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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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**TITLE: The Mexican-American War and Its Relevance to 21st Century Military Professionals**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

**AUTHOR: MAJOR MICHAEL F. CLEVINGER, USMC**

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## *Executive Summary*

**Title:** The Mexican-American War and Its Relevance to 21st Century Military Professionals

**Author:** Major Michael F. Clevenger, United States Marine Corps

**Thesis:** It is incumbent upon military professionals to leverage history to assist in the understanding of potential future conflict. The Mexico-American War and Winfield Scott's Mexico City campaign provide a significant case study in this endeavor.

**Discussion:** From 1846 to 1848, the United States engaged in a declared war with Mexico over a territorial dispute. The justness of this war, although much debated, is not the subject of this paper. Although there were numerous campaigns worth study within this war (i.e. General Taylor in Texas and northern Mexico or Commodore Stockton off the California coast) this study will focus along three general themes.

First, an analysis on the impact of Antione-Henri Jomini and Napoleon Bonaparte on the American way of war as exemplified by General Winfield Scott in the Mexico City Campaign. The impact of the Napoleonic military revolution cannot be overstated. This impact affected the task organization, campaign design, and tactical employment of General Scott's forces and enabled him to achieve the nation's strategic and political objectives.

Second, General Scott's development of the Mexico City campaign is a prime example of applying the military means to reach political ends. Put another way, Scott understood the strategic goal and tactical reality and bridged that gap through operational art in the design of the Mexico City campaign. For United State military personnel, whose senior leaders are civilians; the ability to "translate" strategic and political objectives to political action through operational art is a requisite that Scott's campaign provides a solid example.

Finally, General Scott's actions as an occupying force in Mexico City, and other populated areas, can provide today's military leaders an example of how a senior commander was able to balance the simultaneous regular and irregular threat he faced throughout his campaign. Scott's action in this regard can provide valuable lessons learned for future military leaders as America's future enemies would look to take any tactical advantage available, hybrid warfare.

**Conclusion:** The evolution in the American way of war, based on Jominian and Napoleon principles, enabled the American military to project power in the support of national policy, Manifest Destiny. General Scott's brilliance in the operational level of war, connecting military mean to political ends, was evident in the development of the Mexico City campaign. Finally, his tactics, techniques, and procedures approach to irregular war, understanding the limited war policy aspect of the conflict, enabled him to successfully navigate this hybrid environment and achieve a political and military end to the conflict. Twenty-first century military professionals should study the Mexican-American War as it provides a meaningful case study on the evolution of the American way of war in the nineteenth century, campaign design at the operational level of war, and the successful execution of civil-military operations.

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## *Preface*

When contemplating a topic for the Masters of Military Studies (MMS) program, I struggled mightily. I wanted to choose a topic with which I was unfamiliar so as to limit initial bias and provide an opportunity to learn something new about a topic I had never considered studying. As I worked with my MMS mentor, I began to focus on two general themes: implementation of national power in support of national strategy or a military campaign and its implication at the operational level of war. Due to the tireless support of my mentor, I was able to refine my ideas into a topic that met both desires.

Although studied during general history courses while attaining my undergraduate degree, the Mexican-American War was never covered in the same detail as other wars of American History. I plan to show that the study of the Mexican-American War, its causal factors, the application of national power within the DIME construct, and General Winfield Scott's Mexico City campaign are as important to the development of 21st century military professionals as any other war or campaign in American History.

Although there are several campaigns and fronts throughout the war, I chose to limit the case study to General Winfield Scott's Mexico City campaign. This is because it provides analysis of numerous aspects of the war that no other single campaign provided. Specifically, operational maneuver, joint execution of an amphibious landing, tactics and techniques of civil-military operations and the conduct of security and stability operations, and the characteristics of land warfare as an evolution in the American way of war. All of this resulted in, for the first time of any real significance, the successful projection of American power away from the homeland (i.e., expeditionary warfare).

First and foremost, I would like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Donald Bittner, my MMS

advisor, for his patience and guidance throughout this process. Additionally, I would also like to thank Lieutenant Colonel Edward Nevglowski, my military faculty advisor, as a second reader and sounding board for my thoughts and ideas. In addition to my advisors, I would also like to thank the staff at the Grey Research Center and Leadership Communication Skills Center for their instruction on how to conduct research to exploit the wealth of information provided in the library and how to put my thoughts on paper in a coherent manner. Undoubtedly, without the assistance from the aforementioned individuals, none of this would have been possible. Last but not least, I would like to thank Jamie, my wife, for sacrificing her nights and weekends watching Hannah, our daughter, and our newborn, James, while I focused on this endeavor.

## INTRODUCTION

Unlike other wars or conflicts in American history, the Mexico-American War (1846-1848) is little studied in professional military institutions. Several historians posit the reason for the lack of interest in this conflict is due to the perceived injustice of this war in comparison to other American endeavors.<sup>1</sup> However, the study of this conflict is vital as it signified a significant transition in the way in which the United States waged war at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. This analysis will shed light on areas of study for military professionals seeking to gain a deeper understanding of the application of the military element of national power at the three levels of war. Additionally, this conflict, and the circumstances surrounding the advent of open hostilities, provides clear examples of the application of the four instruments of national power. Although the war predates the introduction of the doctrinal concepts of DIME (diplomacy, informational, military, and economics) into current international relations theory lexicon, President James K. Polk's administration clearly followed these lines of effort as he attempted to attain his strategic objectives of the annexation of Texas and accrual of additional territory in accordance with the mid-19th century belief of Manifest Destiny.<sup>2</sup>

Lieutenant General Winfield Scott's design of the Mexico City campaign as an early example of operational art, the evolution of the American way of war executed in the Mexico City campaign as envisioned by Scott, and his successful execution of civil-military operations make the Mexican-American War a vital area of study for the 21st century military professional. Similar to the military revolution that took place in Europe during the Napoleonic wars, the American military was forced to evolve its approach to the conduct of warfare. Winfield Scott's study of European theorists and battles, especially during the Napoleonic Wars, armed him with the knowledge to adopt a new method in the American way of war. Furthermore, Scott

understood that tactical success did not always equate to strategic victory. This understanding enabled him to bridge the gap between military means and political ends by through operational art and design. As biographer Timothy D. Johnson notes, “Scott skillfully executed a strategy designed to achieve political results.”<sup>3</sup> Finally, Scott’s experiences in Florida in the 2nd Seminole War and his study of Napoleon’s campaign in Spain demonstrated the effectiveness a guerilla force could have and how an invading force can perpetuate a local population to actively engage in a guerrilla war. From these lessons, as well as many others, Scott derived his civil-military strategy to mitigate popular uprising and combat guerrilla forces, while simultaneously defeating a conventional army.

### **CURRENT DOCTRINAL CONCEPTS**

Although many of the concepts used in the analysis of this conflict did not exist in the 19th century, the ideas for which they represent were not new. These terms are used to study and assess the past in order to gain a glimpse into future conflict and how best to achieve operational and strategic ends. For example, although international relations theory of this era had not codified national power, or its component elements, it is clear that President Polk, and his administration, used the DIME elements of Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economy against Mexico in order to achieve United States policy and strategic ends. Although 19th century military theorists had distinct levels of war, this study analyzes this conflict using contemporary levels of war: strategic, operational, and tactical. Furthermore, concepts such as operational art and design did not exist in 1846 but General Winfield Scott was in fact using these in the development of his Mexico City Campaign in order to achieve strategic objectives and the policy goals of the Polk Administration. Appendix B: Definition of Terms is provided for the reader for ease of reference.

## GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT

Following the war of 1812, the “most notably American strategist”<sup>4</sup> was Winfield Scott. Born 13 June 1786 in Virginia, Scott did not initially seek a military career. Following study at the College of William and Mary, he pursued a career in law.<sup>5</sup> In 1808, as the United States began to expand its military, Scott petitioned and gained a commission as a captain in the artillery.<sup>6</sup> With no formal military education Scott took command and experienced operations in New Orleans and Canada during the War of 1812. Prior to Scott’s action in the War of 1812, though, Scott was court-martialed for “slandering” a senior officer and suspended for twelve months.<sup>7</sup> During this period, Scott dedicated himself to the study of warfare. Although it is not known exactly which works Scott read, it is accepted that much of his study was from European texts, with an emphasis on French style of warfare due to the heavy French influence in Scott’s thought and writings.<sup>8</sup> On March 9, 1814, within only several years of his return from his forced sabbatical, Winfield Scott was promoted to Brigadier General.<sup>9</sup>

Over the span of 53 years and countless publications, Scott’s influence on the American way of war was immense. In 1815, Scott was sent to Europe to “observe and study the tactics of the French,” and the lessons he learned would be the genesis for his 1821 *General Regulations of the Army*, which would be the “basis for all further regulations.”<sup>10</sup> On this, Scott stated that the French regulations, the basis for which he penned his own, were the “most copious, containing all that can be desired for an army.”<sup>11</sup> The importance of a single volume of documents directing the tactics, techniques, and procedures for all elements of the United States military cannot be overstated. Up to this point, each state was responsible for the training of its own militia with no federal requirement to use the same regulation. Only slightly better, the regular force was also inconsistent as regulations taught from unit to unit were based on the commander’s discretion.

This was bore out during the War of 1812 and was the impetus behind the congressionally mandated development of a single regulation. As the most vocal proponent, or due to his status as president of the boards assigned to develop the regulations, US Army regulations became heavily influenced by the French way of war. Scott's continued study of the preeminent military theorists would mold the subsequent editions of his *General Regulations* over the next half-century and provided "regimentation and system where little had previously existed."<sup>12</sup>

During successive commands, Scott would win fame for "his superior training and conditioning of soldiers" along the French style of open-order fighting.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, during the 2nd Seminole War in Florida and Cherokee uprising in Alabama, Scott learned first hand the effectiveness a guerrilla hit-and-run tactics against a conventional force. Unfortunately for Scott, President Andrew Jackson recalled him from the field of battle after only several months in Florida to defend the failures of his Seminole campaign to a court of inquiry. Although the court found that his plan was "well devised and prosecuted with energy, steadiness, and ability,"<sup>14</sup> Scott had also learned lessons that would impact the planning and execution of all subsequent operations.<sup>15</sup> In Florida Scott learned that tactical victory did not always guarantee strategic success plus not to commence an operation until a commander is fully prepared.<sup>16</sup>

Prior to the Mexican War and his General Order No. 20 proclamation, Scott had demonstrated awareness for the need to mitigate civilian uprisings and a keen understanding of the methods for which to accomplish this. During the Nullification Crisis of 1833, Scott was ordered to Charleston, South Carolina. Scott's policy was "humility and forbearance." To his men Scott stated, "They are still our countrymen, and may be saved from that great crime by respect and kindness on our part...If we succeed by such means in this endeavor, it will be a great moral triumph, worth much more to our country than crushing victories in the field." To

demonstrate a parallel to twenty-first century leadership and guidance in civil-military operations, Scott's words, written nearly two hundred years ago, would sound familiar themes heard today.<sup>17</sup> Scott goes on to say, "Bad words and even casting mud upon us, can do no harm. We shall show our courage by quietly passing along...but should they...make war upon us, then, in tear and blood we will crush them!"<sup>18</sup> Scott employed this same approach with the Cherokee five years later. To his soldiers he stated, "Every possible kindness...must be shown by the troops; and if, in the ranks, a despicable individual should be found...it is hereby made the special duty of the nearest good officer or man instantly to interpose, and seize and consign the guilty wretch." However, if force had to be used Scott provided this guidance, "They must be pursued and invited to surrender, but not fired upon, unless they should make a stand to resist. Even in such cases, mild remedies may sometimes better succeed than violence."<sup>19</sup>

As the first American officer to attain the rank of Lieutenant General (Brevet) since George Washington, Scott served as a general officer for forty of his fifty-three year career, the last twenty of which was as the Commanding General of the United States Army.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, Scott served as a general officer for thirteen presidential administrations enabling him to develop a keen ability to operate within the civilian-military realm and understand "the relationship between military means and political ends."<sup>21</sup>

## **CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

### **The American Zeitgeist of mid-nineteenth century**

As early as 1823, when President James Monroe announced his Monroe Doctrine, penned by then Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, proclaiming "there would be no future European colonies in the Americas," the United States was beginning to exert itself as a hegemonic power within the western hemisphere. In 1845, columnist John O'Sullivan coined the phrase "manifest

destiny” to support Texas annexation and westward expansion by American settlers because if was “the right, the duty...of Americans [to] convey the benefits of republic government to those anxious to embrace them.” Although the two main political parties of the era disagreed on the validity of this concept, due primarily to the slavery issue, the majority of the American people agreed it was preordained by God that the United States would extend from coast to coast, spreading the virtues of the American people and their institutions. It was in this spirit of the times that James K. Polk ran for Presidency of the United States, on the Democratic ticket, against his Whig opponent, Henry Clay. While Henry Clay ran on an anti-annexation platform, President Polk’s platform embodied the belief of manifest destiny and included themes such as the annexation of Texas, acquisition of California, and settlement of the Oregon territory boundary.<sup>22</sup>

Although the outcome was close, Polk’s dominant westward expansion theme delivered him the white house. The previous president, John Tyler, believed in expansionism and had attempted to “secure Texas by treaty”<sup>23</sup> but was vehemently opposed by his own Whig party due to the expansion of slavery into new territories and to avoid war with Mexico.<sup>24</sup> The victory of Polk over Clay, largely due to Polk’s expansionist platform, vindicated Tyler’s earlier efforts, and, as a “lame duck” president, Tyler exploited popular public opinion about Manifest Destiny and pushed through congress a joint resolution “offering annexation to the Texans.”<sup>25</sup> This was signed on March 1, 1845, three days before Polk assumed office. Mexico, which had never accepted Texas independence despite recognition by “leading commercial powers of the world,” resented the American action. Furthermore, there was disagreement between the Mexican, Texan, and United States governments on what constituted the southern boundary of Texas.<sup>26</sup> The US and Texas believed the Rio Grande constituted the southern border while the Mexican

government believe the Nueces River, 150 miles north, was the boundary.<sup>27</sup> In one sense, the boundary was never considered an issue by the Mexican government because it never acknowledged Texas independence; however, the annexation thrust this border issue to the forefront of an international dispute between the United States and Mexico.<sup>28</sup> As President Polk took office, he was immediately faced with an international territorial dispute over Texas and the Mexican-American boundary that necessitated all elements of national power to succeed.

