday beam that endangers the brain of the white man, to them was but pleasure and rejoicing” (67). Dalcour and Albrecht both echo this view that people of African descent possess a natural disposition for field work, as opposed to Anglos.⁵² They also reiterate Idomen’s depiction of slavery on the island as benignly enforced.⁵³

Brooks dismisses alternative circum-Caribbean slave cultures, especially the Haitian Revolution and its establishment of a republic ruled by former slaves. Instead, the preface provides

an oblique commentary on Haiti, referencing it as “the beautiful island” where “the African is sovereign,” and then asking, “By the free possession of that island have his glory or his happiness increased?” (xx). Apparently, Brooks’s answer is that they have not.⁵⁴ The next paragraph implies that it would happen only if “a few sable youths and maidens” will “hasten to that island purchased with blood, and induce to some exertion the urchins, who roam naked (looking like little statues of bronze,) through its woods and plantain groves,” a view that reiterates stereotypical images of blacks as innately lazy (xx–xxi). A footnote to the previous question clarifies Brooks’s view of racial divisions by arguing that “*white men* of almost every nation, will rush in crowds, when a ‘land of promise’ is described to them” and “with no other means than their own energy” acquire “a little land” for themselves. She opposes this to how supposedly “the negro does no such thing,” but must be “compelled [to] do work enough to support his own life” because “he has not, like the white man, an ‘ideality’ of distant and future good” (xxiii8). Such broad generalizations about entire ethnic groups attempt to legitimize doctrines of Anglo racial superiority, while also defending Anglo-American empire-building as the result of “white men” working tirelessly so that “a little land” will “be reclaimed from the wilderness.” With such rhetorical flourishes, Brooks echoes visions of an Anglo-American nation preordained to extend its dominion throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Like Brooks, the popular novelist Joseph Holt Ingraham travelled the circum-Caribbean and used it as a setting in his fiction. His works explore the significance of Cuba’s and New Orleans’s respective histories as a part of the Spanish empire, reflecting on the larger implications of Spain’s imperial presence in the Americas. Again like Brooks, Ingraham rationalizes the continued existence of slavery in both the United States and Cuba, echoing the views of apologists who presented the institution as a vital aspect of the nation’s economy and argued that people with darker complexions possessed a natural disposition to manual labor. By accepting slavery as inevitable, Ingraham and Brooks reveal how sections of U.S. culture overlooked the inherent contradiction in the nation’s

attitudes toward freedom and slavery. This provides a stark contrast to the independent nations formed by the Spanish American revolutions, which outlawed slavery and worked against its continued presence in the Americas. Several important works from the 1850s—including Frederick Douglass’s novella “The Heroic Slave” (1853); William Wells Brown’s history of the Haitian Revolution, *St. Domingo: Its Revolutions and Its Patriots* (1854); Herman Melville’s novella “Benito Cereno” (1855); and Martin Delany’s serialized novel *Blake; or, The Huts of America* (1859–62)—utilize the circum-Caribbean as a region whose history exposes the inhumanity and unlawfulness of slavery, as well as the discursive forms used by U.S. culture to rationalize its continuation. These texts challenge U.S. culture’s acceptance of slavery and the racial views that endorse it.⁵⁵ They also convey a nuanced understanding of how the Haitian and Spanish American Revolutions established precedents for ending New World slavery. In the process, they critique texts like Ingraham’s *The Quadroone* (1841) and Brooks’s *Idomen*, which reveal how cultural stereotypes rationalizing slavery remained firmly in place during the 1840s, providing writers with another “evil” to blame on Spain and its colonial policies in the Americas.

**How a Yankee Views New Orleans:
Nation-Building in J. H. Ingraham’s *The South-West* and *Lafitte***

In his travel narrative *The South-West* (1835), Ingraham describes his first visit to New Orleans by comparing it to his initial impressions of Boston. Presenting himself as a young explorer entering a foreign territory, he remarks, “when I sallied out the morning after my arrival, to survey [New Orleans,] this ‘Key of the Great Valley,’ I enjoyed [the experience] with almost as much zest, as when, a novice to cities and castellated piles, I first gazed in silent wonder upon the immense dome which crowns Beacon Hill, and lingered to survey with fascinated eye the princely edifices that surround it” (1: 96). This reference to “the immense dome” of the Massachusetts State House begins a description of a journey around Beacon Hill, including such hallmarks of the city’s

revolutionary past as the site of the Boston Massacre, the Old North Church, the Liberty Tree on Boston Common, “the wharf, from which the tea was poured into the dock by the disguised citizens,” and other places which provided “the scene of many a revolutionary incident.” In the process, he makes two references to James Fenimore Cooper’s novel *Lionel Lincoln; or, The Leaguer of Boston* (1825), noting first “the ‘King’s’ Chapel [on Beacon Hill] as the site where [the title character] was married,” and later that “the ancient residence of ‘Job Pray,’” the patriotic madman whom Lionel eventually learns is also his brother, “was gazed upon with a kind of superstitious reverence” (1: 97–8). Extensive descriptions of New Orleans constitute over 180 pages of *The South-West*, roughly two-thirds of the first volume, but Ingraham prefaces his journey through the city with these repeated Bostonian references, providing a more accessible entry point for his Northern readers.

Marking New Orleans as the Boston of the South reduces its past into what the antebellum U.S. viewed as a more socially acceptable Anglo-American model. Along with *The South-West*, Ingraham addresses the history of New Orleans in two of his early novels, *Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf* (1836) and *The Quadroone*. These texts translated his impressions of the city into representative U.S. national narratives that contributed to “the exceptionalism that has long been central to the nation’s conception of its privileged place in the American hemisphere” (Levander and Levine 3). Ingraham’s early works assimilate New Orleans’s heterogeneous environments into the U.S. nation’s expanding geographical and ideological borders, a goal that his comparisons of the city to Boston make especially clear. The subtitle to *The South-West* bills it as written “by a Yankee,” marking its author as one from another section of the nation than the text’s subject matter. Born in Portland, Maine, in 1809, Ingraham grew up in New England, attended Yale College for one year, and eventually sailed south in 1830, travelling through the Bahamas and Cuba before landing in New Orleans, where he spent several weeks, and then journeyed via steamship to Natchez, Mississippi.⁵⁶ He eventually settled in Natchez, living there and in the adjacent town of Washington until 1847,

when he began “to study for the ministry” and moved to Nashville, Tennessee, becoming an Episcopal minister in 1852 and holding several church positions until his death in Holly Springs, Mississippi, in December of 1860.⁵⁷ From 1836 to 1847, however, Ingraham published at least 84 novels, almost 80 of which were short paperback novelettes written for the Williams Brothers publishing house. These texts received a wide readership in the antebellum U.S. but earned him few positive notices from critics. His most famous—and persistent—critic was Edgar Allan Poe, who reviewed three of his works in the pages of *The Southern Literary Messenger* and *Graham’s Magazine*.

In *The South-West*, Ingraham associates himself with what he describes as a typical “Yankee” tourist, claiming that he devoted his time in New Orleans to “perambulating the city, hearing, seeing, and visiting every thing [*sic*] worthy the notice of a Yankee, (and consequently an inquisitive) tourist” (1: 108). His travel narrative chronicles his wanderings through the city, focusing on his passage through specific streets, neighborhoods, markets, and other central sites, each of which Ingraham describes in what Poe maligned as the author’s “inveterate habit of writing what neither is, nor should be English” (Rev. of *South-West* 122).⁵⁸ Poe’s critique of Ingraham remained largely stylistic, however, as he acknowledged that “the portions of the book immediately relating to New Orleans—its odd buildings—its motley assemblage of inhabitants—their manners and free habitudes, have especially delighted us; and cannot fail, of delighting, in general, all lovers of the stirring and life-like” (122–23). Poe, who had never seen New Orleans, alluded to Ingraham’s elaborate renderings of the city’s cosmopolitan environment, which his travel narrative captures by describing the ethnically diverse population, coexisting languages, and mixed architectural styles. Ingraham presents the city effectively as a cacophony of different voices, groups, and sections that he attempts to decipher.⁵⁹ For instance, in one scene, he comments on how “Crowds of mulatto, French and English hack-drivers were besieging the door, shouting in bad French, worse Spanish, and broken English...mingled with execrations, heavy blows, exchanged in the way of friendship, laughter, yells

and Indian whoops, composing a ‘concord of sweet sounds’ to be fully appreciated only by those who have heard similar concerts” (1: 125). Ingraham attributes this potentially chaotic confrontation to the fact that the crowd remained unaware of his national identity, claiming that the carriage drivers were “ignorant of our country, in a city where all the nations of the earth are represented, [and thus] wisely addressed us in a Babelic medley of languages” (1: 125–6). Elsewhere, he reduces the city’s history to a collaboration between European nations by observing that “New-Orleans seems to have been built by a universal subscription, to which every European nation has contributed a street, as it certainly has citizens” (1: 159). Providing a speculative walking tour, Ingraham proposes that “From one [street], which to a Bostonian looks like an old acquaintance, you turn suddenly into another that reminds you of Marseilles,” then makes comparable references to Madrid, Paris, Naples, and Philadelphia (1: 159–160). This confusion suggests why Ingraham returns so obsessively to how New Orleans replicates the “style” of Boston, that “fashion of the plain, solid, handsome brick and granite edifices, which are in progress here, as well as in every other city in the union; a style of architecture which owes its origin to the substantial good taste of the citizens of the goodly ‘city of notions.’” Such a description transforms New Orleans into a place reminiscent of other sites in the U.S. nation, rather than celebrating what Griesz describes as the city’s polyglot, multinational character, which allowed it to function as “a model space in which heterogeneous interests could functionally coexist” in “the country’s most linguistically and racially diverse city” (*Ambassadors of Culture* 109). Ingraham’s confusion over how to interpret the city’s intermingling ethnicities and languages stems partially from his own racism, a factor evident in his dismissal of black and mixed race residents as unworthy of attention because their “character presents neither variety nor interest” (1: 103).⁶⁰ The city’s diversity—specifically its multi-ethnic population and cacophony of languages—remains unfathomable to Ingraham, whose descriptions rely on romantic clichés and historical models derived from earlier literature.

Ingraham's next work and first novel, *Lafitte*, published less than a year after *The South-West* and set partially in New Orleans, contains little sense of the city's heterogeneous character, replacing it with a homogenized appearance of national unity. In *Lafitte* and his fourth novel, *The Quadroone*, Ingraham followed Poe's suggestion that New Orleans offered "the place of all places for the localities of a romance," though as the critic's attacks on both novels indicate, he clearly believed Ingraham was *not* the "novelist of talent" who would utilize the city's potential as a setting for such romances (Rev. of *South-West* 123).⁶¹ Prefacing his own work of fiction about the pirate, James Rees described Ingraham's novel as "a wild romantic tale" that "steeped [Lafitte's life] deeper in mystery." Concerning its historical accuracy, Rees asserted that "the greater portion of [Ingraham's *Lafitte*] was written at sea, far out of the reach of books or individuals, who could have furnished him with much important information on the subject" (385).⁶² Although Rees claims Ingraham told him this about the novel's composition, he is incorrect on both points. The novel was written in Natchez, based on materials found in Arsène Lacarrière Latour's *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814–15* (1816) and the 1830 English translation of François Barbé-Marbois's *Histoire de la Louisiane* (1829).⁶³ As these sources suggest, Ingraham modeled the central character on the historical pirate-turned-patriot Jean Lafitte, who remains infamous for his privateering and smuggling activities in the Gulf of Mexico during the early 1800s, as well as for his assistance in the U.S. victory at the Battle of New Orleans.⁶⁴ Jean's real-life brother, Pierre, a major figure in the history of the Gulf, never appears in the novel. Instead, Ingraham constructs a romantic plot concerning a sibling rivalry between Achille and Henri, twin sons of a French nobleman who quarrel as children and fall in love with the same woman, Gertrude. After attacking his brother and leaving him for dead, Achille flees to Louisiana, where he eventually assumes the name Lafitte as a new identity.

