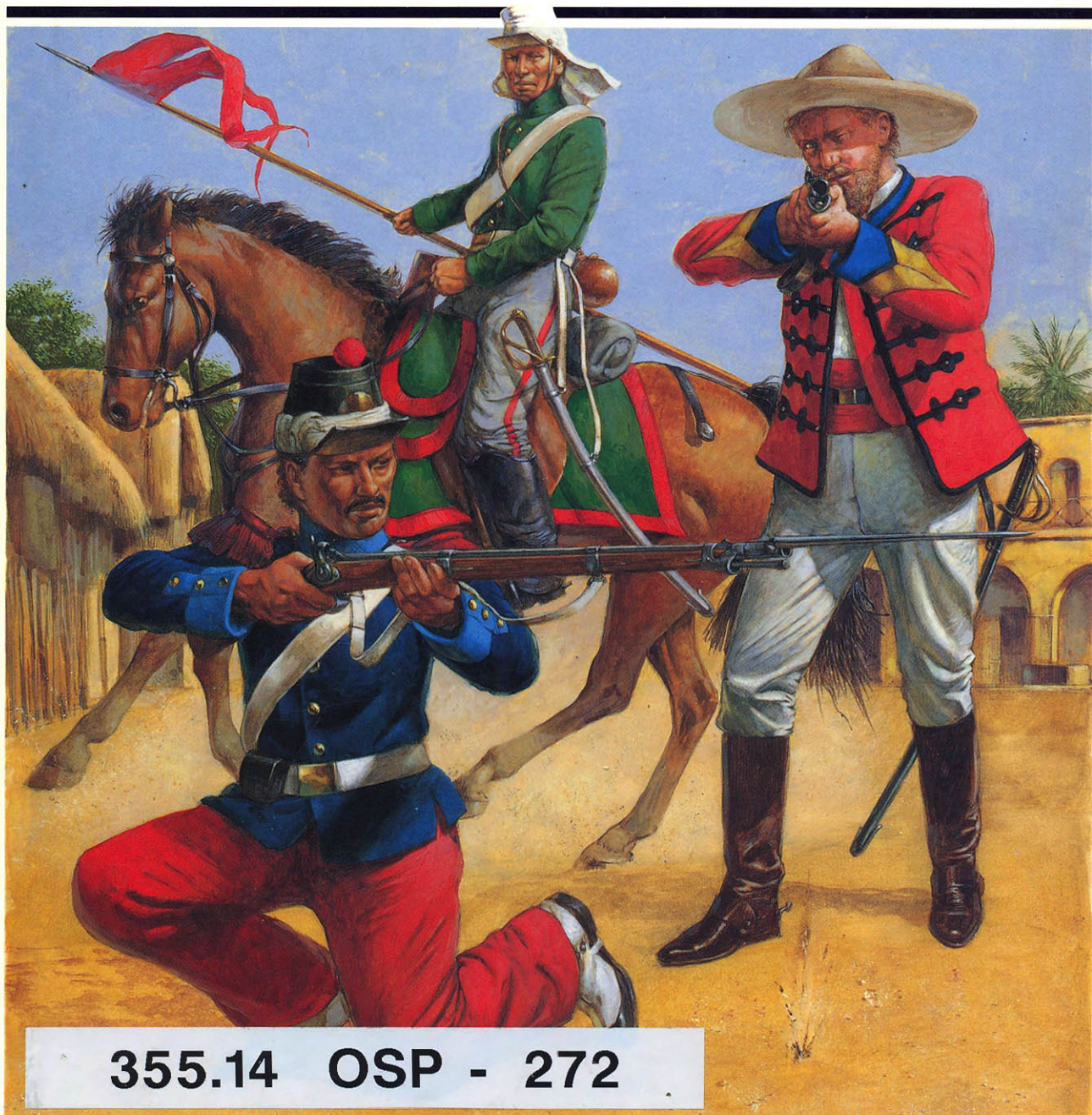


OSPREY
MILITARY

MEN-AT-ARMS SERIES

272

THE MEXICAN ADVENTURE 1861-67



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RENÉ CHARTRAND RICHARD HOOK

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INTRODUCTION

The 'Mexican Adventure' – *l'aventure mexicaine* as the more cynical French of the 1860s called it – was a tragedy of the first order, born of a romantic view of Mexico shared by many Europeans. This school of thought took for granted that most Mexicans were barely capable of governing themselves and that a 'generous intervention' could only be beneficial to all concerned. The Mexican conservatives, who had recently lost power, encouraged this tendency; they managed to convince Emperor Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie of France that, with French help, a great Catholic Latin empire could be established south of the United States. This empire would be ruled by the currently unemployed Archduke Maximilian of Austria with his wife, the Belgian Princess Charlotte; and would be a strong ally – some would say a puppet – of France. French troops would easily sweep away opposition and march into Mexico City. For the French Emperor it would be a master stroke: a vast new vassal empire in America, promising new markets, a 'civilizing mission', and of course *la gloire* – just what the French Second Empire needed to recall the glories of the First, and boost public opinion in favour of the regime.



French Emperor Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie masterminded the intervention in Mexico to set up a great Catholic Latin Empire in America. As if cursed, nearly all leading figures who took part in the intervention were destined to suffer tragedies. Napoleon and Eugénie lost their thrones in September 1870;

Napoleon died exiled in England three years later. In 1879, their only son was killed with the British Army in Zululand. The broken-hearted Empress Eugénie lived until 1920. This evocative sketch by Edouard Détaillé shows the imperial couple at a ball in 1860. (Century Magazine, 1898)

CHRONOLOGY

- 1861**
June: Benito Juárez re-elected president of Mexico.
17 July: Mexican Congress suspends payment on foreign debt.
31 October: France, Great Britain and Spain sign Treaty of London, uniting their efforts to obtain payments from Mexico.
8 December: Spanish fleet and troops from Cuba arrive at Veracruz.
11 December: President Juárez granted extraordinary powers by Mexican Congress.
- 1862**
1 January: United States advises Mexico that it cannot help because of its own Civil War.
6–8 January: British and French fleets arrive at Veracruz.
27 February: Campeche surrenders to French fleet.
5 March: Gen. Lorencez arrives with a French army.
9 April: Britain and Spain decide to withdraw.
24 April: British and Spanish troops leave Mexico.
5 May: French army under Gen. Lorencez defeated at Puebla by Mexican army led by Gen. Zaragoza.
14 June: Pursuing Mexican army contained by French at Orizaba (state of Veracruz).
21 September: More French troops pour into Mexico;



President Benito Juárez of the Republic of Mexico resisted, against the odds, the foreign invasion with success, and ensured the independence of his country. A full-blooded Zapotec Indian, he was born in 1808 to a family of poor peasants, managed to educate himself, and rose to the presidency. This stern democrat was never a soldier, but to this day he is revered as the greatest statesman in Mexican history and his country's saviour. (Museo Nacional de Historia, Mexico)

Gen. Lorencez replaced by Gen. Forey in October.

16 October: Further French reinforcements arrive under Gen. Bazaine.

23 October: Tampico occupied by the French.

12 December: Jalapa taken without combat by Gen. Bazaine.

1863

15 January: Acapulco bombarded by French warships.

16 March: French army under Forey marches into the interior and lays siege to Puebla.

30 April: 3rd Company, 1st Foreign (Legion) Regiment fights to the last man at Camerone.

7 May: Mexican relief army under Gen. Comonfort defeated by French under Bazaine at San Lorenzo, 7 km south of Puebla.

17 May: Puebla surrenders to the French.

31 May: President Juárez and the Republican government leave Mexico City and retreat to the north.

7 June: First French troops under Bazaine enter Mexico City, followed by the main army under Forey on 10 June.

16 June: Superior *junta*, appointed by Forey, appoints Mexican conservative Gen. Almonte as provisional president.

10 July: Superior *junta* proclaims a Catholic Empire and offers the crown and title of Emperor to Archduke Maximilian of Austria.

1 October: Gen. Bazaine replaces Forey as supreme commander.

1864

7 January: French troops under Gen. Bazaine occupy Guadalajara.

6 February: French troops under Gen. Douay occupy Zacatecas.

4 April: United States Congress and Senate pass a unanimous resolution opposing the establishment of a monarchy in Mexico.

10 April: Maximilian accepts the crown of Mexico, signs Miramar Convention.

29 May: Emperor Maximilian and Empress Carlota arrive at Veracruz, and enter Mexico City on 12 June.

3 June: Acapulco falls to the French.

3 July: French occupy Durango.

1 September: Gen. Bazaine promoted to marshal.

November: Republicans suffer defeats in states of Sinaloa and Jalisco.

1865

9 February: French army under Bazaine captures city of Oaxaca from Republicans under Gen. Porfirio Díaz.

29 March: French fleet lands troops who capture Guyamas.

11 April: Republicans defeat Belgian and Imperial troops at Tacámbaro (state of Michoacán).

April: States of Sinaloa and Chihuahua invested by Republicans, who also occupy most towns along the Rio Grande in May.

11 July: Belgians defeat Republicans at second battle of Tacámbaro.

3 October: Maximilian issues his infamous 'Black Decree', threatening summary execution of Mexicans taken under arms.

21 October: Several high ranking Republican military and civil officials are executed by Imperial troops in accordance with the decree of 3 October.

8 November: Term of office of President Juárez is extended due to the intervention; Republican siege of Matamoros raised.

1866

12 February: United States demand the withdrawal of French troops from Mexico.

25 March: Republicans occupy Chihuahua.

6 May: United States officially protest to Austria concerning the corps of Austrian volunteers in Mexico.

31 May: Emperor Napoleon III of France announces

the start of his army's withdrawal from Mexico.

8 July: Republican army under Gen. Mariano Escobedo defeat Imperial troops at Santa Gertrudis (state of Nuevo Leon), and take Guadalajara.

July: Republican troops capture Matamoros, Tampico and Acapulco.

26 July: French evacuate Monterey.

5 August: French evacuate Saltillo.

11 August: Empress Carlota pleads, in vain, to Napoleon III for more French troops.

September: French evacuate Guyamas and state of Sonora.

