

CHAPTER 3

Civil Conflict in Independent Mexico, 1821–57: An Overview

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Introduction¹

Although a number of studies in early republican Mexico have started to dispel many of the myths and inaccuracies that have been inherited in the historiography over the last 150 years from the biased interpretations of Lucas Alamán and José María Luis Mora,¹ and above all, from the historians of the Porfiriato such as Justo Sierra and Enrique de Olavarria y Ferrari,² one issue which has continued to elude any serious attention from scholars is civil conflict.³ To quote Michael Costeloe, 'An incalculable number of revolts, or *pronunciamientos*, took place ... so many [in fact] that nobody has yet counted them'.⁴ Alamán's bold assertion that the first decades of national

¹ This chapter was written with financial assistance from the University of St Andrews and the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland.

² For review essays on recent studies on this period see Timothy E. Anna, 'Demystifying Early Nineteenth-Century Mexico', *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, vol. 9, no. 1 (1993), pp. 119–37; Donald F. Stevens, 'Autonomists, Nativists, Republicans, and Monarchists: Conspiracy and Political History in Nineteenth-Century Mexico', *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, vol. 10, no. 1 (1994), pp. 247–66; Barbara A. Tenenbaum, 'Mexico: So Close to the United States: Unconventional Views of the Nineteenth Century', *Latin American Research Review*, vol. 30, no. 1 (1995), pp. 226–35; Will Fowler, 'Introduction: The Forgotten Century, 1810–1910', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, vol. 15, no. 1 (1996), pp. 1–6. For a bibliographical summary on recent studies on the period also see Linda Arnold, *Política y justicia. La suprema corte mexicana (1824–1855)* (Mexico City, 1996), pp. 11–2.

³ See Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'Los años olvidados', *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, vol. 5, no. 2 (1989), p. 313.

⁴ Although a comprehensive study of civil conflict in Mexico for this period is yet to be written, a number of studies have been published on regional and rural conflicts. See Moisés González Navarro, *Raza y tierra: la guerra de casta y el henequén* (Mexico City, 1970); Leticia Reina, *Las rebeliones campesinas en México, 1819–1906* (Mexico City, 1980); John Tutino, *From Insurrection to Revolution in Mexico: Social Bases of Agrarian Violence, 1750–1940* (Princeton, 1986); Friedrich Katz (ed.), *Revolución, rebelión y revolución: La lucha rural en México del siglo XVI al siglo XX*, 2 vols (Mexico City, 1990); and Jaime E. Rodríguez O. (ed.), *Patterns of Contention in Mexican History* (Wilmington, 1992). An important contribution to the historiography which has provided much of the historical data discussed in this study is Ernesto de la Torre Villar et al. (eds.), *Planes de la nación mexicana* (Mexico City, 1987), 5 vols. An initial chronology of major revolts and *pronunciamientos* for the years 1821–53 can also be found in Will Fowler, *Mexico in the Age of Proposals, 1821–1853* (Westport, CT, 1998), pp. 277–87.

⁵ Michael P. Costeloe, *The Central Republic in Mexico, 1835–1846. Hombres de Bien in the Age of Santa Anna* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 2, 9. (Since Costeloe wrote these lines an initial chronology has been ventured. See note 3.)

life could be defined as one of 'revolutions'⁵ and Sierra's Porfirian view that Mexican history, prior to the establishment of General Díaz's allegedly stable and law-abiding liberal dictatorship, was merely an 'age of chaos',⁶ continue to be reiterated in the historiography. However, a closer look at the nature of the numerous rebellions which took place between the War of Independence (1810–21) and the mid-century War of the Reforma (1858–61) poses a number of questions which this chapter aims to survey, in the hope of highlighting: (1) the need for further research into the civil conflicts which allegedly characterised this period, and (2) the extent to which such research might in fact show that, with the exception of the Federalist Revolt of 1832 and the Revolution of Ayutla (1854–55), the majority of revolts, *pronunciamientos* and skirmishes which took place between 1821 and 1857 were not as significant as we have been led to believe, either in causing the instability which has generally been perceived to have been widespread and endemic in the politics of independent Mexico, or in affecting the everyday lives of the majority of Mexicans who lived during this period.

This chapter proposes that the majority of revolts were not as important as the historiography has led us to believe, provided the civil conflict they unleashed is qualified. Such qualification must take into consideration: (1) the percentage of the population affected by the revolts; (2) the levels of violence these represented, and (3) their impact on national politics. By 'civil conflict' what is understood here is a particular kind of political violence that affects the everyday lives of the civilian population of a particular country. Purely military clashes do not necessarily represent civil conflict, especially when these took place in the countryside and did not involve direct civilian participation, nor does the term 'civil conflict' refer to wars with other nations such as Spain, France or the United States. As will be seen, the nature of military recruitment in nineteenth century Mexico (civilians were, in some cases, forced to join the regular army) means that it would be artificial to make a sharp distinction between those conflicts fought exclusively by soldiers and those that involved civilians. Nevertheless, even when this is taken into consideration, it remains the case that there were surprisingly few revolts in early national Mexico that involved large segments of the civilian population, entailed large-scale fighting and had any impact on national politics. To verify this controversial point, this chapter focuses on the nature of civil conflict from 1821 to 1857 and then analyses the different types of civil conflicts that surfaced, namely military, indigenous, regional and agrarian. It considers the issue of banditry as a possible element of civil conflict and concludes by arguing that only the civil wars of 1832 and 1854–55 truly qualify as civil conflicts. The chapter

⁵ Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Méjico*, vol. 5 (Mexico City, 1969), p. 434.

⁶ Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'De la difícil constitución de un estado: México, 1821–1854', in Josefina Zoraida Vázquez (ed.), *La fundación del estado mexicano, 1821–1855* (Mexico City, 1994), p. 9.

also includes a chronology of major revolts and *pronunciamientos*, which highlights those events that resulted in death-tolls of over 20, which led to a change in government or which were characterised by significant levels of civilian participation.

The nature of civil conflict in Mexico, 1821–1857: a survey

While it cannot be denied that 'military action by ambitious army officers became the normal method of expressing dissent or pursuing policy change',⁷ the notion that Mexico was riddled with civil conflict during its early national period begs clarification. This becomes particularly evident if the term *civilis* is used to refer to these conflicts, as this implies that the revolts involved a high level of civilian participation. A closer look at the most significant revolts from 1821 to 1857 (see Appendix) illustrates the extent to which the majority were inspired, led and fought by the military without the participation of the civilian population.⁸ This fact, which has not been emphasised enough in the historiography, was stated time and again by contemporary politicians who either lamented or expressed relief that the majority of the population appeared to have no interest in the many political revolts which a wide spectrum of military officers orchestrated during these years.⁹

For example, in 1833, the radical Lorenzo de Zavala arrived at the conclusion that if 800 regular troops had in 1829 been able to dominate Yucatán, with a population of up to 700,000 inhabitants, this was because '400,000 degraded Indians do not experience any change in their way of being or lifestyle'. He then went on to lament that the indifference of the masses was inevitable when their situation did not change, regardless of whichever new form of government was promised.¹⁰ Similarly, the *santanista* General José María Tornel came to believe 20 years later that the 'people had remained silent and obeyed, just as they have always obeyed and remained silent, without there having been a single stimulus which could have shaken the cold indifference with which they have seen so

⁷ Costeloe, *The Central Republic*, p. 2.

⁸ The army was not yet a clearly defined, professional institution. The fact that chain gangs were used to recruit unwilling civilians (i.e. Indians) by force to form the rank and file of the troops does beg the question of whether it is artificial to distinguish between strictly military conflicts and civil conflicts for this period. See Waddy Thompson, *Recollections of Mexico* (New York, 1847), pp. 168–74. However, recruitment statistics from the 1846–48 war with the United States suggest that this distinction is valid. At a time when one might have expected a significant rise in recruitment, the regular army failed to muster more than 20,000 men, although Mexico had a population of over seven million. In other words, the army did not represent more than 0.28 per cent of the population at large. Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, *La intervención norteamericana 1846–1848* (Mexico City, 1997), p. 112.

⁹ Notwithstanding the apparent apathy of the masses, most of the governing factions found themselves attempting to co-opt the support of this 'silent' majority. See Torcuato S. Di Tella, *National Popular Politics in Early Independent Mexico, 1820–1847* (Albuquerque, 1996).

¹⁰ Lorenzo de Zavala, *Obras* (Mexico City, 1969), pp. 457–8.

many revolutions take place'.¹¹ It is important to note that this was not a view sustained solely by Mexican politicians, who clearly had marked interests when writing about the political behaviour of the masses. The Scottish-born Fanny Calderón de la Barca, who lived in Mexico in the 1840s, could not help expressing her amazement at the people's indifference to the 1840 July Revolt:

The tranquillity of the sovereign people during all this period is astonishing. In what other city of the world would they not have taken part with one or other side? Shops shut, workmen out of employment, thousands of idle people, subsisting, Heaven only knows how, yet no riot, no confusion, apparently no impatience. Groups of people collect on the streets, or stand talking before their doors, and speculate upon probabilities, but await the decision of their military chiefs, as if it were a judgement from Heaven, from which it were both useless and impious to appeal.¹²

In contrast to the high levels of civilian participation during the War of Independence (1810–21),¹³ and later on, in the mid-century Civil War of the Reform (1858–61), the majority of revolts and conflicts which emerged during the early national period did not involve or affect the population at large. Furthermore, the apparent importance of the few notable exceptions is diminished when we consider the effect such revolts had at a national level. The majority of civil conflicts (i.e. those which involved the participation of the masses at a village level) were of a specific regional nature and, moreover, generally involved either local grievances or racial issues. In particular, the majority of the civil conflicts which were recorded to have erupted throughout this period in the present-day northern states of Sonora, Sinaloa, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, Tamaulipas, Durango and even Zacatecas, including the central Sierra Gorda, and in the southern states of Oaxaca, Chiapas and Yucatán were what the Creole elite came to define as 'caste wars'. Although these indigenous revolts were often bloody,¹⁴ their impact on

¹¹ José María Tornel y Mendivil, *Breve reseña histórica de los acontecimientos más notables de la nación mexicana* (Mexico City, 1985), p. 12. For two recent studies on Tornel see: María del Carmen Vázquez Mantecón, *La palabra del poder. Vida pública de José María Tornel (1795–1853)* (Mexico City, 1997); and Will Fowler, *Tornel and Santa Anna. The Writer and the Caudillo, Mexico 1795–1853* (Westport, CT, forthcoming).

¹² Fanny Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico* ([1843] repr. London, 1987), p. 246. Doña Calderón de la Barca, as the Spanish Ambassador's wife, was no less biased in her descriptions of the behaviour of the Mexican lower classes, but, as she was not herself a political actor, her memoirs reveal different biases from those of Zavala or Tornel.

¹³ It is estimated that prior to 1816, at the height of Morelos' leadership of the campaign for Independence from Spain, there were approximately 40,000 civilians fighting for the insurgency. See Ernesto de la Torre, *La independencia de México* (Madrid, 1992), p. 99. This figure does not take into consideration all of the recorded 281 communities (cities, towns and villages) that fought for Independence. See Juan Ortiz Escamilla, *Guerra y go-bierno. Los pueblos y la independencia de México* (Seville, 1997), pp. 179–83.

¹⁴ This contrasts with the majority of internal conflicts fought by the army during this period, which, on the whole, seldom led to much loss of life. See Will Fowler, *Military Politi-*

national politics was remarkably insignificant. An analysis of the annual ministerial reports of the ministers of war from 1822-53 illustrates clearly that these revolts were not perceived to be a threat to the well-being of the nation. The indigenous rebels were repeatedly characterised as 'barbarians' (*indios bárbaros*) and were generally repressed by régiments made up of criminals, deserters and levied Indians whose punishment consisted in being sent to those frontier posts.¹⁵ In other words, defeating these rebels was not thought to require the better-equipped troops who were destined to guard the more respectable garisons in the main cities, and to fight in the more 'important' conflicts that entailed safeguarding national sovereignty (the wars against Spain [1829], France [1838-39] and the United States [1846-48]) or which were considered to threaten peace and order within the more central and prosperous regions of the Republic (present day Mexico, Puebla, Veracruz, Jalisco, Guanajuato, Querétaro, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, Morelos, Michoacán and Hidalgo).