The opening frames the novel by evoking America's position in the Age of Revolutions. Ingraham describes the boys' father as a veteran of the French Revolution, "that great political index

of this revolutionizing age,” who fled “to the shores of America” and settled around the Kennebec River in Maine. His self-imposed exile critiques revolutionary France because he chose America for its status as “a land where he could cherish his liberal principles with safety and educate his twin sons to act their part honorably and with distinction on the theatre of life” (3). By suggesting that France prohibits the exercise of “liberal principles,” Ingraham implies that the Americas represent a haven from the tyranny—both monarchical and revolutionary—of the European “Old World.”⁶⁵ The novel’s commentary on the period continues with its exclusion of *any reference* to the Haitian Revolution, even though the characters talk repeatedly about travelling to Haiti and the island provides the setting for the final book.⁶⁶ Like Brooks, Ingraham elides how the slave rebellion impacted the Atlantic world and provided an explicit challenge to American slavery. Instead, he depicts Haiti as an uncivilized place whose inhabitants worship a false religion, the Obeah.⁶⁷

As suggested by the novel’s subtitle, “The Pirate of the Gulf,” Ingraham acknowledges New Orleans’s position in the privateering and smuggling trade routes that flourished in the Gulf of Mexico during the 1810s. This system, discussed recently by William C. Davis in *The Pirates Lafitte*, allowed pirate-privateers to transport slaves and goods into Louisiana, circumventing the U.S. government’s 1808 mandate banning the importation of slaves. Davis presents the Lafittes as central participants in this smuggling circuit, an immensely profitable system of exchange involving many New Orleans merchants. Ingraham notes how several Gulf privateers, including Jean Lafitte, received commissions from the revolutionary government in Cartagena struggling to expel the Spanish. He comments that although assigned “to cruise against the royalists or vessels sailing under the flag of Spain,” this “daring band of privateersmen” violated their official commissions by seizing non-royalist ships (29).⁶⁸ Ingraham outlines how they shifted “from privateersmen sailing under the flag of a South American state” to “rovers of the wild blue sea, independent of every flag but their own bright-red banner and acknowledging no commission but that written upon the edge of their

gleaming sabres,” at which point “the Mexican sea became...their empire” (30). By establishing a form of imperial control over the Gulf, the privateers display their devotion to the pursuit of personal wealth, rather than the cause of Spanish American independence.

Following this opening, the majority of the novel devotes little space to Lafitte’s activities in the Gulf. Instead, the plot becomes a historical romance, centered on Lafitte’s guilt over possibly killing his brother Henri and on his growing love for the maiden Constanza.⁶⁹ These familiar tropes avoid addressing the region’s social context, as the early descriptions of Gulf privateering become irrelevant to the romantic plot. Like many historical romances from the antebellum United States, *Lafitte* gestures to real people and events, but presents primarily a conventional story of doomed love, family rivalries, and exotic locales, derived from the works of Sir Walter Scott, Chateaubriand, Cooper, and others. Ingraham returns to a specific U.S. historical context only in the novel’s third and fourth books (of five) as he addresses the Battle of New Orleans, surveying Lafitte’s conversion to the patriot cause, new fidelity to the nation, and crucial role in defeating the British forces.

Lafitte rallies his band of pirates to defend the United States by stressing their status as adopted citizens of the nation. “Like myself,” he claims, “you are Americans by birth or adoption. Fight not against your country, draw every cutlass in her defence [*sic*]; forgive her injuries, and fight for her. The tyrant of England seeks to enslave her; meet him foot to foot, blade to blade. Endeavour to atone for your wrongs to your country by devotion to her cause. Fighting is your trade—but fight now on the right side” (229–30). To this plea, his band replies, “Viva Louisiana—viva la patria—viva Lafitte!” The tripartite form of their allegiance emphasizes Lafitte’s ability to convert them to the cause of American independence, which they express via a devotion to the local area of their habitation, Louisiana; the nation they now claim as their “homeland,” described in the group’s primary language, Spanish, as “la patria”; and their charismatic leader, Lafitte. Their conversion to the patriot cause thus recalls Lafitte’s own, as he abandons his outlaw status to align

himself with the tradition of defending the nation against England.⁷⁰ Clearly, Ingraham's Lafitte diverges from the historical figure who, along with his brother Pierre, "cast [his] lot with the Americans after deciding that a strong presence by the Royal Navy [in the Gulf of Mexico] was not in [his] best professional interests" (Howe 8–9). Instead, Ingraham emphasizes Lafitte's status as a national patriot by clearing the novel's cast of characters of other potential U.S. heroes, including a surprising omission—Andrew Jackson, the hero of the Battle of New Orleans, who at the time of *Lafitte's* publication was the current president of the United States. The novel contains only vague allusions to Jackson, whom Ingraham never mentions by name.⁷¹

Ingraham similarly excludes any extended descriptions of New Orleans, except for brief details concerning Lafitte's nighttime paths through individual streets, limiting the populace to soldiers and government officials. The novel represents the city as a site connected only to the nation's struggle for continued independence, rather than a unique locale displaying the cosmopolitan intermixture acknowledged even in a biased and inaccurate work like *The South-West*. As part of his appeal for inclusion in the nation's military forces, Lafitte expresses his determination to redeem himself for his former abuses against the United States by defending it against the British. "Although a reward is suspended over my head," he claims, "although I have been hunted down like a wild beast by my fellow citizens—although proscribed by the country of my adoption—I will never let pass an opportunity of serving the cause to the shedding of my blood.... I desire to show you how much I love my country—how dear she is to me!" (209). Here *Lafitte* replicates the plot arc established by revolutionary war romances of surveying an individual's conversion to the patriot cause. Instead of a novel about the French pirate, his transnational significance, or how the city of New Orleans served a key role in the War of 1812, Ingraham transports the antebellum period's historical romance of the American Revolution into the nation's "second war of independence," and

in the process treats New Orleans as another generic location within the trajectory of U.S. hemispheric nation-building.

Ingraham's Tragic Mulatta Narrative: Decoding the Conclusion of *The Quadroone*

Published in 1841, five years after *Lafitte* and shortly before his deluge of novelette potboilers, Ingraham's fourth novel, *The Quadroone*, also addresses the city's past, but focuses on Louisiana's transition to Spanish rule circa 1769.⁷² The topic had already received dramatic treatment in Thomas Wharton Collens's play *The Martyr Patriots; or, Louisiana in 1769*, which premiered at the St. Charles Theatre in New Orleans on May 16, 1836.⁷³ Some discussion of the play will clarify the limits of Ingraham's fictional treatment of the same epoch. Collens offered a patriotic spectacle presenting Louisiana's period under Spanish rule from a perspective grounded in U.S. nationalism.⁷⁴ The play depicts the 1768–69 uprising that expelled the first Spanish governor, but ended with the execution of the rebellion's leaders, five prominent citizens who became the title's "martyr patriots." By charting a failed revolt to expel the Spanish led by a group of creoles, Collens suggests that only incorporation into the United States can save Louisiana from the tyranny of European despotism. A brief dream included before the final act presents this struggle literally.⁷⁵ Atop a throne sits "a personification of Europe," "a lash and fetters lying at her feet," with "a personification of Louisiana" chained to the throne and expressing both its "distress" and "the despotism and cruelty of Europe." After a "thunderbolt" shatters the throne and leaves Europe "prostrate on the earth," "Liberty appears descending from above," unchains Louisiana, and declares the territory free. In case any questions arise about the source of this figure of "Liberty," it carries an American flag, while the stage's background displays seventeen stars, "representing the number of States of the Union at the time Louisiana was admitted," encircling the key terms "Constitution" and "Union." Liberty speaks to Louisiana, "Arise, my child, rejoin thy sisters. Thou art free," as a new star ascends to the group above, accompanied by the unofficial national anthem of "Hail, Columbia." The prison

cell holding the revolt's leader, Lafrenière, then reappears, followed shortly thereafter by "a circle of portraits...representing the Revolutionary heroes and worthies, with Washington in the centre" (Collens 462). This conclusion places Louisiana's "martyr patriots" in the tradition of the national heroes associated with the American Revolution. When organizing their revolt, the creoles model themselves consciously on the thirteen colonies—since by 1769, as Collens indicates in a footnote, Britain's colonial subjects in North America had already voiced their disapproval of the Stamp Act. Lafrenière comments that since "Frenchmen will now disown us" and the patriots "can never be" either "Spaniards" or "Englishmen," then they must find a new national identity. "Old Europe," he concludes, "has not a name to fit ye," so they should "be Americans." According to him, "that's a name...that none can take away," which asserts the belief in popular sovereignty's capacity for self-government free from monarchical authority. All the citizens gathered around Lafrenière approve of this proposal by shouting in chorus, "Yes, yes! Americans!" (Collens 432).⁷⁶

Apparently the production of *The Martyr Patriots* proved disastrous and the theater performed it only once more, on the following night. In a critical notice titled "Literary Murder," published on May 19, 1836, a correspondent for the *New Orleans Bee* condemned the performance of the play, while praising Collens's text: "Never was any composition more completely garbled, butchered and parodied—not ten lines of the authors [*sic*] piece were performed, but the most ridiculous crude conception substituted in the place of the language as originally written" (2).⁷⁷ Attacking everyone involved with the performance, the writer asserted that the play itself "suffered martyrdom" and predicted it "would have been eminently successful had it been presented to the public, as it is written."⁷⁸ Although a typical patriotic spectacle, *The Martyr Patriots* indicates how some U.S. citizens—including even a New Orleans native like Collens—regarded Louisiana as a place saved from European corruption by its annexation into the United States.⁷⁹ Ingraham's works reveal how such views entail disregarding and even erasing the area's Francophone and Hispanophone cultures.

In logic similar to Lafrenière's, expansionists judge Louisiana's residents as "Americans," rather than people with ties to France, Spain, or the Caribbean. While Ingraham at least presents Louisiana as loyal to France—claiming in *Lafitte*, for instance, that its local nobility consists of exiles from the French Revolution—Collens proposes that only with its status as a U.S. territory and later state can its residents achieve true freedom.

Set exclusively in and around New Orleans, Ingraham's *The Quadroone* offers a more detailed depiction of the city's history than *Lafitte* or *The Martyr Patriots*, yet simultaneously vilifies Spain as evil, endorses the period's fear of racial intermixture, and minimizes the voices of the creole population.⁸⁰ *The Quadroone* presents Louisiana's Spanish background as a commentary on the New World's value to European nobles, ignoring how it solidified New Orleans as a central location in the circum-Caribbean world.⁸¹ Jules Zanger identifies the title character, Azèlie, as a "tragic octoroon" figure typical in much antebellum fiction about the South, "a beautiful young girl who possesses only the slightest evidences of [black] blood" and whose "sensibility" and "vulnerability" recall "the conventional ingénue 'victim' of sentimental romance" (63).⁸² In the novel's elaborate conclusion, the fates of Azèlie and her brother Renault support the period's ethnocentric stereotypes depicting people of mixed racial heritage as inferior and potentially dangerous.

Ingraham constructs a faux etymology for the term "quadroon" by using that form to refer to males, while adding an "e" ("quadroone") for females. As Werner Sollors notes, Ingraham's etymology is not only incorrect, but his claim in the preface that people "who retain even a *tenth part* of the African blood...come also under the general designation of 'Quadroon'" suggests an unawareness of the precise method for calculating ancestry (emphasis added, 1: ix).⁸³ Additionally, Ingraham makes the racist assertion that when quadroons "are as fair as Europeans," they remain easy to spot because of "the remarkable and undefinable expression of the eyes, which always betrays their remote Ethiopian descent," a method of identification based on assumptions of Anglo-

American racial superiority rather than objective observation or scientific evidence (ix). Betsy Erkkilä terms such constructions part of the “metaphorics of blood” which early Americans used “to mark a boundary around whiteness, purity, virtue, intelligence, and beauty.” In effect, Ingraham accepts the principle of “the one-drop rule” that *any* trace of black blood makes a person distinguishable as non-white. With the institution of such ideologies, Erkkilä argues, “blood became a national fetish, a means of affirming political community, kinship, citizenship, and union at the same time that it became the grounds for exclusion, expulsion, negation, and extermination” (*Mixed Bloods* 7). Despite the narrator’s claims otherwise, *The Quadroone* endorses the cultural assumption that people of mixed race can occupy only an outcast position in the nation. To escape this fate, they must provide incontrovertible proof of their non-miscegenated background.