18 September: French members of Emperor Maximilian's cabinet resign.

3 and 7 October: Republican army under Gen. Diaz defeat Imperial troops at Miahuatlán (state of Oaxaca).

November: Republicans occupy Oaxaca, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosi and Guanajuato.

1867

January: Republicans occupy Zacatecas, San Luis Potosi and Guanajuato.

The arrival of the Emperor and Empress of Mexico at Veracruz on 29 May 1864. Maximilian was a kind but weak-willed man, personally brave but no military leader. He had little understanding of Mexico, and believed the devious conservative advisers who greatly exaggerated their reports of local support for the Imperial project. A tragic and unlucky figure, he paid for his mistakes with the ultimate sacrifice. Empress Carlota had, perhaps, the saddest fate of all. Born Princess Charlotte-Amélie of Belgium, she married Maximilian in 1857 and was only 24 when she left her palace on the Adriatic for the intrigues of Mexico. By the middle of 1866 a distraught Carlota, heartbroken at Napoleon's refusal to give further help, appealed vainly to the Pope, and her desperation carried her into insanity. She was

eventually interned in Belgium where she remained, insane, to the day of her death in 1927. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University)



General Zaragoza, who defeated the French at Puebla on 5 May 1862 – Mexico's most famous battle. His blue general's coat with gold embroidered collar is barely visible under the grey overcoat with gold eagle buttons. (Museo Nacional de Historia, Mexico)



5 February: French troops evacuate Mexico City.

13 February: Emperor Maximilian leads part of his army to Querétaro.

20 February: Republicans occupy Morelia.

9 March: Republican armies under Gen. Escobedo surround Querétaro and start siege operations.

12 March: Last French troops leave Veracruz.

2 April: Capture of Puebla by Republicans under Gen. Diaz.

12 April: Republicans lay siege to Mexico City.

27 April: Sortie by Imperial troops from Querétaro fails.

15 May: Fall of Querétaro to Republican armies under Gen. Escobedo; capture of Emperor Maximilian.



After a long and bitter siege the French captured the city of Puebla in May 1863. A romantic impression of Zouaves in the assault. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University)

- 19 June: Maximilian executed by firing squad at Querétaro.
- 20 June: Mexico City surrenders to Republican troops.
- 15 July: President Benito Juárez makes triumphant entry into Mexico City.

THE FRENCH INTERVENTION

The background to the ‘Mexican Adventure’ can be traced back to 1857 when President Benito Juárez – remembered by Americans as ‘the Lincoln of Mexico’ – and his Liberal government adopted a new constitution which separated church and state, guaranteed freedom of worship, abolished the Catholic church’s privileges, and provided for the expropriation and public sale of the church’s enormous estates. Considerable reaction was fostered by the church and conservative elements of society. By the end of 1857 the country was torn by a bitter civil war, the War of Reform. Part of the army supported the Conservatives, and held Mexico City; but the Liberals, who held most of the countryside and the seaports, gained the advantage and ousted the Conservative forces in late December 1860.

To many Mexicans, especially the humble folk,

the War of Reform promised a degree of freedom. For the first time since its independence Mexico was ruled by civilians rather than generals – and civilians apparently determined to achieve the basic standards of democratic government.

However, the War of Reform left the Mexican economy in a shambles, and payments on foreign debts were suspended. In the mid-19th century there were no international diplomatic organizations to negotiate such issues, and the usual solution was to oblige the debtor nation to pay by force of arms. To this end, Britain, Spain and France sent a joint expeditionary force, which seized the port of Veracruz in December 1861–January 1862 in order to gain control of its custom house, the most important in Mexico, and collect their debts. Britain and Spain were uneasy about the whole venture, and withdrew their troops early in 1862. The French did not.

French intentions became clear as their troops moved inland. But expectations of sweeping aside Mexicans who dared resist the well-drilled French regulars came to an abrupt halt on 5 May 1862 at Puebla. There, 4,000 Mexicans defeated 6,000 soldiers of the French army marching on Mexico City. Napoleon III responded by dispatching 28,000 men under Generals Forey, Bazaine and Douay. They slowly gained ground, took Puebla on 19 May 1863, and occupied Mexico City in June. President Juárez and remnants of his army went north to continue the



Left: Lt. Col. José Montesinos, 6th Guanajuato Battalion, Republican army, 1863, wearing the M1856 infantry tunic. Officers wore the same colour as the men but with longer skirts and gold buttons and epaulettes. The cord around the neck is possibly for a revolver. (Tronconso, Diario ... del sitio de Puebla en 1863)

Right: General Vincente Riva Palacio, c. 1866, who harassed French and Imperial troops in central Mexico and beat the Belgian Legion; he is wearing a light grey-blue French style undress uniform. (Museo Nacional de Historia, Mexico)



fight from desert refuges. The French now had the apparent advantage, and Maximilian and his wife Charlotte (renamed Carlota) arrived in Mexico City in June 1864 to set up the Imperial court at Chapultepec Castle. The country was by no means pacified, but much of it was nominally under Imperial rule. This was largely due to the efforts of French troops and the newly raised Imperial Mexican army. Some conservative elements among the Mexicans supported the new empire; but many others saw the whole episode for what it really was – an invasion of their country – and bitterly resented the loss of their independence.

The Civil War in the United States ended with General Lee's surrender on 9 April 1865, and this had considerable consequences in Mexico. American arms and money were allowed to flow south undisturbed to the Mexican *Juarista* Republicans as tangible support. Furthermore, the United States was increasingly worried by the sight of French and Imperial Mexican troops assembling near the Rio Grande. In August 1865 the Fourth Corps of the US Army was moved from New Orleans to Brownsville, Texas, on the Mexican border.

In Mexico, the well-meaning but ill-informed and ill-advised Maximilian made a bad situation worse by his infamous 'Black Decree' of 3 October

1865. The decree ordered that any Mexican caught under arms be considered a bandit and shot within 24 hours. French and Imperial officers may have felt this measure necessary to counter Republican guerrillas, but it was short-sighted and counter-productive. It turned many indifferent Mexicans against the empire, while the international image of the benevolent emperor bringing civilized European values to the savage South was tarnished. Ultimately, it sealed Maximilian's fate.

Napoleon III faced the realities of his disastrous and costly policy in Mexico. Under pressure from the United States and French public opinion, and convinced of Maximilian's incapacity, he resolved to withdraw his troops. The contraction of French garrisons was handled by Marshal Bazaine over nearly a year; and the last regiments sailed from Veracruz on 12 March 1867. For Maximilian the end came at Querétaro, where two Republican armies numbering 25,000 men besieged his 11,000 troops for six days until his surrender on 15 May. The Emperor and Imperial Generals Miramon and Mejía were tried, convicted, sentenced to death – a pardon was impossible by the 'Black Decree' – and executed by firing squad at Querétaro on 19 June. Mexico City surrendered on 21 June and, on 15 July, President Juárez re-entered the capital.

THE REPUBLICAN ARMY

Little appears to have been written about the Mexican Republican army. Many non-Mexican sources refer to Mexican soldiers with considerable disdain, regarding them as an uninteresting rag-tag force of cruel bandits. This is a hasty dismissal of a force that caused the evacuation of the French army – then considered one of the world’s finest – and that went on to defeat Maximilian’s European-trained Imperial troops.

Strategy and tactics

The forces of the Republic of Mexico suffered enormous disadvantages from the outset. They lacked money, modern arms and equipment. The regular army was small, the state auxiliary forces in poor shape, and political cohesion still fragile following the recent War of Reform. The officers and men, however, were often battle-hardened veterans.

The Republican strategy throughout 1862 and 1863 was to block the French advance from Veracruz to Mexico City at Puebla. The French defeat at the European-style battle of 5 May 1862 surprised the world, and forced Napoleon III to send tens of thousands of seasoned French reinforcements. They finally overcame Puebla the following year after a severe siege, and occupied Mexico City. There were soon around 45,000 regular troops from France, Austria and Belgium sustaining Maximilian’s throne, plus about 7,000 Mexican regulars and about 20,000 auxiliaries in the new Imperial army. President Juárez did not have tens of thousands of well-equipped European regulars to help him fight the French and Austrians.

The Republicans changed their strategy and tactics during 1863–1865. They only had a few thousand regulars and auxiliaries in northern and southern states not occupied by the French. The

The Republican General Porfirio Díaz, c. 1866, in the dark blue full dress uniform embroidered with gold. A future president of Mexico, Díaz was a fiery young general from Oaxaca who put up

unrelenting resistance to the Franco-Imperial troops in the south, and rose to lead one of the main Republican armies in 1866–1867. (Musée royal de l’Armée, Brussels)

Republicans still enjoyed the support of most of the countryside, and many took to the hills. Guerrilla warfare became the norm. The Republicans’ tactic was to avoid ‘anything like a general engagement with the Imperial [and French columns of] troops, but to watch for the enemy and catch him every time when he was unguarded, to strike him at every unguarded spot, and not permit a day to pass that he could fancy himself secure. This was a wise policy, and in this way, we could have kept up the war indefinitely. We always knew where the enemy was . . . eyes were on the foe, ready to report any mistake’, recalled an officer of the General Staff.



By 1866 the Republican armies had grown strong enough in men and arms for tactics to be altered once more. Republican forces increasingly challenged their enemies, winning decisive battles such as Santa Gertrudis, and they later conducted successful large scale siege operations. The toll was high: an estimated 32,000 Republican officers and men died on the battlefield, in hospitals, and executed by French and Imperial firing squads, during the struggle to liberate their country.