Those civil conflicts which did cause a significant change in government can in fact be reduced to five: the revolt of La Acordada (1828), the Federalist revolt against the Bustamante government of 1832, the Texan Revolt (1835-36),¹⁶ the Revolution of the Three Hours (1844) and the Revolution of Ayutla (1854-55).¹⁷ These are the only cases of revolts which had a major impact at a national level and which involved a high level of civilian participation. *Pronunciamientos* such as Casa Mata (1823), Jalapa (1829), Cuernavaca (1834), Guadaluajara, Ciudadela and Perote (1841), San Luis Potosí (1845), Polkos (1847) and Jalapa (1853) that resulted in a change of government were all led and fought by the military and did not involve significant civilian participation. Furthermore, of these five mentioned civil revolts, only two involved large scale fighting throughout the republic. The Revolt of La Acordada and the

cal Identity and Reformism in Independent Mexico. An Analysis of the Memorias de Guerra (1821-1855) (London, 1996), pp. 16-21.

¹⁵ See footnote 9.

¹⁶ The Texan campaign did not result in a change of government. The interim president, José Justo Corro remained in office until the elections of 1837 brought General Anastasio Bustamante back to power. Moreover, the 1836 Constitution known as *Las Siete Leyes* remained in effect until it was overthrown by the Bases de Tacubaya of 1841. However, the Battle of San Jacinto did involve the capture of the Republic's president, General Antonio López de Santa Anna, and as a result, brought a temporary end to the influence that had been exerted by the *santanistas* since 1834. Santa Anna was not able to regain the presidency until 1839.

¹⁷ In all these examples the military were also involved. It would be wrong to assume that there was a clear divide between military and civilian politicians, but revolts have been labelled as civil conflicts when there were civilians amongst the ringleaders of the revolts and when civilians were involved in the fighting. It should also be noted that the civic militias which played a key role in the revolts of 1832, 1844 and 1854-55 have been classified as civilian forces. If one were to define the civic militias as military forces (i.e. as analogous to the regular professional army), then the instances of civilian participation in revolts during this period would become even more insignificant. In that case, it could be said that only the civil conflicts of 1828 and 1835-6 had any impact on government.

Revolution of the Three Hours affected Mexico City only and were of a very short duration. The Texan Revolt, notwithstanding its historical and political importance, did not affect the population at large (at least in terms of who was involved in, or was directly affected by, the fighting), given the remoteness of its location.

Therefore, the majority of the conflicts that surfaced during this period involved only a limited section of the population: namely the military, which represented approximately 0.28 per cent of Mexico's overall population.¹⁸ However, even in the case of military revolts, a study of their individual duration, the effects they had at a national level and the percentage of the population which was affected by them might prove that the generally-held view that the early national period in Mexico was plagued by military interventions is not altogether accurate. As Josefina Zoraida Vázquez noted recently, although 'there were a great number of plans ... only a handful of them were significant'.¹⁹ This is confirmed, in terms of national politics, by the fact that in a period which spanned over 36 years, only seven military-inspired uprisings led to a change of government (Casa Mata, 1823; Jalapa, 1829; Cuernavaca, 1834; Guadalaajara, Ciudadela and Perote, 1841; San Luis Potosí, 1845; Polkos, 1847; and Jalapa, 1853). Moreover, if one takes into account the five aforementioned civilian-led revolts, of which one did not actually involve a change of government (the Texan Revolt), it becomes evident that the idea that after Independence, 'the quarrels between liberals and conservatives would repeatedly plunge the country into civil war' is not only inaccurate but greatly exaggerated.²⁰ During 36 years, only 12 revolts seriously affected national politics. Furthermore, of these 12 revolts, only two involved large scale fighting at a national level (Federalist Revolt, 1832 and Ayudta, 1854–55). The Texan Campaign, which gave rise to three major battles (El Alamo, Goliad and San Jacinto), affected only the underpopulated region in question and those regular troops sent to fight the rebels.²¹

Furthermore, seven of these conflicts did not lead to any deaths at all (Casa Mata, 1823; Cuernavaca, 1834; Guadalaajara, Ciudadela and Perote, 1841; Three Hours, 1844; San Luis Potosí, 1845; Polkos, 1847; and Jalapa, 1853). In the case of the revolt of La Acordada (1828) only a handful of individuals were killed. In the case of the revolt of Jalapa (1829) although no blood was shed in the actual overthrow of General Vicente Guerrero's government, it is not included as a bloodless revolt because the year-long resistance Guerrero went on to mount in the south against General Anastasio Bustamante's government did involve

¹⁸ See footnote 9.

¹⁹ Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'Political Plans and Collaboration Between Civilians and the Military, 1821–1846', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, vol. 15, no. 1 (1996), pp. 21–2.

²⁰ Edwin Williamson, *The Penguin History of Latin America* (Harmondsworth, 1992), p. 259.

²¹ Apart from the Indian tribes there were around 40,000 inhabitants in Texas in 1836. This constituted approximately 0.006% of the population in Mexico at the time. See Vázquez, *La intervención norteamericana*, p. 29.

fighting (albeit sporadic), ending with the notorious and atypical execution of Guerrero on 14 February 1831.²²

Apart from the Texan campaign and the regional/indigenous/agrarian conflicts in Sonora, Sinaloa, Yucatán, Oaxaca and Sierra Gorda, only two others involved full-scale battles, namely Governor Francisco García's federalist revolt in Zacatecas of 1835 (Battle of Guadalupe), and General José Urrea and Colonel José Antonio Mejía's federalist revolt in Tamaulipas of 1839 (Battle of Acajete). As was the case with the Texan Campaign, neither of these conflicts affected the nation at large in terms of where the fighting was located. Moreover, in both cases, the government succeeded in quelling the revolts and their impact on national politics was minimal.

The only other conflict that involved a relatively high death toll was General José Urrea's federalist revolt of July 1840. However, as a recent study of Urrea's *pronunciamiento* has shown, the deaths which were caused by this revolt were more the result of the random and intensive bombing to which the centre of the capital was subjected, than of any direct encounters between the rebels and the government troops.²³

A superficial glance at any list of revolts for this period conjures up an image of chronic instability. The sheer number of revolts would suggest in itself that Mexico was immersed in constant turmoil during the first half of the nineteenth-century. Nevertheless, a closer analysis of their individual duration, the effects they had at a national level and the percentage of the population which was affected by them might provide a very different understanding of the ways in which these numerous internal conflicts affected Mexican society. In order to assess the impact these revolts had on the republic, this chapter will survey the different revolts in terms of the following categories: military conflicts, indigenous conflicts, regional/agrarian conflicts, banditry and finally, civil conflict.

Military conflicts

In many ways it would be misleading to suggest that the military conflicts of this period did not affect the civilian population. The most successful military uprisings were planned and carried out with the support, and at times, even at the instigation of civilian politicians.²⁴ To quote Brian Hamnett:

²² Jan Bazant, 'From Independence to the Liberal Republic, 1821–1867', in Leslie Bethell (ed.), *Mexico since Independence* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 12.

²³ The civilians who died during the revolt were not killed deliberately because of their involvement in the fighting. The casualties were accidental, as they were the result of bombs that exploded in the city centre. To quote Fanny Calderón de la Barca, who witnessed the revolt: 'Both parties seem to be *fighting the city* instead of each other; and this manner of firing from behind parapets is decidedly safer for the soldiers than for the inhabitants'.

Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, p. 231. See also Michael P. Costeloe, 'A Pronunciamiento in Nineteenth Century Mexico: "15 de julio de 1840"', *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, vol. 4, no. 2 (1988), pp. 245–64.

²⁴ Vázquez, 'Political Plans', p. 19.

In Mexico, perhaps more so than in other Latin American countries, the repeated military interventions happened in a context in which the political issues were defined by civilians ... The intervention of military politicians was not motivated to promote the objectives of the army; it was determined by the nature of the constitutional conflict which existed between the civilians.²⁵

Apart from the fact that it was civilian politicians who invited military intervention, most of the successful revolts were financed by landowners and businessmen who were not themselves members of the army.²⁶ Nonetheless, most revolts were military conflicts in the sense that the fighting was carried out by professional soldiers, rather than by armed civilians. With the five exceptions noted earlier, and excluding, for the time being, the indigenous/agrarian revolts which will be looked at further on, none of the seven remaining significant military revolts was fought by civilians. In other words, there were in these cases no recorded instances of civilians becoming involved in the fighting.

In fact, there appears to have been, in the majority of military conflicts, a conscious effort on the part of the government troops and those of the *pronunciados* to avoid any fighting at all, let alone to involve the civilian population. Moreover, in those cases where conflict did lead to fighting, it was remarkably tame, so long as the encounter was between regiments of the regular army. In the words of Ruth Olivera and Lilian Crété, 'Contrary to the rule elsewhere, Mexican revolutions were seldom sanguinary. Contemporary observers even had the feeling that Mexicans fired upon each other from safe distances in order to avoid casualties.'²⁷

The key military revolts of Casa Mata (1823), Cuernavaca (1834), Guadalaajara, Ciudadela and Perote (1841), San Luis Potosí (1845), Polkos (1847) and Jalapa (1853) took place without any violent clashes at all. This can be explained if one considers that after the experience of the 11-year War of Independence, the population at large, at least those who belonged to those generations who had suffered and had lived through the conflict, must have been weary of war.²⁸ The lack of bloodshed can also be explained by the way most of the military revolts were executed. The conspiracies which preceded most of the *pronunciamientos* entailed a long correspondence which gave the rebels a fairly

²⁵ Brian Hammett, 'Partidos políticos mexicanos e intervención militar, 1823-1855', in Antonio Annino et al (eds.), *América Latina dallo stato coloniale allo stato nazione*, vol. 2 (Milan, 1987), p. 574.

²⁶ Vázquez, 'Political Plans', p. 23. Also, as an example of how a *pronunciamiento* was financed by civilian entrepreneurs, see Michael P. Costeloe, 'The Triangular Revolt in Mexico and the Fall of Anastasio Bustamante, August-October 1841', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol. 20 (1988), pp. 337-60.

²⁷ Ruth Olivera and Lilian Crété, *Life in Mexico under Santa Anna, 1822-1855* (Norman, OK, and London, 1991), p. 167.

²⁸ This also applies to most of the agrarian revolts that surfaced during this period. To quote John Tuino, 'agrarian conflicts did not engulf Mexico immediately after Independence. The defeats suffered by the insurgents of 1810 were still fresh memories.' See Tuino, *From Insurrection to Revolution*, p. 248.

sound idea of the kind of support their revolt would have.²⁹ This in turn meant that by the time the revolt was announced with its corresponding manifesto and *grito*, both the rebels and the government tended to be in a position where they could assess, depending on the number of plans of allegiance the revolt received, which of the sides had the greatest chance of winning the conflict.³⁰ In the cases of the revolts of Casa Mata (1823), Cuernavaca (1834), Guadaluajara, Ciudadela and Perote (1841), San Luis Potosí (1845), Polkos (1847) and Jalapa (1853), the governments of Agustín de Iturbide (1821–23), Valentín Gómez Farías (1833–34), Anastasio Bustamante (1837–41), José Joaquín de Herrera (1844–45), Gómez Farías (1846–47) and Manuel María Lombardini (1853) surrendered without mounting any significant resistance after realising that the regular army favoured the objectives of the rebels.