Ironically, volume 1 suggests repeatedly that the novel will challenge the antebellum period’s dominant assumptions concerning the danger and corruption of racial intermixture.⁸⁴ Ingraham presents Azèlie as an “honorable” woman, “innocent and pure,” who possesses “a spotless spirit and a virtuous heart” that compel her “to prefer death to infamy, and the dark silence of the grave to the silken couch of illicit love!” (1: 145–6). After falling in love with the Spaniard Henrique, she opposes her “unnatural mother” Ninine’s plan that she become the mistress of Count Osma, the evil Spanish governor of Louisiana. Like Renault, Azèlie establishes her own agency against the controlling nature of social customs. Even Ninine acknowledges the pair’s rebellion by stating that “Renault hath become too independent,” “spurns [her] authority,” and aims to “control” Azèlie “as if [she] owed obedience nowhere else!” In a regression to gendered roles, however, Renault asserts his independence by fighting Osma’s government, while Azèlie establishes hers by determining to accept death instead of obeying Ninine’s instructions. Stating that her mother “knowest not the meaning of honour,” Azèlie claims, “I will die...ere I become the thing you would have me!” (1: 149). In response to Ninine’s assertion that “Azèlie is a quadroone, and must fulfill her destiny,”

Renault avows his willingness to kill her rather than allow her to become Osma's mistress. "Azèle shall never submit to *the fate of her race*," he claims. "She is too lovely and pure. She has all the virtues of a wife, and none of the vices of a mistress. Ere she shall be one, I will kill her with my own hand" (emphasis added, 1: 159). Renault's debate with Ninine explicitly challenges the social custom of *plaçage*, a system of concubinage that promoted female quadroons as mistresses, or "kept women," of wealthy men.⁸⁵ Instead, he stresses that "Quadroons may wed with quadroons," but then acknowledges, "though so differently are our own men educated, that I must allow with sorrow that the union would be unequal," a comment on the dual oppression endured in the antebellum United States by women of mixed race. Echoing the period's lectures on moral reform—and foreshadowing Ingraham's future position in the ministry—Renault suggests resolving social inequality through an increased emphasis on personal morality: "Cease to educate your daughters as baits to criminal passion, and their conditions will be less unequal" (1: 160). By refusing to obey Ninine's instructions, Azèle supports Renault's argument, suggesting potential social reforms and the end of *plaçage*.

The novel's conclusion contradicts this avowed questioning of the roles assigned to people of mixed race by revealing that Azèle and Renault are descended from European families.⁸⁶ Rather than a member of "the cursed race" of quadroons, Azèle is the "daughter of a Moorish princess, and heiress of a noble Castilian name" (2: 207). In turn, Renault learns of his true status as the Marquis of Caronde's legitimate son. As a judge from Spain confirms, "Renault, lately called the Quadroon, is the rightful heir of the late Marquis of Caronde, and can, therefore, be no slave; but, on the other hand, is a free citizen and a noble-born gentleman" (2: 202). These revelations purify Azèle's and Renault's marriages to Henrique and Estelle, respectively, as unions between nobles, rather than quadroons and European aristocrats. Ingraham explains that "The love and virtue of Azèle were rewarded by the hand of the prince [Henrique], to whom, as granddaughter to the Moorish emperor, she was nearly equal in rank" (2: 216). Typical of the historical romance genre, the

final marriages present ideal relationships derived from the period's social and cultural standards. For instance, instead of representing the results of New Orleans's widespread *plaçage* system that made quadroon women the mistresses of wealthy (and often married) men, the marriages of Azèlie and Renault suggest that they can bond with Europeans only after the "taint" of black blood is removed from their respective pedigrees. Their drives for independence, the novel implies, stemmed from their European backgrounds, rather than any flaw in the social customs regarding quadroons or the characters' desire for personal autonomy. Ingraham suggests that they contradict the dominant assumptions concerning quadroons because they are the offspring of sanctified marriages, not illicit interracial liaisons.⁸⁷

Instead, Ninine and her illegitimate son with Caronde, Jules—both wicked and deceptive characters—are revealed as the novel's actual quadroons. This reinforces the ethnocentric stereotype that people of mixed race remain cursed or "tainted" by their impure racial background. Moments after learning that Ninine is his mother, Jules displays his inherent evilness by strangling her to death, behaving "like a wild beast" whose "clutch was like that of the tiger fixed in the flesh of its victim" (2: 203). Offering a racist characterization of social relations, Ingraham's novel suggests that black blood *can* corrupt European heritage and produce evil individuals. Both Ninine and Jules remain cursed by their partial African descent, which negates their other, "pure" parent. Conversely, Azèlie can overcome the evilness of Osma's blood because it is still European.

Eve Allegra Raimon's important study, *The "Tragic Mulatta" Revisited*, emphasizes that "it is imperative to the narrative aims of this body of literature for the 'tragic mulatto' to be a 'tragic mulatta.' The very tragedy of the figure's fate depends upon her female gender. The sexual vulnerability of a female light-skinned slave is essential to propel the plot forward and to generate the reader's sympathy and outrage" (emphasis original, 5).⁸⁸ For instance, Ingraham makes the novel's title an explicit reference to the "quadroone" Azèlie, rather than the "quadroon" Renault. Yet

The Quadroone inverts the typical plot structure of “tragic mulatta” narratives because Azèlie grows up thinking of herself as a quadroon, only to learn at the end that she is *not* one, but instead a pure-blooded daughter of European nobles.⁸⁹ Ingraham’s “tragic mulatta” thus avoids much of the social commentary associated with such characters. The novel attributes the risk of the heroine being “sold into slavery” and “victimized” by a “slave dealer or overseer” to Osma’s evil nature as a Spaniard, which perpetuates cultural stereotypes associated with the Black Legend.⁹⁰ *The Quadroone* lacks the critique of slavery as an institution that Zanger, Raimon, and other critics locate in “tragic mulatto/a” narratives because Ingraham blames Azèlie’s suffering on a conspiracy between a vile Spanish lord and Ninine, a mulatta presented as evil instead of tragic.⁹¹

The Return of the Martyr Patriots: Louisiana’s Spanish Background in *The Quadroone*

The Quadroone received primarily negative reviews from critics on both sides of the Atlantic. Reviewers accused the novel of immorality, citing Ninine’s cruel exploitation of Azèlie and often ignoring Ingraham’s explanation of how her actions fit into the cultural tradition of *plaçage*.⁹² Even before the novel’s U.S. publication, periodicals reprinted the negative assessments from British literary journals, including the *London Athenaeum*, which concluded that Ninine’s “willing[ness] to barter her child to the highest bidder...imparts the moral taint of a corrupt society to the book, and makes it repulsive” (qtd. in “Mr. Ingraham’s New Novel” 189–90).⁹³ As usual, critics also attacked Ingraham’s prose as poorly written, the plot as contrived, and the characters as superficial. “The incidents of the work are so utterly improbable,” a reviewer for *The Knickerbocker* commented, “that we defy the most inveterate devourer of native romances to create from their perusal an illusion of reality” (“Literary Notices” 339).⁹⁴ Several even judged it his worst novel, including Poe, whose brief review in *Graham’s Magazine* asserted, “Nothing that we could say—had we even the disposition to say it—would convince any sensible man that ‘The Quadroone’ is not a very bad book—such a book as Professor Ingraham...ought to be ashamed of. We are ashamed of it” (296).⁹⁵ The moral

outrage many critics expressed toward the novel emphasizes its unsettling portrayal of Louisiana colonial history and the social institutions forged by its position in the Atlantic slave economy.

The most laudatory review appeared in the August 1841 issue of the *Baltimore Phoenix and Budget*, which declared that “no American has produced a better romance,” then mocked the critics who had condemned the novel because it “is not sufficiently devoted to the advancement of correct moral principles!” Instead, this reviewer stressed that sensitive, Christian readers would recognize that Ingraham’s “main object is to *amuse*—to beguile some weary hour by a pleasant exercise of fancy” (emphasis original, 198).⁹⁶ The *Phoenix*’s review overlooks Ingraham’s background in the Northern United States, which several earlier critics—including those who established the immorality thesis—addressed by comparing *The Quadroone* to *The South-West*, a work that clearly identified its author as “a Yankee.” Instead, concerning the historical romance genre, the *Phoenix* declares that “the wand of the great magician of the North has been achieved by an inspired son of the South” (198).⁹⁷ In his review of *The South-West*, Poe praises Ingraham for challenging the misconceptions about the South often circulated by northern writers. Claiming that Ingraham “laid aside the general prejudices of a Yankee,” Poe compliments him for possessing “no disposition to look with a jaundiced eye upon the South—to pervert its misfortunes into crimes—or distort its necessities into sins of volition” (122).⁹⁸ By identifying how *The South-West* supports the South’s view of its own institutions, Poe foreshadows Ingraham’s later defense of slavery in his reprehensible novel *The Sunny South* (1860).⁹⁹ This endorsement of southern social ideology, particularly its allocation of superior status based on race and class, suggests why some reviewers thought Ingraham a “son of the South.”

As *The Quadroone*’s tepid reception indicates, Ingraham’s works could unsettle readers with their jarring translations of romantic customs to specific social settings. The repeated charges of immorality against Ingraham suggest that *The Quadroone* did provide an unsettling—albeit ultimately

reductive and conservative—depiction of the southern social caste system, even if the novel’s own conclusion negates its earlier representations.¹⁰⁰ Instead, Ingraham argues that in a city like New Orleans, all “honorable” citizens—namely those descended from nobility—can join together in harmonious social relationships, which the novel models with the two marriages at the end. From this perspective, *The Quadroone* uses the events of the late 1760s and the approaching revolutions in France and the Americas to suggest how Louisiana (and by extension, the United States) can remain both racially segregated and socially exclusive. The solution, Ingraham claims, lies in government by a select group of citizen-patriots who defend the supposedly ignorant masses.

In the villainous Count of Osma, Garcia Ramarez, Ingraham fashioned a composite character based on Louisiana’s first two Spanish governors, Antonio de Ulloa and Alexander O’Reilly, even though the novel mentions neither by name. Both men were directly connected to the rebellion that occurred in New Orleans from October 1768 to October 1769.¹⁰¹ After issuing several unpopular economic policies, Ulloa was expelled from the city after failing to institute a functioning administration. Several months later, O’Reilly established Spain’s rule successfully, arrested the rebel leaders, and oversaw their trial and execution, events that inspired both Collens’s play and Ingraham’s novel. As a character, Osma coheres with what María DeGuzmán describes as the Black Legend’s creation of “the Spaniard” as “a typological emblem” representing an evil figure capable of exploiting any group or person for his own benefit, pleasure, profit, or even amusement. She argues that the Black Legend became so engrained in U.S. cultural consciousness it could “be used as...a highly effective effect [*sic*] in the construction of Anglo-American identity in contradistinction to what is posited as the essence of Spanish identity” (5). Ingraham’s novel uses this binary by opposing Osma, a despotic Spanish governor, with *select* Louisiana citizens, primarily creoles, who embody the supposedly Anglo-American patriotism associated with the American Revolution. By doing so, Ingraham allocates to Louisiana’s creole patriots a position in the hemisphere equivalent to

their northern brethren, even though they are *not* Anglo-Americans.¹⁰² But instead of an understanding of Louisiana's unique creole heritage, the novel endorses the fears of racial intermixture dominant in the nineteenth-century United States by systematically cleansing the characters of any "taint" of non-white blood, an action that merely reinforces the period's discourse of Anglo-American superiority and supports its imperialist goals. At the novel's end, Ingraham removes many of the creole and European characters (even such "good" Spaniards as Estelle, Azèlie, and Don Henrique) from Louisiana, effectively clearing a path for its incorporation into the United States. In this sense, the novel's un-quadrooning of Renault and Azèlie serves a purpose comparable to the descending Liberty thunderbolt in *The Martyr Patriots*—it frees Louisiana from potential European despotism.

Revealing that Renault and Azèlie are in fact *not* part black also strips from their acts of rebellion any implications of a revolt led by the slave population. Instead, their courage can be viewed as a result of their European or Creole heritage, rather than a suggestion that the city's slave and free black populations are capable of leading a revolt against those in power. Daniel E. Walker emphasizes how "in both nineteenth-century Havana and New Orleans, the seemingly omnipresent and potentially rebellious black and mulatto populations caused a great deal of concern for the respective slave regimes." As a result, Walker claims, authorities instituted forms of social control designed to curb potential rebellions, including "continuous efforts to divide the African-descended community along every color and class-based designation possible" (105). Although Renault never rallies the city's slaves against the Spanish, his capacity for gaining the support of the multitude, rendered anonymously as "the crowd," suggests his potential for converting anyone to his cause. After all, he convinces a range of characters to do so—ranging from creole aristocrats and administrators, to a Spanish noble and the governor's own daughter. With the discovery of Renault's

and Azèlie's European backgrounds, Ingraham removes any suggestion that people of color could challenge the current regime.