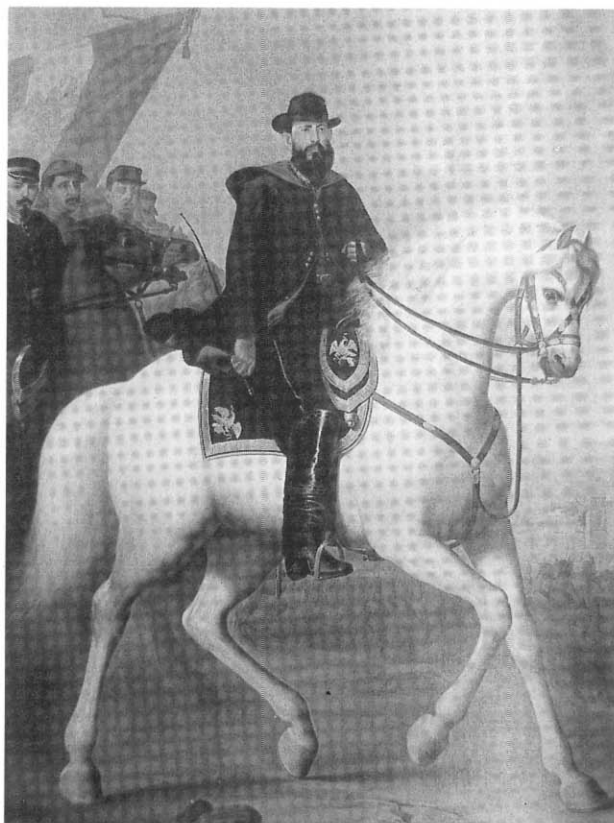
Organization

In 1855 the Liberals came to power, and the following year made considerable changes in the organization of the army, reducing the establishment of regular troops. In spite of all the fighting which was to follow, this started a slow decrease in the army's power as a political institution. This can be explained in part by the fact that a large proportion of the Liberal and Republican forces were not regular soldiers but popular levies raised among peasants. Another change was the rising professionalism of the officers which, by the 1860s, was superior to the Mexican officer corps during the American invasion of 1846-1848.

From 1861 to 1867 there were ten numbered regular line battalions (each having eight companies), and six numbered line cavalry corps, sometimes called regiments (each of two squadrons, each squadron having two companies). A regular 7th Cavalry had been raised by early 1867. The artillery organization called for one battalion of field artillery (six batteries, each having six guns), one garrison brigade (four batteries), one division of horse artillery (two batteries), a number of independent garrison companies, two train companies and three arsenal companies. The engineer corps had an establishment of specialist officers with a battalion of sappers. There was also a corps of invalids, the general officers and staff, and a medical and ambulance corps, giving a total of about 10,000 to 12,000 regular troops.

In addition to the army was the new regular corps of *Rurales*, with 2,200 officers and men. This was formed on 5 May 1861 as a mounted constabulary to chase bandits, however it soon proved an outstanding light cavalry corps fighting the French.

The auxiliary forces were the various state militias and National Guards. Basically, all Mexicans



General Mariano Escobedo, supreme commander of the Republican armies in 1867 – a fine strategist and tactician who rarely wore a

uniform, even for this official painting, unlike his staff officers in the background. (Museo Nacional de Historia, Mexico)

were listed in the militia and might be embodied, in principle, for special short term service. When liable for active service for a prolonged period men would be drafted into a battalion of state National Guards. As in the USA, each Mexican state had its own peculiar customs and regulations for its National Guards and militia. In 1862 auxiliary forces amounted to at least 25 infantry battalions and 25 cavalry squadrons. There were also reserve garrison and field artillery batteries in some seaports and cities. In the Federal District of Mexico City the National Guard had six numbered infantry battalions, the 7th being cavalry and the 8th being the National Guard artillery battalion.

More auxiliary troops were raised as a result of the French invasion. A decree dated 25 May 1862, authorized an indefinite number of 'partisan' or 'guerrilla' units, from 25 men up, operating rather



Col. Pedro Rincon
Gallardo, Aguascaliente
Infantry Battalion,
Republican Army, c. 1867,
wearing a dark blue frock

coat, trousers and képi, all
trimmed with gold. (Anne
S.K. Brown Military
Collection, Brown
University)

loosely under the Republican government. Men were obliged to serve for up to six months, longer service being voluntary. They proved to be valuable auxiliaries in spite of their bad discipline.¹ In June 1862 the auxiliary forces of the Mexico City Federal District were organized into one artillery and four infantry battalions of Mobile National Guards, and eight Sedentary National Guard infantry battalions were raised. As the French invaded in 1862 some state battalions on active service were absorbed into the regular forces, and other state forces were raised.

¹ After the fall of the Empire some sank into lawlessness and banditry, and the Corps of *Ruales* was accordingly reorganized in September 1867 to oppose them.

Most of the men in the regular army came from peasant families, they were usually drafted by force during a levy which resembled the press gangs of the old Royal Navy. The young peasants were rarely able to pay the price of their release. This crude system produced tough reliable soldiers and all attempts to reform it failed until the 20th century. During the French intervention, however, many men joined the army out of a sense of patriotism – although most with such motivations tended to be in the National Guard or militias. Most enlisted men were illiterate. Officers were drawn from the educated classes of society and were often fluent in French, to the surprise of the invaders.

Another surprise to foreigners was the *soldaderas*. At first glance they appeared to be the usual female camp followers who have always followed in the wake of armies; but *soldaderas* were different. Until the 1930s, thanks to the *soldaderas*, the Mexican army did not need an elaborate supply and ambulance establishment. The relationship between *soldadera* and soldier was a business partnership among poor people, not merely a romantic fling. Soldiers gave their pay to these women, who agreed to serve them; there might be a romantic involvement, but *soldaderas* were not bound by marriage and could leave the soldier they were serving at will. They marched with their men – indeed, went ahead of the main force to raise tents and start cooking the evening meal while looking after their children. *Soldaderas* went onto the battlefields, got the wounded out, acted as nurses, and sometimes became casualties themselves. Some went so far as to fight. They were to be found in both the Republican and Imperial armies, although they were frowned upon by the French.²

In the field, the organization of the Republican armies was like that of the Union armies during the US Civil War. There were the armies of the North, of the Centre, of the West and of the Orient (or East). In each army there was a core of regular troops with many auxiliary units in a variable number of divisions and brigades, each brigade usually grouping a regular line unit with auxiliary corps. Artillery batteries and detachments of the train, sappers, and the ambulances of the medical corps were also attached to each army. The general headquarters of each army gath-

² On this peculiar institution, we recommend the excellent study by Elizabeth Salas: *Soldaderas in the Mexican Military, Myth and History*, University of Texas Press, 1990.

ered various staff officers (quarter-master general, commandants of artillery, of engineers, etc.), and a brigade composed of the most élite units was attached to it.

The names of various units can be confusing, but these were basically as in the American armies. Regular corps were simply numbered 'line' units. State troops were designated by their geographical location and, as time passed the term National Guard was rarely used. Some state units were also put on a permanent footing, with the result that some bore their state number and designation as well as a higher number denoting their 'line' identity, while others simply became 'permanent' units. For example, at the 1863 siege of Puebla we find the 1st, 2nd and 6th Guanajuato Battalions (also numbered the 19th, 20th and 22nd Line Battalions), and also 'permanent' battalions from Mexico City and Veracruz. Most units simply bore their local designation: 1st and 2nd Morelia; 1st, 3rd, 4th Zacatecas; *Rifleteros* of San Luis, etc.

After both Puebla and Mexico City fell in 1863 the weakened army did not collapse, but continued resistance by any means available. The original Corps of *rurales*, for example, gradually vanished, but alongside other forces in the state of Oaxaca they continued their resistance. On 1 October 1865 the Oaxaca *rurales* were reorganized as the *Resguardo de Mexico*, and campaigned as light cavalry.

The period from 1863 to 1866 could be termed one of flexible resistance and reorganization by about 60,000 Republicans. Of these, about 10,000 were guerrillas – 'mainly robbers and cut-throats in the pay of the Liberals', wrote an historian sympathetic to Maximilian. Guerrillas were often mentioned by journalists, but they were not the Republican army. The bulk of the Republic's army consisted of about 15,000 regulars allied with 35,000 state National Guard units.

As American aid grew from 1865, the Army of the North under the command of Gen. Mariano Escobedo became the best organized and equipped and was armed with the latest weaponry. Further south were the two smaller Republican armies of the

Mexican soldiers shown wearing the light grey-blue overcoat; this print also gives a good view of the equipment. Detail from a

plate in El Libro Rojo, 1870 (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University)

Centre and of the West, relative to the North both lacked arms and equipment, especially artillery. They eventually combined into a single 'Army of the Centre and of the West' under the command of Gen. Ramon Corona. In early 1867 the Army of the North joined the Army of the Centre and of the West under the overall command of Gen. Escobedo. At the beginning of the siege of Querétaro these forces stood at about 19,000 men. Republican forces in the south-east under Gen. Porfirio Diaz were much battered by the French, lacked arms and supplies, but were nevertheless indomitable. By April 1867 Diaz with his persistent army had recaptured Puebla and was marching on Mexico City.

American and foreign volunteers

The value of having foreign volunteers in the Republican army was recognized, and encouraged by a presidential decree of August 1864. This provided good pay and conditions to experienced and armed foreigners wishing to assist 'in the defence of the independence of Mexico'. Volunteers were 'English, Germans, French, Canadians, Russians, Scotch, Irish, Grecians', but as one Pole recalled the vast majority were Americans. At the end of the Civil War in 1865 many groups of former Union army officers went south of the border; and soon up to 1,500



Americans were serving with Gen. Escobedo's Army of the North. Most were scattered in the various Republican corps, some serving as subaltern officers, others with specialized arms such as the artillery. A group of about 60 were formed as the élite 'American Legion of Honor' in December 1866, and served at Zacatecas and the sieges of Querétaro and Mexico City. In all, it is estimated that about 3,000 American volunteers, veterans of the Union army, served with the armies of the Republic of Mexico. There might have been many more had the French intervention lasted. A survey of Union veterans showed that an astounding 109,000 were ready to serve in Mexico with the Republican armies.