### **United States Application of National Power in the Prelude to War**

Though it wasn't until the mid-20th century that elements of national power were identified on which a nation-state employs hard and soft power to attain political ends, President Polk's whole-of-government strategy in the crisis and subsequent war with Mexico are comparable to the current elements: diplomacy, information, military, and economic (DIME). The Department of Defense defines instruments of national power as, "All of the means available to the government in its pursuit of national objectives."<sup>29</sup> Although Polk's diplomatic efforts would prove fruitless, he believed the "United States could obtain the territorial concessions it sought through the combination of limited military coercion and continued diplomacy."<sup>30</sup> President Polk's declared strategic and political objectives were to address the "indemnification to [US] citizens,"<sup>31</sup> annex Texas along the US accepted boundary of the Rio Grande, and further national expansion through the acquisition of California and the New Mexico territory.<sup>32</sup>

Diplomacy is the "principal instrument for engaging with other states...to advance US interests."<sup>33</sup> President Polk heavily leveraged this element of national power in the prelude to hostilities and throughout the war. Because the United States recognized Texas independence from Mexico, it felt there was no obligation to inform Mexico regarding the annexation and

application for statehood. In response, Mexico recalled her foreign minister in March 1845, effectively ending formal diplomatic relations between the two countries. Although growing sentiment for war existed in both countries, President Polk sent John Slidell as “envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary” in an attempt to settle the dispute by diplomacy. Mexican President Jose Joaquin de Herrera, fearful from a growing majority that wanted war and that an agreement to meet would demonstrate “friendly relations between the two countries,” refused to meet with Slidell. Herrera’s actions were in vain as General Mariano Paredes, a leader within the cohort clamoring for war, deposed him in a bloodless coup. Although every diplomatic effort failed in the run-up to war, Polk continued to attempt to reach a diplomatic peace, albeit on American terms.<sup>34</sup>

President Polk’s employment of the economic element of national power had less of an impact than the military or diplomatic instruments in obtaining his policy goals. As early as 1845, President Polk offered to purchase the debated Texas border areas, plus the California and the New Mexico territories for 30 million US dollars. This Mexico flatly rejected.<sup>35</sup> It can be argued that no Mexican President could have accepted any amount of money as the offer itself was seen as disrespectful, acceptance was political suicide, and thus war was inevitable.<sup>36</sup> As current US doctrine states, the economic instrument can be used to “encourage economic growth...[and] prevent, to the extent possible, economic and financial crisis.”<sup>37</sup> This application of the economic element of national power would come to play during General Winfield Scott’s march to Mexico City as he attempted to mitigate the economic impact his invading force would have on the Mexican economy. Lastly, although President Polk had no obligation to do so, he permitted the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo to stipulate that the United States would compensate Mexico for the territory lost and assume responsibility of Mexican debts to US citizens.

Unfortunately for Mexico, the 15 million US dollars they received following the war was less than half the original offer made by President Polk.

As diplomatic and economic efforts failed, President Polk placed the American military on a war footing. In the southwest, Major General Zachary Taylor was ordered to move to Corpus Christi and “hold his forces in readiness” in the event of war. In the Pacific, Commodore J.D. Sloat, commander of the Pacific Squadron, was ordered to “seize ports along the California if war should break out.” After Slidell was rebuffed and Mexican authorities refused to pursue peaceful negotiations, President Polk and Secretary of War William L. Marcy ordered General Taylor to cross the Neuces River and “advance to the Rio Grande and take up a defensive position on the east bank of that stream.” Polk, understanding the need to remain the aggrieved party in this international conflict for internal political reasons, ordered Taylor to not treat the Mexican citizens or military personnel as the enemy; however, the President did authorize Taylor to use hostile force if instigated by the Mexicans.<sup>38</sup>

Then arose the Thornton affair and the role of the final element of national power, information. Although the means were considerably different in the 19th century, President Polk was able to exploit this concept quite adeptly in order to claim to be the wronged party. Current DOD joint doctrine defines certain elements of the informational instrument as the ability to further a cause by controlling the narrative through media platforms.<sup>39</sup> The event that Polk was able to exploit in this means was the Thornton Affair. Although Polk understood that Mexico did not recognize the Rio Grande as its northern boundary and Mexico would view US military presence as an incursion, he nonetheless ordered Taylor south, albeit with strict instructions to not initiate hostilities.<sup>40</sup> General Pedro Ampudia, commanding general of Mexico forces along the Rio Grande, provided Taylor with an ultimatum: withdraw to Corpus Christi within 24 hours

or hostilities would begin. Taylor responded that “he had been ordered to his present position and there he intended to stay,” essentially calling Ampudia’s bluff. Then Mexican quickly replaced General Ampudia with General Mariano Arista on April 24, 1846, and reinforced his command to 8,000 men. The next day General Arista sent a force across the Rio Grande encircling a squadron of dragoons commanded by Captain Seth Barton Thornton. In the ensuing skirmish, eleven US soldiers were killed and fifty-two prisoners were taken.<sup>41</sup> This altercation provided President Polk the justification to proclaim the United States as the offended party. In his war message to Congress on May 11, 1846, the Thornton affair would play a pivotal role as he stated, “Mexican forces...assumed a belligerent attitude...invas[ing] our territory, and shed[ing] American blood upon American Soil.”<sup>42</sup> This is a prime example of the exploitation of the informational element to “improve the efficacy of [US] actions and create...conditions favorable to [strategic] objectives.”<sup>43</sup>

### **Early Stages of War and Genesis for a New Front**

Despite no military experience, President Polk was an active commander-in-chief in the development of the war plans. Polk recognized that the majority of the Mexican Army was located in vicinity of Mexico City and, therefore, developed a strategy to exploit this gap. Polk’s approach to the Mexican War was also limited in nature. He had no plans for a draft, to place the country on a national war footing, or “conquer all of Mexico.” Polk’s plan instead focused on a expeditionary force, comprised of 8,000 regular forces and 20,000 state volunteers on a one year enlistment, to “seize and hold” the Northern Provinces of Mexico and retain them until peace could be negotiated on American terms. The plan consisted of a multi axis advance into Texas and the New Mexico territory by the army, a blockade of eastern Mexico in the Gulf of Mexico,

and a combined sea and land campaign in California to force Mexico to “recognize the fait accompli and be willing to negotiate.”<sup>44</sup>

Success away from Mexico attended to what would now be called supporting efforts, but which would also have long term consequences in the ensuing peace. In Texas, the senior commander was Major General Zachary Taylor. Taylor’s initial victories at Palo Alto and Resaca del la Pama forced Mexican forces south of the Rio Grande, from which they would never recover. Taylor exploited these early successes by crossing the Rio Grande River and seizing the city of Monterey. In the New Mexico territory, General Stephen Kearny and Colonel Alexander Doniphan captured Santa Fe, New Mexico. Doniphan then continued his attack south capturing El Paso. Kearny continued west to support the California campaign. In California the US Navy quickly seized the coastal cities of San Francisco and Los Angeles with the help of Captain John Fremont’s militia. Kearny, moving west from Santa Fe, was denied entry to San Diego, but the Mexican military quickly withdrew south to consolidate their defensive positions due to Taylor’s successes in the east. Despite his earlier defeat, Kearny quickly occupied the now abandoned city of San Diego shoring up US control of the California coast.<sup>45</sup>

Map 1: The Mexican-American War 1846-1848.



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexican-American\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexican-American_War)

As the end of 1846 approached, the United States was in control of Texas, to the Rio Grande River, the New Mexico territory, and California. Although “Polk still clung to the belief that the Mexican government would acquiesce in the face of mounting US pressure” it became apparent that the land and sea campaigns, though tactically successful, were “dangerously extended...and politically indecisive”<sup>46</sup> and a new approach was necessary. Scott himself believed as much. In his memoirs Scott wrote that, “As early as May 1846, when it was known that the Mexicans had assumed a threatening attitude on the Rio Grande...he [Scott] doubted whether...the Rio Grande the right basis for offensive operations against Mexico; and suggested the plan of conquering a peace which he ultimately executed.”<sup>47</sup> Scott doubted that Taylor’s limited penetration into northern Mexico and Taylor’s focus on the Mexican Army, for which

Taylor viewed as the Mexican center of gravity, would achieve the strategic results Polk desired. In Scott's view "the country would be bankrupted and dishonored unless the war" could be brought to a successful conclusion and only Scott "could give to it the necessary impetus and direction."<sup>48</sup>

Taylor's successes were within Polk's limited war strategic framework.<sup>49</sup> Polk believed that Taylor and Kearney's campaigns on the periphery, examples of the limited war strategies espoused by the administration, would compel Mexico to accept peace by American terms. Conversely, what Scott proposed in "Vera Cruz and its castle – New line of operations," was to employ operational maneuver and limited war tactics within a strategic total war construct, the seizure of Mexico's capital. Scott viewed Mexico City as Mexico's center of gravity, and her loss, not the destruction of an army, would achieve the peace Polk desired. Eventually President Polk acquiesced to Scott's request to lead the force that would open this new campaign stating, "we must...profit by his military experience."<sup>50</sup>

### **SCOTT'S MEXICO CITY CAMPAIGN: OPERATIONAL ART**

Scott understood the purpose of a new campaign was to "convince the Mexican government of the futility of prolonging the war, and perhaps to make its [Mexico's] continued prolongation impossible." Unlike Taylor's strategy of annihilation and focus on Mexico's army, Scott focused on a political strategy. He believed the "conquest of the capital would paralyze the country completely enough...and oblige any Mexican government to make peace in order to remain a government at all." Scott's campaign was designed "not of great battles but of maneuver, seeking to flank the Mexicans out of successive positions at minimal costs" to ensure adequate troop levels for the subsequent occupation of the capital and peace negotiations.<sup>51</sup> It

was this understanding, or what Clausewitz called “coup d’oeil,”<sup>52</sup> that helps define what Scott achieved as the beginning of American operational art at the operational level of war.

First, what is operational art and the operational level of war. A brief understanding of this concept and an analysis of Scott’s Mexico City campaign will demonstrate that this was an early example of what many believe to be a more contemporary framework of warfare. Joint Publication 1 *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* says that the “operational level [of war] links strategy and tactics by establishing operational objectives needed to achieve the military end states and strategic objectives,” and is attained through operational art.<sup>53</sup> Joint Publication 3-0 *Joint Operations* defines operational art as, “the application of creative imagination by commanders and staffs – supported by their skill, knowledge, experience – to design strategies, campaigns, and major operations to organize and employ military forces by integrating ends, ways, and means.”<sup>54</sup> Stated another way, operational art synchronizes the design, planning, and execution of operations within a theatre of war and serves to bridge the gap between strategy (policy as defined by civilian leadership) and tactics (the individual battles) to achieve the national strategic objectives. Lieutenant General Paul Van Ryper, USMC (Ret) stated that “the practice of operational art requires [a commander’s] ability to: bridge from strategy to tactical actions; employ operational maneuver, fires, and information; and plan using systemic operational design.”<sup>55</sup>

Taylor’s failure to bring the war to a speedy resolution through his distant northern overland campaign led Scott to develop the “Vera Cruz and its Castle – New line of operations proposal.”<sup>56</sup> Secretary of War William Marcy communicated the new approach, approved by President Polk, to Taylor in a letter dated 22 October 1847. Marcy informed Taylor that the “government is anxious that nothing should occur to prevent the expedition to Vera Cruz” and

that it would be “scarcely possible to get the requisite number of regulars without drawing some of those now with you.”<sup>57</sup> More important than the transfer of troops was the justification for the new campaign and the role Taylor’s forces would play at each level of war. First, Marcy laid out the political justification for the new campaign. In the “plan of the campaign,” Marcy told Taylor, his role was “designed to be principally confined to the [northern] provinces” the “political affairs of Mexico...have an important bearing upon our military movements...and render it necessary to modify the plans of operations.”<sup>58</sup> Based on Taylor’s reports to Marcy, regarding the disposition of civilians in the area, Marcy was led to believe that, “it is no longer reasonable to expect from them neutrality...[and] it must be taken on the assumption that they will cooperate with the enemy...to impede our movements.”<sup>59</sup> Marcy then informs Taylor of his role as a deception force. “The belief should be encouraged that Tampico is the destination of the expedition...[and] the enemy will readily expect a forward movement on your part. The enemy should be impressed with the belief that you intend to move forward, to the end that they may not withdraw their forces and employ them on either points.”<sup>60</sup> This was vital, as it would force the Mexican government to maintain forces in their northern provinces, further splitting their army to defend along multiple fronts.