From its opening scene—in which a mob repels the emissaries sent to assume control of Louisiana in June of 1766—the novel focuses on how different groups of Louisiana citizens respond to Spanish rule. While the mass populace eventually accepts Spanish law, three distinct groups challenge its institution with acts of rebellion. These factions include a collection of nobles known as “the Seven Brothers,” the city’s governing council, and the quadroons Renault and Azèlie. The oldest of the brothers, Charleval, remains the novel’s main representation of the creole population.¹⁰³ His role in the text involves supporting Renault, whom he serves as an ally rather than an autonomous military leader. After their initial battles with the Spanish troops—in the first chapter and later when the imperial representatives successfully establish their dominion in 1769—the brothers disappear from the plot until near the conclusion, at which point they unite with Renault to confront the tyrannical Osma. Until then, they remain in the background, absent figures suggesting the suppressed will to revolt of the creole population. Ingraham distinguishes Louisiana’s ruling class—embodied in Governor Caronde and the councillors, Charleval and his compatriots, and eventually Renault—from the city’s mass populace who quickly submit to Osma and his demands. For instance, Caronde remains “ready to risk his life for the people he had governed, although they had so basely revolted from their allegiance to bow the neck to the Spanish yoke” (2: 7). Caronde’s patriotic spirit—“I am bold because humanity is so,” he tells Osma (2: 8)—separates him and his associates from the anonymous masses that Ingraham presents as mindless followers of any authority figure.¹⁰⁴ Revealing Ingraham’s classist views, the text rejects the possibility that rebellion could stem from anyone other than the city’s elite. Even Renault, subjugated through most of the text as a quadroon, possesses a degree of nobility through his presumed status as Caronde’s illegitimate son, only to be revealed in the end as “a free citizen and a noble-born gentleman.”

By acknowledging its legal rights to Louisiana, the city's governing council acquiesces to Spanish authority. In conversation with Osma, Caronde rationalizes the patriotism displayed by Louisiana's citizens as "efforts to preserve our natal soil from the rule of a foreign prince" which "originated in our attachment to our own [rule]," and thus "a pledge of our future devotion to Spain, if hereafter we should personally yield to her our allegiance" (2: 8). The citizenry, he implies, will remain loyal to any government it finds beneficial for its homeland. Their opposition to Spain's imperial administration continues because of Osma's abusive power and attempted alteration of the country's "laws and language" (2: 7). In a crucial section, Osma orders the execution of all the members of the council he can capture because of their supposed aid of the rebel groups.¹⁰⁵ Although he escapes execution, Caronde dies shortly afterward, while encouraging Renault and Charleval to avoid angering Osma because of his willingness to punish Louisiana's citizens. He defends the French king's right to transfer Louisiana to Spain, suggesting that by governing the territory "Spain has done no more than take her right" (2: 95). Caronde's dying plea supports the *idea* of Spanish rule, even though he has suffered its brutal results. This differentiates Spain's right to govern Louisiana from Osma's brutal actions. For this reason, Renault directs his rebellion against Osma personally, instead of the Spanish imperial government as a whole. Osma's execution of the councillors provides historically based evidence of his despotic rule. Ingraham claims that Osma's order of execution "openly mocked" the ideas of "justice and humanity," transforming the doomed councillors, as "the victims of his blood-thirsty vindictiveness," into martyr patriots (2: 90).

For his account of the execution, Ingraham references François-Xavier Martin's *The History of Louisiana* (Vol. 1, 1827; Vol. 2, 1829), even quoting a long passage from its description of the event. An important early work surveying the state's history, Martin's study contributed to the growing popular conception of the execution as evidence of Spain's harsh rule over the territory.¹⁰⁶ Martin also paralleled the rebellion of 1768–69 with the American Revolution—for example, the

chapter discussing the execution ends with a description of the Boston Massacre.¹⁰⁷ Subsequent historians, however, have repeatedly disputed his suggestion that Louisiana's challenging of Spanish rule inspired the revolt in British North America.¹⁰⁸ Ingraham quotes Martin's final assessment of the execution as "an act which no necessity demanded and no policy justified; an act which served rather to gratify a spirit of retributive vengeance in the satisfaction of personal revenge than to answer the ends of national justice" (2: 91). The entire second clause appears nowhere in Martin's original text, so Ingraham added it to emphasize how the event reveals Osma's despotism.¹⁰⁹ Labeling the execution "personal revenge"—instead of "national justice"—separates the ruler's practices, once again, from the general character of Spanish authority. Ingraham continues the novel's depiction of *only an individual* Spaniard as evil, while the others appear more humane and benevolent toward Louisiana. While Osma emerges as an evil tyrant, most of the novel's other Spanish characters appear relatively benign. For example, Ingraham presents both Henrique—absurdly identified as Spain's future king Charles IV—and Don Louis, Osma's estranged brother, as the count's enemies, which associates them with Renault, the seven brothers, and a majority of Louisiana's citizens. Thus, the novel vilifies an individual ruler—the fictional Count of Osma, Garcia Ramirez—rather than the entire system of Spanish imperial rule.

Don Louis even explains his departure from Spain years earlier as a reaction to Ramirez's villainy, claiming that he "sailed for the New World, disgusted with the land that bore upon its green bosom [such] a monster" and "buried myself in the wilderness of America" (2: 211). There he eventually joined a Comanche tribe, married the daughter of its leader, and became the chief Ihuahua who aids Renault's and Charleval's joint forces in their overthrow of Osma.¹¹⁰ His membership in the tribe offers an alternative form of nobility to the one valued by the other characters, who embrace their European backgrounds. Even Renault, following the discovery of his status as a pure blooded creole and thus a true "native son" of Louisiana, relocates to Paris after

marrying Estelle. The impression made by their presence in France survives even the social changes enacted by the French Revolution, since her “gentle and melancholy beauty” and his “noble bearing” are remembered “even in the early part of the present generation, by the surviving courtiers of the time of Louis XIV” (2: 216). Renault’s successful reception by French nobility gains him a social status equivalent to a European citizen. Similarly, Charleval and the four remaining brothers become the leaders of a “regiment of creoles” protecting Louisiana. Described as “faithful supporters of the Spanish government,” they endorse Spain’s rule over the territory (2: 217). With its conclusion, *The Quadroone* presents Louisiana as content under Spanish dominion, given the absence of a tyrannical ruler like Count Osma. Instead, Louisiana functions as a haven for Europeans away from the Old World’s potential corruption, as signaled by the revelation that *most* of the key figures in New Orleans society have direct connections with Spain or France. Ingraham emphasizes their transatlantic ties with the systematic return to Europe of Henrique, Estelle, Azèlie, and Renault.

While charting the series of marriages that resolve the plot, Ingraham reveals that Henrique later became King Charles IV of Spain. Although implausible and historically inaccurate—the king never visited *any* of the Americas—this development expands the depiction of Louisiana’s position in the Age of Revolutions.¹¹¹ Associating Henrique with this particular Spanish monarch alludes to the fact that the king’s forced abdication by Napoleon in 1808 spurred the revolutions in Spanish America. Rather than submit to French rule, the colonies rebelled against the Bourbon reforms by fighting for their own sovereignty, including the continuation of Spanish law.¹¹² Patriot forces in both Spain and its American colonies rejected the establishment of Joseph Bonaparte, Napoleon’s brother, as the new Spanish monarch. Challenges to France’s control of Spain and the deposing of Charles IV produced several transnational revolutionaries who later participated in Spanish America’s struggles for independence, including Xavier Mina. At the same time, Charles IV’s

presence implies defending Spanish law against the imperial aggressions of France, the nation to which Ingraham's Louisiana residents express their continued loyalty.

But by supporting Renault's rebellion against Osma, Henrique advocates the cause of Louisiana's patriots, which reveals the future Spanish king as sympathetic toward the plights of those oppressed by imperial rule. His embrace of Renault's actions complicates the novel's representation of Louisiana's Spanish background. As the future Charles IV, Henrique remains sympathetic, while Osma emerges as a vicious ruler in the style of Napoleon, willing to exploit his subjects for his personal gain. Henrique's ascent as Charles IV ties his supposed—i.e., fictional—activities in Spanish-controlled Louisiana and sympathy with its local populace to the later uprisings in Spanish America that objected to the king's deposition and the institution of a French-controlled puppet government. In the end, Ingraham's transformation of Henrique into Charles IV associates Louisiana's revolt against Osma with the Spanish American Revolutions that began following the king's abdication. Whether or not Ingraham intended it as such, his novel concludes with a prescient suggestion of New Orleans's connections to the independence movements in Latin America.

As indicated in the previous chapter's discussion of Santangelo and *El Correo Atlántico*, the city provided a sphere for collecting and disseminating information on the revolutions and the republics produced by them.¹¹³ Countless rebel leaders, soldiers of fortune, Spanish loyalists, federalist exiles, and others related to the independence movements lived in New Orleans for varying lengths of time. Its Gulf port, diverse population, thriving commercial districts, and growing size made it a convenient location for planning, funding, launching, publicizing, and profiting from the revolutions.¹¹⁴ By depicting interactions between its ethnically diverse populations, Ingraham's works capture the city's entangled position in both the Age of Revolutions and the Atlantic world.¹¹⁵ On the streets of antebellum New Orleans, readers find creoles, slaves, free blacks, U.S. citizens, mulatto mistresses, pirates, U.S. soldiers (sometimes even Andrew Jackson), European nobles, evil

Spaniards, exiled patriots, and a myriad of additional characters. The city emerges varyingly as the Boston of the South, an ideal U.S. national site, a frontier territory considering possible annexation, a corrupt den of interracial sexual liaisons, a base for circum-Caribbean piracy and privateering, a symbol of European imperialism's exploitation of the New World, a place where Europeans can escape from Old World corruption, supporting evidence for the Black Legend, a base of operations for aiding Spanish American revolutions, and ultimately, a romantic locale because of the interactions between these cultural elements. In other words, for Ingraham and his antebellum U.S. readership, the city embodied Poe's suggestion that it offers "the place of all places for the localities of romance."

Notes

¹ This insight orients Thompson's own overview of the historiography of New Orleans, which aims "to place the city's history within non-national contexts where the USA is not automatically the object of comparison" (306).

² In the first chapter of *New Orleans As I Found It*, Durell describes the city as a "world in miniature"—where one may meet with the products and the people of every country in any way connected with commerce" (5). Concerning "the city's motley population," Durell notes how "All shades, from deepest black to purest white, are here...mixed and jumbled together," offering "an assemblage of strange faces, of the representatives of distinct people" (28–29).

³ The full passage reads, "Well would it have been for Spain had her discoverers who followed in the track of Columbus possessed his sound policy and liberal views. What dark pages would have been spared in her colonial history! The new world, in such case, would have been settled by peaceful colonists, and civilized by enlightened legislators, instead of being overrun by desperate adventurers, and desolated by avaricious conquerors" (Irving 566). See also Irving's follow-up volume, *Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus* (1830). According to Andrew Burstein, "in the mid-nineteenth century, Irving's *Columbus* was the most commonly owned book." Burstein also notes that for U.S. writers, "Columbus's example justified westward expansion," so Irving chose "to paint him as a well-mannered, well-intentioned visionary" (*Original Knickerbocker* 196–97).

⁴ For information on the *True American* and its association with nativist groups, see Miller 13–14, 16.

⁵ Even more than *El Correo Atlántico*, which the previous chapter revealed as an occasional organ of pro-U.S. propaganda, the New Orleans newspaper *La Patria*'s vehement opposition to the U.S.-Mexican War, analyzed by Kirsten Silva Gruesz, offers an explicit counter-narrative to Durell's defense of Anglo-American empire (*Ambassadors of Culture* 112–20). See also Reilly, "Spanish-Language Voice of Dissent."

⁶ See Roach 179; and Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture* 110. Recent studies exploring connections between Cuba and Louisiana include Scott, *Degrees of Freedom*, and Walker, *No More, No More*.

⁷ Even today, some commentators perpetuate the idea of New Orleans being an "exceptional" city within the United States. For example, Ned Sublette describes the city as "an alternative American history all in itself," because Louisiana was supposedly "different in everything" (4). Sublette provides an attentive analysis of the city's musical culture, but expanding his assertions to offer an historical overview of Louisiana (as in the statements above) risks reinforcing ideas of American exceptionalism.

⁸ Goudie notes that “U.S. claims to a pure, uncorrupted white creole identity were illuminating for how they labored to repress the inter-American cosmopolitanisms of many of its leading citizen-subjects,” including Alexander Hamilton (9). This chapter shows how several novels by U.S. writers set in/around New Orleans, particularly Ingraham’s *The Quadroone*, focus on providing their heroes and heroines with un-mixed racial backgrounds, descended from either Europe or Anglo-America.