Weapons

In 1862 regular line troops had Enfield rifles, Minié conversions, and even some American Mississippi rifles. Most weapons found among the volunteers and National Guards were smoothbore muskets, and some apparently still had flintlocks. (This was when they had firearms at all.) At the 1863 siege of Puebla, Mrs. Sara Stevenson, an American living in Mexico, recalled: 'The main trouble was scarcity of arms. The guns were mostly old rejected muskets, and I was told that during the siege unarmed bodies of men waited to use the arms of the slain or wounded . . . the cruel struggle lasted for two whole months. To quote a French officer, it was "a noble defence, admirably organized".'



After the fall of Puebla and Mexico City the resistance continued in conditions that can hardly be imagined. In many parts of rural Mexico the people remained loyal to the Republic during the French occupation, many fleeing to the hills to form improvised units. In the isthmus of Tehuantepec half of the men were completely unarmed, and it took two years to obtain 200 machete blades. Any weapons were better than none, and almost anything sharp was pressed into service. A British observer reported: 'Their arms are very various. Big-mouthed *escopetas*, warranted not to hit at fifty yards and much more dangerous to the owners than to anyone else; damaged Springfields from the Rio Grande supplied by some cute Yankee speculator, who in turn was probably cheated out of his money; rusty muskets of the Brown Bess school, and serviceable French and Austrian rifles are to be found among their armament. Most of the men have bayonets . . .'

Republican agents actively sought to purchase arms, especially in the United States, in spite of the embargo on arms exports during the Civil War. The result was a cat-and-mouse game, worthy of spy novels, between the Mexican agents and French diplomats who tried to have the illegal exports stopped. During 1864, for instance, some 14,000 rifles intended for Mexico were seized by the San Francisco police acting on information from the French consulate. But weapons and ammunition nevertheless made their way over the border to northern Mexico in quantity. The end of the American Civil War halted the embargo, and supplies of all sorts now made their way freely into Mexico. Many Enfield muskets also came from Britain, in ships that had to sneak past French Navy patrols to unload along the Mexican coast: some 10,000 muskets were

Generals José Arteaga and Carlos Salazar were captured by the Imperialists and executed as bandits on 21 October 1865, a result of Maximilian's 'Black Decree'. The Republicans were outraged, and thereafter adopted a very stern policy towards senior officers in Imperial service. Both generals are shown wearing mostly civilian clothing as was often the case among the

Republicans; only the peaked caps give a military look. The Imperial soldiers shown have the same type of uniforms as the Republicans. Plate from El Libro Rojo, 1870. One of the authors of El Libro Rojo was Gen. Vicente Riva Palacio, a personal friend of the two generals. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University)

landed in this way during a dark September night in 1863. Three years later, 20,000 Enfields were bought by the Republican government.

Thanks to such tireless efforts, by 1866 some Republican army units were better armed than their French and Imperial opponents. A British observer noted General 'Treviño's [1st] cavalry [division, Army of the North], twelve hundred strong, and all armed with Spencer rifles' – eight-shot magazine-fed breech-loading rifled cavalry carbines. Some Sharps and Remington breech-loading carbines are also mentioned, but these were obviously in small numbers. Irregulars might be armed with any of the above, as well as with various revolvers.

Of special note were the units attached to the HQ of the Army of the North, armed with '16-shot' American breech-loading rifles. These were Henry rifles, a thousand of which had been sold to the Republic in the later part of 1866. This lever-action repeating .44 calibre rifle held 15 rimfire cartridges in its tubular magazine and a sixteenth round in the chamber. US Army tests had shown that 120 rounds could be fired in 340 seconds, including reloading time – less than three seconds per shot.

This revolutionary weapon was noted with dismay by an Imperial officer at the siege of Querétaro. 'A Republican corps . . . the Chasseurs [*Cazadores*] of Galeana – armed with American sixteen-shot rifles, maintained a heavy and mortal fire on our troops.' During a cavalry battle the Imperial Empress Dragoons charged the Republican cavalry, but 'these being armed with 16-shot American rifles greeted them with a terrible fire, and as they moved aside, unmasked several corps of infantry with similar arms. The first rank of the Empress Dragoons was struck down and the rest terribly decimated.' When Mexico City was also invested in May 1867 a Belgian correspondent even mentioned that 'the regiment of Yankees armed with 16-shot rifles' was part of the besieging army. There was no American 'regiment', in fact, but the comment shows the devastating effect this weapon had on Imperial morale.³

The artillery of the Republican forces initially consisted of smooth-bore cannon of various origins, mostly old Spanish and British brass pieces. Some were mounted on Gribeauval field carriages, others



Two regular cavalry soldiers of the Republican forces captured at Puebla and photographed in 1863 wearing their worn-out uniforms. The style is that of the 1856 regulations but the colours might be different. Instead of grey faced with green, the jacket might be blue with scarlet collar and cuffs and white metal buttons. The

overall, which may have been blue or grey, have rudimentary leather 'false boots'. Both wear the black leather shako with white cover. The trooper at right has three white laces hastily sewn on the lower sleeve indicating the rank of corporal first class. (Ph. 21893, Austrian Army Museum, Vienna)

on garrison or naval carriages. Most were rendered useless and the carriages destroyed before the surrender of Puebla in 1863. Artillery remained scarce in the Army of the Centre and of the West, which had only five cannon in 1867. By that time Gen. Escobedo's Army of the North had 57 cannon, mostly 'French' (probably American 'Napoleons') with some old Spanish smooth-bore pieces; but the real innovation was the appearance of rifled ordnance. The Republican artillery had American Parrott rifled

³ The only American unit would have been the company-sized American Legion of Honor, whose men were armed with Henry rifles and Colt revolvers.

cannon, which shelled Querétaro with considerable effect. A few Austrian rifled cannon, probably captured from the Austrian Legion, were also used by Escobedo's gunners at the siege. The Republicans now had the most modern artillery.

Uniforms

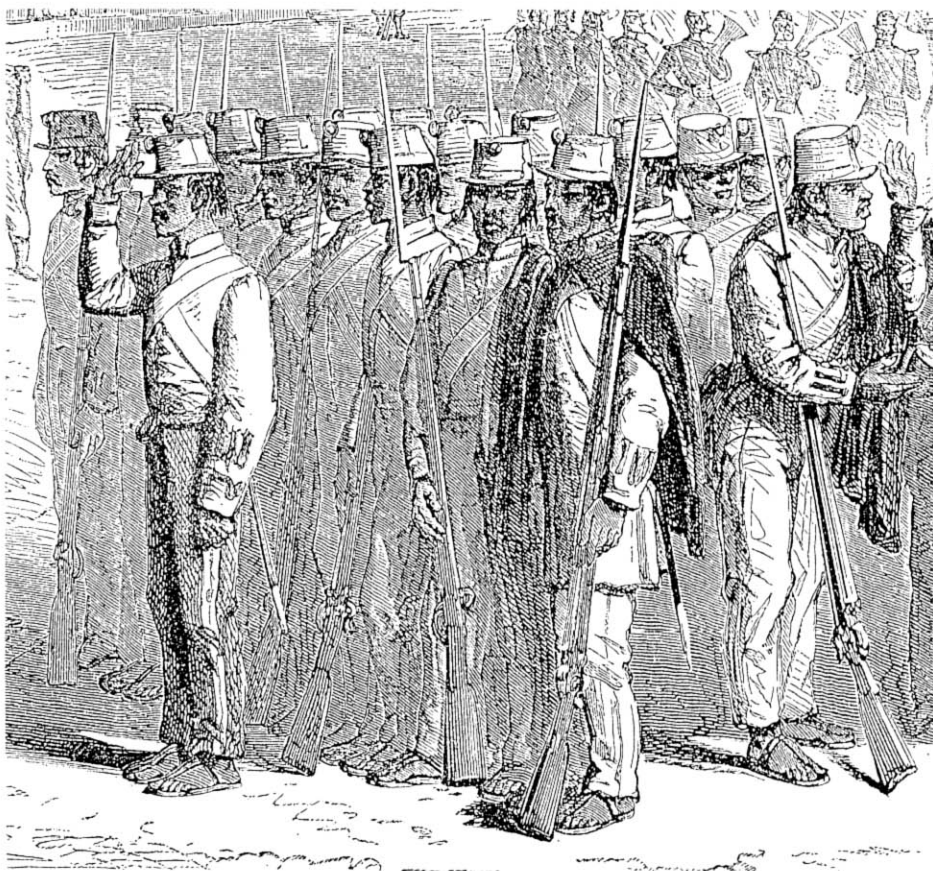
Fanciful dress was swept away by very sober uniforms after the Liberals took power in 1855. Only the more mundane elements of the previous regulations were retained in those of 29 April 1856. This decree established the official instructions until after the French intervention; the next dress regulations were issued in 1869.

For the infantry, the 1856 regulations prescribed a dress uniform and a 'garrison and campaign' undress uniform. The dress uniform was a plain, short-skirted tunic of dark blue; it had a scarlet collar and cuffs, brass buttons, dark blue trousers with scarlet stripe, black leather shako with scarlet cords and pompon, and a yellow metal badge with the number or initials of the corps. The garrison and

campaign dress for infantry was a white cotton jacket with dark blue piping and plain yellow metal buttons, white trousers, and dark blue *képi* with red piping.

The 1856 cavalry dress uniform was a grey jacket with light green collar, cuffs and piping, white metal buttons, grey pantaloons with green stripe and strapped with leather, black half boots, black leather shako with light green cords and pompon and a white metal badge with the number or the initials of the corps. The garrison and campaign dress was a white cotton jacket; grey pantaloons with green stripe and strapped with leather were worn mounted and white trousers when on foot, with a grey *képi* with green piping.