Scott’s development of his Mexico City campaign was to provide a military means to reach political ends at, what Scott considered, being the least costly method. Maximizing operational maneuver from the sea (i.e., landing his army from the sea at Vera Cruz), Scott would limit his overland route to approximately the 250 miles from Vera Cruz to Mexico City, albeit within the heart of Mexico and significantly behind enemy lines. His tactical and operational approach was to avoid pitched battle and rapidly seize, what Scott considered to be the enemy’s center of gravity, Mexico City.

In a series of meetings and letters between General Scott, Secretary of War Marcy, and President Polk the new campaign was discussed, debated, and subsequently approved with Scott as the commander. The first formal plan, “Vera Cruz and Its Castle,” sent to Marcy on 27 October 1846, was an overview of the campaign as Scott envisioned it and a request to command the expedition. Scott’s coup d’oeil, understanding of operational art, and the linkage between tactics and strategic objectives enabled him to explain the dangers an overland campaign would have. Considering the “tyranny of distance” between Taylor’s position in northern Mexico and the capital, Scott wrote, “If you come with few, we will overwhelm you; if with many, you will overwhelm yourselves,” an acknowledgement of Napoleon’s struggles during the French invasion of Russia in 1812.<sup>61</sup> Although Scott was advocating for the Vera Cruz expedition he also understood, like the limited impact the other campaigns had in their ability to achieve the strategic objective, that the seizure of the coastal town alone would not cause Mexico to acquiesce. To Marcy he stated, “As a step toward compelling Mexico to sue for peace...I am persuaded that our possession of those places would be of but very little more value...unless...the capture should be promptly followed by a march...upon the capital.” He continues, “to conquer a peace...we must take the city of Mexico, or place it in imminent danger of capture.”<sup>62</sup>

The balance of “Vera Cruz and Its Castle” discusses in detail the difficulties of landing at Vera Cruz, the seizure of the fortress San Juan de Ulloa, and the men and material that such an expedition would require. Due to the formidable defenses of San Juan de Ulloa, Scott knew that the navy or army could not take it alone, without significant delay or loss of life, neither of which Scott could afford. Time was not on the side of the invading force either, as the vomito, or yellow fever, season would fall upon Scott’s forces by late spring. Scott was aware that

reinforcements would be slow to arrive and that all forces available to him would be needed for the next phase of his expedition, the march on Mexico City. For these reasons Scott proposed to “attack the castle by land and water” and that the naval squadron be reinforced with “many bomb ketches,” ships, armed with high angle mortars rather than cannon, specifically designed for naval sieges of littoral forts. In addition to the siege vessels, Scott requested specially constructed landing craft, in sufficient numbers to land “at least 2,500 men, with two light batteries” in a single wave. For the purposes of the landing, siege, and seizure of Vera Cruz, Scott informed Marcy that “ten thousand men to be the minimum force” needed.<sup>63</sup>

Although the balance of this first communiqué did not provide details concerning the follow-on phase of the Vera Cruz expedition, Scott would make it known that the army “be augmented to about 20,000 men for ulterior operations.” Although Scott proposed transferring forces from Taylor’s command to his own, he was adamant that Taylor remained a “threatening force at Monterey” in order to force the Mexicans to maintain a large presence in the north.<sup>64</sup>

In Scott’s second message to Marcy, “Vera Cruz and Its Castle – New line of Operations, thence upon the Capital,” was sent on 12 November 1846, only days before he was named the campaign’s commander. In this letter and the several memoranda that followed in the days after, Scott laid out in detail how he planned to conduct the new operation and for what he would need to make it successful. At the time Scott wrote this, President Polk had not yet approved the new campaign; therefore, Scott stressed that despite tactical successes on land and sea “it is evident that, to compel [Mexico] to sue for peace, we must modify our plan of invasion and prosecute it with...redoubled means.” Knowing the war was beginning to lose favor politically and continued delay may “raise up new parties against us,” Scott understood the necessity of bringing the war to a speedy end while achieving the strategic objectives. To reinforce this tone

Scott reasoned, “a little war – a war prosecuted with inadequate means or vigor – is a greater evil than a big war. It discredits the party possessed of the superior means; it exhausts her finances, exhausts enthusiasm, and generally ends in failure of all objects proposed.”<sup>65</sup>

At Vera Cruz, Scott reinforced his need for 10,000 men, with the ability to land 2,000-3,000 simultaneously to achieve “a landing...making good the foothold, until the remainder of the expedition could follow.” Scott stressed that the seizure of Vera Cruz was but a means to an end, that the “principal object in those captures, would be to open a new and better line of operations upon the enemy’s capital.” Although Scott would again stress the need for 20,000 troops in order to seize or place the capital in “imminent danger of capture” his army would never exceed 13,000 at any given time.<sup>66</sup>

Regarding General Taylor’s position at Monterey, Scott reinforced the necessity of maintaining adequate forces to threaten the possibility of an advance from the north, and thus force the Mexican military to maintain forces in that theatre. Any reduction to Taylor’s forces, and the force protection issues possibly generated, would be counterbalanced by the opening of a new front and the imminent threat against the capital city of Mexico. Scott emphasized this point when he stated to Marcy that “to meet the [threat of] double invasion, Mexico must either divide her forces and increase our chance of success on both lines, or double her forces on one, and leave the other comparatively open to our advance.”<sup>67</sup> Scott’s comprehension of the required synchronization needed to effectively employ and coordinate multiple armies across several simultaneous campaigns to achieve the strategic ends demonstrate operational art rarely yet conducted in American military history.

## EVOLUTION OF THE AMERICAN WAY OF WAR

Neither educated at West Point nor formally trained in military practice, Scott was an avid reader of military history and theory. European, more specifically early 19th century French commanders and military theorists, would heavily influence Scott's ideas on tactics and techniques of warfare. He adopted this and implemented many of their principles in what passed for US Army doctrine in the numerous publications he would author.<sup>68</sup> This infatuation caused many to call Scott a Francophile.<sup>69</sup> Although it cannot be proven which works Scott read throughout his lifetime, there is no doubt, based on his continued reference to the French style of warfare throughout his career, that the Napoleonic Wars, and the authors that best captured their lessons, had an immense impact on his thinking. Even Scott would say that the French way of warfare and their publications were the most complete of the time, "containing all that can be desired for an army."<sup>70</sup>

Scott's method of warfare, from his tactical employment of forces to the operational design he applied to his campaign, represents a distinct American way of war, contrary to Russell Weigley's thesis in *American Way of War*, when compared to the other major conflicts of the 19th century. The United States, "a weak nation state...initially practices a strategy of attrition aimed at wearing out its opponents" during the War of 1812. This attrition strategy can be defined as a defensive strategy whose primary objective is to trade space for time in the hopes that the enemy will lose the ability or willingness to continue. The other major conflict of the century following the Mexican-American War is the American Civil War. Strategy of annihilation characterized this conflict by "the destruction of the enemy's armed forces and complete overthrow of the enemy." These two strategies, which Weigley argues are the two American ways of war, do not fit with Polk's policy and Scott's campaign design. Military

historian Brian Linn argues that the strategies are too restrictive and do not account for limited war, which more aptly characterizes the Mexican-American War.<sup>71</sup>

Although the United States was involved in numerous conflicts during this “interwar” period, none were on the scale, in terms of geographic depth or army size, of the two aforementioned conflicts except the Mexican-American War. Similar to the War of 1812 and the American Civil War, the Mexican-American War was a conflict between two nation-states, or near-peer competitors, within the international community. Although there were advantages in military technology by the United States, the two armies had similar weapons. Additionally, Mexico had the advantages of the defense, superior numbers, and interior lines of operations. Many of the strategies and tactics Scott had studied and espoused into US Army regulations in the preceding 30 years of his career would face their first significant test against a like foe, thus validating Scott’s belief that the country should change the American way of war.

The most important aspect of Napoleon’s influence on Scott was also “fundamental to Napoleon’s strategy and his conduct of battle: the breaking up of the formerly unitary arms into permanent divisions and corps, combining infantry, cavalry, artillery, and support services”<sup>72</sup> or what could be called a combined arms force. These semi-autonomous units made possible many of the additional innovations Scott would adopt and employ throughout his 53-year career, specifically during his field command in the Mexican-American War. Without these changes to task organization and tables of equipment, neither Scott nor his subordinate commanders, could have exercised the subsequent principles or tactics to any satisfactory effect. Certainly, his design of the Mexico City campaign would have failed if not for these innovations or the influence of other great military theorists like Jomini.

Baron Antoine Henri de Jomini, a Swiss born banker, was a very capable staff officer and prolific writer of military history. His significance would rise during, but especially after, the Napoleonic wars.<sup>73</sup> His works, *The Art of War* and *Treatise of Grande Military Operations*, had a significant impact on 19th century military commanders, Scott chief among them.<sup>74</sup> Comparing and contrasting Scott's Mexico City Campaign against the principles Jomini espouses in *The Art of War* marks a clear point in United States history to which a new American way of war emerged. The principles Scott applied during his Mexico City Campaign can be viewed throughout the preparation for the campaign, amphibious landing at Vera Cruz, march to Mexico City, and finally the assault on the capital itself.

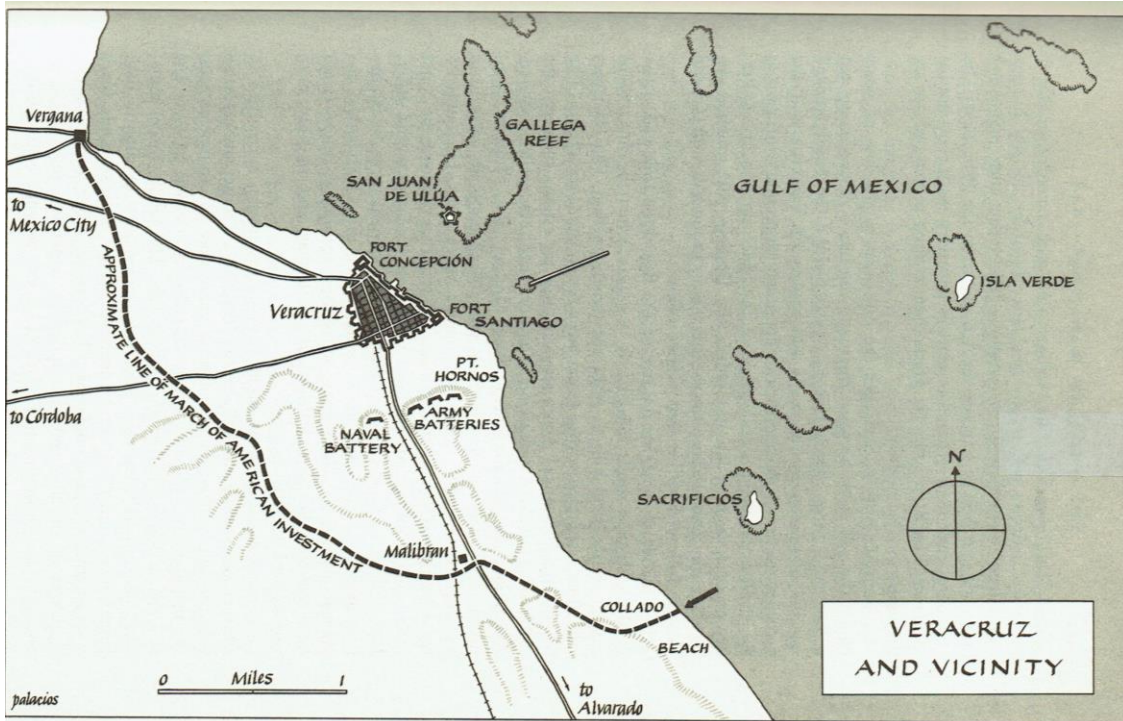
Jomini emphasizes the important role the commander takes in the preparations of war. As Taylor's campaign in northern Mexico failed to achieve the political aims set forth by President Polk, Scott identified an opportunity. According to Jomini, the first priority of a commander is to understand the strategic objectives as defined by the head of state and develop operations to accomplish them.<sup>75</sup> Scott did just that. In "Vera Cruz and Its Castle," Scott correctly noted that the initial strategy employed by Polk and Taylor had failed and a new one would be necessary.<sup>76</sup> Additionally, in accordance with Jomini's belief that generals conduct great study of their theater of operations prior to taking the field, Scott provided detail regarding the men and materiel that would be necessary to conduct a successful landing at Vera Cruz and follow-on march to Mexico City.<sup>77</sup> He linked tactical action to operational goals so as to achieve the strategic aims. To that end, Scott "personally supervised the acquisition of horse, foot, and artillery"<sup>78</sup> and the development of landing craft specifically designed for the landing at Vera Cruz provide clear examples of this Jominian principle.<sup>79</sup>

The Vera Cruz operation itself was largely Jominian in concept. First, Scott's plan to use General Taylor as a fixing force from the north while his forces landed in vicinity of Vera Cruz deceived the enemy as to the main effort.<sup>80</sup> Although Scott did not have tactical control of Taylor's army, he ensured that Taylor's army was a "sufficient defensive force to maintain the false position of Monterey...[to support his] descent on Vera Cruz and the conquest of the capital."<sup>81</sup> In addition to synchronizing multiple fronts in support of the opening of this new line of operation, Scott was providing for an additional route to victory. If Mexico chose to divert the majority of their forces to one front, it would "leave the other comparatively open to our advance."<sup>82</sup>

In the selection of Colloda Beach, over two miles from the formidable fortress of San Juan de Ulloa, located at Vera Cruz, Scott followed another Jominian principle of amphibious operations: to choose a landing site for which troops may land unopposed and in large numbers to seize a beachhead rapidly, or in Jomini's words a "base of operations."<sup>83</sup> According to Jomini, a base of operations is the location to which an "army obtains its reinforcements and resources...takes the offensive...[and] retreats when necessary."<sup>84</sup> Finally, the seizure of the fortress at Vera Cruz was in keeping with Jomini's view on amphibious landings, to "make sure of the possession of one fortified harbor."<sup>85</sup> Regarding his tactics in the seizure of Vera Cruz and the fortress located there, Scott paid homage to Jomini's warnings of protracted sieges: not to allow the besieged time to call for reinforcements. Hence he moved rapidly to defeat this threat and secure his own lines of communication. Employing land forces to the west and nearly 80 warships to the east, Scott encircled the port town, forcing their surrender within a matter of days.<sup>86</sup> Without a secure base of operations to ensure his lines of communication back to the

United States would remain open, Scott would have been unable to commence his land movement towards Mexico City.