⁹ Roach writes, “The idea of circum-Atlantic cultural exchange does not deny Eurocolonial initiatives their place in [modern] history—indeed, it must newly reconsider and interrogate them—but it regards the results of those initiatives as the insufficiently acknowledged cocreations of an oceanic intercultural” (5).

¹⁰ In an 1843 *Graham’s* piece about the river, James Kirke Paulding acknowledges that New Orleans “deserves” being discussed, so he provides a brief sketch of it as “not only ‘an opulent city,’ but the capital of a rich and independent state,” which “will in one hundred years...almost rival Paris itself in magnitude” (“Mississippi” 215–16). Timothy Flint’s *Recollections of the Last Ten Years...* (1826) remained a widely read account of the Mississippi River valley, referenced by such writers as Lorenzo de Zavala and J. H. Ingraham.

¹¹ For his 1847 visit, the Argentine intellectual Domingo Sarmiento followed a trans-Atlantic route, travelling from Paris to New York, visiting several prominent U.S. cities, then departing from New Orleans for Havana. See his *Travels in the United States in 1847*, trans. Michael Aaron Rockland (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

¹² Roach notes that “the long ‘Americanization’ (that is, Anglification and Africanization) of Latin New Orleans” reveals how “Louisiana participated in the formation of the complex identities of the circum-Caribbean rim...even as it negotiated its incremental assimilation into the hypothetical monoculture of Anglo North America” (10).

¹³ See Guterl 21–22; Scott 1–29; and Walker vii–ix, 1–7.

¹⁴ Luis-Brown’s study uses “Mexico and Cuba as geopolitical focal points...because of their long-standing centrality to the history of U.S. imperialism—both were objects of U.S. annexationist designs from the early nineteenth century” (7–8).

¹⁵ See Fischer 1–38, 227–44; Hunt, *Haiti’s Influence*; and Trouillet 70–107. For a discussion of how the slave revolt in St. Domingue influenced the expansion of Louisiana’s slave and plantation economies, see Rothman 75–95. Rothman connects these developments with the January 1811 uprisings “in the sugar plantation districts above New Orleans,” which began “the largest slave rebellion in the history of the United States” (74).

¹⁶ *Justa defensa de la Academia cubana de literatura contra los violentos ataques que se le han dado en el Diario de la Habana: desde el 12 hasta el 23 de abril del presente año* (New Orleans [Matanzas, Cuba]: Impresa por Mr. St-Romes, oficina de *el Courier*, 1834).

¹⁷ Luis M. Pérez identifies the New Orleans imprint as fake and claims the pamphlet was actually published by Tiburcio Campe in Matanzas, Cuba (*Estudio sobre las ideas* 21). If correct, then this attribution suggests Saco’s and Campe’s desire that readers *believe* the pamphlet came from New Orleans, indicating the exile community’s public status and influence on Cuban politics. From April 1829 to August 1830, Campe published the Spanish-language newspaper *El Español* in New Orleans (Kanellos and Martell, *Hispanic Periodicals* 187).

¹⁸ Kaplan notes that the term “Spanish-American War” reflects “a U.S.-centered perspective” and thus is replaced by several more accurate names, including the Spanish-Cuban-American War (215n1). Kaplan’s study challenges what she describes as “an older exceptionalist historiography, which viewed [the war’s outbreak in 1898] as an aberration, as the only time that the United States became—inadvertently—a proper imperial power, and the only time imperialism was a subject for public consumption and debate” (17).

¹⁹ Characterizing these debates as a “dilemma of balancing imperialism with racism,” Thomas Hietala observes that “[U.S.] American feelings of superiority over other peoples provided a self-serving sanction for taking territory from them, but these same feelings also inhibited expansion by making areas more densely populated by nonwhite peoples less attractive” (164).

²⁰ See Foos 3–9, 175–6; and Streeby 3–20. Kaplan argues that “the conquest of Indian and Mexican lands in the antebellum period cannot be understood separately from the expansion of slavery and the struggle for freedom” (18).

²¹ Information in this paragraph derives from a search using the University of Virginia’s Early American Fiction database (accessed on-line via Louisiana State University’s Middleton Library on April 26, 2010) for references to New Orleans in works of fiction published in the United States from 1800 to 1861.

²² See *Randolph* (Baltimore: n.p., 1823), 1: 185, 201, 210, 213; 2: 20. Neal describes a character’s house as “full . . . with black Patagonians, creatures that he has caught somewhere in South America” who “can’t speak a word of English, and have no other notion of duty, than to do just what he bids them” and “would cut any body’s throat at his bidding” (1: 239). Equating them with slaves, this passage reiterates the stereotype of South Americans as ignorant automata (a topic analyzed in Chapter 1).

²³ For scenes explaining the traveler’s failed attempts to reach New Orleans, see Kennedy, *John Bull in America* 23–4, 53, 94, 174.

²⁴ For Harry Franco’s experiences with the city’s cotton merchants, see Briggs 2: 210–17.

²⁵ For a discussion of Sealsfield’s depiction of Louisiana, as well as his probable ownership of a plantation there, see Ritter, “Louisiana—The New Egypt.”

²⁶ In April of 1828, *The Monthly Review* of London critiqued Sealsfield’s defense of slavery for reiterating “the old series of arguments pressed into the service of the slaveholders, with as much confidence as if it had not been a thousand times refuted” (Rev. of *Americans As They Are* 456). The critic also questioned the accuracy of Sealsfield’s depiction of Louisiana, speculating that he might have an investment in the state’s economic progress, claiming that Sealsfield appears “very anxious to represent Louisiana as very little, if at all, inferior to [the] El Dorado of the Buccaneers.” Noting Sealsfield’s reference to how the state offers a logical destination for English immigrants, the reviewer surmises, “we suspect there may be some personal interest lurking under these alluring descriptions,” then ponders, “Has our author any plantations to sell? or has he a design of setting up a plantation company, that should make Louisiana the field upon which its capital should be expended?” (451). Overall, the review suggests how Sealsfield’s travel account invites future economic investment in Louisiana’s plantations, an interpretation that acknowledges his acceptance of expansionism.

²⁷ Like Rivera, Mexal emphasizes the narrative’s investigation of how Mexico risks adopting “a slavish or ‘servile’ devotion to U.S. social and political institutions” (80).

²⁸ Later, in a passage endorsing the American Colonization Society’s creation of Liberia, Zavala offers another assessment of “quadroons in Louisiana and Carolina” by claiming that they disprove popular concerns over whether breeding between slaves and free people would erase “the natural stigma” of the former for being discontent and unproductive (*Journey* 143).

²⁹ Scott elaborates, “Men and women from each society could begin to see what freedom had come to mean on the other shore, with all that this might suggest about their own future. More ominously, each could see some of the forces working against them, though such forces operated quite differently on either side of the Gulf of Mexico” (2).

³⁰ Tom Chaffin associates López’s filibustering with a form of “republican nationalism” working toward “universal white-male suffrage, popular sovereignty, laissez-faire individualism (for whites), slavery, and territorial expansion” (8). Robert E. May observes that “Not only did Narciso López command the first significant illegal invasions from American soil since the Canadian rebellions of the 1830s, but his landings in Cuba helped to spawn further expeditions by providing orientation and field training for many officers and enlistees in later filibustering bands” (*Manifest Destiny’s Underworld* 20–1). See also May, *Southern Dream*.

³¹ *Rosamond: or, A Narrative of the Captivity and Sufferings of an American Female Under the Popish Priests, in the Island of Cuba...* (New York: Leavitt, Lord, 1836).

³² In one scene, Herbert depicts a pirate attack as a “massacre” consisting of “savage crews” with “their appalling yells deadening the hearts of all who heard them,” so that the inhabitants of a besieged Spanish vessel have “no hope, save the precarious chances of a pirate’s mercy” (8).

³³ These events occur in the latter half of volume two. The novel’s first volume details Robin’s “Neptunian origin” as an orphan washed ashore near Barnegat, New Jersey, from a shipwrecked vessel transporting “a rich freight of rum and sugar, and other West Indian products” (Bird 1: 13–14). Curtis Dahl describes the novel as a “lurid picaresque” (110), an assessment supported by Robin’s myriad adventures, which find him acting (often unwittingly) as a robber, British soldier in the War of 1812, seller of faux medical elixirs, and Indian fighter, all before becoming a pirate. Although contemporary reviewers offered it moderate praise, the novel has received little critical attention since then. Bird’s biographer, Clement E. Foust, dismisses it as “a rather loose-woven yarn of improbable adventures,” though he acknowledges that the early sections chronicling Robin’s schoolboy experiences possess some “autobiographical value” (105).

³⁴ For a concise analysis of events leading to the U.S. acquisition of Florida, see Nugent 93–129.

³⁵ Bird emphasizes Robin’s admiration for the group in scenes describing Dare as a “gallant leader” commanding “heroes and men of might,” despite their illegal actions as filibusters with no sanction from the U.S. government (2: 138).

³⁶ On Jackson’s actions in Florida, see Nugent 122–23.

³⁷ Recalling Robinson’s defense of Mina, Bird blames Dare’s death on a lack of support from Mexican citizens. Bird remarks how “[Dare], doubtless, calculated upon receiving great assistance from the Mexican nation itself, and having his command swelled by successive patriots [to form] a countless army,” but the royalist forces attacked “before any reinforcements arrived” (2: 266).

³⁸ By recounting these crimes, Brown reveals that he was all the characters who terrorized Robin.

³⁹ In June of 1839, a reviewer for the *Southern Literary Messenger* praised Bird’s depiction of Brown as a typical pirate, noting that “A course of murder and villainy is powerfully described, and the excesses and tender mercies of piracy on the high seas, darkly and terribly exposed” (“Dr. Bird’s New Novel” 427).

⁴⁰ Earlier, concerning Emilie’s positive first impression of Pedrillo, Sedgwick notes, “She first sedulously cultivated Pedrillo’s acquaintance; ‘Eve did first eat;’ but Mrs. Layton, no more than our first mother, foresaw the fatal consequences of what appeared a trivial act” (1: 215). This passage underscores the typological association of Pedrillo with Satan (disguised as the serpent) tempting Eve.

⁴¹ In an analysis of how “Sedgwick critiques the construction of women as sexual property,” Jenifer Banks observes that Layton’s consent to trade Emilie in exchange for an erasure of his debt “likens many nineteenth-century American marriages to legalized prostitution” (242).

⁴² In a thematic reading of this marriage plot, Nina Baym observes that “Emilie’s story...shows that male lust is inherently an exploitive passion,” as evidenced by the opposition Sedgwick constructs between “Pedrillo’s purely lustful attraction to the young girl” and “the respectful affection of her southern sweetheart” (60).

⁴³ Pedrillo’s scheme breaks his agreement “never, but with [Emilie’s] consent, to take her to Cuba” (1: 223).

⁴⁴ For a similar reference to Pedrillo, see Sedgwick 1: 281.

⁴⁵ The critic finds Sedgwick’s portrayal of Pedrillo ineffective, describing the character as “rather common-place” and “a mere tyro in knavery,” reminiscent “of a vulgar actor” (Rev. of *Clarence* 93). Published in the January 1831 issue of the *North American Review*, the article makes no reference to Pedrillo’s true identity as a native of the U.S.

⁴⁶ See Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture* 33–5, 61–2. Rufus Wilmot Griswold described Brooks as “the poet of passion,” who “gives the heart its true voice” (*Poets* 182). Griswold also made the dubious claim that though “in the style of a

romance,” *Idomen* “contains little that is fictitious except the names of characters” (“Late Maria Gowen Brooks” 68). The novel’s title page features an epigraph from Lord Byron’s *Don Juan*, “Truth is strange—stranger than fiction,” suggesting that the story contains elements of non-fiction.

⁴⁷ For additional mythopoeic descriptions of Ethelwald, see Brooks 81, 91, 92.

⁴⁸ Later, *Idomen* elaborates on the ostracism she experiences by noting how “gay, thoughtless persons might come [to a ball] . . . on purpose to look, in curiosity, on one, to whom the present favorite of the world around him [Ethelwald], had devoted whole days, and even weeks.” She then admits, “I feared to meet the gaze of the multitude,” emphasizing that her notoriety has impacted her psychological health (123).