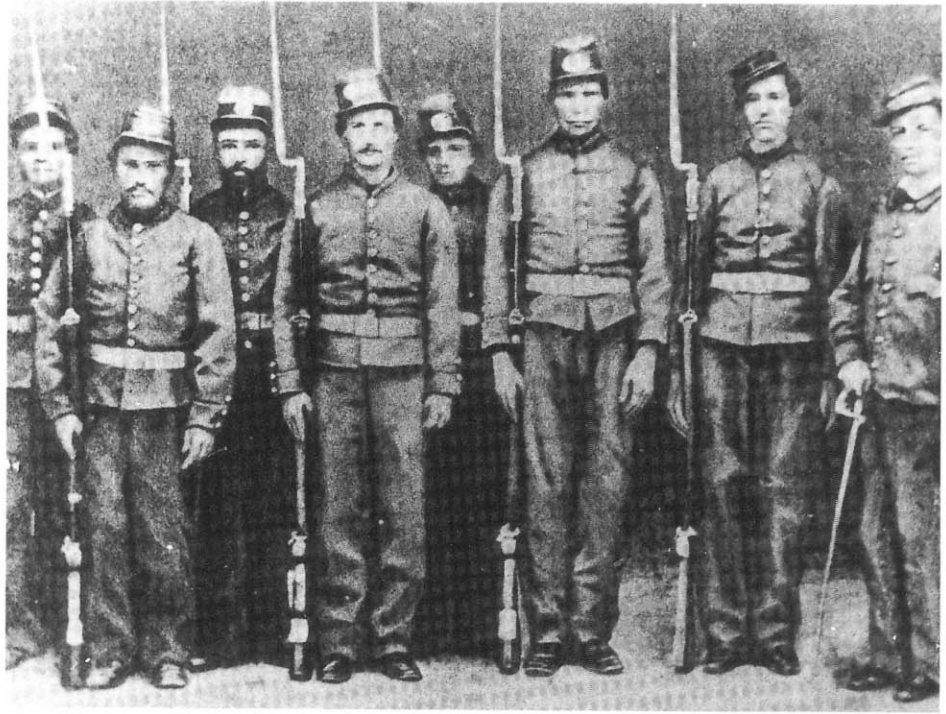
The uniform for the foot artillery was a dark blue coatee with crimson collar, cuffs, turnbacks and piping, brass buttons and flaming bomb badge at the collar, dark blue trousers with crimson stripe, black leather shako with crimson cords and pompon and a brass badge of crossed cannon. The undress was an all dark blue frock piped with crimson with the bomb badge at the collar, dark blue trousers with crimson



Above: Soldier of the Supremos Poderes battalion who was at the siege of Querétaro and took part in Maximilian's court-martial in 1867. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University)

Mexican soldiers wearing mostly the white linen campaign dress, from a print published in L'Illustration in 1863.

This much-retouched 1867 photo of Maximilian's execution squad shows a fairly well equipped Republican unit, the 1st Mobile Battalion of the state of Nuevo Leon. Except for the officer on the right they wear the basic 1856 infantry uniform. A refinement on these coats is the three buttons on the lower sleeve and cuff. The black leather shako bears a brass oval plate but no pompon. The NCO (second from right) wears the undress képi. The officer wears a képi with gold lace, and a non-regulation blouse with breast pocket flaps such as worn by the Imperial troops, possibly from a stock of captured clothing. The squad had British M1853 Enfield rifles. (Musée royal de l'Armée, Brussels)



piping, shako with cover for the men and dark blue képi with crimson band and piping and a cannon badge for the officers. The horse artillery had the same uniform but with three laces on each cuff. The train company had a grey-blue jacket with crimson cuffs and piping, grey-blue pantaloons strapped with black leather and with a crimson stripe, and a black leather shako with crimson pompon.

The Engineer Corps, including the Sapper Battalion, had a dress uniform consisting of a dark blue coat with black velvet collar and lapels, crimson cuffs and piping, yellow lace, brass buttons, dark blue trousers with crimson stripe, black leather shako piped with red with crimson cords and pompon and a yellow metal plate. The undress uniform was a dark blue jacket with black collar and cuffs, dark blue trousers with crimson stripe, and dark blue képi with crimson piping.

During this period the Mexican soldier wore a peculiar mixture of French military style and Mexican civilian dress, giving him a distinctive appearance. The black leather shako was narrow towards the top, usually worn without cords but often with a 'sun curtain' of white cotton rolled up around the crown when not in use. The tunic might be long or short, loose or badly cut, and very plain. The cloth

trouser legs were often rolled up to the knee exposing the bottom of the white cotton trousers worn underneath. Few infantry troops except regulars had shoes and gaiters, and those who did only wore them on dress occasions; nearly all had leather sandals over bare feet.

The uniform of the Corps of *Rurales* raised in 1861 was a grey jacket with scarlet cuffs and collar, a grey waistcoat, chamois leather trousers, a wide-brimmed hat with a white band inscribed with '1°', '2°', '3°' or '4° de Policia'. Saddlery was the *vaquero* style, with grey horse blankets. Weapons were a percussion carbine, a lance with a red pennant and a sabre.

In general, the state National Guard battalions wore the same uniforms as the regular army. However, the four infantry battalions of Mobile National Guards organized in Mexico City in June 1862 wore dark blue tunics with yellow cuff laces, dark blue trousers, and a black leather shako with green pompon and the number of the battalion.

Uniforms worn during the 1863 siege of Puebla were varied, ranging from the 1856 regulation dark blue with leather shako worn by regulars and Puebla National Guards, to the red blouses and white trousers of the 2nd Morelia Battalion. Red, the colour



Irregular lancers in battle. The dress of these troops was that of the vaqueros – the Mexican cowboys – who were especially skilful

with lances. Plate from El Libro Rojo, 1870. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University)

of the Liberals in the Reform War, became associated with the Republicans in their fight to liberate Mexico.

These were difficult times for the Republican forces of President Juárez. For the next two years much of the country was under the control of the French and their Imperial allies; the Republicans suffered from severe shortages of equipment and weapons and few had uniforms. The forces of resistance wore the typical costume of Mexico. The isthmus of Tehuantepec remained loyal to the Republic during the French occupation, and many men and women fled to the hills to form an improvised army. The defenders of the Republican cause were ‘little more than a rabble of Zapotec Indians dressed in “pyjama” coat and trousers of white cotton, sandals, cartridge belts, and black felt hat with red bands. Every two months each soldier received a piece of *manta*, coarse cotton cloth, to mend his clothes.’ The basic costume of most Republican infantry was recalled by an Austrian veteran as ‘white clothing contrasted by the dark skin of the Indians [wearing it] . . . the headgear being conspicuous, from

the country’s *sombrero*, of enormous dimensions, to the modern French style *képi*’; he added that very few men had shoes, sandals being worn by the majority.

The regulars and ‘permanent’ state troops also wore the basic white linen costume but with the leather shako: ‘The Mexican soldiers, at the time of the French intervention’, recalled Georges Bibesco, ‘were for the most part Indians, conscripted into the regular army. The soldier’s uniform comprised a jacket of white linen with little skirts, trousers of the same material, and a small shako of black leather. He marched in bare feet, or wore *guaraches*, a sort of sandal. His arms consisted of a musket and bayonet. A black leather belt carried his bayonet scabbard and a large cartridge box.’

The regular and state cavalry generally had military uniforms. In the Army of the North they often had dark blue jackets with red cuffs and collar rather than the regulation grey. The Army of the Orient generally had grey uniforms but trimmed with red instead of the regulation green, which seems to have faded out of use.

The irregular cavalry usually wore the typical *vaquero* costume including the wide-brimmed *sombrero*, and carried lances. The cavalry lances often had red pennants; and ‘the *chinacas rojas* was the nickname given to the undisciplined bands of Republican horsemen who wore red blouses’. An Austrian veteran remembered the red blouses, as well as other horsemen wearing ragged parrot green jackets.

By 1866–1867 many Republican soldiers ‘did not affect any more their old disdain for military insignia and, on the contrary, they sought uniformity in their dress’, noted Albert Hans. The Army of the North, in particular, clothed some units in quality blue Mexican uniforms. Other soldiers had US Union Army surplus uniforms: 6,265 coats, 1,119 caps, 5,000 cap covers, 5,200 belts, 3,000 mess tins and 46,210 knapsacks were shipped to Mexico from 1866.

The combined Republican armies besieging Querétaro in 1867 brought together many types of clothing, equipment and arms. Some regular and state corps had the blue 1856 uniforms, some had American uniforms, and others had uniforms captured from Imperial stores. The men of the élite *Supremos Poderes* battalion were noted as hard-looking, good-sized soldiers wearing ‘a grey uniform ornamented with yellow [cuff] lace and . . . a black

leather shako'. The infantrymen of many units simply had white linen blouses and trousers with the shako with sun cover, and a *sarape* which they carried rolled up in the day but used as a cloak at night. Irregular cavalrymen wore red blouses and wide-brimmed *sombreros*. Such was the dress of much of the Republican army right up to the capture of Mexico City in 1867.

Officers

If the men were often ragged, an English observer reported that '... the Mexican officers glittered with embroidery and gold, had two-dollar gold pieces for buttons to their jackets and silver *reals* strung all over their leggings, gold-mounted spurs at their heels, silver-mounted revolvers at their holsters, and the trappings of their horses so inlaid with silver that often the saddle would be worth five times as much as the horse'. A French memoirist reported a simpler dress: 'Officers wore white clothing ... A jacket without epaulettes, the *attentes* [epaulette straps] ... on the shoulders, trousers ... a shako the size of the *képi*, or a sombrero completed their uniform.'

Officially, officers had the same uniform as their men but of better quality and with longer tunic skirts. Ensigns had half-inch lace edging the top of the cuffs, lieutenants double and captains triple edging. Majors and above had epaulettes and crimson sashes, with gold or silver tassels for lieutenant-colonels and colonels. Photographs of Republican officers of infantry, artillery and engineers during the 1860s often show them in undress wearing French style *képis*, and double-breasted frock coats with American style officers' straps at the shoulders. A peculiar and

apparently popular fashion on the frock coat was a pointed cuff with a curve at the point, edged with broad lace.