Although the changes in government brought about by these revolts, with their respective changes in policies (concerning issues such as the constitutional framework of the republic, taxation, education, land reform, economic policy, freedom of the press and the role of the Church), affected the population at large, the lives of the majority of Mexicans were not interrupted by any noticeable form of politically-inspired *violence*. It could in fact be said that, with the exception of the revolts of 1832 and 1854–55, for the average civilian in the more populated central regions of Mexico, while changes in government might have affected his or her life, the violence which is generally associated with civil conflict did not.³¹ As an example, a cobbler born at the end of the eighteenth-century and living in Mexico City would have witnessed fighting only in 1828 during the Revolt of La Acordada, in 1840 during the July Revolt and some rioting in 1844 during the Revolution of the Three Hours. In 1832, he might have heard the gunfire from the Rancho de Posadas during the last stages of the federalist revolt against Bustamante's government. However, in this instance, the fighting did not actually reach the capital itself. If one adds together each one of these cases, the witnessed violence would have constituted no more than 20 days of his existence. He would also have seen the violence that preceded and followed the capture of the capital in September 1847 by the US army, but given that this was an international conflict, it does not enter the analytical parameters of this study. It should be stressed that the hypothetical cobbler from Mexico City was far more likely to have wit-

²⁹ For the characteristic steps that were taken in the preparation and execution of a typical *pronunciamiento*, see Vázquez, 'Political Plans', pp. 21–3.

³⁰ The traditional pattern of action was one in which those high-ranking officers who had been in correspondence with the rebels during the conspiracy phase, and who had previously negotiated to support the revolt in exchange for privileges, pay rises, etc., in the event that the *pronunciamiento* was successful, published and circulated their respective plans of allegiance to the uprising in the days which immediately followed its eruption.

³¹ In the mid-to-late 1820s the city and state of Mexico together accounted for nearly 20% of the country's entire population of approximately 6.2 million people. The most populous states thereafter were Puebla (population 750,000) and Jalisco (population 650,000). See Timothy E. Anna, *Forging Mexico 1821–1835* (Lincoln, NE, 1998), pp. 101–2.

nessed political violence than an equivalent cobbler from the other central cities. The average civilian from the cities of Puebla, Morelia, Cuernavaca, San Luis Potosí, Querétaro, Veracruz, Jalapa, Guadalajara or Guanajuato, in contrast, did not witness any significant political military violence during this period, even during the revolts of 1832 and 1854–55.

In brief, the majority of military conflicts took place outside the main urban areas,³² they were seldom bloody and they did not directly involve or affect the majority of the civilian population. They consisted more of shows of strength, which were resolved without fighting or popular involvement. Although further research needs to be carried out into each of these individual revolts before any firm conclusions can be reached, it would nevertheless appear to be the case from this preliminary survey that between 1821 and 1857, the more populated areas of central Mexico did not experience any significant politically-motivated displays of violence (with the exception of the conflicts of 1832 and 1854–55). However, it would be wrong to assume that this was the case throughout the republic. As will be seen in the following pages, a very different situation obtained in the more peripheral regions of Sonora, Sinaloa, Yucatán, Chiapas, Guerrero and Oaxaca, where larger indigenous populations resorted to almost constant raids on the properties of the land-owning Creole classes throughout this period. Although these conflicts did not cause noticeable changes in government policies and were not motivated by political division between liberals and conservatives, they nevertheless affected the lives of the population from these regions.

Indigenous conflicts

Carmen Vázquez Mantecón's historical maps of revolts and rebellions in the nineteenth century show the regions which were most affected by indigenous conflicts from 1821–57.³³ These were Sonora and Sinaloa (Yaqui wars: 1826–33, 1834–37, 1838–56),³⁴ Sierra Gorda (Xichu revolts: 1844, 1847, 1849, 1854–55)³⁵ and Yucatán (Maya revolts: 1847–52).³⁶ Furthermore, in the northern regions of Nuevo México and California

³² Most battles and skirmishes were fought in the margins of the larger haciendas frequently found outside the main cities. A typical battle, the Battle of Tulancingo (7 January 1828) was fought on the outskirts of the hacienda of San Antonio Ahuehuetita and in which only eight soldiers died, can be found in Tornel, *Breve reseña histórica*, pp. 201–3.

³³ Carmen Vázquez Mantecón, 'Rebeliones y revueltas: 1820–1910', hojas I y II, in *Atlas Nacional de México* (Mexico City, 1990).

³⁴ For the Yaqui Wars see Evelyn Hu-DeHart, *Yaqui Resistance and Survival. The Struggle for Land and Autonomy, 1821–1910* (Madison, 1984), in particular pp. 18–73; and Cecile Gou-Gilbert, *Una resistencia india. Los yaquis* (Mexico City, 1985).

³⁵ The second revolt of 1847, and those of 1849 and 1854–55 included the participation of military officers and resulted from a number of causes, of which the discontent of the indigenous population was only one. See Carmen Vázquez Mantecón, 'Espacio social y crisis política: La Sierra Gorda 1850–1855', *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, vol. 9, no. 1 (1993), pp. 47–70.

³⁶ Marie Lapointe, *Los mayas rebeldes de Yucatán* (Mexico City, 1983).

there were repeated clashes before 1848 between the few Mexican settlements which had been established there and nomadic tribes such as the Yaquimas, Cayuses, Nez Percés, Navajos, Utes, Apache, Comanche, Kiowa, Pawnees and Jicarillas.

Life in the peripheral regions of the north of the republic was one of constant skirmishes between the Mexican settlers and the indigenous tribes. To quote Evelyn Hu-DeHart, 'the Yaquis found themselves locked in continuous, often violent, battle with the new Mexican republic for control over land, water, their own labour power and, ultimately, their community'.³⁷ However, these conflicts affected a very small percentage of Mexico's population. After all, as the minister of war noted in 1844, these revolts occurred because since Independence no Mexican government had succeeded in populating Sonora and Sinaloa with enough settlers for an orderly society to be established there.³⁸

As for the Sierra Gorda, it is important to note that conflicts started to erupt with a certain regularity only in the 1840s and 1850s. Nor were these strictly indigenous conflicts. As was the case with states or departments such as Sonora and Sinaloa, the populated areas of the Sierra Gorda were few and very difficult to reach. It was precisely because of the region's inaccessibility that it became a favourite hideout for fugitive rebels and criminals.³⁹ Furthermore, of the nine revolts which took place in the Sierra Gorda between 1844 and 1854 (Xichu, 1844; Xichu, 1847; Tomás Mejía, 1847; Leonardo Márquez, 1849; Eleuterio Quiroz, 1849; Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga, 1849; Vicente Vega, 1854; Eulogio Contreras, 1854; and Gonzalo Vega, 1854), excluding the three last revolts which came to form part of the Revolution of Ayutla which will be considered below, only one attracted the intervention of government troops (Paredes y Arrillaga, 1849). The others were fought out and resolved by the local communities and caciques who were affected by them, without concerning the national government, or for that matter, the Mexican population at large.

In the case of Yucatán, an important distinction also needs to be made between the caste war of 1847–52, which was a bloody and devastating racial, social and political revolution and the numerous revolts which affected the peninsula prior to 1847. The secessionist revolts of 1829, 1840–41, 1842–43 and 1844–46 were mainly led by the Creole elites in Yucatán who wanted power to rest with them rather than with a government based in a capital over 1,500 kilometres away.⁴⁰ Although some fighting took place during these secessionist revolts, the skirmishes were few and of minor sig-

³⁷ Hu-DeHart, *Yaqui Resistance*, pp. ix–x.

³⁸ British Library (henceforth BL) LAS 535 (8)3: José María Tornel y Mendiivil, *Memoria del secretariado de estado y del despacho de Guerra y Marina, leída a las cámaras del congreso nacional de la República Mexicana en enero de 1844* (Mexico City, 1844), p. 52.

³⁹ Vázquez Mantecón, 'Espacio social y crisis', p. 51.

⁴⁰ Will Fowler, José María Tornel y Mendiivil, Mexican General/Politician (1794–1853)', unpublished D.Phil diss., University of Bristol (1994), pp. 161–3.

nificance (with the exception of the battle of Tixkokob, 1843).⁴¹ In fact, although the government of Santa Anna (1841–44) attempted to impose its will on the rebels, the conflict in Yucatán was not considered to be a major priority. In stark contrast to the military mobilisation which was ordered to quell General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga's revolt of November 1844, in which Santa Anna himself abandoned the presidency to lead the attack on Guadalajara, most of the troops dispatched to Yucatán were criminals and deserters who were sent there as a form of punishment. The very composition of these troops meant that they often joined the rebels on arrival, rather than executing their mission of vanquishing the Yucatecans.

What emerges from this very general overview of the indigenous conflicts that surfaced during this period is that they did not transcend the regions in which they took place. As a result, they did not affect the more densely populated regions of central Mexico and they had a minimal impact on national politics, let alone on the lives of the majority of Mexicans. Moreover, while from the perspective of a settler in Sonora, these years must have been particularly turbulent, the same cannot be said for an average civilian in the Sierra Gorda or Yucatán. In the Sierra Gorda, violence played a significant part in everyday life only towards the end of the period which concerns this study. In Yucatán, with the exception of the battle of Tixkokob (1843) which affected only military forces, none of the secessionist revolts involved any serious fighting. It was only from 1847 to 1852 that the white community in the peninsula was faced with the horrors of a full-scale indigenous revolution.⁴² Evidence that the different Mexican governments, and by extension the bulk of the population of the more populated central regions of the republic, did not accord much attention to these indigenous revolts can be found in the fact that there was no serious effort to appeal or listen to the indigenous communities' demands until the *porfiriato*. Even then, the policies implemented in response to indigenous grievances were barely significant. The 1910 Mexican Revolution would confirm this. Furthermore, bearing in mind the Mexican government's response to the 1994 Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, it is not difficult to appreciate that the indigenous revolts of the first half of the nineteenth-century were not perceived to be a major threat or even concern by the different governments of the period.⁴³ These conflicts did not affect national poli-

⁴¹ For a gloating account of the defeat inflicted on General Matías Peña y Barragán's government troops by the Yucatecan Sebastián López de Llergo, see BL: 9771b33(3): *Desahogo de D. José M. Tornel bajo la firma de José López de Santa Anna* (Mérida, 1843).

⁴² It is interesting to note that faced with the Maya uprising, those Creole elites from Yucataán and Campeche who had previously struggled to consolidate the independence of Yucataán found themselves begging for military support not only from the central government, but also from the United States and the Spanish authorities in Cuba. Their situation had become so desperate that they preferred annexation by the United States, or even a return to Spanish colonial domination, to defeat by the Maya.

⁴³ It is interesting (and perhaps worrying) to note that a similar trend is emerging at present in the way that the Mexican government appears to be ignoring the conflict in Chiapas. In a recent

tics, in the same way that national politics failed to address the problems that caused them. As Anne Staples has noted recently, regarding the government's response to the protests of the different indigenous populations since Independence:

the Indians live in regions which are far away from the seat of power; their contribution to the gross internal product is minimal; it is easy to forget them, for they neither have nor have had a voice (with which to express their discontent). As in the nineteenth century, it always comes as a shock when they demand to have the same rights as the rest of the population.⁴⁴

Regional and agrarian conflicts

If a distinction is to be made between these indigenous revolts and those that might be considered regional and agrarian, this lies in the fact that the latter did not focus on racial issues. The majority of rural conflicts during this period arose from the same sorts of land-related issues that provoked the indigenous revolts. However, the demand for exclusion of citizenship in the Mexican state which characterised revolts such as Juan Banderas' Yaqui war (1826–33) did not feature among the reasons for the rural or agrarian rebellions which will be surveyed here. Instead these regional and agrarian conflicts arose either as a result of localised land disputes or a commercial need for greater autonomy on the part of the regional elites.