⁴⁹ The novel’s emphasis on visiting Cuba reflects the U.S. reading public’s growing interest in the travel accounts of the island. Around the same time, William Gilmore Simms’s *Magnolia* journal and the *Southern Literary Messenger* published a series of articles written by John Wurdeman entitled “Notes on Cuba,” the basis for his 1844 volume of the same title. See *Magnolia; or, Southern Appalachian* 2 (1843): 153–9, 241–8, 317–19, 368–74; and *Southern Literary Messenger* 10.2 (Feb. 1844): 96–103. In November of 1844, New York’s prominent *Knickerbocker* literary magazine began running a seven-part series of “Letters from Cuba” by Richard Burleigh Kimball, who devoted the fourth installment to a thorough critique of Wurdemann’s account. See *Knickerbocker* 24 (1844): 449–56, 545–52; *Knickerbocker* 25 (1845): 1–12, 145–59; *Knickerbocker* 26 (1845): 36–48, 383–92, 544–51.

⁵⁰ Lazo notes, “In the antebellum period, Cuba became a favored destination for the ‘invalid trade,’ the business of tourism for sick people who sought to improve their health under the island sun” (*Writing to Cuba* 9). See also Louis A. Pérez, Introduction to *Slaves, Sugar and Colonial Society* xi–xxvi. At the end of Bird’s novel, Robin Day decides to live in Cuba so that his wife can recover her health.

⁵¹ At the end, Brooks reviews how *Idomen*’s story passed through this series of narrators and languages, emphasizing that “the genuine expressions of the heart are the same in every idiom” (221).

⁵² See Brooks 152, 211, 228.

⁵³ As Gruesz notes, “only one black character in [the novel] has a name,” Dalcour’s slave Benito (*Ambassadors of Culture* 67). Benito constantly waits on his master, performing tasks required of a house servant. Brooks describes many of these activities during moments where Dalcour interrupts his narration of *Idomen*’s life. There are also corresponding moments when Dalcour mentions Benito waiting on him during breaks in *Idomen*’s own telling of her tale. These repetitions remind readers of slavery’s existence in Cuba, yet they present Benito as a flat, docile character who enjoys serving his master. See Brooks 42, 79, 121, 178, 199.

⁵⁴ Brooks’s dismissive treatment recalls Trouillet’s discussion of how an “incapacity to express the unthinkable”—namely, that slaves could overthrow their masters and establish a sovereign nation—prompted Western history’s “general silence” toward the Haitian Revolution (97).

⁵⁵ See Fagan, “Reclaiming Revolution”; Levine, *Martin Delany*, especially pp. 83–5, 190–215; Mackenthun 94–162; and Sundquist 135–221.

⁵⁶ Based on materials included in his potentially autobiographical novel *Paul Perril, the Merchant’s Son* (1847), some scholars speculate that Ingraham traveled to Buenos Aires, Argentina, around 1826 and participated in a local revolution (Weathersby 16).

⁵⁷ Biographical information based on Weathersby 15–48.

⁵⁸ Poe elaborated, “Numerous instances of bad taste occur throughout the volumes. The constant straining after wit and vivacity is a great blemish. Faulty constructions of style force themselves upon one’s attention at every page. Gross blunders in syntax abound. The Professor does not appear to understand French. This is no sin in itself—but to quote what one does not understand is a folly” (Rev. of *South-West* 123).

⁵⁹ For a discussion of how visitors responded to the confusing experience of navigating New Orleans streets in the 1830s and 1840s, see Ryan 27–29.

⁶⁰ Rothman observes how “Few travelers who visited New Orleans in the early nineteenth century failed to note its astonishing diversity, but the experience of living in a diverse society did not automatically lead to tolerance of others, let alone mutual respect. In the context of inequality and economic exploitation, it led instead to deepening antipathy and horrible violence” (224).

⁶¹ After acknowledging that *Lafitte* “possesses vigor...and there can be little doubt of its attaining popularity,” Poe concluded that “Upon the whole, we could wish that men possessing the weight of talents and character belonging to Professor Ingraham, would either think it necessary to bestow a somewhat greater degree of labor and attention upon the composition of their novels, or otherwise, would *not* think it necessary to compose them at all” (Rev. of *Lafitte* 595–96).

⁶² For the rest of Rees’s tales featuring the pirate, see “The Gold Chain: A Passage in the Life of Lafitte,” *New World* 17 Oct. 1840: 305–6; and “Passages in the Life of Lafitte,” *New World* 23 Jan. 1841: 50–1. Rees also wrote a play entitled *Lafitte* that “was highly successful” when performed at the Camp Street Theatre from April 3–14, 1837 (Watson, *History of Southern Drama* 52).

⁶³ Ingraham includes quotations from these sources as epigraphs to individual chapters. See *Lafitte* 157–245.

⁶⁴ As my analysis shows, Ingraham made only limited use of events from Jean Lafitte’s life. The novel’s preface offers a confusing explanation of its engagement with the historical record. Ingraham claims that although “the leading incidents upon which the present work is founded are chiefly history,” he followed “the pages of history...only so far as they could be made subservient to our tale.” Thus, *Lafitte* “does not profess to be exclusively a tale or history of the times to which it is referred but of an individual in some degree connected with them,” yet Ingraham stresses that he also avoided employing “the faithfulness of a biographer” in his presentation of Lafitte’s life (xxi).

⁶⁵ One typically overwrought passage proclaims, “The errors of the old world shall be redeemed in thee—and, although the continents of the east have been enrolled century after century upon the scroll of history, yet *their history is ended—thine only begun*; and dark and guilty as are ITS pages shall THINE be bright and pure!” (my italics, Ingraham’s capitalization, *Lafitte* 3).

⁶⁶ Lafitte’s determination to redeem himself by taking Constanza, Count Alphonse, and their slave Juana to Port-au-Prince, Haiti’s capital, appears ridiculous since the Haitians would expel any European nobles, especially slave owners (128). Also, book 4 opens with Count D’Oyley’s arrival off the coast of Haiti in the Gulf of Gonâve, which Ingraham misidentifies as “the bay of Gonzaves” (249).

⁶⁷ When Martinez, the treacherous Spaniard pursuing Constanza, consults a local oracle, Oula, Ingraham describes her as “an aged African sybil, a degenerate priestess of the terrible deity, Fetish, or the Obeah” who had “deceived others so long that she ultimately deceived herself” (252, 259). For a discussion of Obeah’s importance in Caribbean cultures, including as a threat to British and French colonialism, see Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert 15–16, 131–44.

⁶⁸ Ingraham claims the privateers performed a “lawless mode of translating special commissions” via a “delusion of the visual organs which led them to see in every flag the gorgeous blazonry of his Majesty of Spain, against whom they had declared open war” (30).

⁶⁹ Lafitte’s determination to redeem himself by rescuing Constanza from the Spanish recalls George Dekker’s observation that “the action of historical romances often turns on the failure of a character or class to understand that attitudes and behavior recently appropriate and tenable are so no longer” (15). Ingraham never posits the Spanish as a threat to the privateers or the United States.

⁷⁰ Poe rejected Ingraham’s presentation of Lafitte as a national patriot, noting that “the pirate-captain, from the author’s own showing, is a weak, a vacillating villain, a fratricide, a cowardly cut-throat, who strikes an unoffending boy under his protection” (Rev. of *Lafitte* 595).

⁷¹ Conversely, the first description of New Orleans in *The South-West* refers to the city as “the American Waterloo, whose Wellington, ‘General Jackson’ [is still celebrated by an] elegant ballad...in the ‘Boston picture-books’” (1: 73–4).

⁷² After *Lafitte*, his next novel was *Burton; or, The Sieges* (1838), a two-volume historical romance about Aaron Burr during the American Revolution, including his role in “the sieges” of Quebec and New York, as well as his notorious activities as a ladies’ man. The preface reveals that Ingraham considered writing about Burr’s filibustering schemes in Texas. Nancy Isenberg comments on the relationship between the aborted and final versions: “Ingraham explained the origin of his subject’s conspiracy-driven downfall. As the rake turned traitor, Burr’s early debaucheries prefigured his later grand scheme; his conquests on the ‘sofa’ were merely a rehearsal for his imperial ambitions against a supine West” (409).

⁷³ The play was published later in 1836 by the New Orleans publishing house of L. Dillard and Co. The full text is also reprinted in *The Louisiana Book: Selections from the Literature of the State*, ed. Thomas M’Caleb (New Orleans: R. F. Straughan, 1894), pp. 421–72.

⁷⁴ Concerning the popularity of patriotic plays, Watson notes the eight revivals in antebellum New Orleans of C. E. Grice’s celebratory drama *The Battle of New Orleans*, which premiered in 1815 (*History of Southern Drama* 51).

⁷⁵ An advertisement for the play in the *New-Orleans Bee* on May 16, 1836, described the entr’acte dream as “A Grand Dioramic Vision, foretelling the independence of Louisiana, and the rise and prosperity of the City of New Orleans.” This announcement was enticing enough to attract the attention of the *New-York Mirror*, which ran a brief notice on June 25, 1836, that mentioned the play’s performance and reprinted the ad’s description of the “grand dioramic vision” (413).

⁷⁶ The manner in which the mass populace voices their support of the revolt led by Lafrenière and his co-conspirators illustrates Peter P. Reed’s claim that “the underclasses provide the supernumerary displays that flesh out the spectacle of early American patriotism, although they recede at play’s end, excluded from the scene of dramatic triumph” (19). Although not a play, Ingraham’s novel *The Quadroone* makes comparable use of the city’s inhabitants to show mass support for each of Louisiana’s shifting governing bodies.

⁷⁷ *New Orleans Bee*, May 19, 1836, p. 2. As evidence of the production’s poor quality, the reviewer describes the absurd staging of the execution scene, which featured *four* Spanish soldiers shooting *five* patriots and a stray bullet killing the heroine. Then, in a telling reference to recent events in Texas, the author suggests that audience members “must suppose [the soldiers] to be even greater shots than [Davy] Crockett himself” (“Literary Murder” 2).

⁷⁸ The *Bee*’s review deflected any possible blame from Collens since “his play was not heard—the play performed was a manufactured concern of the stage manager and his supernumeraries.” Regarding the entr’acte diorama, the writer proposes that it “would have succeeded had the scene shifter and stage manager done justice to the beautiful paintings of [Antoine] Mondelli” (“Literary Murder” 2). For more on the production, see Kendall 139.

⁷⁹ For discussions of patriotic theatrical performances, see McConachie 91–118; Meserve, *Heralds of Promise*; and Reed 79–100.

⁸⁰ In the preface and first chapter, Ingraham summarizes Louisiana’s history up to 1769 (*Quadroone* 1: vii–17). The novel was first published in London in 1840, where it received scathing reviews.

⁸¹ Several of his subsequent novelettes feature New Orleans, including *Alice May, and Bruising Bill* (1845); *The Lady of the Gulf: A Romance of the City and the Seas* (1846); *The Mysterious State-Room: A Tale of the Mississippi* (1846); *The Odd Fellow; or, The Secret Association, and Foraging Peter* (1846); and *Blanche Talbot; or, The Maiden’s Hand: A Romance of the War of 1812* (1847). In none of these, however, does Ingraham devote as much attention to the city as in his earlier works.

⁸² Zanger argues that “the strategy of the octoroon plot was to win sympathy for the antislavery cause by displaying a cultivated, ‘white’ sensibility threatened by, and responding to, a ‘black’ situation” (64), a narrative technique that “flattered the Northern audience in its sense of self-righteousness, confirming its belief in the moral inferiority of the South” (66). Karen Sánchez-Eppler focuses on how “the rhetoric of amalgamation” such texts employ “suggests that the light-skinned body is valuable in this fiction precisely because of its ability to mask the alien African blackness that the

fictional mulatto is nevertheless purported to represent” (33). Scholars often cite Richard Hildreth’s novel *The Slave; or, Memoirs of Archy Moore* (1836) as the first appearance in U.S. literature of the “tragic octoroon.”

⁸³ Sollors writes, “[Ingraham’s] mathematics for the calculus of color is startlingly uninformed by the most basic recognition that it is hard to convert ancestry-counting (which—barring incest—has to run 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256...based on the number of parents, grandparents, and their more distant antecedents) into a (decimal?) system that would include such units as ‘tenth’ and ‘fifth’” (126).

⁸⁴ In contrast to Ingraham’s plot, the historical period of Spanish rule improved the social position of Louisiana’s free black population. Jennifer M. Spear notes that although it did “perpetuate rather than eradicate slavery” (103), “the Spanish government opened new avenues to freedom and often defended the rights of slaves against their owners” (128).

⁸⁵ For discussions of *plaçage*, see Bell 112–16 and Walker 82–3.