Map 2: Landing at Collado Beach and Siege of Vera Cruz.

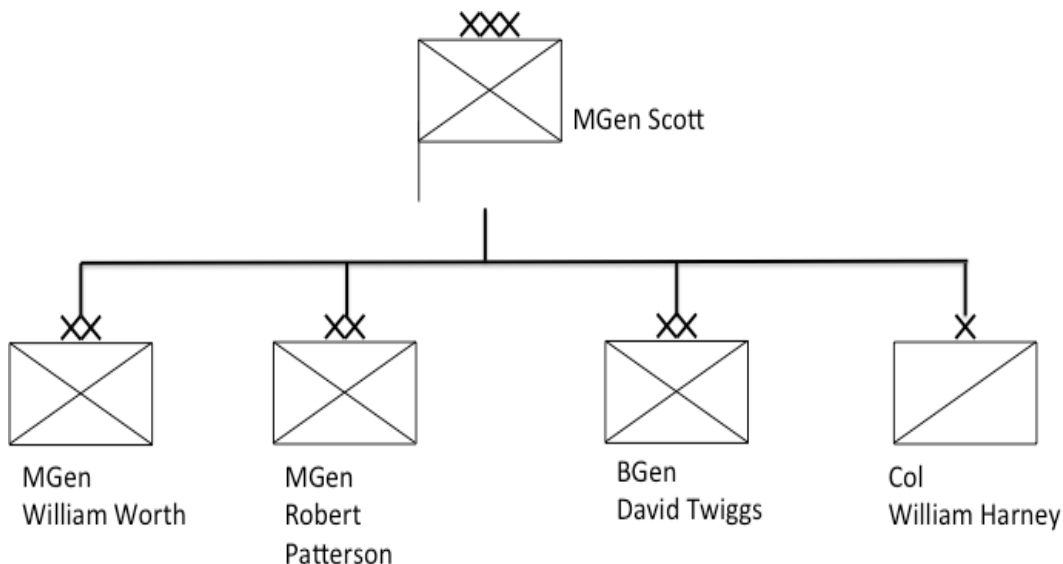


Source: Jack K. Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848*, 243.

During the march to Mexico City, additional Jominian and Napoleon principles are visible in the execution of Scott's campaign. Although Scott was aware that the National Highway would favor the defenders as he travelled west, he also knew that to reach Mexico City rapidly, or the strategic point as Jomini calls it, he would need to travel on the center line of operations within his zone.<sup>87</sup> To this end, he selected the town of Jalapa to serve as his geographical objective point for which to aim.<sup>88</sup> Prior to departing Vera Cruz, Scott first adjusted his task organization, splitting his forces into three semi-autonomous divisions, each comprised of infantry, artillery, and cavalry.<sup>89</sup> Additionally, he maintained a brigade of dragoons to serve as reconnaissance elements in general support to the army. It was with these

forces as Cerro Gordo that Scott would demonstrate his mastery of the additional principles of Jomini and Napoleon: envelopments or flanking attacks and concentration at decisive points.

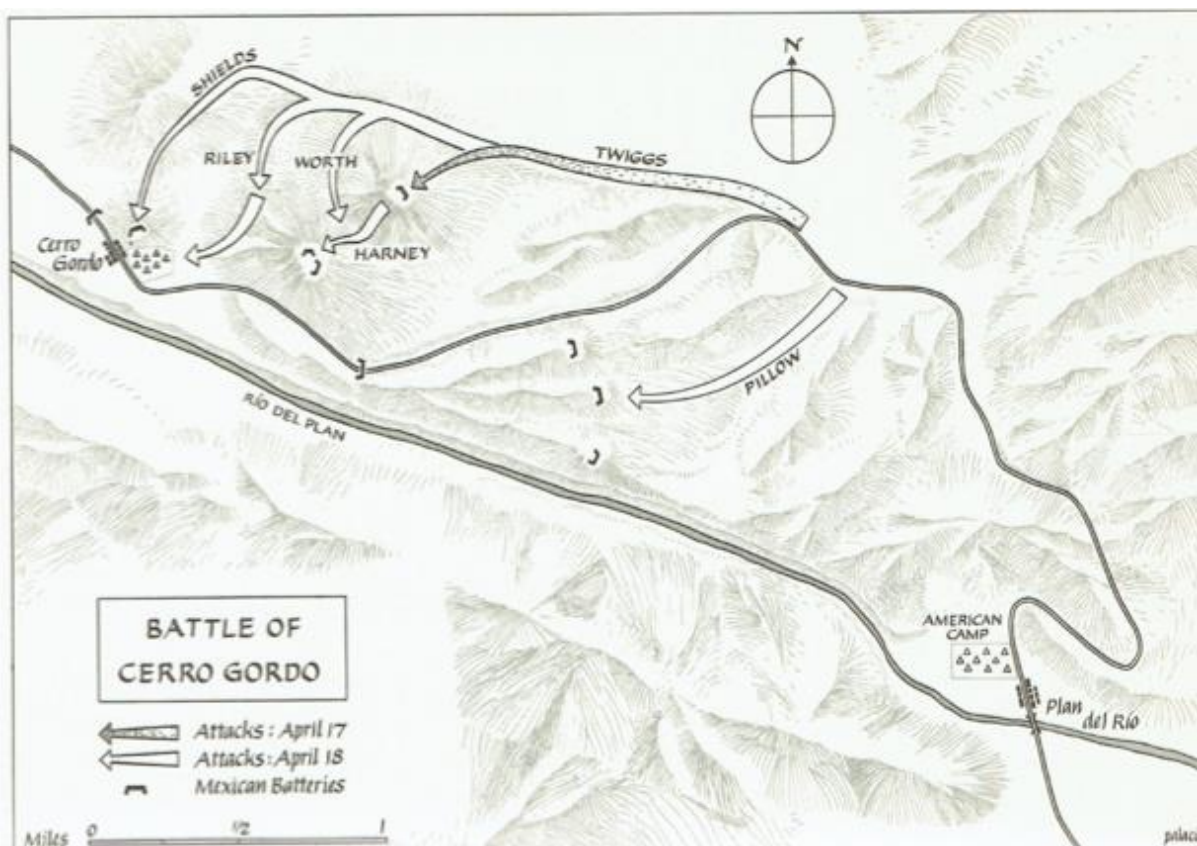
Figure 1. Task Organization of Scott’s Army departing Vera Cruz.



Aware that Scott was using the National Highway to march on Mexico City, General Santa Anna deployed his numerically superior force of 12,500 men along several hills and ridgelines that flanked both sides of the road just north of the town of Cerro Gordo. This position had the additional advantage of adjacent natural obstacles that Santa Anna believed were too difficult for an army to navigate through.<sup>90</sup> Scott, understanding the intrinsic strengths of the defense, would overcome this by finding “a passable way...without alarming the enemy – giving the possibility of turning the extreme left of his line of defenses, and capturing his whole army.”<sup>91</sup> This form of maneuver, “flank attacks and envelopments [were] the central themes of his battle plans.”<sup>92</sup> As Jomini states, “an enemy [can be] dislodged...by outflanking him so as to take him in flank and rear, or by using both.”<sup>93</sup> Utilizing engineers to conduct route reconnaissance, Scott was able to find a route to the flank and rear of the Mexican Army that would effectively cut off their retreat; this enabled him to apply the Jominian principles of

diversionary attacks and concentration against the decisive point. Scott used a division; nearly one-third of his available forces, to conduct the diversion in order to ensure the deception was able to “distract the enemy troops from the main thrust against the rear.”<sup>94</sup> This conformed to a key Jominian dictum: “draw the enemy in a direction where you wish him to go, in order to facilitate the execution of an enterprise in another direction.”<sup>95</sup> With the diversion in place, Scott executed what Jomini calls concentration at the decisive point “in order to inflict the decisive blow.”<sup>96</sup> This battle, more than any other in the campaign, demonstrates the superiority of the principles articulated by Jomini.

Map 3: Battle of Cerro Gordo.



Source: Jack K. Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848*, 266.

Another Napoleonic and Jominian concept employed by Scott during his campaign to Mexico City was the tactical reserve. Like Napoleon, Scott would organize his reserve with

heavy cavalry and light infantry.<sup>97</sup> Jomini, though, also saw the value of the reserve in the defense stating that, “whenever an army takes the offensive, it should always contemplate the possibility of being compelled to act on the defensive.”<sup>98</sup> Hence a commander should retain a reserve to support the inevitable transition. Scott, in comparison, would also employ the reserve to exploit success in the pursuit of a fleeing enemy. With regard to pursuit, Jomini stated that it should be executed “especially when it is subsequent to a battle gained”<sup>99</sup> but he failed to comment on the reserves value during the pursuit of a fleeing enemy. At the battle of Cerro Gordo, with the enemy confused and fleeing, Scott employed his reserves of cavalry and infantry by ordering that “pursuit may be continued many miles, until stopped by darkness or fortified positions, toward Jalapa”<sup>100</sup> resulting in the capture of 3,000 enemy soldiers and significant materiel.<sup>101</sup>

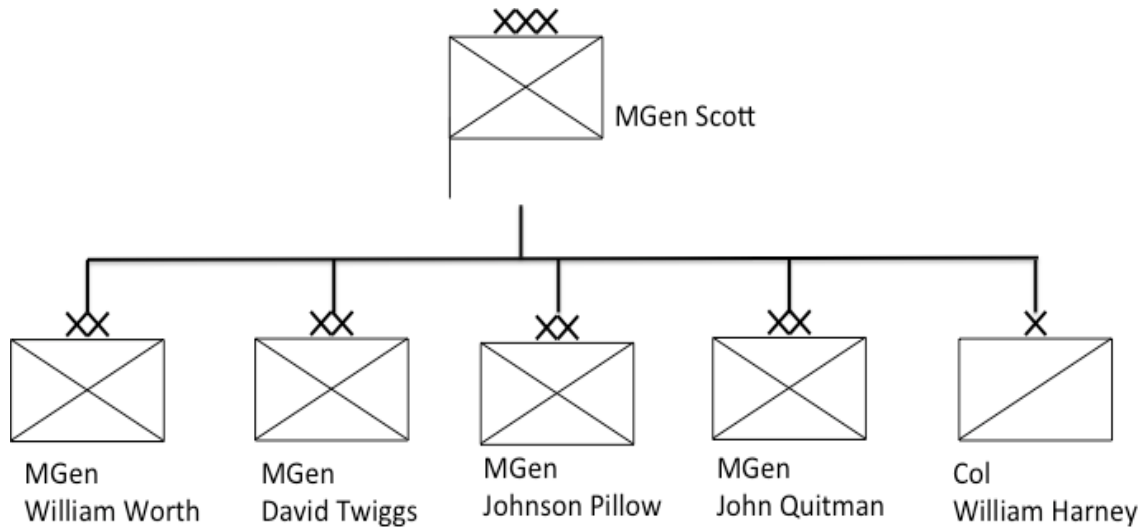
Another Napoleonic tactic and Jominian principle exercised by Scott during his Mexico City Campaign was the principle of dispersion and concentration at the decisive point. The organization of semi-autonomous combined arms divisions enabled Scott to disperse his divisions, threatening multiple targets simultaneously and forcing the Mexican military to defend across a wider front.<sup>102</sup> This distribution of Mexican forces to defend all possible targets had several effects. First, it weakened all defensive positions, as the Mexicans were unable to concentrate their superior numbers. Second, dispersion would impact the ability to conduct an attack on Scott’s forces with the necessary numbers to mitigate Scott’s mutually supporting divisions. Scott’s emphasis on mutually supporting movements and positions was so that “no division (even the leading or rearmost one) was ever separated more than seven or eight miles from support, or rather half that distance, by means of double movement.”<sup>103</sup> “By similar means,” Scott would go on to comment regarding convergence at the decisive point: “three

divisions might easily have been united in little more than two hours, in the case of formidable attack upon an interior division.”<sup>104</sup>

Scott was able to put 10,500 soldiers in the field against Mexico City because he kept losses to a minimum by conducting flanking movements, “turning the Mexicans out of strong defensive positions” during his march to Mexico City and not seeking major pitched battle with the main enemy force with attendant high casualties.<sup>105</sup> He was also able to do this because he exercised economy of force by accepting risk in other areas. He consolidated numerous depots along the National Highway, his main axis of advance, and reduced garrison strengths in key population centers. This effectively severed his primary ground line of communication between himself and his base of operations at the port at Vera Cruz.<sup>106</sup>

In the final push to Mexico City, Scott applied many of the principles he had previously employed throughout the previous five months of his campaign. Dispersion, concentration, deception, flanking attacks, and envelopments would all be necessary to overcome the defenses in depth of the nearly 30,000 soldiers Santa Anna had deployed for final defense for Mexico City. Scott, though, had no intention of attacking into teeth of the enemy defense and organized his forces to support this final phase of his campaign.