It needs to be stressed that these agrarian revolts did not really start to surface until the 1840s. As John Tutino noted:

During the period after Independence, there was little sustained rebellious activity among estate dependants. The era of decompression in which estate production was turned over to many tenants — who gained autonomy that apparently compensated for persisting insecurities — relieved, or at least cushioned, the grievances of many estate dependants.⁴⁵

It was only after the start of the Mexican–US War of 1846–48 that several significant rural insurrections exploded in Yucatán, the Sierra Gorda, Juchitán (Oaxaca) and in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. However, with the exception of the noted Maya revolution in Yucatán, these agrarian revolts did not affect the majority of the population even in the areas in which they took place. They were sporadic and short-lasting uprisings in which the number of casualties was minimal. It was only in 1848 that numerous rural protests started to spread across the core of

letter, the Zapataista leader Subcomandante Marcos accused the Zedillo government of publicly ignoring the conflict and of carrying on as if Chiapas did not matter or exist. (See *La Jornada*, 11 September 1998. See also Will Fowler, 'Goatsuckers, Guerrillas and Democracy: Mexico in the 1990s', *Vida Hispánica*, no. 19 (March 1999), pp. 12–6.

⁴⁴ Anne Staples, 'Una falsa promesa: La educación indígena después de la independencia', in Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru and Gabriela Ossensbach (eds.), *Educación rural e indígena en Iberoamérica* (Mexico City, 1996), p. 63.

⁴⁵ Tutino, *From Insurrection to Revolution*, p. 247.

the central highlands, affecting modern states such as Mexico, Morelos and Hidalgo.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, these 'were not sustained mass insurrections such as those in the peripheral areas. They were lengthy protests, punctuated by sporadic violence.'⁴⁷

Therefore, two key points need to be emphasised. The first is that agrarian conflicts did not characterise the first two decades of the early national period. They became an important feature in the countryside only in the late 1840s. The second point is that these conflicts cannot really be defined as civil wars. Although these conflicts were organised and fought out by the civilian population of the countryside, the scale of the violence was relatively minor. In other words, the late 1840s witnessed the emergence of significant social unrest in the rural regions of the republic, but not the emergence of anything that could be categorised as civil war. This unrest, paired with the national-political grievances exacerbated by the Santa Anna dictatorship (1853-54), led to the bloody Revolution of Ayutla (1854-55). However, it would be misleading to argue that prior to 1854 Mexico was riddled with significant or widespread agrarian revolts.

In terms of regional conflicts, with the exception of the 1832 federalist revolt, only four escalated into violent confrontations (Zacatecas, 1835; Texas, 1836; Tamaulipas, 1839; Yucatán, 1843). Relevant to the discussion of these revolts are the tensions which arose between the centralist tendencies of the more central regions, and the federalist tendencies of the more peripheral ones. As can be appreciated from the appendix, the great majority of the *pronunciamientos* that surfaced during this period were inspired by either the centralising or federalising shifts of the different governments that came to power between 1821 and 1857. Therefore, excluding the period of the Revolution of Ayutla which was not inspired solely by the centralist-federalist divide, the most conflictive years were 1832, 1835-36, 1839-41 and 1846. In other words, the numerous regional federalist revolts which erupted in 1832, 1835-36, 1839-41 and 1845-46 reflected, in the first instance, a strong rejection on the part of the more peripheral regions (Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, Jalisco, Texas, Durango, Tamaulipas, Nuevo León, Veracruz, Tabasco, Yucatán, Chiapas, Oaxaca and Guerrero) of the centralising tendencies of General Anastasio Bustamante's first government (1830-32) and the consolidation of a centralist constitution under General Santa Anna's government (1835-36)⁴⁸ and later, an equally strong drive on their part to end the Central Republic, thereby bringing about the return of the 1824 Federal Constitution (1839-41 and 1845-46). In contrast, 1834 and 1835 were years which were also characterised by numerous centralist *pronunciamientos* in the more central cities of Ori-

⁴⁶ For a study of agrarian unrest in the state of Mexico see Michael P. Costeloe, 'Mariano Arizcorreta and Peasant Unrest in the State of Mexico, 1849', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, vol. 15, no. 1 (1996), pp. 63-79.

⁴⁷ Tuñino, *From Insurrection to Revolution*, p. 256.

⁴⁸ Including the interim presidencies of General Miguel Barragán and José Justo Corro.

zaba, Toluca, San Luis Potosí, Puebla, Cuernavaca and Mexico City, all of which emerged as a means of pressuring the government into effecting the significant reform of the 1824 Constitution which led to the drafting of the centralist 1836 Constitution known as *Las Siete Leyes*.⁴⁹

Another year in which there was an intense proliferation of regional *pronunciamientos* was 1834, in which numerous priests collaborated with the military garrisons of the provinces, both central and peripheral, in unanimously rejecting the reforms which were being discussed and proposed by the radical congress of Valenú́n Gómez Farías' interim presidency. This study will not explore in any depth the Catholic Church's role in these conflicts and instead supports the notion that the Church was used more as an excuse by both the military and civilian politicians who organised most of the so-called religious conflicts of this period, thereby rejecting the view that the Church was an active perpetrator of rebellions.⁵⁰ It is nevertheless evident that at least in the cases of the 1834 *pronunciamientos* which spread throughout the Republic in favour of 'Santa Anna y los fueros' and later in the case of the anti-Gómez Farías 1847 revolt of the Polkos, certain members of the Church were particularly active in financing the uprisings.⁵¹

However, in spite of the frequency of regional *pronunciamientos*, only four escalated into violent confrontations. Governor Francisco García's federalist revolt of 1835 led to the Battle of Guadalupe in Zacatecas; the Texan revolt of 1836 led to the noted battles of the Alamo, Goliad and San Jacinto; the 1839 federalist revolt of General José Urrea and Colonel José Antonio Mejía led to the Battle of Acajete in Tamaulipas; and the 1843 secessionist revolt of Yucatán led to the noted Battle of Tixkokob. However, the Battle of Guadalupe lasted only a few hours and did not entail many casualties, and the battles of the Alamo, Goliad and San Jacinto affected only the remote and relatively small Texan population and those government troops despatched to the north to fight the rebels. As for the battles of Acajete and Tixkokob, these were

⁴⁹ See Reynaldo Sordo Cerdeño, *El congreso en la primera república centralista* (Mexico City, 1993), pp. 174–97.

⁵⁰ See Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'Iglesia, ejército y centralismo', *Historia Mexicana*, vol. 39, no. 1 (1989), pp. 205–34.

⁵¹ See Michael P. Costeloe, 'The Mexican Church and the Rebellion of the Polkos', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, vol. 46, no. 2 (1966), pp. 170–8. For the Revolt of the Polkos also see Pedro Santoni, *Mexicans at Arms. Puro Federalists and the Politics of War, 1845–1848* (Fort Worth, 1996), pp. 182–95. For the political activities of the Church see Anne Staples, *La iglesia en la primera república federal mexicana (1824–1835)* (Mexico City, 1976); Anne Staples, 'Clerics as Politicians: Church, State, and Political Power in Independent Mexico' in Jaime E. Rodríguez O. (ed.), *Mexico in the Age of Democratic Revolutions, 1750–1850* (Boulder, 1994), pp. 223–41; Brian Connaughton, *Ideología y sociedad en Guadalajara (1788–1853)* (Mexico City, 1992); Alvaro Matute, Evelia Trejo and Brian Connaughton (eds.), *Estado, iglesia y sociedad en México. Siglo XIX* (Mexico City, 1995); and Brian Connaughton and Andrés Lira (eds.), *Las fuentes eclesásticas para la historia social de México* (Mexico City, 1996).

brief in their duration, they took place in under-populated peripheral locations and they affected only the military forces who fought them.

The majority of these 'revolts' were concerted and formalised protests which the different regional garrisons, churches, town halls and haciendas presented to the republic in the form of printed *pronunciamientos*, plans or *actas* which were publicised either in the form of pamphlets or in the national press. Much research needs to be carried out into what these actual *pronunciamientos* represented to the majority of the population of the different localities in which they surfaced. Nevertheless, an initial analysis might suggest that these *pronunciamientos* did not in any way amount to civil war. Moreover, what such research might also show is that it was never the intention of those individuals who drafted the texts of these *pronunciamientos* to encourage civil conflict. The majority of *pronunciamientos* should perhaps be seen as an early-nineteenth century equivalent of modern day lobbying. As such, they were an integral part of Mexican political culture during its early national period. In other words, for the average politician wishing to encourage political change, whether at a regional or national level, the *pronunciamiento* represented as good a constitutional means as the process of elections or congressional debate.⁵² That the *pronunciamiento* was, paradoxically, a constitutional political strategy is suggested by the much publicised citizen's right to insurrection (*derecho de insurrección*) which was reiterated in the *catecismos políticos* children were expected to learn at school after Independence. In other words, if we interpret the *pronunciamiento* as a clear reflection of this constitutional *derecho de insurrección* (which all young citizens were taught as an integral part of their political culture), then we are not facing instances of armed revolts, but rather, examples of a political culture that accepted the *pronunciamiento* as a normal and, above all, constitutional means to fulfil the people's aspirations. It is interesting to note that by 1835, one of the main authors of the *Siete Leyes*, Francisco Sánchez de Tagle, attempted to make a distinction between what were, in his mind, acceptable examples of the right to insurrection ('positive resistance') from those cases which were not

⁵² Xiomara Avendaño Rojas has recently illustrated the extent to which the 'right to insurrection' was publicised in the *catecismos políticos* and *carrillas del ciudadano* which children were expected to learn in school from as early as 1822. One of these *carrillas* stated: 'The right of insurrection is based on the same source of power, since nothing is more just and legitimate than disobeying the commands of those who, although empowered by the people to govern, neither carry out their duties nor satisfy the aspirations of the people: nothing is more just and legitimate than insurrection against those who attempt to impose their will on the people'. ('El derecho de insurrección se funda en el mismo origen del poder, pues nada más justo y legítimo que desobedecer los mandatos del que, facultado por el pueblo para dictarlos, no llena cumplidamente su encargo, ni satisface las aspiraciones del pueblo: nada más justo y legítimo que la insurrección contra el que trata de imponer su voluntad al pueblo.') See Xiomara Avendaño Rojas, 'La evolución histórica de la ciudadanía: un punto de partida para el estudio del Estado y la nación' in Luis Jáuregui and José Antonio Ortega Ortega (eds.), *Historia y nación. vol. 2, Política y diplomacia en el siglo XIX mexicano* (Mexico City, 1998), pp. 171–82.

(‘negative resistance’).⁵³ In this sense, it might be productive in sociological, anthropological and political terms to study these *pronunciamientos* more as projects, proposals and requests than as calls to arms.⁵⁴

Banditry

Another aspect of Independent Mexico which has attracted scant attention from scholars is banditry. While this initial survey suggests the need to revise the view that the period under study was characterised by civil conflict, an altogether different perspective emerges when the issue of banditry is taken into consideration. Unlike civil conflict, banditry was a regular feature of the republic during its early national period.⁵⁵ Any propertied person who decided to travel at the time either requested an escort or ran a high risk of being assaulted.⁵⁶ As was noted by the US minister plenipotentiary, Waddy Thompson, who was himself threatened by bandits on three separate occasions during the same journey to Puebla from Jalapa in 1842, ‘In less than a month after this, five or six Americans left their arms in the stage at this same place, and they were robbed of everything they had with them’.⁵⁷ Fanny Calderón de la Barca similarly described how on one occasion her journey to Puebla was temporarily detained because her party did not have an adequate escort; a local from San Miguel de los Soldados ‘seemed to think it extremely probable that we should be robbed, believed, indeed had just heard it asserted, that a party of *ladrones* were looking out for (us)... (An escort of) two men could be of no manner of use, as, in case of attack, resistance, except with a large escort, was worse than useless.’⁵⁸ It comes as no surprise that one of the main reasons used by the Minister of War in 1835 to justify having a large army was so that the roads were not used solely by bandits.⁵⁹

⁵³ Francisco Sánchez de Tagle, *Refutación de las especies vertidas en los números 21, 22 y 23 del periódico titulado “El Antejío” contra el proyecto de la primera ley constitucional que presentó al Congreso la Comisión de Reorganización* (Mexico City, 1835) quoted and analysed in Alfonso Noriega, *El pensamiento conservador y el conservadurismo mexicano*, vol. 1 (Mexico City, 1993), pp. 134–40.