⁸⁶ Richie Devon Watson, Jr., notes that “At its conclusion *The Quadroone*...addresses one of the South’s most profound social discordances by simply denying that the discordance exists through arbitrary plot resolutions and a conventionally romantic happy ending” (*Yeoman Versus Cavalier* 83). As in other plantation novels, Watson explains, “a potentially interesting critique of the abstractions of the southern social code...is short-circuited by arbitrary ‘happy endings’ that cannot begin to address the vexing social problems on which the novels initially seemed determined to focus” (98).

⁸⁷ Citing language from the novel’s preface, Werner Sollors remarks that “for Ingraham, the function of the term ‘Quadroon’ obviously was not that it established a precise genealogical position but that it provided a name for characters who, ‘to all appearance, are as fair as Europeans,’ even though they retain what he somehow calculated to be a ‘tenth part of the African blood.’ The term ‘Quadroon’ thus marks a character with some ‘black’ ancestry who could be taken for ‘white’—a situation which has plot consequences in courtship situations” (126).

⁸⁸ Raimon writes that “more than her light-skinned male counterpart, [the ‘tragic mulatta’] can best act as a conduit for imaginative representations that reveal the multigenerational implications and contradictions for an increasingly multiracial America founded on ideals of individual liberty” (9). With its Eurocentric storyline, *The Quadroone* uses Old World nobility to provide unsatisfactory resolutions to vexing questions central to the history of race in the Americas.

⁸⁹ In most “tragic mulatta” narratives, the heroine “was raised and educated as a white child and as a lady in the household of her father,” but after his death discovers that he “failed to free her properly” and she is thus a slave “attached as property by her father’s creditors,” who sell her into slavery. “Occasionally she escapes with her lover; more often, she dies a suicide, or dies of shame, or dies protecting her young gentleman” (Zanger 63–4). In *The Quadroone*, Don Henrique fills the role of the lover, who is generally from the North or Europe, while Azèlie’s oft-expressed willingness to sacrifice herself for him follows the genre’s conventions.

⁹⁰ DeGuzmán notes how the term “Black Legend” itself associates Spaniards with Africans in a symbolic bond of presumed degeneracy and inferiority, which she terms “the pejorative...‘blackening’ of the Spanish character in order to maintain the threatened ‘whiteness’ of the Anglo characters” (3).

⁹¹ For additional discussions of “tragic mulatto/a” narratives, see Nelson, *Word in Black and White* 79–84; Roach 181–4, 198–202, 211–24; and Sollors 220–45.

⁹² Ingraham’s critique of the *plaçage* system stems from his view of it as morally corrupt, rather than because of its systematic exploitation of mixed-race women as objects of male sexual desire. However, the first chapter’s opening paragraph denies that the novel contains any “moral” or social commentary, advising “those rigidists” who expect such from a tale to “close these volumes with the reading of this paragraph.” Instead, Ingraham evokes the tradition of sentimental romances by stating the intention “of imparting cheerfulness to thy brow, of communicating warmth to thy bosom, and of infusing new sensibilities into thy soul” (1: 13).

⁹³ For periodical articles quoting the *London Athenæum*’s review, originally published on July 18, 1840, see “Mr. Ingraham’s New Novel,” *New World* 22 Aug. 1840: 189–90; and “Literary Notices,” *Knickerbocker* 17.4 (April 1841): 339–40.

⁹⁴ Another reviewer judged it “among [Ingraham’s] ablest and most interesting novels,” but still condemned its story as immoral (*New Yorker* 30 Mar. 1841: 14).

⁹⁵ On June 26, 1841, Poe wrote to Frederick W. Thomas, “It appears Ingraham is in high dudgeon with me because I spoke ill of his ‘Quadroon.’ I am really sorry to hear it—but it is a matter that cannot be helped. As a man I like him much, and wherever I could do so, without dishonour to my own sense of truth, I have praised his writings. His ‘South-West,’ for example, I lauded highly. His ‘Quadroone’ is, in my honest opinion, trash. If I must call it a good book to preserve the friendship of Prof. Ingraham—Prof. Ingraham may go to the devil.” For the letter, see *The Portable Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. J. Gerald Kennedy (New York: Penguin, 2006), pp. 471–2.

⁹⁶ The *Baltimore Phoenix*’s review reassures readers that “the author we are commenting on is a Christian” who wrote the novel “to procure an honest living.” It even suggests the primary “practical lesson” contained in the novel is “to form a correct style of composition by example,” one of the kindest assessments ever offered about Ingraham’s prose style (198–99).

⁹⁷ See the *Knickerbocker*’s review (“Literary Notices”) for a discussion of *The Quadroone* in relation to *The South-West*.

⁹⁸ In a notorious passage, Poe claims that Ingraham “has spoken of slavery as he found it.... He has discovered, in a word, that while the *physical* condition of the slave *is not* what it has been represented, the slave himself is utterly incompetent to feel the *moral* galling of his chain” (Poe’s emphasis, Rev. of *South-West* 122). Poe’s comments echoed the viewpoint of the periodical he was writing for at the time, the pro-slavery *Southern Literary Messenger*. Terence Whalen reads the passage as “directed toward a racist majority,” since Poe “first concedes the ‘misfortunes’ of slavery and then assures his readers that these misfortunes cause little injury to the slaves themselves” (17). J. Gerald Kennedy argues that the passage reveals how Poe “viewed slavery not as an institution beneficial to blacks (a position advocated by apologists) but as a lamentable system upon which the economy of the South had come to depend” (“Trust No Man” 236).

⁹⁹ See *The Sunny South; or, The Southerner at Home, Embracing Five Years’ Experience of a Northern Governess in the Land of the Sugar and the Cotton* (Philadelphia: G. G. Evans, 1860).

¹⁰⁰ See Sollors 125–6. Watson claims that such “insistently felicitous endings demonstrate the determination of the South’s antebellum writers to resolve the social contradictions of their culture, no matter how capriciously or unconvincing” (*Yeoman Versus Cavalier* 99).

¹⁰¹ For character sketches of the nobleman Ulloa and the Irish soldier-of-fortune (turned Spanish general) O’Reilly, see Moore 1–13, 190–4.

¹⁰² Shannon Lee Dawdy argues that “the New Orleans movement [in 1768] was a creole revolt propagated by local elites proclaiming a desire for free trade, a custom that had arisen out of economic necessity” (232).

¹⁰³ Ingraham describes the brothers as the city’s protectors, “Noble by birth, well-formed and handsome in their persons, modest in speech and carriage, and possessing bold and determined spirits, they constituted a gallant band, who might be relied on whenever duty or chivalry should call upon them to act. They were the pride of the town and boast of the whole province” (1: 18). The composition of the group supports the assumption that noble heritage destines people for positions of authority and governing power.

¹⁰⁴ Osma describes Caronde’s bold statement as “the temper of spirit I have had to contend with all along in getting foothold in this province! this is the temper that has twice bathed your city’s square with the blood of Spanish men!” (2: 8). Conjointly, then, Osma and Caronde depict Louisiana’s patriotic “spirit” as “bold” and grounded in “humanity,” recalling U.S. nationalism’s fervent opposition to European tyranny.

¹⁰⁵ As Collens did in *The Martyr Patriots*, Ingraham draws on the actual execution (which occurred on October 25, 1769) of the five men judged responsible for leading the 1768 rebellion that expelled Ulloa’s government.

¹⁰⁶ In an observation clearly aimed at Martin’s work, John Preston Moore asserts that “the trial and execution...prejudiced many early Louisiana historians against Spain.... In this atmosphere of resentment, the myths,

legends, and misconceptions [about Spanish rule] have flourished” (xii). Moore’s study helpfully dispels many of the false notions perpetuated by Martin, Ingraham, and other writers.

¹⁰⁷ See Martin, *History of Louisiana*, vol. 2, especially pp. 22–23, 30–74.

¹⁰⁸ For example, see Moore 213–15.

¹⁰⁹ Ingraham also revised Martin’s text to form a parallel construction between the two clauses. The original reads, “No necessity demanded, no policy justified it” (2: 7). In the rest of the quotation, Ingraham followed Martin’s text closely, except for changing the time of execution from three to “six o’clock in the afternoon.” The reason for this change remains unclear. In the most detailed study of the rebellion published to date, Moore follows Martin by stating the execution occurred at 3 pm (208).

¹¹⁰ After helping depose Osma, Don Louis “returned with his warriors to the forests, to which habit and disgust of the world had attached him, and died in old age, wept and honoured by his adopted tribe” (*Quadroone* 2: 217). Don Louis’s self-imposed exile evokes the myth of America’s wilderness as a “virgin land” capable of regenerating an individual’s identity through interaction with the frontier’s “uncivilized” inhabitants. See Roderick Frazier Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, especially pp. 44–83.

¹¹¹ As an explanation for why history shows no record of Azèlie as queen of Spain, Ingraham claims that “she lived not to reach the throne; and when, at length, Don Henrique, under the designation of Carlos IV., seated himself upon it, another and less lovely sat by his side” (*Quadroone* 2: 216).

¹¹² See Adelman, “Age of Imperial Revolutions,” especially pp. 332–6; and Rodríguez O., *Independence of Spanish America* 19–74.

¹¹³ The city performed a comparable function during the U.S.-Mexican War when it served as a hub for distributing accounts of the conflict written by war correspondents. As Robert Johannsen shows, this system of circulation formed the first news wire service (16–20).

¹¹⁴ For instance, the Lafitte brothers engaged in each of these activities. See Davis, *Pirates Lafitte*, especially pp. 65–70, 76–82, 146–9, 281–9, 326–31.

¹¹⁵ For a discussion of how the Atlantic world-system “entangles” multiple places and people together into an interrelated network, see Gould, “Entangled Histories.”

CONCLUSION

RECONSIDERING 1846 AS “THE YEAR OF DECISION”

The preceding chapters have surveyed how from 1810 to 1846, an emerging strand of U.S. nationalist discourse challenged the viability of independent Latin American republics. While it is true that several of these young nations possessed unstable governments during their early years—and some continued to experience upheavals throughout the twentieth century, and even into the twenty-first—their populations nevertheless labored successfully for their freedom from European imperial rule and worked to ensure their continued sovereignty. During this period, U.S. commentators addressing Latin American affairs initially praised the rebel colonies for separating from the Spanish empire, claiming that they followed the tradition of the American Revolution. But over the next three decades, as interest in territorial expansion grew and Jacksonian Democrats gained more political power, the initial rhetoric of transamerican union gave way to explicit criticism of several independent republics, particularly Mexico, the closest southern neighbor of the United States. For example, two of the most vocal advocates for U.S. recognition of Spanish American independence in the early 1820s, Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, shifted to openly ambivalent, sometimes even paternalistic attitudes by the 1840s.¹ As regions bordering Spanish-American frontiers, Texas and Louisiana became crucial contact zones for interactions between Mexico and the United States, which reached a climax in late April of 1846, when war erupted between the nations. For this reason, my analysis focused on those locales as hubs of cultural activity entangled with questions generated by Latin American independence.