Figure 2. Task Organization of Scott's army for assault on Mexico City.

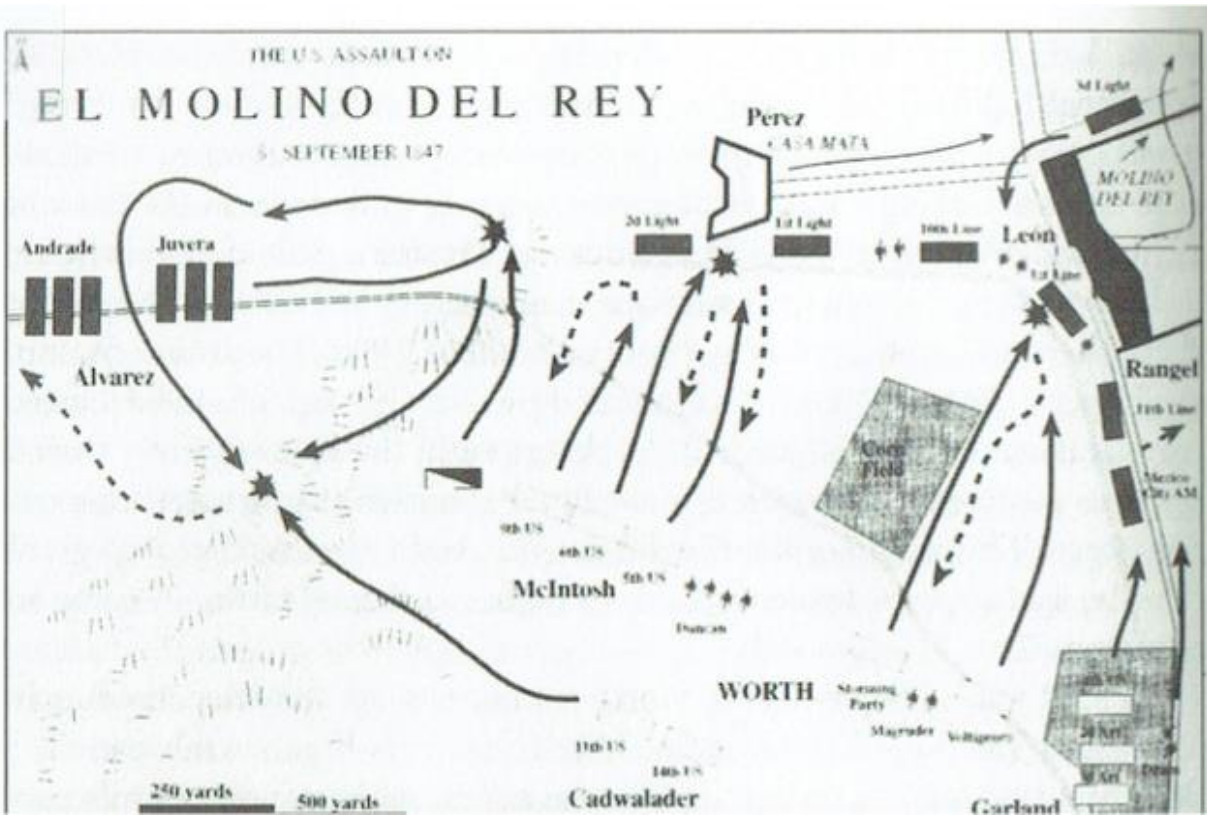


Santa Anna, believing the natural obstacles south of the city impenetrable, focused the bulk of his defenses east of the city oriented on the National Highway. Scott, again through superior reconnaissance as at Cerro Gordo months earlier, found a route around Lakes Xochimilco and Chalco and of the El Pedregal lava field. Then came the attack on the Mexican capital, in accordance with his *General Regulations of the Army*. In it, Scott had written of the necessity of conducting deception “with false attacks” and “by amusing or holding in check a large portion of the enemy, by a small number of the army.”<sup>107</sup> This is precisely what Scott did. Conducting a feint along the National Highway into Santa Anna’s main engagement area at El Penon and other diversionary attacks along other routes into Mexico City, Scott achieved surprise. In a letter to Secretary Marcy following the capture of Mexico City Scott would state that he knew that “turning the strong eastern defenses of the city, by passing around south...and maneuver...to the south and southwest of the capital” would provide the greatest opportunity for success while “spar[ing] the lives of this gallant army for a general battle which I knew we had to win before capturing the city, or obtaining the great object of the campaign – a just and honorable peace.”<sup>108</sup> As Jomini stated, “The object of an offensive battle can only be to dislodge



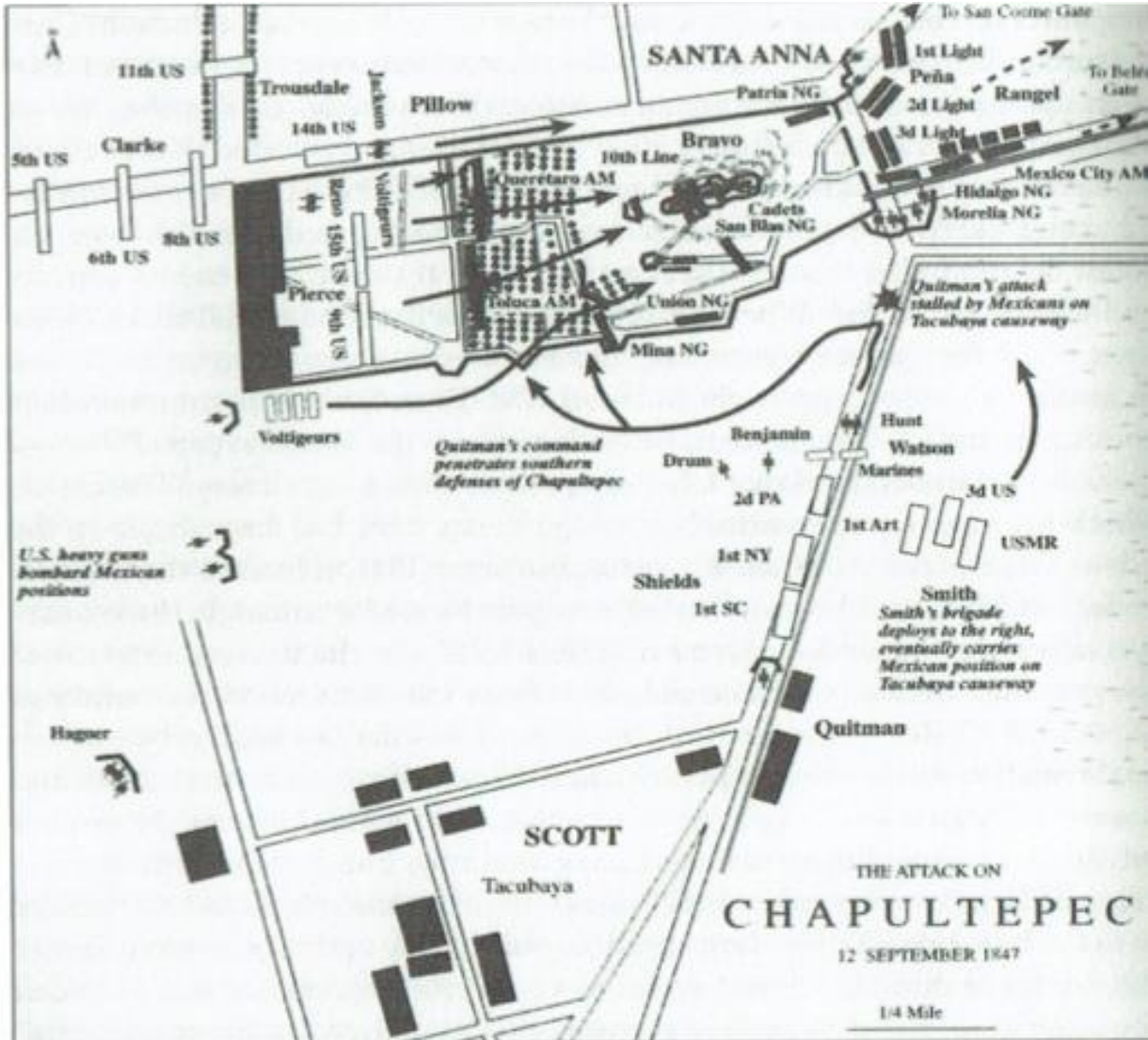
mistaken for a feint, and the old as indicating our true ultimate point of attack.”<sup>111</sup> Scott’s plan worked and by the time that enemy realized the main attack was coming from the southwest “it was too late for the enemy to recover from the effects of his delusion.”<sup>112</sup> The deception had worked so convincingly that when hostilities commenced on 6 September 1847, Scott was able to capture Mexico City eight days later. In rapid fashion Scott won a series of decisive battles at Molino del Rey (8 September 1847), Chapultepec (12-13 September 1847), and the final assault on Mexico City (13-14 September 1847).

Map 5: Battle of Molino del Rey 8 September 1847.



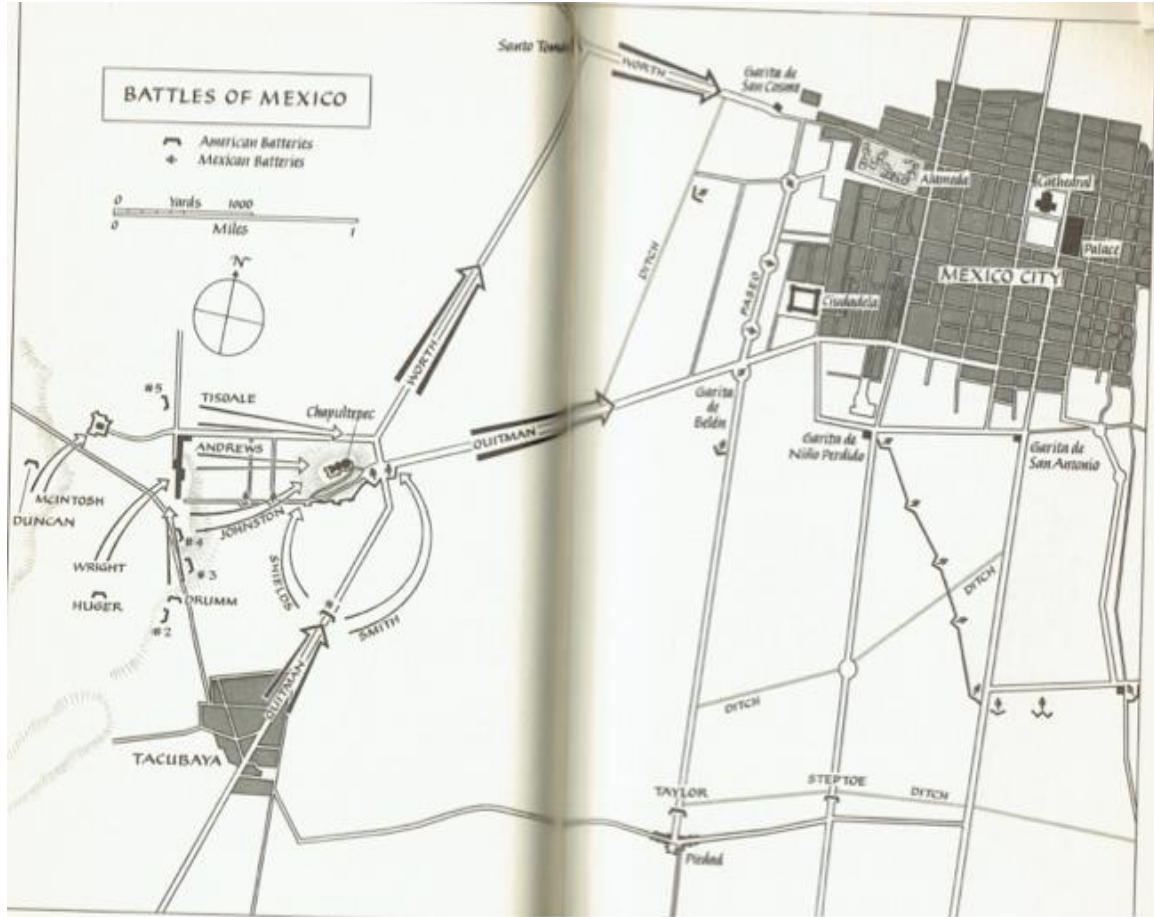
Source: Timothy D. Johnson, *Gallant Little Army*, 204.

Map 6: Battle of Chapultepec 12-13 September 1847.



Source: Timothy D. Johnson, *Gallant Little Army*, 214.