⁵⁴ Will Fowler, *Mexico in the Age of Proposals*.

⁵⁵ It is thus not surprising that two of the most significant realist novels about the 1840s–60s written in Mexico in the late nineteenth century were about banditry: Manuel Payno, *Los bandidos de Río Frío* (Mexico City, 1996) (originally published in Barcelona, 1891); and Ignacio M. Alamaniano, *El Zarco* (Mexico City, 1984) (originally published in Mexico City, 1901).

⁵⁶ For example, General Tornel refused to return to Mexico City from Morelia in 1848 until he was guaranteed an escort of 20 dragoons from the state military authorities, ‘as the road is full of thieves’ (‘por estar el camino lleno de ladrones’). Archivo Histórico Militar de la Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional (Mexico City), expediente XI/III/1–93, Tornel to Minister of War General Pedro Anaya, 30 May 1848.

⁵⁷ Thompson, *Recollections of Mexico*, p. 21.

⁵⁸ Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, pp. 40–1.

⁵⁹ Bl.: L.A.S. 535/2 (8): José María Tornel y Mendivil, *Memoria del secretario de estado y del despacho de guerra y marina, leída en la cámara de representantes en la sesión del día veinte y tres de marzo y en la de senadores en la del veinte y cuatro del mismo mes y año de 1835* (Mexico City, 1835), p. 3.

Banditry was of considerable concern to the Mexican elite, who constantly reiterated their anxieties in their personal correspondence, in the articles they published in the press and in their political demands for more effective policing. Banditry posed a threat to their lifestyles and properties, but denunciations of banditry also served other purposes. The elite used the term to categorise many of the political conflicts of the period. In other words, they described many revolts as being nothing other than the despicable activities of ruthless bandits. For example, the Yaqui caudillo Manuel María Gándara who led the Yaqui revolt of 1843, and who has recently been analysed as a political leader,⁶⁰ was described in General José María Tornel's ministerial report of 1844 as a 'dreadful man' (*hombre funesto*), who having once been a law-abiding citizen (he was named governor of Sonora in 1841), had become a bloodthirsty bandit at the head of an army of barbaric Indians.⁶¹ By describing its leader as a simple bandit, Tornel stripped Gándara's revolt of political content.⁶²

Needless to say the elites' obsession with safeguarding their properties was accompanied by a particularly emphatic fear of social dissolution.⁶³ The memory of the rampages which characterised the initial stages of the War of Independence and the scenes of popular violence which accompanied the Revolt of La Acordada, leading to the riot of the Paríán market in 1828, haunted and traumatised the political elites during the first three decades of national life.⁶⁴ Thus the need to create a law-abiding and orderly society with a strong government was one of the political aspirations which was shared by all of the political factions.⁶⁵ Paradoxically, while this fear determined or at least justified the gradual exclusion of the less affluent members of society from participating in the political process, limiting the suffrage first in the 1836 Constitution, and subsequently even further in the 1843 Constitution and during the Dictatorship of 1853–55, the elites remained ostensibly scandalised by the lack of interest the masses showed in politics.

Although it needs to be noted that the countryside in particular was seriously affected by banditry, the numerous clashes that are recorded as

⁶⁰ Hu-DeHart, *Yaqui Resistance*, pp. 59–74.

⁶¹ Tornel Y Mendivil, *Memoria del secretariado de estado y del despacho de guerra ... 1844*, pp. 50–2.

⁶² This is not dissimilar to the way Pancho Villa was branded as a 'bandit' by his political adversaries, while his supporters considered him to be a great revolutionary leader. See Friedrich Katz, *The Life and Times of Pancho Villa* (Stanford, 1998).

⁶³ Will Fowler, 'Dreams of Stability: Mexican Political Thought During the "Forgotten Years"'. An Analysis of the Beliefs of the Creole Intelligentsia (1821–1853)', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, vol. 14, no. 3 (1995), pp. 287–312.

⁶⁴ For the riot of the Paríán market see Silvia M. Arrom, 'Popular Politics in Mexico City: The Paríán Riot, 1828', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, vol. 68, no. 2 (1988), pp. 245–68.

⁶⁵ A recent study on the success of Santa Anna and the *santanistas* stresses the extent to which the general's popularity was based on the perception that, unlike his contemporaries, he led a faction that was particularly tough on criminals. See Will Fowler, 'The Repeated Rise of General Antonio López de Santa Anna in the So-Called Age of Chaos' in Will Fowler (ed.), *Authoritarianism in Latin America since Independence* (Westport, CT, 1996), pp. 1–30.

having taken place between the propertied classes, the military escorts and the small gangs of bandits composed of deserters and members of the dispossessed classes cannot be defined as civil conflicts given that the skirmishes, albeit numerous, had no immediate political significance.

Civil conflict: the 1832 Federalist Revolt and the Revolution of Ayutla, 1854–55

The only clear examples during this period of civil wars which were long-lasting, affected national politics, and involved the population at large were the 1832 Federalist Revolt⁶⁶ and the Revolution of Ayutla, 1854–55.⁶⁷ In both cases, the revolts involved large scale fighting with high tolls of casualties; they were characterised by the participation of civilian militias, and they affected a wide number of regions. This is not the place for a detailed analysis of these revolts (why they erupted, how they developed, etc.). However what needs to be highlighted is the extent to which these revolts, unlike the majority of conflicts which have been surveyed in this study, can be categorised as major civil wars.

The 1832 Federalist Revolt entailed, together with numerous skirmishes, four particularly bloody battles. Given that the majority of conflicts during this period were seldom sanguinary, further research needs to be carried out into why in 1832 the revolt degenerated into such violent conflict. The battle of Tolomé (located in Veracruz, 3 March 1832) between General Calderón's government regular troops and General Santa Anna's federalist civil militias lasted seven hours and resulted in over 100 casualties. Santa Anna's regiment of 800 infantry and 600 cavalry suffered a death toll of 80, and a further 528 of his men were taken prisoner.⁶⁸ The Battle of Gallinero (located between San Miguel de Alende and Dolores Hidalgo, 18 September 1832) between General Anastasio Bustamante's government regular troops and General Ignacio Moctezuma's federalist civil militias resulted in over 969 casualties.⁶⁹ Ac-

⁶⁶ On the 1832 Federalist Revolt see, Frank Samponaro, 'La alianza de Santa Anna y los federalistas, 1832–1834. Su formación y desintegración', *Historia Mexicana*, vol. 30, no. 3 (1981), pp. 359–80; Michael P. Costeloe, *La primera república federal de México (1824–1835)* (Mexico City, 1983), pp. 327–51; Jaime E. Rodríguez O., 'The Origins of the 1832 Rebellion' and Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, 'Los pronunciamientos de 1832: aspirantismo político e ideología' both in Jaime E. Rodríguez O., *Patterns of Contention*, pp. 145–62 and pp. 163–86 respectively.

⁶⁷ On the Revolution of Ayutla see General Doblado, *La Revolución de Ayutla* (Mexico City, 1909); Fernando Díaz Díaz, *Caudillos y caciques. Antonio López de Santa Anna y Juan Alvarez* (Mexico City, 1972); Jan Bazant, *Antonio Haro y Tamariz y sus aventuras políticas, 1811–1869* (Mexico City, 1985); Carmen Vázquez Mantecón, *Santa Anna y la encrucijada del Estado. La dictadura (1853–1855)* (Mexico City, 1986), pp. 281–96; and Anselmo de la Portilla, *Historia de la Revolución de México contra la dictadura del General Santa Anna, 1853–1855* (Mexico City, 1993).

⁶⁸ Costeloe, *La primera república federal*, p. 333.

⁶⁹ 'Oficio del cura de la villa de Dolores Hidalgo, en que da noticia del número de muertos que se sepultaron en su parroquia, después de la acción del Gallinero' (Dolores Hidalgo,

ording to another account 2,000 of Moctezuma's men were killed, and 1,200 were taken prisoner.⁷⁰ The battle of San Agustín del Palmar (located in Puebla, 29 September 1832) between General José Antonio Facio's government regular troops and General Santa Anna's federalist civil militias resulted in over 200 casualties and the subsequent seizure of Puebla.⁷¹ The battle of the Rancho de Posadas (located in the Valley of Mexico, 6 November 1832) between General Bustamante's government regular troops and General Santa Anna's federalist civil militias resulted in also over 200 casualties and was described by José María Bocanegra as 'very bloody' (*muy sangrienta*).⁷²

The lives of the majority of the population in the central regions of the republic were seriously affected by the conflict. The fighting involved the participation of a high percentage of civilians who, deciding to support the revolt by joining the federalist militias, abandoned families, jobs, fields and properties in order to bring down Bustamante's government. This disposition on the part of the civilian population to abandon the security of their homes and lifestyle and to risk their lives fighting was uncommon during this period and needs serious study.⁷³ The deployment and billeting of government troops also affected many communities, which found themselves having to cope with the sudden arrival of entire regiments in their vicinity. Finally, the rebels' control of the key port of Veracruz and those regions north-west of Zacatecas, paired with the longevity of the conflict, had a major impact on the republic's trade and economy, unlike the majority of revolts which surfaced during this period.⁷⁴

While the reasons for the high levels of violence which characterised the 1832 Federalist Revolt still need to be fully explained, the violence which featured prominently in the Revolution of Ayutla (1854–55) is easier to understand. In the context of increasing agrarian unrest, coinciding with a dramatic polarisation of politics following the formalisation of political parties in the late 1840s, Santa Anna's dictatorship, in particular after the deaths of Alamán and Tornel in June and September 1853, became so extreme both in its repressive nature and in its autocratic pseudo-monarchic form of government that conservatives, moderates and radicals alike found themselves uniting to overthrow him.

²³ Sept. 1832), in José María Bocanegra, *Memorias para la historia de México independiente, 1822–1846*, vol. 2 (Mexico City, 1987), p. 339.

⁷⁰ F. de P. Arrangoiz, *México desde 1808 hasta 1867*, vol. 2 (Madrid, 1872), p. 211.

⁷¹ See 'Parte oficial de la derrota que sufrieron las fuerzas al mando de D. Antonio Facio' in Bocanegra, *Memorias*, vol. 2, pp. 341–4.

⁷² Bocanegra, *Memorias*, vol. 2, pp. 316–7.

⁷³ This is particularly the case as the policies pursued by Bustamante's government (1830–32) were not fundamentally different from those adopted by the previous governments of generals Guadalupe Victoria and Vicente Guerrero. See Will Fowler, *The Liberal Origins of Mexican Conservatism, 1821–1832* (Glasgow, 1997), pp. 32–41.

⁷⁴ Barbara A. Tenenbaum, *México en la época de los agiotistas, 1821–1837* (Mexico City, 1985), p. 60.

Nevertheless, it needs to be noted that, as yet, no historian has written a full and comprehensive study of this revolution.