Writing in 1943, the western historian Bernard DeVoto described 1846 as “the year of decision,” claiming that it represented “a turning point in American destiny” that facilitated the nation’s territorial expansion to the Pacific (4). Accordingly, DeVoto presented Polk as “the only ‘strong’ President between Jackson and Lincoln,” who managed “to fix the mold of the future in

America down to 1860” because of his ability to “read the popular mind” and discern that “Americans also wanted the vast and almost unknown area called New Mexico and California” (8). As these passages suggest, DeVoto reads Polk as an embodiment of Manifest Destiny, crediting the President with illustrating the belief that “it was perhaps the American destiny to spread our free and admirable institutions by actions as well as by example, by occupying territory as well as by practicing virtue” (9). By contrast, the pamphlets Santangelo published in the mid-1840s indicate the extent to which some antebellum citizens—including many members of the Whig party—objected to Polk’s actions and his campaign platform of acquiring Oregon and California.² In the years since DeVoto’s monograph appeared, this Whiggish interpretation of Polk and the U.S.-Mexican War has become the standard one, viewing the events of 1846–48 as what Thomas Bender terms the beginning of “a long-standing pattern of U.S. presumption of empire in relation to Central and South America” (203).³ Recent works of literary criticism by David Kazanjian, Jaime Javier Rodríguez, and Shelley Streeby explore the popular literature produced about the war, unpacking how the dozens of novelettes published between 1846 and 1850 depict U.S. territorial expansion as benign, characterize Mexicans as racially inferior, and present the campaign as a chivalric defense of national honor.⁴

Along with Santangelo, opponents to the U.S.-Mexican War included a diverse range of authors, including transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, and Henry David Thoreau, whose classic essay “Civil Disobedience” (1849) was inspired by his protest of the government’s actions; the abolitionist Frederick Douglass; poet James Russell Lowell, whose *The Biglow Papers* (1848) satirized the conflict’s supporters; and even William H. Prescott, whose *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (1843) allegedly inspired some pro-war advocates and provided troops with a pseudo travel guide to understand the areas they visited during the campaign.⁵ Like Zachary Taylor, the commander of the military forces against Mexico who used his service record to win the

presidency in the election of 1848, Prescott was an avowed Whig who thus opposed the war for its explicit endorsement of the Democratic party's expansionist agenda. Robert Johansen notes how such "steadfast Whigs" as Prescott and Robert Montgomery Bird "exhibited a fundamental irony with respect to the war," since their works contradicted their avowed opposition to the conflict by contributing to the "spirit that made the war all the more popular" (186).⁶ This contradiction suggests a central component of the cultural imaginings taking place in U.S. literature prior to 1846, as writers presented Mexico (and by extension, independent Latin America) as in need of the intervention that ultimately occurred, yet they opposed the actual end results of their own suggestions. The commonality of such conflicting views offers a potential explanation for the fluctuating sympathies and statements of a commentator like Santangelo, whose oppositional editorial positions might appear surprising. Santangelo viewed Polk's actions as contrary to "the spirit of republicanism," which compelled him to write passionately against the invasion of Mexico, even though he could potentially benefit from the overthrow of its government.⁷

By surveying early representations of Latin American independence in U.S. print culture, including those disseminated in both Anglophone and Hispanophone publications, I have attempted to show how changing responses to Spanish American revolutions foreshadowed the crisis of national identity caused by the U.S.-Mexican War. The invasion of an independent republic prompted questions of both the campaign's legitimacy and what such an act of aggression revealed about the imperial expansion of the United States. Concerning the experiences of U.S. soldiers, Paul Foos observes that "the naked opportunism of the 1846–48 war, the class conflict that the army brought with it to Mexico, and face-to-face experience with the Mexican people would bring about changed racial thinking: some individuals and groups became more exploitive than ever, but others rejected the cant of racial destiny" (5).⁸ By contrast, Thomas Hietala notes, "Even as American troops penetrated into the heart of Mexico and then subdued and occupied Mexico City, Democrats

continued to proclaim the exceptional virtue of the United States and to distinguish it from all other empires” (209). From the founding of the nation, but especially after victory in the War of 1812 guaranteed its continued sovereignty, literary works celebrated the American Revolution for inaugurating a new tradition of republican government and egalitarian liberty. For example, the jubilee celebrations in 1826 revealed how citizens throughout the nation venerated the revolutionary generation. But during the thirty-six years between Miguel Hidalgo’s 1810 rebellion and the invasion of Mexico, writers frequently denied that Latin American republics represented acceptable inheritors of U.S. revolutionary principles and models of government. For instance, many commentators openly questioned whether the inhabitants of Spanish-American frontiers were capable of self-government.⁹ Alongside this emerging skepticism about the viability of republican governments in Latin America, filibustering campaigns gained additional public and private support, as more individuals accepted the idea of U.S. citizens intervening to aid oppressed groups or entire populations viewed as struggling to liberate themselves.

During the 1810s and 1820s, qualified expressions of hemispheric solidarity spread through several sections of U.S. print culture—exemplified by texts like the Monroe Doctrine and Webster’s Bunker Hill Monument Address, which celebrated the republics as “southern brethren” who had “followed [the] example” of the United States. The authors of those documents never observed firsthand the Spanish-American colonies rebelling against Spain, but comparable sentiments appeared in travel narratives published by writers like Henry Marie Brackenridge and William Davis Robinson who visited the regions during and after the revolutions. Whereas these earlier writers assumed U.S. cultural superiority, Timothy Flint gave the trend a new dimension in his novel *Francis Berrian* by attributing Mexican independence partially to the actions of a U.S. adventurer, and eventually suggesting the alleged benefits of incorporating Spanish-American frontier territories and inhabitants into the nation. Ten years later in 1836, when Texas colonists engaged in their own

independence struggle against Mexico, Richard Penn Smith acknowledged few remaining traces of transamerican sympathy in his novel *Col. Crockett's Exploits and Adventures in Texas*, which presents the Tennessee frontiersman as a martyr who died defending the cause of liberty. Instead, Smith's incarnation of Crockett agrees wholeheartedly with the Declaration of Independence issued by the Texas Congress, even reciting several passages from the document when explaining his own increasing devotion to the fight against Santa Anna. This act of literary ventriloquism indicates how the novel collects and disseminates contemporary commentaries on Texas, synthesizing them into a text supporting the region's independence and dismissing the Mexican government as a despotic administration oppressing the colonists.

As indicated by Smith's rendition of Crockett and his Texas campaign, many of the travel narratives and works of fiction discussed celebrate specific types of characters as national patriots. All share a common devotion to "the cause of liberty," a belief system associated in the texts specifically with U.S. national principles, rather than with transamerican or even transatlantic discourses of freedom. Fighting on the patriot side—either in the American Revolution or a subsequent one that allegedly follows its model—will supposedly prompt inclusion into the national community. This offer even extended to foreigners, as revealed by the honorary U.S. citizenship bestowed on the Marquis de Lafayette, a hero of the revolutionary war and the "adopted son" of George Washington. As suggested in chapter 2, Lafayette offers a model for understanding an array of characters, both fictional and historical, from Francis Berrian to Xavier Mina and possibly even Davy Crockett. All embody the idea of a citizen travelling to a region in revolt to aid the rebels out of a devotion to ideas, rather than a pursuit of personal gain. Mina provides a crucial example here because of the frequency with which he was referenced—normally with great esteem—by later commentators on Texas, Mexico, and Latin America in general. In the public proclamation he issued on February 22, 1817, Mina appealed to the Mexican insurgents to allow him "to take part in [their]

glorious tasks” and accept him as one of their “compatriots,” declaring his intention to labor “only for the sake of liberty” (158–59).¹⁰ Subsequent reports on his activities and legacy, ranging from Robinson’s initial biographical sketch to Bird’s off-hand comment about Capt. Dicky Dare’s death as part of the campaign, along with countless later iterations, emphasize that despite his capture and execution, Mina succeeded in earning the support of patriots across the Americas, making a considerable impression on transamerican cultural consciousness.¹¹ Although a Spaniard by birth, Mina came to signify more than just a Mexican patriot, but instead a transatlantic one whose campaign justified the intervention of foreign citizens in the affairs of another sovereign nation.

Read together, the four chapters also focus on a series of cultural attitudes toward Latin America, embedded in distinct national narratives commenting on the United States and its position in the world. The discussions reveal a shift in sectors of U.S. popular consciousness, specifically from viewing southern republics as compatriots in a hemispheric struggle against European empires, to regarding them instead as sites of future national expansion. The post-1846 history of the Americas, surveyed by scholars like Lester Langley and Frederick Pike, indicates the repercussions caused by the auto-ethnographic imaginings of the previous decades.¹² For instance, 1840s-era depictions of New Orleans and Cuba, both crucial locations in the circum-Caribbean world, foreshadow the subsequent U.S.-sponsored filibustering schemes to seize the island, as well as the ultimate overthrow of Spanish rule there in the Spanish-American War of 1898. These events suggest an alternate mode of national expansion from the one celebrated by DeVoto. Instead of just the acquisition of continental territories spanning to the Pacific, U.S. literary representations of Latin American independence mark a decisive shift toward justifying intervention in foreign areas. If initial responses to Spanish American revolutions remained hopeful that the colonists would expel the royalists and found model republican governments, then by 1846 a distinct group of writers and public figures argued that the Latin American governments were incapable of instituting true

independence and thus the people needed their northern neighbors to liberate them. In the process, a republic previously regarded as one of the “southern brethren” of the United States was reimagined as a tyrannous regime that should be overthrown, enacting an aspect of U.S. foreign policy still prevalent today.¹³

Notes

¹ See the Introduction, which discusses Webster’s two addresses at the Bunker Hill Monument, the first in 1825 praising the new republics for having “followed [the] example” of the United States, the second in 1843 chastising them for allegedly regressing to a state comparable to monarchy.

² J. Gerald Kennedy argues that one such note of concern over Polk’s agenda came from Edgar Allan Poe, whose “Some Words with a Mummy” (1845) satirized the election of 1844, characterizing emergent U.S. empire-building as “all a mistake,” a critique encoded in the name of the tale’s subject, the Egyptian mummy Count Allamistakeo (“Mania for Composition” 20–25).

³ Bender identifies two dominant modes of U.S. empire: “First, Americans presumed a position of superiority to the people whose land they coveted or whose trade they sought.... Second, Americans repeatedly misunderstood the culture, ideas, and aspirations of other people and nations. Again and again they presumed that their own parochial assumptions were universal and should be controlling in intercultural and international exchanges” (192). Similarly, William Earl Weeks describes three central components of “the rhetoric of American empire”: “the assumption of the unique moral virtue of the United States, the assertion of its mission to redeem the world by the spread of republican government and more generally the ‘American way of life,’ and the faith in the nation’s divinely ordained destiny to succeed in this mission” (183–84). For overviews of historical perspectives on the U.S.-Mexican War, see Foos 8–10 and Nugent 219–20.

⁴ For analyses of Mexican War novelettes, including texts by such prominent antebellum writers as George Lippard, Ned Buntline, and A.J.H. Duganne, see Kazanjian 173–212; Rodríguez, *Literatures of the U.S.-Mexican War*, especially pp. 16–109; and Streeby, *American Sensations*, especially pp. 38–101. These recent studies expand upon previous work on the war’s popular literature: see Johannsen 175–203 and Slotkin 191–207.

⁵ See Johannsen 217–18, 245–48, 277–78.

⁶ Early on, one of the war’s vocal supporters included the poet Walt Whitman, who celebrated “the Mexican peasants over their corrupt leaders,” echoing the justifications offered by Polk and his allies (Loving 89).

⁷ For a representative example of how Santangelo critiqued Polk and the U.S.-Mexican War, see his pamphlet *Two or Three Millions*, especially pp. 2–3. By comparison, in the years after he aided the expeditions launched by Gutierrez and Mina, Toledo underwent an even more radical reversal, as he shifted from publishing pro-independence propaganda to participating in filibustering campaigns, and finally to working with royalists toward suppressing the rebellions, the latter of which gained him renewed citizenship in Spain (Kanellos, “José Alvarez de Toledo” 93–94).

⁸ Foos also emphasizes how some political factions were unsatisfied with “the territorial gains” made possible by the war: “The shortfall of Manifest Destiny was a bitter pill, in an optimistic era, when many Americans thought that republicanism was the universal tonic for oppressed and divided nations of Latin America and Europe. Democratic Party propagandists dared to dream of an Americanized hemisphere and world. The retreat to ‘free soil’—a white man’s empire upon ‘empty’ lands—was a fallback position and turned American disputes over race and slavery inward, compressing and inflaming them” (5–6).

⁹ These sentiments echoed a statement Jefferson quoted from Henry Marie Brackenridge, which asserted that “a people must be educated and prepared for freedom.” See Chapter 1 above; Brackenridge, *Voyage* 1: 67n; and Keller 231–2.

However, later commentators did not share Brackenridge's optimism about the progress of Latin American republics toward achieving this "education."

¹⁰ Addressed to "Americans," the passage states: "Only for the sake of liberty have I as yet taken up arms; only in its defense will I bear them in the future. Permit me, friends, permit me to take part in your glorious tasks; accept the cooperation of my small efforts in favor of your noble undertaking.... Count me among your compatriots. Would that I might merit this title by helping you to win your liberty or by sacrificing my own existence" (Mina 158–59).

¹¹ For instance, the author of a 4-part series of articles in the *Democratic Review* referenced "the short, but brilliant career of Mina in Mexico," commenting that "brilliant it was, from the constant display of boldness, energy and courage, under difficulties which, as he could not but have seen within a short time after his landing in Mexico, were insuperable." See "Retrospective View of the South-American States," *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* 1.3 (Feb. 1838): 377. The article's overview of the Mina expedition (pp. 376–78) appears to be based on the account given in Robinson's *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution*.

¹² See Langley, *Americas in the Age of Revolution* and *Americas in the Modern Age*; Pike, *United States and Latin America*; and Schoultz, *Beneath the United States*.

¹³ Walter Nugent observes that after the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, "the continental United States was complete" and "there was plenty of 'empty' real estate to be filled with democratic people and the blessings of liberty," but that at the same time expansionists realized "there were other ways to be imperial without actually annexing land, as the United States would demonstrate in the next century and a half" (220).

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