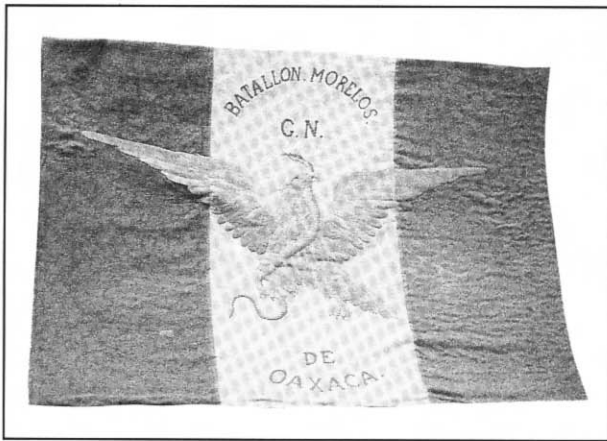
General officers were to retain the uniforms prescribed on 20 June 1853 until the 1870s. The full dress was a bicorn hat with white plumes and gold lace, cockade loop and tassels; dark blue coat with scarlet cuffs, collar, lapels, turnbacks and piping, with two rows of gold embroidery on the collar and cuffs for generals of division and one row for brigadier generals, and gold embroidered lapels, pocket flaps, etc., for other ranks; dark blue trousers laced gold when on foot, and white breeches with high boots when mounted. Undress was as above except that coats were only embroidered on the collar and cuffs. All had gold epaulettes, and waist-sashes (of blue and gold for generals of division or green and gold for brigadiers). Many generals replaced scarlet facings with dark blue; others preferred dress coats with no lapels. The epaulettes were often not worn, leaving only the gold transverse straps. The bicorn hat seems to have only been worn occasionally; even in full dress, the dark blue *képi* with gold lace was the universal favourite.

Some generals could be quite informal. Gen. Escobedo, commanding the combined armies in 1867, had himself painted wearing a plain civilian hat,

Marshal Bazaine with his young Mexican bride, c. 1865. Bazaine, a battle-hardened veteran of Algerian campaigning, and an ex-ranker, had considerable political influence on the Imperial government and favoured a hard line towards Republicans. Although he campaigned successfully, he eventually concluded that such a large country could not be held, and competently contracted and evacuated the French expeditionary force ahead

of schedule. In this drawing from a photo, Bazaine wears the undress blue tunic with gold epaulettes and red trousers with gold stripe, red képi with blue band with gold lace and embroidery. The curse of Mexico fell on Bazaine at Metz during the Franco-Prussian War; his surrender there was harshly judged, and the old soldier was made a scapegoat. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University)





Colour of the Morelos Battalion, Oaxaca National Guard, Republican army, c. 1866. (Museo Nacional de Historia, Mexico)

a dark blue sleeved and hooded cloak lined with red and fastened with gold buttons, dark blue trousers with a narrow gold stripe, and high black boots. Gen. Corona was often seen in a plain red cotton shirt, with a red band round his hat. This simple dress is confirmed by a French officer who noticed that Republican 'senior officers and generals wore largely civilian clothing'.

Flags

All units used the red, white and green tricolour of Mexico, with the motif of an eagle grasping a snake at the centre in natural colours; above and below the eagle were the unit designations. Veteran units had battle honours on streamers tied below the spearhead finial. Army command headquarters could also have small square white standards with designations such as '2 D.I.' for the HQ of the 2nd Infantry Division, '1 B.C.' for 1st Cavalry Brigade, etc.

THE FRENCH ARMY

During 1862 and 1863 38,000 French troops went to Mexico, taking with them nearly 6,000 horses and mules, and 26,000 tons of supplies. They were supported by many ships and thousands of sailors from the French Navy. According to the April 1864 Miramar Convention between Maximilian and

Napoleon III, French troops would stay in Mexico for three years, with the Foreign Legion remaining for six years. Clearly, France could not sustain such a commitment forever. The campaign was already proving a considerable drain on its treasury since, contrary to expectations, Maximilian's empire could not pay for the French troops. The French also had to subsidize the Mexican Imperial army. By the middle of 1864 it was felt that the situation was under control, and by 1865 the expeditionary force was reduced to 31,000 men. By then, public opinion in France increasingly demanded that the government 'bring the boys home', as the campaign in Mexico brought France nothing but losses of men, money and prestige. Critics of the French army noted that in spite of its great reputation and alleged successes, it had clearly failed to decisively defeat the forces of the Mexican Republic. Small-scale and indecisive clashes with elusive partisans alternated with the occasional costly ambush; and, in the coastal lowlands, disease took a constant and heavy toll.

Towards the beginning of 1866 the tide slowly began to turn in the Republicans favour. Republican Gen. Mariano Escobedo emerged as the leading tactician and, from June, pressured the French and Imperial troops to evacuate from the north-eastern states. It was the beginning of the end. When Gen. Castelnau, Napoleon III's aide-de-camp, arrived to ensure the evacuation of the French contingent, he found 24,000 men who had had enough. 'For over three years', Castelnau wrote, 'they have marched from one ocean to the other across Mexico; they are exhausted.' Discipline was affected and desertion had become common. As the last French units left Veracruz in March 1867, many soldiers must have had a thought for their 7,000 comrades who remained buried in Mexico.

Organization

The French troops deployed in Mexico between 1862 and 1867 were from the following corps:

Line infantry regiments: 7th, 51st, 62nd, 81st, 95th, 99th

Chasseurs à pied battalions: 1st, 7th, 18th, 20th

Zouave regiments: 1st, 2nd, 3rd

Cavalry: 5th Hussars (2 squadrons), 12th *Chasseurs à cheval* (4 squadrons), *Chasseurs d'Afrique* (7 squadrons from 1st, 2nd & 3rd)



Left: Sous-lieutenant Blanc of the Foreign Regiment (the then-official title of the French Foreign Legion) photographed in 1866. He wears the 1845 nine-button long-skirted tunic, retained for grande tenue at this date, complete with epaulettes of rank, duty gorget, and the gold buglehorn of the Voligeur Company on his collar.

Right: The normal field dress of the French officer in the 1850s and 1860s was the Zouave-style 'African' frock, as worn by Sous-lieutenant Lenoir of the Legion in 1867. In this formal portrait it is worn closed; in the field it was worn open over a waistcoat and sash. Note the large Hungarian knots of gold braid, single for this rank; and, just visible on his right sleeve, the red-lined rear vent edged with gilt ball buttons and crossed by thin braid loops. Note also the exaggerated size of the seroual trousers.



Artillery: 6 batteries (3 field, 1 of the Guard, 1 siege, 1 mountain)

Engineers: 5 companies

Train: 1 squadron

Colonial troops: *Tirailleurs algériens* (2 companies from each of the three regiments); 2nd Bn. *Infanterie légère d'Afrique*; 1st *Régiment Etranger* (Foreign Legion); Martinique volunteers

Naval troops: 1 Marine Regt., 1 Bn. of Sailors, 1 battery of Marine Artillery.

In Mexico, French army line regiments had two battalions, each with 750 men divided into five companies of Fusiliers, one of Voltigeurs and one of Grenadiers. (In France, regiments had three battalions with six companies per battalion.) Of the cavalry, the three regiments of *Chasseurs d'Afrique* were the most prominent during the intervention and saw many engagements against the Republicans, who nicknamed them *carniceros azul* – the 'blue butchers'. Each regiment of light cavalry had six squadrons, but no entire regiment was sent to Mexico.

The Foreign Legion had a peculiar role. As early as 1863, Napoleon III wished to post it in Mexico in the long term as a steady core for the new Imperial army. It was also planned to raise 'two regiments of Indian soldiers' – meaning native Mexicans – attached to the Legion and led by Legion officers and NCOs. Two Mexican companies of the Legion were raised in November 1863, and reported upon favourably, but the experiment did not go any further. The Legion, however, went from two battalions in 1863 to six in 1866, with small locally improvised cavalry and artillery elements. By that time, although it had fought very well, desertion was rampant (according to Gen. Castelneau), who added that there was hardly a guerrilla band without some former légionnaires. As a result, the worn-out Foreign Legion was withdrawn from Mexico in early 1867 having lost nearly 2,000 men – by far the highest proportion of any French army unit.

Weapons

French soldiers in Mexico carried the 1857 model rifled percussion musket, carbine or musketoon

introduced in 1857; or a converted smoothbore musket which had been rifled in 1857 in order to save money. The 'transformed' muskets were then designated 'M1822T', 'M1853T', etc. In the development of French muskets and rifles, the period from 1853 and 1866 was one of missed opportunities due to the conservatism of armament committee officers. They favoured large calibres and the modification of existing systems, as opposed to developing new designs. Other nations, including Britain and the USA, were decreasing calibres and improving the design and accuracy of their weapons. French weapons were, as a result, being left behind. This was corrected by the adoption of the breech-loading Chassepot rifle in 1866, but this weapon never reached Mexico as its distribution in France only started in December. Officers were armed with M1845 sabres and, from 1858, were allowed to carry Lefauchaux six-shot revolvers. Heavy and light cavalry carried the Model 1822 cavalry sabre – a sturdy and graceful weapon that had been copied by many armies. The comparatively obsolescent status

of French weapons was exemplified by the firearms of their cavalry: enlisted men carried only single-shot muzzle-loading percussion pistols, no breech-loading repeating carbines, and only officers were issued revolvers.

Artillery was a special interest of Napoleon III, who was an acknowledged ordnance expert. In 1853 he introduced a 12-pounder smooth-bore field gun which proved to be a very reliable design. It was much copied by the Americans as the 'Napoleon' during the Civil War. In 1858 muzzle-loading rifled artillery was introduced, with cylindrical shells with studs to engage the six rounded grooves in the chamber of the barrel. These guns were first used with success in 1859 against the Austrians, and later in Mexico; but they were all repatriated to France, leaving Maximilian with no rifled artillery to face the Republicans in 1867.