More so than in the case of the Federalist Revolt, the Revolution of Ayutla was characterised by intense popular participation. Under the leadership of Juan Alvarez the entire south of the Republic rose in arms against Santa Anna. The villages and towns of Michoacán were equally quick to respond in rising against the dictatorship following the proclamation of the Plan of Ayutla (1 March 1854). Santa Anna, at the head of 5,000 men, was unable to defeat General Ignacio Comonfort at the Battle of Acapulco (20 April 1854). As an expression of his frustration, his army assaulted and destroyed all the villages and haciendas it passed through on its retreat to the capital. Following this defeat, the revolution spread throughout the republic with violent uprisings erupting in the states of Tamaulipas, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí and even Mexico. The violent nature of this civil conflict was such that Santa Anna decreed that 'every single village which manifests itself on the side of the rebels against the supreme government must be burned to the ground'. Moreover, he ordered that all rebel leaders be executed. Compared to previous conflicts, in which rebel leaders were seldom executed, Santa Anna's response to the rebellion was particularly brutal. Furthermore, in contrast to the Federalist Revolt of 1832, when despite high levels of civilian participation fighting was limited to specific battles which took place outside major urban areas, the Revolution of Ayutla was characterised by widespread fighting in towns, villages and cities where garrisons loyal to the regime attempted to repress the rebellious civilian communities by burning and ransacking their properties. General Comonfort's correspondence during the war highlights only too well the extent to which the fighting became uncontrolled. Unlike 1832, when organised militias led by regular generals and high-ranking officers fought the government troops in specific locations, the Revolution of Ayutla witnessed the random pillage and destruction of communities which were not necessarily directly involved in the conflict. Comonfort was particularly emphatic in stressing that it was imperative that the revolutionary forces behave in a civilised manner. He wrote time and again to his subordinate officers to demand that any acts of gratuitous violence be punished by death: 'no excesses will be tolerated, nor will we allow bandits to claim they defend the glorious revolution which is costing us so many sacrifices'.⁷⁵

In brief, while the Federalist Revolt was the first major civil conflict to erupt in Mexico after Independence, the Revolution of Ayutla represented the first major revolution or civil war of this period, involving not so much straightforward battles as violent outbreaks throughout the central and southern regions of the republic which affected the civilian population at large.

⁷⁵ Comonfort to General Antonio Díaz Salgado, Las Balsas, 22 May 1855, in Doblado, *Revolución de Ayutla*, p. 81.

Conclusion

Instability, like time, is relative. It depends almost entirely on perception rather than on concrete facts. While throughout this period the political elites were consistent in lamenting the extent to which independent Mexico was afflicted by civil conflicts, they were equally consistent in lamenting that none of the so-called revolutions which erupted after 1821 involved or affected the majority of the population. In other words, their perception of instability only concerned the higher echelons of the political ladder. It was the elites who could not come to a significant agreement either on the form of government which was most appropriate for Mexico or on which caudillos were best suited to lead the new nation. Their perception of instability (with the exception of their obsession with banditry and their fear of social dissolution) did not take into account the political activities of the masses. The masses were perceived to be indifferent.

In essence, this survey of Mexican national politics in the more populated central regions of the republic suggests that, in general, only high-ranking officers and members of the political elite were involved in the conflicts which surfaced during this period. In other words, the history of the *pronunciamientos* of the first national decades is, with the exceptions of the 1832 Federalist Revolt and the Revolution of Ayutla (1854–55), the history of the elites' struggle to impose or consolidate their hold on power in a context of intensely heterogeneous and deeply divided factions. The ideological, personalist, regional, social and economic divisions which splintered the various political movements into numerous bitterly opposed factions prevented these elites from reaching a consensus through which the interests of their own social class, that of the *hombres de bien*, could have been better served. Nevertheless, while there is no doubt that these bitter struggles for power and to establish a long-lasting constitutional framework were one of the reasons why this period has been characterised as politically unstable, it is equally true that few of these upheavals affected the everyday lives of the majority of the population. It is interesting to note Fanny Calderón de la Barca's perception of the Triangular Revolt of 1841: 'This revolution is like a game at chess, in which kings, castles, knights and bishops are making different moves, while the pawns are looking on or taking no part whatever'.⁷⁶ The majority of the political revolts were instigated, organised and carried out by the political elites without involving the people.

Moreover, the great majority of these so-called civil conflicts were in reality nothing other than formalised complaints or political proposals that did not involve or even intend to involve any serious fighting. It is time for a distinction to be made between what a *pronunciamiento*, as opposed to a revolt or revolution, actually meant. When fighting did

⁷⁶ Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, p. 412.

take place it was seldom sanguinary, and it generally affected only the rank and file of the army, without bringing the civilian population into the fray. Between 1821 and 1857 only two revolts erupted which could properly be defined as civil conflicts and which affected national politics and the population at large, namely the Federalist Revolt of 1832 and the Revolution of Ayutla (1854-55). The other instances of civil conflict, in the peripheral regions of Yucatán, Sonora, Sinaloa and Texas, albeit violent, were relatively insignificant in terms of their individual duration, the effects they had at a national level and the percentage of the population which was affected. Although it would be absurd to argue that this was a period of stability, or that there was little political unrest, it is evident from this initial survey that further research needs to be carried out into the nature of the revolts which emerged between 1821 and 1857 before we can fully comprehend the extent to which this was, in reality, a period of significant political violence. However, it is clear from this preliminary overview that the traditional view which we have inherited from Lucas Alamán, and which continues to be upheld even in the work of notable intellectuals such as Enrique Krauze that this was a period of revolutions needs to be dramatically revised.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Enrique Krauze, *Siglo de caudillos* (Barcelona, 1994), p. 128.

APPENDIX 3.1

Chronology of Major Revolts and Pronunciamientos in Mexico, 1821–57

Conflicts that resulted in death-tolls of over 20 have been highlighted in bold. Revolts that led to a change in government are underlined. *Revolts that were characterised by significant civilian participation are italicised.*

1821 24 February: Plan of Iguala: General Agustín de Iturbide

24 August: Treaties of Córdoba: Signed by Iturbide and Viceroy Juan O'Donojú

28 September: Declaration of Independence (Mexico City)

1822 18 May: Iturbidista Coup (Mexico City) [Mexico became an Empire]

22–26 September: Revolt of Brigadier Felipe de la Garza (Soto de la Marina)

6 December: Plan of Veracruz: Generals Antonio López de Santa Anna and Guadalupe Victoria

1823 5 January: Pronunciamiento of Generals Nicolás Bravo and Vicente Guerrero

1 February: Plan of Casa Mata: General José Antonio Echegarri (Veracruz) [Brought about the end of Agustín I's Mexican Empire in March 1823]

23 February: Plan of Jalisco (Guadalajara)

5 June: Federalist Plan of San Luis Potosí: Santa Anna

22 December: Revolt of General José Antonio Echegarri (Puebla)

1824 17 January: Plan of Francisco Hernández (Puebla)

23 January: Revolt of Colonel José María Lobato (Mexico City)

8–11 June: Iturbidista Plan of Guadalajara: Generals Luis Quintanar and Anastasio Bustamante

August: Anti-Spanish Revolt: Colonels Manuel and Antonio León (Oaxaca)

1825–1833 *Juan Banderas led indigenous rebellion in the then Estado del Occidente at the head of Yagui, Maya, Pima and Opata Indians (involved 15 battles with federal troops and 34 major attacks on local settlements)*

- 1827 12 January: Pro-Spanish Plan of Juan Climasco Velasco (also known as Plan of Father Arenas)
27 March: Plan of Tlaxcala
31 July: Plan of Veracruz: Colonel Manuel Rincón
23 December: Escocés Pronunciamiento of Montaña (Orumba). To be led thereafter by General Nicolás Bravo
24 December: Escocés Revolt of José Nuño de Rivera (Texcoco)
- 1828 7 January: Battle of Tulancingo [Estimated eight casualties]
12 September: Pro-Guerrero Pronunciamiento of Perote: Santa Anna (Perote)
16 September: Plan of Perote: Santa Anna (Perote)
30 November: Revolt of La Acordada: Lorenzo de Zavala (Mexico City) [led to overthrow of constitutionally elected presidential candidate, General Manuel Gómez Pedraza, replacing him with General Vicente Guerrero]
4 December: Riot of the Parián Market (Mexico City)
- 1829 6 November: Centralist Pronunciamiento of Campeche: Commander Ignacio de la Roca (Campeche) and subsequent revolt in Yucatán
4 December: Plan of Jalapa: Sebastián Camacho to be led thereafter by General Anastasio Bustamante [led to overthrow of Guerrero's government]
17 December: Bustamantista Plan of Tehuantepec
19 December: Bustamantista Plan of San Luis Potosí
23 December: Bustamantista Plan of Mexico City
24 December: Bustamantista Plan of Jalisco (Guadalajara)
26 December: Anti-Bustamantista Plan of Jalapa: Santa Anna
- 1830 3 January: Revolt in Ciudad Victoria
13 January: Federalist Plan of San Luis Potosí: Governor Vicente Romero (San Luis Potosí)
10 February: Federalist Plan of Michoacán: Governor Salgado (Morelia)
February: Revolt of Vicente Guerrero in the south begins (Acapulco, Guerrero)

- 11 March: Plan of Codallos: Juan José Codallos (Santiago Fort, Barrabás)
- March: *Revolt of Governor Salgado* (Zamora, Michoacán)
- June: Pro-Guerrero Revolt of Juan Nepomuceno Rosains, Francisco Victoria and Cristóbal Fernández (Puebla)
- June: Pro-Guerrero Revolt of José Márquez (San Luis Potosí)
- June: Pro-Guerrero Revolt of José María Méndez and Gregorio Mier (Morelia, Michoacán)
- 18 August: Pronunciamiento of Officer Felipe Codallos (Mexico City)
- 30 September: Battle of Texca (between Guerrerista rebels and government troops) [Estimated eight casualties]
- 14 February: Execution of Vicente Guerrero (Oaxaca)
- 1831
- 15 April: Juan Alvarez surrenders ending Guerrero Revolt in the south

1832

Federalist Civil War Against the Government of General Anastasio Bustamante

- 2 January: Plan of Veracruz: Santa Anna (Veracruz) [led to overthrow of Bustamante's government after a year of civil conflict]
- 6 January: Federalist Plan of Alvarado
- 10 January: *Federalist Plan of Huamantla*
- 26 January: *Federalist Plan of Tarecuato*
- 1 February: *Federalist Plan of San Juan Bautista*
- 5 February: Federalist Plan of San Cristóbal
- 11 February: *Federalist Plan of Nuestra Señora de la Concepción Tonalapa*
- 12 February: *Federalist Plan of Teloloapan*
- 15 February: *Federalist Plan of San Miguel Tecomatlán*
- 15 February: *Federalist Plan of Ajuchitán*
- 15 February: *Federalist Plan of San Juan Bautista Tlalchapa*
- 15 February: *Federalist Plan of San Miguel Teloloapan*
- 21 February: *Federalist Plan of San Miguel Teloloapan*
- 22 February: *Federalist Plan of Hacienda de Cubo*
- 23 February: *Federalist Plan of Mineral de Tepetitlán*
- 26 February: *Federalist Plan of Mineral de Tetela*