Map 7: Battle of Mexico City 13-14 September 1847.



Source: Jack K. Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848*, 314-315.

Although West Point cadets had been reading elements of Jomini since the 1820s, by the mid-19th century, under the tutelage of Dennis Hart Mahan, professors at the United States Military Academy were teaching the principles of Jomini.<sup>113</sup> This would not have been possible if Scott had not proven their value during his Mexico City Campaign. These tactics, or principles, became so highly regarded by the young officers of the Mexican-American War because they had not been found wanting; therefore, Jomini's influence would continue into the next major American conflict, the American Civil War. Additionally, it was Napoleon's "idea of combined-arms combat divisions that made the implementation of these tactics possible in the first place."<sup>114</sup> Jomini wrote that a truly great general would possess "a thorough knowledge of

the principles of the art of war,”<sup>115</sup> and it was Scott’s exceptional understanding of these principles that enabled him to change his country’s way of war.<sup>116</sup>

### **CIVIL-MILITARY OPERATIONS AND HYBRID WAR**

Study of Winfield Scott’s execution of civil-military operations is a worthwhile endeavor for current military professionals. America’s future conflicts are more likely to be limited hybrid wars rather than “the tidy and concise military and political paradigms of a bygone era when industrialized nation-states waged near-total wars of annihilation,” as the United States experienced in the Civil War, World War I, and the Second World War. As Iraq and Afghanistan have demonstrated, future potential adversaries will “exploit our [US] critical vulnerabilities and...[not] conform to our [US] notions of warfare.”<sup>117</sup> It will not be enough to simply engage with an adversary’s military force, the United States military must be capable of functioning amongst local populations while conducting civil-military operations or security and stability operations.

In addition to new methods of organization and grand tactics, Scott also learned the risks associated with neglecting the civil-military aspects of warfare. Both from the study of historical examples, such as the French efforts in fighting a guerrilla force in Spain, and first hand experiences during the Nullification Crisis in South Carolina and the 2nd Seminole War in Florida; Scott understood the necessity of what today has become Civil-Military Operations. Scott anticipated many of the issues that an invading and occupying force would face and developed a strategy to minimize the threat guerrilla forces would present while simultaneously maintaining pressure on Mexico’s conventional forces. Throughout the planning and execution of Scott’s occupation two maxims of Napoleon are evident. First, in Maxim 70, one can see the dichotomy of Scott’s approach, neither whether too severe nor too mild. The maxim goes on to

state “a conqueror should know how to employ by turns severity, justice and leniency in suppressing or preventing disturbance.” Furthermore, Maxim 110, states that conquered territories should be “maintained in obedience...by moral means.”<sup>118</sup>

Although current doctrine and planning tools were not available to Scott in the 19th century, one can observe the organization of his efforts along what today is called lines of effort. Joint Publication 3-57 *Civil-Military Operations* provides recommended Lines of Effort (LOE) for the planning and execution of civil-military operations. These include: economic stability, infrastructure, public health and welfare, public education and information, and rule of law.<sup>119</sup> Scott’s design included each of these elements as well as governance, as he transitioned from offensive operations to an occupation.

Scott understood that with the “war of masses having ended with the capture of this city, the war of detail, including the occupation of the country”<sup>120</sup> would require discipline by his men to mitigate the precarious situation his army faced. To this point he issued General Order 286 following the occupation of Mexico City stating that the enemy may still yet “reunite...and fall upon us to advantage if we rest inactive on the security of past victories” therefore “vigilance and discipline are...our only securities.”<sup>121</sup>

Scott’s first employment of stability tactics occurred immediately following the siege of Vera Cruz. The General knew he needed the support of the local population or, at the very least as Canfield states, “their ambivalence”<sup>122</sup> if he were to continue his march to Mexico City. Scott “undertook a deliberate campaign to mitigate the threat of guerrilla warfare breaking out.”<sup>123</sup> He declared martial law and issued a proclamation to the Mexican people “condemning Mexico’s national leaders but befriending its populace.”<sup>124</sup> The “Proclamation to the Good People of Mexico,” written by Scott, stated, “Americans are not your enemies, but only the enemies of

those who misgoverned you and brought about this unnatural war. To the peaceable inhabitants, and to your church, which is respected by the governments, laws, and people in all parts of our country, we are friends.”<sup>125</sup> The issuance of General Order Number 20, assuring the Mexican people that US soldiers would be severally punished for murder, rape, assault, and robbery or any crimes against priests or Catholic churches.<sup>126</sup> These actions imposed order on the local population and, most importantly, discipline upon his troops. Scott believed that “disorders and crimes...may destroy the best concerted plans, by exasperating the inhabitants, and rendering the war, on their part, national, interminable, and desperate.”<sup>127</sup> “Without it,” Scott proclaims, the army would not have “reached the Capital of Mexico.”<sup>128</sup>

In his attempt to “mitigate the underlying causes of instability within civil society,”<sup>129</sup> Scott took great care to ensure the Mexican economy still functioned. In Vera Cruz, Puebla, and Mexico City Scott employed local laborers to clear and repair the city in order to reopen local shops and provide the perception of normalcy following his siege and occupation in each.<sup>130</sup> Scott reopened the port at Vera Cruz and did not restrict access to foreign ships, thus allowing foreign trade to continue to stoke Mexico’s economy. Scott also mandated that “everything consumed or used by our troops was as regularly paid for as if they had been at home.”<sup>131</sup> Hence, any supplies from local merchants would be purchased at fair market prices, endearing the local merchant class and demonstrating that America was not the enemy of Mexican citizens.<sup>132</sup>

Scott assigned general officers to serve as military governors to work hand-in-hand with local officials and religious leaders in the major towns and cities along his axis of advance. Scott himself would serve in this role once Mexico City was occupied until General Quitman, a lawyer in civilian life, would assume this duty.<sup>133</sup> Understanding the importance of the Catholic Church

in Mexican society, Scott forced his troops to salute priests and, despite being protestant, attended Catholic mass with local governmental leaders.<sup>134</sup> Much like restrictions to collateral damage on today's battlefield, Scott limited the destruction of infrastructure and civilian and combatant casualties. He realized, "quite pragmatically, that if he did [not do] so, social chaos would reign, and there would be no one left to negotiate with."<sup>135</sup>

After his departure from Vera Cruz, Scott's army was only able to reach the town of Puebla, a small city of 80,000, before it culminated due to a lack of supplies and short-term enlistments coming to an end. For a period of two months Scott, and his 7,500-man army, garrisoned in Puebla as he waited for reinforcements and additional supplies. Scott continued to apply his General Order Number 20 and reinforced the message he delivered in his proclamation. Despite his civil-military efforts, Scott's army did confront increased guerrilla attacks along the National Highway back to his seaport at Vera Cruz. In response, Scott issues a second proclamation promising to "penalize civilian leaders for guerrilla attacks." Having demonstrated his fairness in the treatment of civilians and fulfillment of his promises to punish his own troops for violating his general order; the local populace assisted Scott's forces in quelling this insurgent threat.<sup>136</sup> It was the credibility Scott gained in Vera Cruz that enabled him to continue his civil-military operations effectively and leverage locals to assist his efforts. Scott overcame this culmination by ensuring his lines of communication remained open, receiving both men and materiel to continue his push to the Mexican capital. Eventually, though, as the cost in manpower became too high, Scott was forced to consolidate his forces and cut ties with his base of operations at Vera Cruz for the final assault on Mexico City.

Finally, in Mexico City, Scott's security and stability approach reached its zenith. As Scott's army marched through the Alameda and into the Grand Plaza of the National Palace, he

was conducting an exhibition of his military strength to the local population in order to deter any civilian uprising.<sup>137</sup> He knew that until a peace could be negotiated his army would have to occupy a city of over 200,000. Scott's main effort would shift from combat operations to civil-military operations and an occupation policy that would help to end the conflict. During this nine-month occupation, Scott's experiences in Vera Cruz and Puebla paid off and he was able to quickly curtail civilian unrest through the employment of similar techniques. Mexico City offered Scott and his army numerous complexities. First, the sheer size of Mexico City, in population and geography, and the complexity of a large urban sprawl, was beyond most US cities. To make matters worse, on the eve of his withdrawal, Santa Anna emptied the jails unleashing thousands of criminals onto the streets. Scott, assuming a civil governmental role, proclaimed "religious freedom and full civil rights for law abiding citizens,"<sup>138</sup> addressing the criminal threat with active patrols and sharpshooters in overwatch positions with orders to shoot any "Mexican brandishing a weapon."<sup>139</sup> The discipline Scott placed on his forces was significant as "nearly all infractions of good behavior were quickly and severely punished,"<sup>140</sup> as they had to be due to his precarious situation. Scott established the "American Star," a Spanish and English daily newspaper that published his general orders, official notices, and other pertinent information regarding the occupation for his troops and, more importantly, locals.<sup>141</sup> This method enabled him to communicate directly with the people and control the information narrative.

Two key elements of General Order Number 20 that had significant impacts on the relationships between US Soldiers and the Mexican population concerned security of key infrastructure and the police force. Scott wrote, in Article 13, "For the ease and safety of both parties, in all cities and towns occupied by the American army, a Mexican police shall be

established and duly harmonized with the military police of the said forces.” These combined forces, across the five police districts in Mexico City, were more effective in maintaining order and rooting out insurrection because the Mexicans were indigenous to the streets they patrolled. The second measure Scott employed was the special security detachments to safeguard key infrastructure and personnel. Article 15 stated, “this splendid capital – its churches and religious worship; its convents and monasteries; its inhabitants and property, are, moreover, placed under special safeguard of the faith and honor of the American army.” This was extended to “hospitals, public establishments of instruction...also to mills, post offices, and the like.”<sup>142</sup> Between the law and order provided by the combined police forces and the fixed site security normal schedules began to resume in Scott’s attempt at attaining a semblance of normalcy for the civilians.

Over 260 miles from the port at Vera Cruz, Scott understood he could not control, with his army alone, the vital National Highway, the ground lines of communication connecting him in Mexico City to his means of resupply from the sea. Criminals and guerrillas alike consistently threatened this, so Scott employed several methods to keep his army’s lifeline open. First, Scott empowered the local mayors and held them financially responsible for the loss of any US or Mexican goods traveling near their towns unless they “provided the perpetrators or information concerning their whereabouts.” Additionally, Scott hired Manuel Dominquez (a friendly bandit), and his force of 200 men, to guide Scott’s logistic trains and spy for his army. These forces “developed into an effective anti-guerrilla force,”<sup>143</sup> keeping communications with Vera Cruz open, and allowed Scott to use economy of force and position forces in other areas throughout central Mexico.

General Scott's "strict regard for the rights of the citizens"<sup>144</sup> and the "sound civil-military policies [he implemented], not the conventional defeat of Santa Anna's army, proved decisive."<sup>145</sup> Scott's desire to have the "least possible pressure on industry and wealth of the country"<sup>146</sup> would not allow forced requisitions. Instead, his army paid locals for supplies despite the uncertainty of his own logistical situation.<sup>147</sup> In a letter to Secretary Marcy Scott stated that, "no community can escape absolute anarchy without civil government; and all government must have some revenue for its support."<sup>148</sup> Furthermore, he billeted his troops in public buildings, military barracks, or other non-private locations. On this matter Scott wrote, "In occupying the capital and other cities, strict orders were given that no officer or man should be billeted, without consent, upon any inhabitants; that troops should only be quartered in the established barracks and such other public buildings as had been used for that purpose by the Mexican government."<sup>149</sup>

Scott understood that unnecessary violence and unruly action by his forces would have counterproductive effects and took every effort to avoid civilian casualties. Unfortunately, despite his best efforts and post conflict design of civil-military operations, Scott's forces still faced resistance. When encountered, an aggressive policy and action ensued.<sup>150</sup> The tactics employed by the guerrilla forces and criminal enterprises were snipers, raids on garrison outposts, and ambushes of convoys and small patrols along the National Highway. Scott responded with two approaches. First, he gave no quarter to guerrillas and punished civilians who harbored them by confiscating their property. Additionally, Scott looked to deny the guerrillas the very thing they needed to survive: the local population. Through publications, like the bilingual *American Star* newspaper, Scott attempted to demonstrate to the locals that the

guerrillas “preyed upon their fellow countrymen”<sup>151</sup> attempting to alienate them from their support.

Scott’s “skillful integration of anti-guerrilla, stability, and high-intensity combat operations precluded the eruption of a widespread religious-based insurgency and consummated his tactical victories with enduring political success.”<sup>152</sup> Scott would later recall that the “order worked like a charm; that it conciliated Mexican; intimidated the vicious of the several races, and being executed with impartial rigor, gave the highest moral deportment and discipline ever known in an invading army.”<sup>153</sup> To demonstrate the success Scott achieved in civil-military operations, of winning the hearts and minds of the local population and maintaining justice and order by an occupying force, upon his recall to the United States the “citizens of Mexico City offered him a 1.5 million dollar bonus to stay as the dictator of Mexico.”<sup>154</sup> Furthermore, so just was Scott’s approach to the treatment of civilians and conduct of the interim government he established, there is a belief that many Mexicans, fearful of the return of their government’s corrupt and oppressive methods, wanted the United States to annex Mexico rather than face “the dreaded anarchy which would follow the evacuation” of the US military.<sup>155</sup> During the occupation Scott’s forces so adeptly “supervised elections, administered public health, and regulated markets, businesses, taverns, and gambling”<sup>156</sup> that Scott told Secretary Marcy that it “cannot be doubted that all...would again relapse into a permanent state of revolutions”<sup>157</sup> if the military were to be withdrawn prematurely. One salient point to draw from this, for the 21st century military professional, is to ensure that all measures taken in civil-military operations are conducted, to the greatest extent possible, with the host government in the lead so as to generate trust and confidence in the local population and of their own leaders and institutions.

