

# The annexation of texas and mexico history essay



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The late Ambrose Bierce once said that, God alone knows the future, but only an historian can alter the past. While these words hold true for all aspect of history, this paper is going to be focus this view towards the history of the second largest U. S state, the state of Texas. For most, the history surrounding Texas and its annexation is all but solved. There is, however, still some mystery to this great states history. To begin, in this paper will go over the traditional historic view of Texas and its annexation, the possibly betrayal on how Mexico lost part of his country, and Manifest Destiny. In this paper Manifest destiny is strongly the main subject that explains the annexation of Texas.

The idea of annexing the territory of the American Union was quite old, but until 1845 there had been only tentative steps in this direction. By 1844, there was a growing British influence in the republic of Texas to the United States, in which both Americans and Texans had expressed interest. In addition to this, the Democratic presidential candidate, James Knox Polk, and his platform favored all sections of staked Kingdom, which, of course, included the annexation of Texas and the Oregon Territory. The Mexican government immediately protested against this measure. Mexico had never stated that the annexation of such territory to the American Union would be considered an act of hostility and sufficient cause for declaring war. As it decreed, the Mexican Prime minister revoked passports, and Mexico broke diplomatic relations with the United States.[2]

In August 1841, General Mariano Paredes Arrillaga rebelled against the government of Anastasio Bustamante, but not for the purpose of creating a new government. On October 11, Paredes Arrillaga again put Santa Anna as

president of the republic. Together they convened a constituent congress, but it was disbanded in 1842. With arbitrary acts and persecution throughout the country, Santa Anna and Paredes Arrillaga became practically dictators of the country.[3]

Meanwhile, the U. S. Congress discussed the annexation of Texas, for which there was a problem of division between northerners and southerners due to existing slavery in the South, which was not practiced in the north.

Southerners also wanted Texas as a slave state, while northerners demanded that it became a free state. Whichever side managed to impose its policy in the new state would gain more power within their country.

Finally, a compromise was reached between the two parties and Congress approved the admission of Texas as a state of the Union. This act, which was against the agreements signed with the Mexican government, was a blow to the honor and dignity of the Mexican country. As a result of these events the American people would begin traveling down a path that would result in a war with Mexico.[4]

In the other side, Santa Anna formed a notable meeting which commissioned to make a new constitutional basis, known as Organic Bases, on July 12, 1843. They declared Santa Anna president for another term. Santa Anna retired to his estate at Manga de Clavo, Veracruz, where he had to return soon as his former ally Paredes Arrillaga rebelled against him. Paredes Arrillaga had support in several parts of the country, and managed to persuade Santa Anna to resign from the presidency. The new president was José Joaquin de Herrera, who took over the country at critical moments when the United States signed an agreement to annex the Republic of Texas.

The situation in Mexico was also dangerous, as the divisions between conservatives threatened to collapse the fragile Mexican government.[5]

During his time in government, José Joaquín de Herrera tried by all means to prevent the annexation of Texas to the United States. There was talk of recognizing the Texan government if he signed a treaty which undertook not to annex and recognize its border with Mexico.

Diplomats from the two countries negotiated until the Americans showed clearly that they had no intention of yielding. The Mexican President suspended negotiations with U. S. representatives, who seemed determined to start the war at all costs. Joaquín de Herrera asked the Mexican Congress to seek a loan of fifteen million dollars to fund the defense of the country, only to have the deputies disapproved its decision to suspend negotiations with the Americans. Despite this he still assembled an army of 6, 000 poorly armed and equipped men, who were put in charge of Mariano Paredes Arrillaga.[6]

Mexican forces were fighting against Americans who were camped on the bank of the Nueces River in Texas, but the Mexican army did not reach its destination, because even though there was a threat of invasion of our country, Paredes Arrillaga used the troops under his command to rebel against José Joaquín de Herrera, who was defeated the December 14, 1845. Paredes Arrillaga proclaimed himself president while U. S. troops crossed the border and came to the Rio Grande. Following his example, General Rafael Tellez, who had been sent to protect the Californias, rebelled against Paredes Arrillaga, leaving unprotected Californias. The movement ensued

and Guadalajara General Jose Maria Yanez, who acted according to Gomez Farias and

Santa Anna, persuaded the head of the local garrison, Mariano Salas, also rebelled against Paredes Arrillaga.[7]

Finally, Mariano Salas was as interim president, but by then U. S. General Zachary Taylor had advanced to Matamoros, Tamaulipas, with 10, 000 men. While infighting became stronger, the whole country was the victim of a foreign invasion, and in a few months the invasion threatened to reach the center of the country. Stephen Kearny occupied the northern territories of the country in Alta California. Zachary Taylor moved south and besieged Monterrey, which came after a bloody battle. It became obvious to the Americans that Mexican territory would be very difficult to win, so it was decided to attempt an invasion by sea to Veracruz City, which fell after a heroic defense and an intense bombing in February 1846. Winfield General Scott, commanding a well-equipped army, landed and headed for the center of the country.[8]