- 28 February: *Federalist Plan of San Juan Bautista de Tehuehueta*
- 2 March: *Federalist Plan of San Francisco Huahueta*
- 3 March: **Battle of Tolomé** (Veracruz) [estimated over 100 casualties in battle; the number of casualties rose to 1,000 as General Calderón's troops were forced to prolong their stay in the tropics]
- 3 March: *Federalist Plan of Tlacotepec*
- 4 March: *Federalist Plan of Tetela del Río*
- 5 March: *Federalist Plan of Santa María Xochitepec*
- 5 March: *Federalist Plan of San Pedro Pemapa*
- 6 March: *Federalist Plan of Santo Tomás*
- 6 March: *Federalist Plan of Santa María Xochicalco*
- 6 March: *Federalist Plan of Tlalalongo*
- 7 March: *Federalist Plan of San Miguel Sochitepec*
- 10 March: Federalist Plan of Tampico
- 13 March: *Federalist Pronunciamiento of Pueblo Viejo*
- 14 March: *Federalist Plan of Tampico*
- 25 March: *Federalist Plan of Huetamo*
- March: Federalist Revolt: Colonel Antonio Barragán (San Luis Potosí)
- March: *Federalist Revolts recorded in Toluca, Río Verde, Zacatecas, Durango, Texas*
- 8 April: *Federalist Pronunciamiento of Tancanhuitz*
- 27 April: Revolt of Colonel Ignacio de Inclán, calling for return of Gómez Pedraza (Lerma)
- 19 May: *Federalist Plan of Zacatlán*
- 25 May: *Federalist Plan of Cuahuayutla*
- 1 June: *Federalist Plan of Tancanhiz*
- 3 June: *Federalist Pronunciamiento of Seris*
- 4 June: *Federalist Pronunciamiento of Tabasco*
- 17 June: *Anti-Federalist Pronunciamiento of Zacualtipan*
- 5 July: Plan of Veracruz, calling for return of Gómez Pedraza
- 10 July: *Plan of Zacatecas*, calling for return of Gómez Pedraza

- 12 July: *Federalist Revolt begins in Zacatecas*. Francisco García
- 12 July: *Federalist Plan of Puente Nacional*
- 13 July: Plan of Jalisco (Guadalajara)
- 16 July: *Federalist Plan of Santa María Tenistlán*
- 26 July: *Federalist Plan of Villa de Austin*
- 5 August: *Federalist Plan of San Luis Potosí*
- 5 August: *Federalist Plan of Guadalcazar*
- 12 August: Federalist Plan of Juan Alvarez (Acapulco)
- 17–19 August: Federalist Plan of Matamoros
- 3 September: *Federalist Plan of San Felipe*
- 4 September: Federalist Pronunciamiento of General Gabriel Valencia
- 6 September: *Federalist Plan of Temascaltepec del Valle*
- 18 September: **Battle of El Gallinero** (San Luis Potosí) [estimated over 969 casualties; 2,000 casualties according to one account]
- 19 September: *Anti-Federalist Plan of Huetamo*
- 24 September: *Anti-Federalist Plan of Zacapu*
- 26 September: *Federalist Pronunciamiento of Culiacán*
- 29 September: **Battle of El Palmar** (Puebla) [estimated over 200 casualties]
- 30 September: Federalist Plan of Guadalajara
- 4 October: Santanista Revolt of Yucatán (Mérida)
- 4 October: Santanista Revolt of Tabasco
- 4 October: Santanista Revolt of Chiapas
- 3 December: *Federalist Plan of Ixtapan*
- 6 December: **Battle of the Rancho Posadas** (Mexico) [estimated over 200 casualties]
- 7 December: *Anti-Federalist Pronunciamiento of Toluca*
- 11 December: Peace Treaty is signed in Puente de México between Bustamante and Santa Anna
- 13 December: *Federalist Pronunciamiento of Huachinango*
- 23 December: Convenios de Zavaleta are signed bringing the war to an end

- 1833 15 January: Pronunciamiento of Monterrey
- 26 May: Plan of Escalada: Colonel Ignacio Escalada (Morelia, Michoacán)
- 8 June: Plan of Arista: General Mariano Arista (Huejotzingo, Puebla)
- 9 June: Pronunciamiento of Texcoco
- 17 June: *Plan of Mineral de Nieves*
- 19 June: Pronunciamiento of Matamoros
- 22 June: Pronunciamiento of Campeche
- 23 June: *Pronunciamiento of Matamoros*
- 25 June: Plan of Villa del Carmen
- 25 June: Plan of Villa de Chilapa
- 26 June: Plan of San Felipe del Obraje
- 12 August: *Pronunciamiento of Arizpe*
- 19 October: *Pronunciamiento of Tlaxcala*
- 27 November: *Plan of San Cristóbal de Chiapas*
- 2 December: Plan of Chichihualco: General Nicolás Bravo
- 1834 2 February: Plan for a Monarquía Indígena: Priests Carlos Tepisteco Abad and Epigmenio de la Piedra
- 11 May: Revolt of Puebla: General José Mariano García Méndez
- 15 May: *Plan of Jalapa*
- 18 May: *Plan of San Agustín Tlaxco*
- 23 May: Pronunciamiento of Oaxaca: Manuel Gil Pérez
- 25 May: Plan of Cuernavaca: General José María Tornel [led to overthrow of Valentín Gómez Farías' administration]
- May: Pronunciamientos supporting the Plan of Cuernavaca recorded in *Huitzucó*, *Chichahuapan*, Huejotzingo, Zacapoaxtla, Mexico, Taxco, Huetuco, Tepecoacuilco, Iguala, *Ixtlahuaca*, San Felipe, *Temascaltepeque*, Mazatepec, *Santa María Nativitas*, Tlacoatepec and Tenancingo
- 31 May: Pronunciamiento of Toluca: Colonel José Vicente González (Mexico)
- June: Pronunciamientos supporting the Plan of Cuernavaca recorded in *San Salvador El Verde*, *Huezotla*, *San Martín Texmelucan*

can, Misantla, San Francisco, El Carmen, San Pedro Tolimán, Teacualoya, Teotitlán, San Andrés Tuxtla, Malinalco, Teziutlán, Tuxpan, Colima, Teotihuacán, San Juan Aquixtla, Apam, Coronancho, Totolapa, Todos los Santos (Cempala), San Nicolás Ponatla, Jutepec, Santiago Tecla, San Ildelfonso Hueyotlipam, Cuautitlán, San Andrés Chalchicomula, Tula, Tepeca, Santa Ana (Montealto), Iguala, Tlalamanalco, San Juan Bautista Tlayacapan, Tepetzotlán, San Pedro Tlaxcoapan, Santa María Tulepec, San Miguel Xaltocan, San Salvador Atenco, Ayotzingo, Tenango Tepopala, Contepac, Santo Domingo Xochitepec, Ixtapaluca, Ameca, San Juan Tianguismanco, Zinguilican, Tecalli, Coyoacán, San Juan del Río, Cadereyta, Mineral de Zimapan, Ixmiquilpan, Salamanca, Atlixco, Santo Domingo Mixcoac, Mineral del Cardonal, San Juan Evangelista Acatzingo, Atoctpan, Santiago de Querétaro, Santiago Tulyehualco, San Agustín Tlaxco, Mineral de Pachuca, Celaya, Huascaloya, Irapuato, Atonilco el Grande, Guadaluajara, Mexico City, San Francisco Soyaniquipan, Santa Catarina Mártir, Santo Evangelio, Huachinango, Zinapécuaro, León de los Aldama, Aczapotzalco, La Piedad, San Juan Jonotla, Santa Ana Sacatlamanco, Acapulco, San Juan Bautista Acatlán, San Martín Tucamapan, Teloloapan, Guanajuato, Oaxaca, Morelia, San Nicolás Nochitlán, Santa Ana Tianguisenco, Etla, Michoacán, Matamoros, Purísima Concepción de los Catorce, Analco, Jamilepec, Tepeji, Santa Anna de Tamalipas, Tehuantepec, Rancho del Zapote, Chihuahua, Orizaba, Córdoba, Tlaxco and Omotepec.

June: Colonels José Antonio Mejía and Gutiérrez's antisantanista revolt (Puebla and later Tehuacán, Veracruz)

June: Month-long siege of Puebla

19 June: *Federalist Plan Salvador*

July: Pronunciamientos supporting the Plan of Cuernavaca recorded in Minatitlán, Jamilepec, San Juan de los Llanos, Tenancingo, Colima, Morelos, San Cristóbal de Colima, Campeche, Veracruz, Mineral de Temascaltepec, Santo Domingo Ocotlán, Guadalcazar, Ciudad del Venado, Joquizingo, Poeyaxum, Villa de Salinas del Peñón Blanco, San Juan Teotihuacán, San Juan de Guadalupe, Villa del Carmen, Acámbaro, Iguala, San Francisco de los Pozos, Xicalapa, Ozuluama, Tampico, Mexico City, Cholula, Villa de Ramos, Río Verde, Ciudad Fernández, Tomatán, Villa de Natividad Cunduacán, San Francisco, Matehuala, Coyuca, Santo Domingo, San Juan Bautista, Morelia, Tantoyuca, Monterrey, San Marcos Eloxochutlán, Pungarabato, Montemorelos, Huetamo, Matamoros, Santa Catarina de Páizcuaro, Mondlova, Puebla, Lagunillas, Chinameca, San Juan Bautista Cuautla, San Buenaventura, Nadadores,

Guerrero, San Martín Atercal, San Miguel Acambay, Durango, Tepeji, Texas and Arío.

August: Pronunciamientos supporting the Plan of Cuernavaca recorded in *Zacatlán, Puebla de los Ángeles, Temapache, Cocupao, San José de Puebla, Lagos, Jalapa, Coatepec, Teocelo, Huimanguillo, Acatlán, Orizaba, Morelia, Mascota, Sinaloa, Coahuila, Coahuila, San Pedro Piedragorda*. Further plans of alliance recorded in the states of Nuevo México, Querétaro, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, Michoacán, Nuevo León, Puebla, Yucatán, Jalisco and Chiapas.

1835 23 March: Plan of Texca: General Juan Alvarez

April–May: Federalist Revolt: Francisco García (Zacatecas)

11 May: **Battle of Guadalupe** [estimated 20 casualties]

18 May: Centralist Pronunciamiento of Nombre de Dios (Durango)

19 May: Centralist Pronunciamiento of Orizaba: Miguel Fernández

28 May: Centralist Pronunciamiento of Tlaxcala

29 May: Centralist Pronunciamiento of Toluca (Toluca)

30 May: Centralist Pronunciamiento of Zacatecas

30 May: Federalist Pronunciamiento of San Francisco

31 May: Centralist Pronunciamiento of Cuernavaca

June: Pronunciamientos supporting the Centralist Plan of Toluca recorded in Mineral de Veta Grande, Sombrerete, Fresnillo, Saín Alto, San Luis Potosí, State of Mexico, Mineral de Pánuco, San Juan Teotihuacán, Santa Ana Chiautempam, Zinacantepec, Mineral del Taxco, Tenango, Nativitas, San Juan Bautista de Teúl, Tlaltenango, San Juan Bautista de Tepetongo, Tepechitlán, Atolinga, Guadalupe (Zacatecas), Tlalpan, Momax, Jonacatepec, Mexico City, Jalapa, Morelia, Durango, Cuiacán, Pueblo Viejo, Villa del Carmen, San Juan Bautista de Jonuta and Villa Parras.

June: Pronunciamientos opposing the Plan of Toluca's centralist demand for a constitutional change of government recorded in Austin, Campeche, Mérida, Sisal, Hool, Calkiní, Cahuich, Hecelchakan and Leona Vicario.

July: Pronunciamientos opposing the Plan of Toluca's centralist demand for a constitutional change of government recorded in Chiapas, Viesca, Mapimí, Tabasco, Villa Guerrero, Coahuila, Texas, Tepeitán, Allende and Macuspana.