## **END OF THE WAR: TREATY OF GUADALUPE**

On 2 February 1848 Mexico and the United States signed the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. In accordance with the terms of the treaty, Mexico renounced claims to Texas (along the Rio Grande border), New Mexico, and California. In exchange, the United States agreed to pay \$15 million for what would equate to one-third of Mexico's landmass, as well as to pay the debts incurred by American citizens in the disputed territories.<sup>158</sup> This landmass included what would become all, or part of, the states of California, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado dramatically changing the landscape of the United States. Mexican citizens within the aforementioned annexed area had the choice of relocating within Mexico's new borders or stay and receive US citizenship, and all the rights therein. Over 90% opted to stay. Ironically, even though Scott's main effort campaign leading to the capture of Mexico City and his ensuing occupation policies lead to the end of the war and achievement of President Polk's policy goals, the supporting effort operations of Taylor, Doniphan, and Stockton had the long term implications for the country.

The Treaty of Guadalupe was ratified 38-14 by the United States Senate. Predominately along party lines, the large majority of dissenters were from the Whig party, based on their moral concerns with the implications of Manifest Destiny, a perceived land grab by a stronger nation against a weaker one, and the impact of expansion on the state of slavery, as well as the "all-of-Mexico" Democrats who believe all of Mexico should have been annexed.<sup>159</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

Carl von Clausewitz wrote in *On War* that, "either the objective is to overthrow the enemy – to render him politically helpless or militarily impotent, thus forcing him to sign whatever peace we please; or merely to occupy some of his frontier-districts so that we can

annex them to use them for bargaining at the peace negotiations.”<sup>160</sup> Although Taylor was successful in Texas and northern Mexico, Scott understood the limited impact the occupation of these frontier districts would have on achieving President Polk’s strategic goals. Scott states in his memoirs that “the victory at Buena Vista, was, no doubt glorious...but, it did not advance the campaign an inch, nor quicken a treaty of peace an hour, as the Mexicans universally regarded it as a mere border affair.”<sup>161</sup> As Clausewitz notes, operations in war are to render the enemy helpless to force peace, and Scott believed “to compel a people...to sue for peace, it is absolutely necessary...to strike, effectively, at the vitals of the nation.”<sup>162</sup>

Scott was a bold strategist. As Russell Weigley, an eminent military historian noted, Scott’s “march from Vera Cruz into the interior was one of the most daring movements of American military history.”<sup>163</sup> His mastery of operational art in developing a campaign to bridge the gap between tactics and strategic policy was unparalleled at its time. In six months, Scott had conducted the largest amphibious landing in US history, till then, seized Vera Cruz, marched 250 miles to Mexico City, “fought outnumbered at every battle...against the best army Mexico fielded in the nineteenth century, and won with an army that averaged around 10,000 men, about half of whom were untrained volunteers.”<sup>164</sup> It was through the organization and tactics Scott learned through rigorous self-study of notable theorists like Jomini and commanders like Napoleon that enabled Scott to overcome these odds and effectively lead to change the American way of war. Scott also demonstrated successful methods to effectively operate within a hybrid threat, employing tactics, techniques, and procedures within civil-military or stability operations. One of the greatest compliments Scott could receive, from the man partially responsible for Scott’s genius in the conduct of military affairs, came from Jomini, who wrote of him: “Scott had conducted a brilliant campaign.”<sup>165</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> Carol L. Thompson, "America's Manifest Destiny," *Current History* 15, no. 00088 (Dec 1948): 345, <http://search.proquest.com>; *The Mexican-American War*, DVD, directed by Jim Lindsey (2008; USA: New Video Group, History Channel (Television Network), and Arts and Entertainment Network, 2008).
- <sup>2</sup> William P. Hoar, "Manifest Destiny," *The New American* 19, no. 15 (Jul 28, 2003): 37, <http://search.proquest.com>.
- <sup>3</sup> Timothy D. Johnson, *Winfield Scott: The Quest for Military Glory* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 207.
- <sup>4</sup> Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 65.
- <sup>5</sup> Johnson, *Winfield Scott*, 9.
- <sup>6</sup> Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 66.
- <sup>7</sup> James A. Cope, "Winfield Scott's Mexico City Operation: The Genesis of American Operational Art?" (Master's thesis, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1989), 2. <http://publicaccess.dtic.mil>.
- <sup>8</sup> Johnson, *Winfield Scott*, 18-19.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 41.
- <sup>10</sup> Cope, "Genesis of American Operational Art," 2.
- <sup>11</sup> Winfield Scott, *Memoirs of Lieut. General Scott, LL.D.*, vol. II (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1970), 206.
- <sup>12</sup> Johnson, *Winfield Scott*, 79.
- <sup>13</sup> Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 66.
- <sup>14</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 273.
- <sup>15</sup> Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 66.
- <sup>16</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 263.
- <sup>17</sup> In support of counterinsurgency operations during Operation Iraqi Freedom, General James Mattis, USMC (Ret) famously told his Marines that they be "no better friend, no worse enemy" to the people of Iraq.
- <sup>18</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 247-248.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 320-321.
- <sup>20</sup> Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 65.
- <sup>21</sup> Allan Peskin, *Winfield Scott and the Profession of Arms* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2003), 191.
- <sup>22</sup> Hoar, "Manifest Destiny," 33-38.
- <sup>23</sup> Otis A. Singletary, *The Mexican War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 8.
- <sup>24</sup> Thompson, "America's Manifest Destiny," 344.
- <sup>25</sup> Singletary, *The Mexican War*, 8.
- <sup>26</sup> Thompson, "America's Manifest Destiny," 344.
- <sup>27</sup> Singletary, *The Mexican War*, 11.
- <sup>28</sup> Joseph G. Dawson III, "The U.S. War with Mexico: The Difficulties of Concluding a Victorious War," In *Between War and Peace: How America Ends Its Wars*, ed. Col. Matthew Moten (New York: Free Press, 2011), 86.
- <sup>29</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: Joint Staff, October 15, 2016), 114. <http://dtic.mil/doctrine>.

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- <sup>30</sup> Daniel T. Canfield, "Winfield Scott's 1847 Mexico City Campaign as a Model for Future War," *Joint Force Quarterly* 55, (4th quarter 2009): 97. <http://search.ebscohost.com/>.
- <sup>31</sup> James K. Polk, "Hostilities by Mexico: Message from the President of the United States relative to an invasion and commencement of hostilities by Mexico," *House Executive Document No. 60*, May 11, 1846, 5. <http://congressional.proquest.com>.
- <sup>32</sup> Dawson, *Between War and Peace*, 87.
- <sup>33</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, JP 1 (Washington, DC: Joint Staff, March 25, 2013), I-12 (40). <http://dtic.mil/doctrine>.
- <sup>34</sup> Singletary, *The Mexican War*, 9-10.
- <sup>35</sup> K. Jack Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 24-25.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 378.
- <sup>37</sup> JCS, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces*, I-13 (41).
- <sup>38</sup> Singletary, *The Mexican War*, 10-11.
- <sup>39</sup> JCS, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces*, I-12 (40).
- <sup>40</sup> George Bancroft, interim Secretary of War, Orders to BGen Taylor, of 15 June 1845, concerning movement of US troops to the contested area in Texas and restrictions on use of force, *House Executive Document No. 60*, 81-82.
- <sup>41</sup> Singletary, *The Mexican War*, 12.
- <sup>42</sup> Polk, "Hostilities by Mexico," *House Executive Document No. 60*, 8.
- <sup>43</sup> JCS, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces*, I-12, (40).
- <sup>44</sup> Dawson, *Between War and Peace*, 87-89.
- <sup>45</sup> For additional information on these theatres of the Mexican-American War see K. Jack Bauer's book, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848*, chapters 2-12.
- <sup>46</sup> Canfield, "Winfield Scott's 1847 Mexico City Campaign," 97.
- <sup>47</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 384. Scott is quoting Secretary of War Marcy, referencing a letter written 25 July 1846.
- <sup>48</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 399.
- <sup>49</sup> Dawson, *Between War and Peace*, 87.
- <sup>50</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 400.
- <sup>51</sup> Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 73-74.
- <sup>52</sup> Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 102. "Commander's...ability to see things simply, to identify the whole business of war completely with himself, that is the essence of good generalship. Only if the mind works in this comprehensive fashion can it achieve the freedom it needs to dominate events and not be dominated by them."
- <sup>53</sup> JCS, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces*, I-8 (36).
- <sup>54</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operations*, JP 3-0 (Washington, DC: Joint Staff, August 11, 2011), I-13 (37). <http://dtic.mil/doctrine>.
- <sup>55</sup> Lt. Gen Paul K. Van Riper, USMC (Ret), *An Introduction to Operational Art* (Marine Corps University, Quantico, VA, August 23, 2016), PowerPoint presentation, slide 60.
- <sup>56</sup> Prior to assuming his field command, Gen Scott was active as the General-in-chief of the army in both the execution of the various campaigns of the war and conducting his more administrative duties or as he states in his *Memoirs* "made several ordinary tours of inspection."
- <sup>57</sup> William Marcy, Secretary of War, Orders to BGen Taylor concerning Scott's Mexico City Campaign, *House Executive Document No. 60*, 365.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 363.

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- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 364
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, 364-366.
- <sup>61</sup> Winfield Scott, "Vera Cruz and its castle," *House Executive Document No. 60*, 1268.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, 1268-1269.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid*, 1269.
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, 1270.
- <sup>65</sup> Winfield Scott, "Vera Cruz and its castle – New line of operations, then upon the capital," *House Executive Document No. 60*, 1270.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, 1271.
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 1273.
- <sup>68</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 207-208.
- <sup>69</sup> James W. Pohl, "The Influence of Antoine Henri de Jomini on Winfield Scott's Campaign in the Mexican War," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 77, no. 1 (June 1972): 89, <http://digital.library.txstate.edu>.
- <sup>70</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 206.
- <sup>71</sup> Brian M. Linn, "The American Way of War Revisited," *The Journal of Military History* 66, no. 2 (April 2002): 502. <http://search.proquest.com>.
- <sup>72</sup> Peter Paret, "Napoleon and the Revolution in War," in *Makers of Modern Strategy*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1986), 125.
- <sup>73</sup> Pohl, "Influence of Jomini on Scott," 86
- <sup>74</sup> According to Scott biographer Timothy D. Johnson, Scott owned Jomini's *Treatise on Grand Military Operations*, published in 1830, but not *The Art of War*, published in 1838, until 1854. Although there is no record of this book in Scott's library before or during the Mexican War, it does not say that he was not familiar with it as he was a carnivorous reader of military history and theory.
- <sup>75</sup> Antoine Baron de Jomini, *The Art of War*, trans. G.H. Mendell, USA and W.P. Craighill, USA (Wesport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1971), 50.
- <sup>76</sup> Scott, "Vera Cruz and its castle – New line of operations," *House Executive Doc No. 60*, 1271.
- <sup>77</sup> Scott, "Vera Cruz and its castle," *House Executive Doc No. 60*, 1273-1274.
- <sup>78</sup> Pohl, "Influence of Jomini on Scott," 89.
- <sup>79</sup> Jochen S. Arndt, "The True Napoleon of the West: General Winfield Scott's Mexico City Campaign and the Origins of the U.S. Army's Combined-Arms Combat Division," *The Journal of Military History* 76, no. 3 (July 2012): 653. <http://search.proquest.com>.
- <sup>80</sup> Jomini, *The Art of War*, 251.
- <sup>81</sup> Scott, *Memoir*, 403.
- <sup>82</sup> Scott, "Vera Cruz and its castle," *House Executive Document No. 60*, 1273.
- <sup>83</sup> Jomini, *The Art of War*, 251.
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, 77.
- <sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, 252.
- <sup>86</sup> Pohl, "Influence of Jomini on Scott," 93.
- <sup>87</sup> Jomini, *The Art of War*, 117.
- <sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, 88; and Pohl, "Influence of Jomini on Scott," 94.
- <sup>89</sup> Arndt, "True Napoleon of the West," 653.
- <sup>90</sup> Pohl, "Influence of Jomini on Scott," 95.
- <sup>91</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 432.
- <sup>92</sup> Arndt, "True Napoleon of the West," 656.