In Mexico City, things went from bad to worse. Supported by liberals, Santa Anna would again become president, and as such, would gathered an army and fight Taylor's troops in Nuevo Leon. After losing a battle in Buenavista, Mexican troops retreated to the center of the country. In the absence of Santa Anna, they took over the administration of Gomez Farias, who took the opportunity to once again declare the Reformation and the confiscation of church property, which caused the Church and most conservatives to withdraw any support to national armies. While Santa Anna fought the Battle

of Angostura, south of Saltillo, Mexico City did a survey of the presidential guard for his opposition to the reforms of Gomez Farias. Santa Anna quickly returned to Mexico City and politically removed his vice president. This earned him the support of the clergy, which eventually gave funds to equip an army that came back to fight the Americans who were advancing rapidly towards the valley of Mexico. After a terrible battle in Cerro Gordo, near Jalapa where the Mexican army fled in disarray, General Scott had Winfield free passage to the center of the country. By August 1846, the American armies were already in the valley of Mexico. Americans began an attack on the garrisons of the periphery of the city, among which were those of Casa Mata and Molino del Rey. Scott attacked Chapultepec on September 13, where General Nicolás Bravo resisted isolated with only 800 men. Days later the Americans stormed the city. Santa Anna tried and failed siege of Puebla, after which he was removed as chairman, a position he held interim Manuel de la Peña y Peña, who organized a provisional government and then moved to Toluca to Querétaro invaders appear in the Lerma Valley. From this point it was obvious that Mexico was defeated and that resistance was futile.[9]

While the invading army occupied many of the major cities in Mexico, Pena y Pena government initiated peace talks with Nicholas Trist, sent by President James K. Polk. Trist met with Luis de la Rosa, Mexican foreign minister, in a negotiation process that was long, reaching Trist to threaten even conquer Querétaro, Mexico provisional seat of government, if not accept U. S. terms.

Finally, De la Rosa and Trist signed the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848, by which the United States ceded New Mexico and Upper California, plus it was ending the war between the two governments and

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other conditions imposed on Mexico. This dispossession of Mexico was accomplished. United States continued its westward expansion and a year later California.

As with all things it is important to see two opposing sides before making a conclusion. For this reason, the idea of manifest destiny in regards to the annexation of Texas must be brought into the light. It was around the time of 1830's and the early 1840's that the idea of manifest destiny began to merge with the wide spread beliefs of westward expansion and American nationalism. This idea of manifest destiny finds its roots in prideful democratic traditions, which when faced with a near endless continent; many Americans believed that they had a divine right to be forbearers of freedom. It was this view of being chosen by God that added fuel to the fire as nationalistic evangelist preachers spread the idea to the masses that it was their God given right to spread democracy as well as Protestantism from coast to coast. As a result, the American people desired to control all of the territories that were connected to North America, and make them free. Free that is, for them.[10]

As a result of this belief that the United States must expand its borders, the idea of annexing new land in the south was a logical step. This idea first arose in 1841 following the death of President William Harrison. As a result of his death, Vice President John Tyler, as Harrison's successor, became the next president of the United States. During his time as President, Tyler brought about the idea of manifest destiny. The idea had already existed, but Tyler popularized it. As a result of this idea that one must conquer land for the United States, the issue of Texas and its annexation began to surface.

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In addition to this, however, the idea of manifest destiny and expansion would be transformed by the annexation of Texas. It was in 1836 that the Republic of Texas sought to break away from Mexico and join the United States. As a result of this, there was a declaration of independence from Mexico. This idea of acquiring a vast amount of land in the south fit perfectly with the idea of expansion as proposed by manifest destiny. This expansion in the south, however, would transform the idea of manifest destiny as the Republic of Texas was requesting entry into the United States rather than being forced to join. Despite the ideas of manifest destiny and a desire to expand, there was some controversy about annexing Texas as it would add an additional slave state to the Union, and would threaten to divide the Democratic Party. Despite the controversy surrounding the addition of the state, the desire to expand the newly forming nation proved too strong, and the fear that the Democratic Party would be divided by the issue of slavery was overwhelmed.[11]

In conclusion, there are many fact sounding the annexation of Texas, and while many of these so called facts may be true, many more are likely to have been distorted over time. If one looks at the ideas of manifest destiny, and the desire to obtain land for the United States, it is east for one to see how this idea could have played a part in the annexation of Texas to the United States. This is not to say, however, that many of the widely accepted facts surrounding Texas and its annexation are not true, but rather that some of these facts have been distorted over time and that there was an underlying force driving its annexation that can be found in manifest destiny.