- 16 August: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Tecpan
- 23 August: Federalist Plan of Oaxaca
- 6 September: Plan of the Junta Anfictónica of New Orleans
- 7 November: Secessionist Pronunciamiento of Texas
- November: José Antonio Mejía Federalist Revolt (Tampico)
- 1836 January–June: Federalist Revolts recorded in Huajuapam (Oaxaca), Zacatecas, Alta California, Chiapas and Papantla.
- 2 March: Declaration of Texan Independence
- 6 March: **Battle of El Alamo**
- 18 March: **Battle of Goliad**
- 21 April: **Battle of San Jacinto**
- 20 December: Plan of Captain Mariano Olarte
- 1837 26 January: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Alta California
- 14 April: Federalist Pronunciamiento of San Luis Potosí
- 6 May: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Río Verde
- 16 September: Secessionist Pronunciamiento of Sonora
- 9 October: Pronunciamiento of González and Fiz
- 1 December: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Aguajilla (Michoacán)
- 26 December: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Arizpe: General José Urrea
- 1838 11 January: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Culiacán
- 16 January: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Sinaloa
- 3 June: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Monte Alto
- 3 September: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Arizpe
- 7 October: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Santa Ana de Tamaulipas: Longinos Montenegro
- 7 October: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Tampico: Colonel José Antonio Mejía and Valentín Gómez Farías
- 9 November: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Camargo
- 17 November: Federalist Plan of Opodepe
- 22 November: Federalist Plan of Rancho de Punttiagudo
- 12 December: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Ciudad Victoria

- 16 December: Federalist Revolt of Santa Ana de Tamaulipas begins: José Urrea
- 23 December: Federalist Plan of Alejo Espinosa
- 1839**
- 19 January: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Monclova
- 22 January: Federalist Pronunciamiento of General José Urrea (Tampico)
- 27 February: Pronunciamiento of Montemorelos
- 28 February: Federalist Pronunciamiento of San Cristóbal de Hualahuises
- 3 May: **Battle of Acajete** [estimated 40 casualties; Mejía is executed]
- 1 June: Pronunciamiento of Misanlta
- 11 June: Pronunciamiento of Rancho de San Francisco
- 13 December: Federalist Plan of Juan Pablo Anaya
- 1840**
- 23 January: Federalist Plan of Casa Blanca
- 18 February: Secessionist Pronunciamiento of Mérida
- 25 February: Secessionist Pronunciamiento of Campeche
- 4 March: Secessionist Revolt in Yucatán begins
- 30 March: Federalist Pronunciamiento of San Andrés de Nava
- 30 March: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Santa Rita de Morelos
- 30 March: Federalist Pronunciamiento of San Pedro de Gígedo
- 1 April: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Valle de Santa Rosa
- 13 May: Pro-government Pronunciamiento of Camargo
- 17 May: Pro-government Pronunciamiento of Ciudad Guerrero
- 17 May: Pro-government Pronunciamiento of Villa de Mier
- 17 May: Pro-government Pronunciamiento of Villa de la Purísima Concepción de Mier
- 30 May: Pro-government Pronunciamiento of San Fernando de Rosas
- 16 July: Federalist Revolt:** José Urrea and Valentín Gómez Farías (Mexico City)
- 19 July: Federalist Plan: José Urrea and Valentín Gómez Farías (Mexico City)
- 9 August: Pronunciamiento of Turicato (Michoacán)
- 1 October: Pronunciamiento of Valle de Aguililla

- 7 December: Pronunciamiento of Pichucalco
 28 December: Pronunciamiento of San Pedro Michoacán
- 1841
 14 January: Secessionist Declaration (Yucatán)
 1 February: Yaqui Secessionist Plan of Independence: Manuel María Gándara (Sonora)
- 1841-44 Third Major Yaqui Revolt*
- 8 May: Secessionist Plan of Independence (Chiapas)
 10 May: Pronunciamiento of Landa (Querétaro)
 30 July: Pronunciamiento of Capula
 August-October: Triangular Revolt: Generals Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga, Santa Anna and Gabriel Valencia (Guadalajara, Veracruz and Mexico City) [led to overthrow of Bustamante government]
- 8 August: Plan of Guadalajara: General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga (Guadalajara)
 23 August: Pronunciamiento of Northern Army seconding that of Guadalajara: General Mariano Arista
 4 September: Pronunciamiento of La Ciudadela: General Gabriel Valencia (Mexico City)
 5 September: Pronunciamiento of Santa Anna de Tamaulipas
 9 September: Pronunciamiento of Perote: Santa Anna (Perote)
 9 September: Pronunciamiento of Santiago de Querétaro
 11 September: Pronunciamiento of Veracruz
 11 September: Pronunciamiento of Durango
 12 September: Plan of General Anastasio Bustamante (Mexico City)
 14 September: Pronunciamiento of Saltillo
 14 September: Pronunciamiento of Monterrey
 15 September: Pronunciamiento of Tlaxcala
 15 September: Pronunciamiento of Santa Anna Chautepam
 17 September: Pronunciamiento of Orizaba
 28 September: Plan of Tacubaya
 1 October: Federalist Pronunciamiento (Mexico City)
 2 October: Pronunciamiento of General Valentín Canalizo
 3 October: Centralist Pronunciamiento of Morelia

- 7 December: Pronunciamiento of Pichucalco
 28 December: Pronunciamiento of San Pedro Michoacán
- 1841
 14 January: Secessionist Declaration (Yucatán)
 1 February: Yaqui Secessionist Plan of Independence: Manuel María Gándara (Sonora)
- 1841-44 Third Major Yaqui Revolt*
- 8 May: Secessionist Plan of Independence (Chiapas)
 10 May: Pronunciamiento of Landa (Querétaro)
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 17 September: Pronunciamiento of Orizaba
 28 September: Plan of Tacubaya
 1 October: Federalist Pronunciamiento (Mexico City)
 2 October: Pronunciamiento of General Valentín Canalizo
 3 October: Centralist Pronunciamiento of Morelia

- 4 October: Pronunciamiento of Pátzcuaro
 - 5 October: Pronunciamiento of Acuitzio
 - 6 October: Pronunciamiento of Apatzingán
 - 6 October: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Morelia
 - 7 October: Pronunciamiento of Tacámbaro
 - 9 October: Pronunciamiento of Aguililla
 - 9 October: Pronunciamiento of Tangandácuaro
 - 10 October: Pronunciamiento of Zamora
 - 10 October: Pronunciamiento of Chilchota
 - 10 October: Pronunciamiento of Mineral de Zacualpan
 - 12 October: Federalist Revolt of Durango
 - 20 October: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Estancia de Juchitán
 - 20 October: Pronunciamiento of Florentino Villar
 - 22 October: Pronunciamiento of General Nicolás Bravo (Chilpancingo)
 - 22 November: Pronunciamiento of Acapulco: General Juan Alvarez
- 1842
- 9 December: Plan of San Luis Potosí
 - 11 December: Pronunciamiento of Huejotzingo: General José María Tornel (Puebla)
- December: Over 100 Anti-Congress Pronunciamientos were recorded in the states of Jalisco, Zacatecas, Michoacán, Querétaro, Veracruz, Oaxaca and Aguascalientes.
- 1843
- 1 January: Pronunciamiento of Tapachula
- March–May: Juan Alvarez led revolt in the south
- 23 September: Plan of Opedepe
- 1844
- Xichu Revolt in the Sierra Gorda
 - 2 November: Pronunciamiento of Guadalajara: General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga (Jalisco)
 - 6 November: Pronunciamiento of Aguascalientes
 - 8 November: Pronunciamiento of Zacatecas
 - 9 November: Pronunciamiento of General Lino J. Alcorta
 - 12 November: Pronunciamiento of General Pedro Cortázar

- 15 November: Pronunciamiento of Querétaro
- 18 November: Pronunciamiento of San Luis Potosí
- 22 November: Pronunciamiento of Pátzcuaro

6 December: Revolution of the *Tres Horas* (Mexico City) [led to overthrow of Santa Anna's government]

December: Anti-santanista pronunciamientos recorded in San Fernando de Guaymas, Hermosillo, San Cristóbal, Ures, Seris, Camargo, Tlaxcala, Oaxaca, Jilotepec, Tejupilco, San Francisco Tepeyanco, Santa Inés Zacatelco, Tabasco, Tuxpan, Veracruz, Armada Nacional, Saltillo, Nuevo León, Sabinas, San Juan de Ulúa, Morelia, Zitácuaro, Michoacán, Hacienda del Mortero, Durango, Tampico, Perote, Guanajuato, Santa Lucía Coyuca, Chihuahua, Yucatán and Amatlán.

1845 21 January: Pronunciamiento of Santa Fe

7 June: Federalist Revolt: Valentín Gómez Farías (Mexico City)

14 June: Federalist Revolt of Tabasco: General Ignacio Martínez (Tabasco)

15 June: Federalist Revolt of Juchitán (Oaxaca)

14 December: Pronunciamiento of San Luis Potosí: General Manuel Romero. Thereafter led by General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga [led to overthrow of General José Joaquín de Herrera's government]

1846 5 February: Pronunciamiento of Maztlán

April: Juan Alvarez anti-Paredes Revolt (Guerrero)

20 May: Pronunciamiento of Guadalajara

31 July: Pronunciamiento of Veracruz and Ullúa

4 August: Plan of La Ciudadela: General Mariano Salas and Valentín Gómez Farías (Mexico City) [led to overthrow of Paredes y Arrillaga's government]

11 August: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Durango

12 August: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Zacatecas

12 August: Federalist Pronunciamiento of San Luis Potosí

16 August: Federalist Pronunciamiento of Colima

4 September: Pronunciamiento of Santa Anna de Tamaulipas

19 November: Federalist Pronunciamiento of San Juan Bautista (Tabasco)

- 1847 Second Xichu Revolt in the Sierra Gorda
Revolt of Tomás Mejía in the Sierra Gorda
16 February: Clerical Pronunciamiento of Oaxaca
26 February: Revolt of the Polkos [led to overthrow of Valentín Gómez Farías's administration]
21 December: Revolt of the Repúblicas Indígenas de Campeche begins
1847–1852 Caste War in Yucatán
- 1848 15 June: Monarchist Pronunciamiento of General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga
- 1849 11 February: Pronunciamiento of Sierra Alta
Santanista Revolt of Leonardo Márquez (Sierra Gorda)
Revolt of Eleuterio Quiroz (Sierra Gorda)
- 1851 8 January: Plan of Guanajuato
26 July: Pronunciamiento of San Juan de Tierra Adentro
3 September: Plan of the Campo de la Loba
- 1852 July: Revolt in Mazatlán
26 July: Plan of Blancarte
14 December: Pronunciamiento of Durango
23 December: Pronunciamiento of Chihuahua
28 December: Pronunciamiento of Veracruz
- 1853 2 January: Pronunciamiento of Orizaba
19 January: Pronunciamiento of Mexico City
26 January: Pronunciamiento of San Juan Bautista
1 April: Santanista Pronunciamiento of Jalapa: Tornel (Jalapa) [led to overthrow of Manuel María Lombardini's government]
14 December: Pronunciamiento of Santa María de Zoquizquiapan
- 1854 24 February: *Revolution of Ayutla*: General Juan Alvarez (Guerrero) [led to overthrow of Santa Anna's government after a year and a half of civil conflict]
February: Generals Juan Alvarez and Ignacio Comonfort led revolt in the south
1 March: Plan of Ayutla: Juan Alvarez
Revolts recorded in Guerrero and Michoacán

- April: Revolt of Vicente Vega (Sierra Gorda)
- April: Revolt of Gonzalo Vega (Sierra Gorda)
- 20 April: **Battle of Acapulco** (estimated 1,000 casualties)
- Santa Anna's army destroyed and pillaged all the villages it crossed on its retreat to Mexico City from Acapulco
- Sporadic fighting erupted throughout the Republic
- December: Revolt of Eulogio Contreras (Sierra Gorda)
- 1855** 13 August: Plan of San Luis Potosí: Antonio Haro y Tamariz
- 13 August: Pronunciamiento of Mexico City
- 4 October: Revolution of Ayutla ended with Juan Alvarez's rise to the presidency
- 12 December: Pro-clerical Revolt (Puebla)
- 12 December: Plan of Zacapoaxtla: Priest Ortega y García
- 19 December: Second Plan of Zacapoaxtla
- 1856** 16 January: Siege of Puebla
- 21 January: Puebla surrenders to the rebels led by Antonio Haro y Tamariz
- 23 March: Ignacio Comonfort's government troops retake Puebla