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- <sup>93</sup> Jomini, *The Art of War*, 188.
- <sup>94</sup> Arndt, “True Napoleon of the West,” 657.
- <sup>95</sup> Jomini, *The Art of War*, 221.
- <sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, 139.
- <sup>97</sup> Arndt, “True Napoleon of the West,” 663; and Jomini, *The Art of War*, 279.
- <sup>98</sup> Jomini, *The Art of War*, 133.
- <sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, 242.
- <sup>100</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 435.
- <sup>101</sup> Winfield Scott, After Action Report concerning the Battle of Cerro Gordo, *House Executive Document No. 60*, 948.
- <sup>102</sup> Arndt, “True Napoleon of the West,” 658.
- <sup>103</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 465.
- <sup>104</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>105</sup> Dawson, *Between War and Peace*, 91.
- <sup>106</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>107</sup> Arndt, “True Napoleon of the West,” 659.
- <sup>108</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 468-469.
- <sup>109</sup> Jomini, *The Art of War*, 188.
- <sup>110</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 509-510.
- <sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, 510.
- <sup>112</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>113</sup> Pohl, “Influence of Jomini on Scott,” 86; Samuel Watson, “Continuity in Civil-Military Relations and Expertise: The U.S. Army during the Decade before the Civil War,” *The Journal of Military History* 75, no. 1 (2011): 243. <http://ebscohost.com>; and Linn, “American Way of War Revisited,” 513-514.
- <sup>114</sup> Arndt, “True Napoleon of the West,” 663.
- <sup>115</sup> Jomini, *The Art of War*, 57.
- <sup>116</sup> The Civil War was a conflict fought on a vastly larger scale in numbers and theatres. In the expanded armies, the West Point graduates were few – and, of course, not all followed Jominian principles, even among Academy graduates (e.g., Ambrose Burnside at Fredericksburg in December 1862). Ironically, Jominian influences continued as many of the inexperienced officers commissioned during that war read what they could about war and this was Jomini or other military theorists influenced by Jomini.
- <sup>117</sup> Canfield, “Winfield Scott’s 1847 Mexico City Campaign,” 96.
- <sup>118</sup> Gerald A. Dolinish, “General Winfield Scott: His Development and Application of Political/Civil-Military Concepts during the Mexican War,” (master’s thesis, U.S. Army War College, 2002), 4. <http://publicaccess.dtic.mil>.
- <sup>119</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Civil-Military Operations*, JP 3-57 (Washington, DC: Joint Staff, September 11, 2013), III-1 (60). <http://dtic.mil/doctrine>.
- <sup>120</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 570.
- <sup>121</sup> *Ibid*, 536.
- <sup>122</sup> Canfield, “Winfield Scott’s 1847 Mexico City Campaign,” 98.
- <sup>123</sup> *Ibid*, 97.
- <sup>124</sup> Dawson, *Between War and Peace*, 91.
- <sup>125</sup> Charles Winslow Elliot, *Winfield Scott, the Soldier and the Man* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1937), 461.

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- <sup>126</sup> Bauer, *The Mexican War*, 326. In Spain and Portugal, during the Peninsular War, the Duke of Wellington issued a similar order to British and presumably Scott was well aware of this precedent and acted similarly.
- <sup>127</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 559-560.
- <sup>128</sup> *Ibid*, 395.
- <sup>129</sup> JCS, *DOD Dictionary*, 35.
- <sup>130</sup> Canfield, "Winfield Scott's 1847 Mexico City Campaign," 97.
- <sup>131</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 580.
- <sup>132</sup> Dawson, *Between War and Peace*, 90.
- <sup>133</sup> *Ibid*, 96
- <sup>134</sup> Canfield, "Winfield Scott's 1847 Mexico City Campaign," 97.
- <sup>135</sup> Timothy D. Johnson, *A Gallant Little Army: The Mexico City Campaign* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 196.
- <sup>136</sup> Dawson, *Between War and Peace*, 91.
- <sup>137</sup> *Ibid*, 85.
- <sup>138</sup> Edward S. Wallace, "The United States Army in Mexico City," *Military Affairs* 13, no. 3 (Autumn 1949), 161. <http://search.proquest.com>.
- <sup>139</sup> Canfield, "Winfield Scott's 1847 Mexico City Campaign," 98.
- <sup>140</sup> Wallace, "The United States Army in Mexico City," 160.
- <sup>141</sup> *Ibid*, 160-161; and Bauer, *The Mexican War*, 327.
- <sup>142</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 545-547.
- <sup>143</sup> Cope, "Genesis of American Operational Art," 23.
- <sup>144</sup> Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 72.
- <sup>145</sup> Johnson, *Winfield Scott*, 269.
- <sup>146</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 553.
- <sup>147</sup> Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 72.
- <sup>148</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 560.
- <sup>149</sup> *Ibid*, 580.
- <sup>150</sup> Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 72.
- <sup>151</sup> Dawson, *Between War and Peace*, 98.
- <sup>152</sup> Canfield, "Winfield Scott's 1847 Mexico City Campaign," 96.
- <sup>153</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 396.
- <sup>154</sup> Cope, "Genesis of American Operational Art," 10.
- <sup>155</sup> Wallace, "The United States Army in Mexico City," 164.
- <sup>156</sup> Dawson, *Between War and Peace*, 96.
- <sup>157</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 561.
- <sup>158</sup> Bauer, *The Mexican War*, 384.
- <sup>159</sup> *Ibid*, 387.
- <sup>160</sup> Clausewitz, *On War*, 69.
- <sup>161</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 412-413.
- <sup>162</sup> *Ibid*, 404.
- <sup>163</sup> Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 75.
- <sup>164</sup> Cope, "Genesis of American Operational Art," 23.
- <sup>165</sup> Dawson, *Between War and Peace*, 104.

## Appendix A: Timeline

2 March 1836	Texas declares independence from Mexico
December 1844	Texas agrees to annexation with US
1 March 1845	Texas Annexation signed by President Tyler
4 March 1845	President Polk Inaugurated
March 1845	Mexico formally cuts diplomatic ties with US
4 July 1845	Texas accepts offer of statehood
25 July 1845	Taylor ordered to Corpus Christi, TX
29 December 1845	Texas becomes 28th state
December-January 1845-46	Gen Parades leads coup in Mexico, becomes Mexican President
13 January 1846	Gen Taylor ordered to Rio Grande
25 April 1846	Thornton Affair
11 May 1846	President Polk's war message to Congress
13 May 1846	US Declares War
5 June 1846	Kearny marches to New Mexico
4 July 1846	Bear Flag Republic proclaimed in California
16 August 1846	Santa Anna returns from exile
20-24 September 1846	Battle of Monterey
18 November 1846	Scott named commander of Mexico City Campaign
3 January 1847	Scott withdraws troops from Taylor's army
22-23 February 1847	Gen Taylor victorious at Battle of Buena Vista

9 March 1847	Gen Scott lands at Vera Cruz
24 March 1847	Siege of Vera Cruz
15 April 1847	Nicholas Trist appointed peace commissioner to travel with Scott
18 April 1847	Battle of Cerro Gordo
19-20 August 1847	Battles of Contreras/Churubusco
24 August 1847	Armistice agreed to by Scott and Santa Anna
6 September 1847	Armistice ends
8 September 1847	Battle of Molino del Rey
12-13 September 1847	Battle of Chapultepec
13-14 September 1847	Battle for Mexico City
14 September 1847	Scott occupies Mexico City
6 October 1847	Polk orders recall of Trist
16 November 1847	Trist receives order of recall but remains
13 January 1848	Scott relieved of command by Polk
2 February 1848	Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo signed
10 March 1848	Treaty ratified by US Senate
25 March 1848	Treaty ratified by Mexican Government
12 June 1848	Final US troops depart Mexico City

Compiled from Bauer's *The Mexican War*, Singletary's *The Mexican War*, Scott's *Memoirs*, and US correspondence during the war.

## Appendix B: Definition of Terms

**Campaign** – A series of related major operations aimed at achieving strategic and operational objectives within a given time and space. (JP 1)

**Center of Gravity** – The source of power that provides moral or physical strength, freedom of action, or will to act. (JP 5-0)

**Civil-Military Operations** – Activities of a commander performed by designated civil affairs or other military forces that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces, indigenous populations, and institutions, by directly supporting the attainment of objectives relating to the reestablishment or maintenance of stability within a region or host nation. Also called CMO. (JP 3-57)

**Counter guerrilla Operations** – Operations and activities conducted by armed forces, paramilitary forces, or nonmilitary agencies against guerrillas. (JP 3-24)

**Counterinsurgency** – Comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes. Also called COIN. (JP 3-24)

**Critical Vulnerability** – An aspect of a critical requirement which is deficient or vulnerable to direct or indirect attack that will create decisive or significant effects. (JP 5-0)

**Diplomatic** – Diplomacy is the principal instrument for engaging with other states and foreign groups to advance US values, interests, and objectives, and to solicit foreign support for US military operations. Diplomacy is a principal means of organizing coalitions and alliances, which may include states and non-state entities, as partners, allies, surrogates, and/or proxies. (JP 1)

**Economic** – A strong US economy with free access to global markets and resources is a fundamental engine of the general welfare, the enabler of a strong national defense. In the international arena, the Department of the Treasury works with other USG agencies, the governments of other nations, and the international financial institutions to encourage economic growth, raise standards of living, and predict and prevent, to the extent possible, economic and financial crises. (JP 1)

**Expeditionary Force** – An armed force organized to accomplish a specific objective in a foreign country. (JP 3-0)

**Information** – Information remains an important instrument of national power and a strategic resource critical to national security. Previously considered in the context of traditional nation-states, the concept of information as an instrument of national power extends to non-state actors—such as terrorists and transnational criminal groups—that are using information to further their causes and undermine those of the USG and our allies. DOD operates in a dynamic age of interconnected global networks and evolving social media platforms. Every DOD action that is planned or executed, word that is written or spoken, and image that is displayed or relayed, communicates the intent of DOD, and by extension the USG, with the resulting potential for strategic effects. (JP 1)

**Line of Effort** – In the context of joint operation planning, using the purpose (cause and effect) to focus efforts toward establishing operational and strategic conditions by linking multiple tasks and missions. (JP 5-0) Lines of Effort links multiple tasks and missions using the logic of purpose – cause and effect – to focus efforts toward establishing operational and strategic conditions. (JP 3-24)

**Military** – The US employs the military instrument of national power at home and abroad in support of its national security goals. The ultimate purpose of the US Armed Forces is to fight and win the Nation’s wars. Fundamentally, the military instrument is coercive in nature, to include the integral aspect of military capability that opposes external coercion. Coercion generates effects through the application of force (to include the threat of force) to compel an adversary or prevent our being compelled. The military has various capabilities that are useful in non-conflict situations (such as in foreign relief). Regardless of when or where employed, the Armed Forces of the United States abide by US values, constitutional principles, and standards for the profession of arms. (JP 1)

**National Power** – The ability of the US to advance its national interests is dependent on the effectiveness of the United States Government (USG) in employing the instruments of national power to achieve national strategic objectives. The appropriate governmental officials, often with NSC direction, normally coordinate the employment of instruments of national power. (JP 1)

**Operational Art** – The cognitive approach by commanders and staffs — supported by their skill, knowledge, experience, creativity, and judgment — to develop strategies, campaigns, and operations to organize and employ military forces by integrating ends, ways, and means. (JP 3-0)

**Operations Design** – The conception and construction of the framework that underpins a campaign or major operation plan and its subsequent execution. (JP 5-0)

**Operational Level of War** – The level of war at which campaigns and major operations are planned, conducted, and sustained to achieve strategic objectives within theaters or other operational areas. (JP 3-0)

**Stability Operations** – An overarching term encompassing various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief. (JP 3-0)

**Strategic Level of War** – The level of war at which a nation, often as a member of a group of nations, determines national or multinational (alliance or coalition) strategic security objectives and guidance, then develops and uses national resources to achieve those objectives. (JP 3-0)

**Tactical Level of War** – The level of war at which battles and engagements are planned and executed to achieve military objectives assigned to tactical units or task forces. (JP 3-0)

## **Appendix C: Key Figures**

### **President James K. Polk**

James K. Polk, a Jacksonian Democrat, was the 11th President of the United States (1845-1849). Polk won the office of president largely due to his platform that supported Manifest Destiny and ultimately committing the United States to war with its southern neighbor Mexico. Other offices held include governor of Tennessee and member of the House of Representatives, for which he was the Speaker from 1835-1839. Polk only served one term due to a campaign pledge he made which was serendipitous, as he died three months after leaving office.

### **General Zachary Taylor**

Zachary Taylor was a career military officer, serving from 1808 until his election to serve as the 12th President of the United States in 1849. Taylor's military career includes the War of 1812, the Black Hawk and Second Seminole Wars, and the Mexican-American War where he was the Commanding General for all forces in Texas and Northern Mexico. Indifferent to politics, Taylor was convinced by leadership of the Whig Party to run in the 1848 election, where he defeated General Scott for the nomination. Taylor died less than a year into his presidency, 9 July 1850.

### **General Winfield Scott**

Winfield Scott's military career spans fifty-three years and three major wars. He served as a general officer for thirteen Presidents and was the longest serving Commanding General of the United States Army, over twenty years. Ever ambitious, Scott unsuccessfully ran for president as a Whig in 1840, 1848, and 1852. He failed to receive his party's nomination in his first two attempts and, in 1852, lost in the general election to Democrat Franklin Pierce, a veteran of the Mexican-American War who reached the rank of Brigadier General. Although a Virginian, Scott remained loyal to the Union and served as President Lincoln's senior military advisor and developed the Anaconda Plan, the slow destruction of the Confederacy by naval blockade with an overland campaign from the Mississippi River to cut the south in two. Unfortunately for Scott, public opinion sought a rapid victory and, following the Union defeat at Manassas in 1861 for which Scott took responsibility for, Lincoln replaced Scott with Major General George B. McClellan. Scott retired to West Point, NY and would live to see himself vindicated as General Ulysses S. Grant's eventual win over the south was largely followed its outline. Scott died on 29 May 1866.

See pages 3-5 for additional information on General Winfield Scott.

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