Uniforms

On 30 March 1860 a new uniform for enlisted men was introduced – it was received by critics as a masterpiece of *les stupidités de la mode*. The new tunic had very short skirts which ended just a few inches below the waist, and was nicknamed a *basquine* (after a feminine undergarment, that predates the corset!). It was dark blue edged all around with yellow piping, and had a yellow collar, yellow cuff flaps and brass buttons. Grenadiers had red grenades at the collar and turnbacks, and red epaulettes; voltigeurs had red bugle horns at the collar and turnbacks, and yellow epaulettes; fusiliers had plain collars, yellow stars at the turnbacks, and green epaulettes with red crescents. Trousers were red, extremely baggy *à la Zouave*, and had to be fastened below the knee with laced buff leather leggings edged in black, under which were short white gaiters. The new leather shako was meant to be worn on campaign. It had a brass eagle plate, a large stamped red-white-blue cockade; a dark blue (1st Bn.), red (2nd Bn.) or green (3rd Bn.) pompon, and a black leather chinstrap. The



Sous-lieutenant Farjat, 3rd Co., Foreign Regt., 1864, wearing a typical French officer's Mexican field dress. This style, with the coat open to reveal a very deep sash over a vest, shirt collar and ribbon tie, was also seen in Algeria, the

Crimea and Italy. The coat here is a non-regulation paletot; double-breasted, it has fold-back lapels, and bears rank at the cuffs in simple galons à la marine. He wears riding boots to above the knee.



Left: The 1860 basquine tunic, 1858 képi with sun-cover, and – for this posed portrait – a civilian-style ribbon tie, worn by a private of the Foreign Regt. in Mexico, 1865. On early film the yellow collar prints as dark as the blue body colour.

képi was abolished and a folding forage cap, red and dark blue with yellow piping and a yellow tassel, was issued. The cravat was dark sky-blue.

Officers did not have the *basquine* nor the baggy trousers but wore a long-skirted tunic entirely of dark blue, with gold buttons and epaulettes; red trousers, black shoes and shako. On campaign a popular alternative which had spread from the Zouaves throughout the army in Algeria was a single-breasted dark blue frock coat worn without epaulettes, but with gold flank company distinctions on the collar. Elaborate rear cuff vents were lined red and bore many small gilt ball buttons and braid loops. Rank was designated by an elaborate system of gold cord Austrian knots on the sleeves; ensigns had one in silver or gold according to button colour, lieutenants two, captains three, majors four, lieutenant-colonels and colonels five in gold and silver alternating. The frock was normally worn open over a dark blue vest and (often) a broad coloured sash, with a white shirt and black bow tie. In Mexico officers commonly wore *képis* (distinguishable by the extent and colour of the braid piping on the crown) with white covers, and



Right: The basic 1860 infantry private's uniform, on a mannequin in the Musée de l'Armée's collection at Chateau de l'Empéri. On modern film the yellow collar of the Foreign Regt. version shows clearly.

sombreros or straw hats on campaign. A dark blue pelisse with black braid and fur was also popular with French officers.

For the enlisted men in Mexico, the M1858 *képi* continued to be worn. It was red with dark blue band and piping, but was nearly always worn with a white cover and sun-curtain. Another popular head garment was the straw hat, initially of French Navy type. In 1862, some 4,000 'Panama' hats were purchased in Martinique for the 7th and 62nd Line Regiments, each with a white cover and a black ribbon bearing the number of the regiment. Medium blue, red or green waist sashes, lightweight white trousers, and the blue-grey double-breasted overcoat instead of the *basquine*, were widely worn. Working and field dress often comprised a plain dark blue jacket with three-point red patches on the low standing collar. The Zouaves were used to the leggings, but the Line infantrymen were not. Men of the 7th and 62nd

tended to omit the leather leggings, but an illustration of the 95th in Durango shows them still worn in September 1865.

The uniform of the Foreign Legion was identical to that of the Line infantry except that the piping on the tunic was scarlet instead of yellow, the yellow collar was piped dark blue, and the cuff flaps were dark blue piped scarlet. Campaign dress was usually the *képi* with a white cover, the dark blue jacket (*veste*) with red collar tabs, and white trousers and gaiters – all items officially abolished in 1860 for the Line infantry, but retained for North African-based units. The *Infanterie légère d'Afrique* also had a similar uniform to the Line infantry, except for white metal buttons, and epaulettes with a red strap and green crescent and fringes.

The *Chasseurs* battalions also had the *basquine* tunic. This was dark blue with yellow piping all around, pointed cuffs also piped yellow, white metal buttons, and green epaulettes with yellow crescents. Trousers were baggy *à la Zouave*, of grey-blue, and were worn with the same leather leggings and gaiters as in the Line infantry. The leather shako had a green pompon, the forage cap was dark blue with yellow piping and tassel, and the *képi* was dark blue piped yellow. Officers wore the all dark blue long-skirted tunic with silver buttons and lace, or the 'African' undress frock with silver buttons and sleeve knots, with blue-grey trousers piped yellow. In Mexico white *képi* covers, trousers, etc., were worn as in the Line infantry.

Zouave units had first been raised in Algeria during the 1830s, but by the time of the intervention in Mexico they were recruited from adventurous Frenchmen. They had proven themselves crack troops in North Africa, the Crimea (where they first drew the attention of the world press) and Italy; and their peculiar 'Arab' uniform was being adopted by units in many countries. This consisted of a dark blue 'bolero' jacket trimmed with flat red lace which included an oval roundel on each side – the *tombeau*, in theory a false pocket – which was in the regimental colour: red for the 1st Regiment, white for the 2nd

and yellow for the 3rd. The waistcoat, called a *sédria*, was also dark blue trimmed with red lace. The large baggy *seroual* trousers were red (or white linen in hot weather) and were worn with leather leggings and white gaiters. A medium blue sash was worn around



Private of the Martinique Volunteers, a black colonial corps which served in Mexico from 1863 to 1866. They wore a dark blue képi with red piping,

dark blue jacket (veste) with red anchor at the collar and brass buttons, white trousers and gaiters. (Private collection)

the waist; headgear was a red *chéchia* (a *fez*) with a dark blue tassel and a green turban. Zouave uniforms had no buttons. Officers wore a French-style uniform consisting of: dark blue tunic with gold buttons and elaborate gold knots on the sleeves denoting rank; red trousers with a wide dark blue band (white in hot weather); a medium blue sash; and a red *képi* with a dark blue band and gold lace. Officers of North African troops did not wear shakos.

The *Tirailleurs algériens* were recruited in North Africa and, like the Zouaves wore 'Arab' style uniforms. The jacket, waistcoat and baggy trousers were sky-blue trimmed with yellow. The *tombeau* was red for the 1st Regiment, white for the 2nd and yellow for the 3rd. A red sash was worn around the waist. The *chéchia* was red with a tassel in the same colour as the *tombeau* and a white turban. Officers wore French-style uniforms consisting of a sky-blue tunic with yellow collar, yellow piping edging the front and the pointed cuffs, gold buttons and epaulettes. The undress frock had elaborate gold sleeve knots instead of epaulettes; red trousers with a wide sky-blue band (white trousers being substituted in hot weather); a red sash and a red *képi* with a sky-blue band and gold lace completed the uniform.

A detailed description of cavalry uniforms would exhaust the limited space available, as a result only the campaign dress of the *Chasseurs d'Afrique* will be examined. Like the Zouaves, they were originally raised from natives for service in Algeria but by the 1840s they were composed entirely of French personnel. In Mexico they wore the undress sky-blue *veste* with yellow collar tabs and white metal buttons; baggy red cavalry pants with a sky-blue stripe and extensive soft black leather 'false boots' below the knees; and a red sash. The headgear was a cap peculiar to the *Chasseurs d'Afrique*, a sort of tall *képi* recalling the army's 1830s *casquette d'Afrique*. These hats were called *taconet* after their maker's name. The *taconet* was red with a sky-blue band, black visor and chin strap, and a pompon of the squadron colour,⁴ with the tricolour cockade and the number of the regiment just below. A white cap cover was usually worn. Officers wore sky-blue dolman with black braid, yellow cuffs and silver sleeve knots; red pants

with sky-blue stripe; and a red *képi* with sky-blue band and silver braid. *Sombreros* were also popular, but in action the *taconet* was usually worn.

French artillery wore elaborate full dress uniform that included a coat with tails. The field uniform consisted of a dark blue jacket with red collar tabs and brass buttons, dark blue trousers with wide double red stripes, white gaiters, and a dark blue *képi* with red piping. Engineers also had an elaborate full dress uniform, this was dark blue with black velvet facings piped red. Field dress was the same as worn by the artillery except that jacket collar tabs, were black edged with red.

THE IMPERIAL MEXICAN ARMY

Organization

The Imperial Mexican army was organized in the autumn of 1863 at the request of Napoleon III, who was anxious to have a sizeable local army. In its early days it was often called a 'Franco-Mexican' army since it was organized, armed, clothed and paid by the French; but in time, it became the Imperial army. It consisted of three types of troops: the regular army; auxiliary troops which could be joined to the regulars; and the *Resguardo*, or rural guards, the Imperial equivalent of the Republican *Rurales*.

In October 1863 the regular army had six battalions of infantry, six squadrons of cavalry, one squadron of *Exploradores* or scouts, three batteries of artillery, one company of artillery, and a corps of invalids: a total of about 7,000 men. Auxiliary troops numbered ten battalions of infantry, 12 squadrons of cavalry, a battery of field artillery and a section of mountain artillery, amounting to 3,800 men – to which could be added another 2,300 men spread among eleven small auxiliary units. A regiment of Imperial Guard was also being organized. The Imperial army grew rapidly, and by June 1864 was reckoned to have 19,437 men.

On 26 January 1865 Maximilian reorganized his regular army, which now had a general staff; 12 line infantry battalions; two battalions of *Cazadores* (light infantry); six regiments of cavalry, and 12 *Presidial*

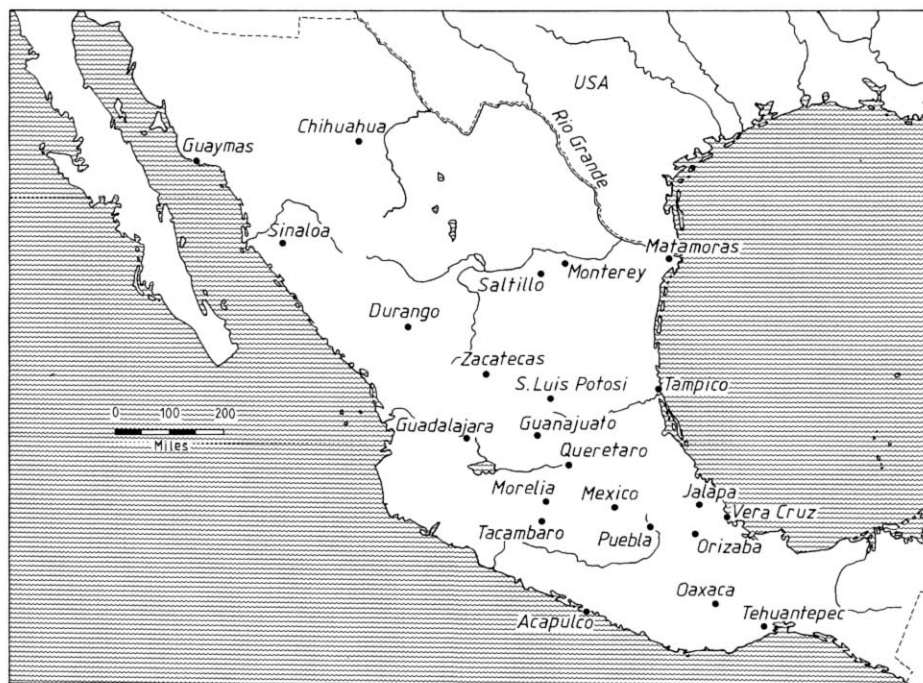
⁴ Sent to Mexico were the 1st, 2nd and 6th Squadrons of the 1st Regt. of *Chasseurs d'Afrique*; the 3rd and 4th Squadrons of the 2nd Regt., and the 4th and 5th Squadrons of the 3rd Regt. The pompon colours for each squadron were: 1st, royal blue; 2nd, red; 3rd, green; 4th sky-blue; 5th, yellow; 6th, orange.

(or independent) companies of cavalry; one field artillery battalion of six batteries; one artillery regiment consisting of four mountain and four horse batteries; a corps of engineers with a battalion of sappers; administrative corps (train, medical, etc.); a Legion of Gendarmerie; and a company of Palatine Guards. The establishment was fixed at 1,164 officers and 22,374 regulars. A regular battalion was supposed to have over 800 men, but the actual strength could be less than half that number. In October 1865 the strength of the armed forces was reported as 7,658 regulars, 9,432 auxiliary troops, and 12,263 rural guards and gendarmerie, for a total of 29,353. As can be seen, the problem with Maximilian's force was that only a quarter of it could truly be considered as a professional army – nearly half of it being a police force.

The French had a low opinion of their Mexican allies. Capt. Vanson of the French General Staff made some shrewd observations about the strange state of affairs he witnessed. He was astonished to find that not a single Mexican soldier guarded the gates of the Imperial palace; when he asked why, he was told 'quite seriously' that Mexican soldiers were too dirty in their habits. He observed sadly that it was 'not possible' to treat a nation in such a cavalier fashion as the Mexicans were being treated. Mexican soldiers

saluted the French, but 'never, ever' would a Mexican officer be saluted by a European soldier or officer. Vanson concluded that 'we treat them even worse than we treat the Turks'. Smarting under the disdain of their European allies, it is a wonder that many Imperial soldiers remained loyal to Maximilian to the end.

The unsettled state of the Imperial regime and the announced departure of the French expeditionary force led to a great many changes. In May and June 1866 nine new 400-man battalions of *Cazadores de Mexico* were being formed, in the hope of having 'efficient' Imperial troops to replace the departing French. These *Cazadores* battalions were led by French officers and were to be composed of equal numbers of Mexicans and French soldiers – who were offered incentives to stay. The rest of the army was also seeing changes, and by early 1867 the Imperial army had grown, on paper, to 18 battalions of infantry; nine battalions of *Cazadores*; ten regiments of cavalry (including one of hussars and one of Guard Empress Dragoons); an artillery consisting of four garrison and eight field batteries; the engineer corps with three companies of sappers; the Municipal Guard of Mexico City consisting of an infantry battalion and a cavalry squadron; the Gendarmerie, and the Palace Guard. This impressive total con-



Most of the cities shown were attacked and/or occupied during the intervention. Some Mexican states bore the name of the states capital, e.g. Chihuahua, Durango, Oaxaca, Puebla. Other capitals had different names, for instance Monterrey in the state of Nuevo Leon and Saltillo in Coahuila. National Guard units had their city's or state's name. The length of Mexico is crossed by the eastern and western ranges of the Sierra Madre mountains interspersed with valleys and a broad central plateau north of Querétaro to the American border. As can be seen, the distances were great and, for the French, the roads were never safe from ambush.



Mexican Republican Army:
1: Private, Field Arty., 1856-69
2: Private, 6th Line Inf. Bn., 1856-69
3: Private, 3rd Bn. Mobile Nat. Gd., 1862

Mexican Republican Army:

1: Engineer officer, 1863-67

2: Private, Line Inf., 1856-69

3: Private, 2nd Morelia Bn., Nat. Gd., 1863

3

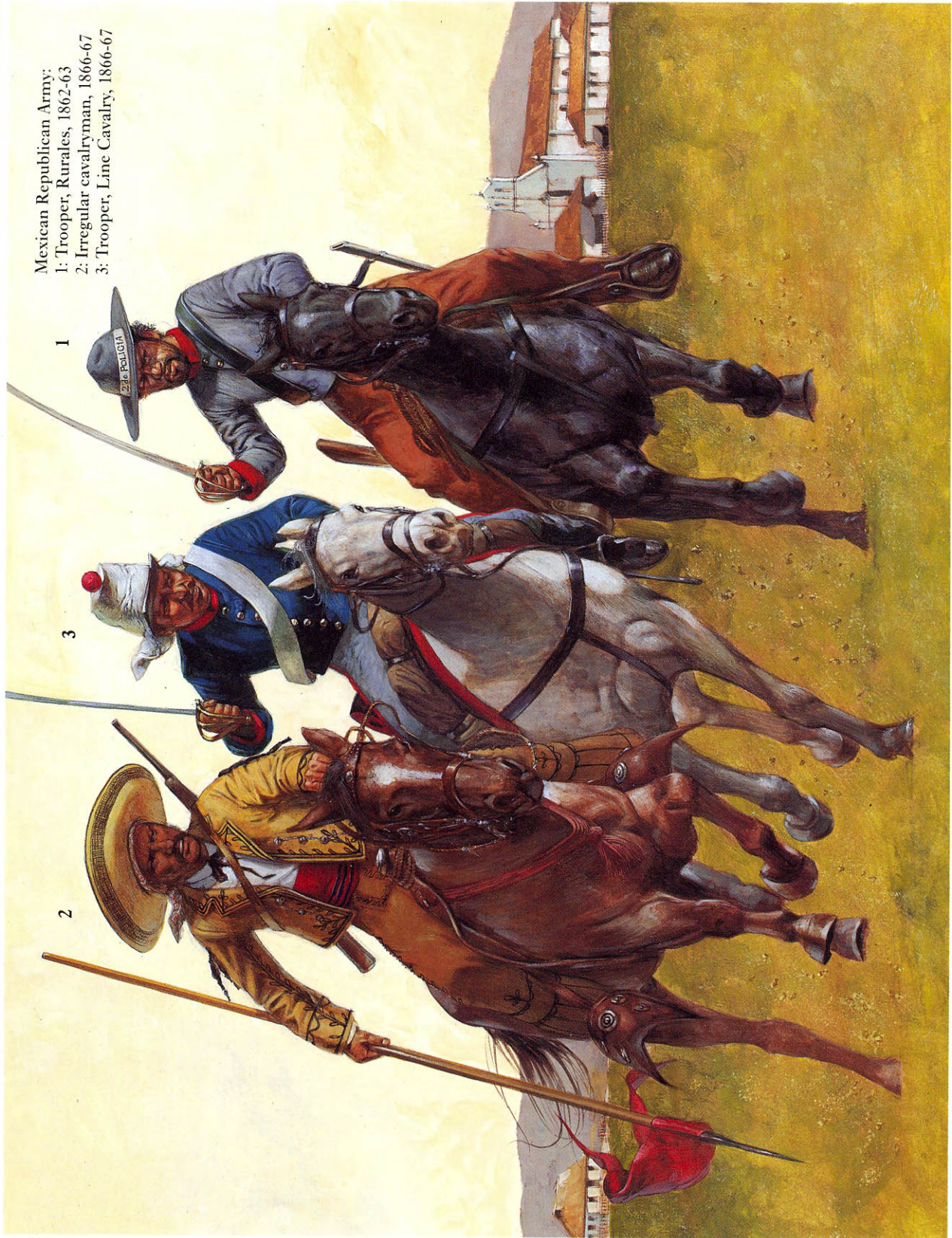
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1



Mexican Republican Army:

- 1: Trooper, Rurales, 1862-63
- 2: Irregular cavalryman, 1866-67
- 3: Trooper, Line Cavalry, 1866-67



Mexican Republican Army:
1: State militiaman, 1863-67
2: Infantry private, 1866-67
3: Pte., Supremos Poderes Bn., 1867





French Army.
1: Private, Line Inf., 1863-67
2: Cpl., Foreign Legion, 1863
3: Private, Chasseurs a pied, 1863-67

Mexican Imperial Army:
1: Private, Infantry, 1863-65
2: Trooper, Cavalry, 1863-65
3: Trooper, 1st Sqn. Contra-Guerrillas, 1865-67



Mexican Imperial Army:
1: Palatine Guardsman, 1865-67
2: Jäger, Austrian Legion, 1865
3: Private, Belgian Legion, 1865





Mexican Imperial Army:
1: Pte., 2nd Inf. Bn., 1866-67
2: Pte., Cazadores de Mexico, 1866-67
3: Officer, Cazadores de Mexico, 1866-67

cealed the fact that many battalions had only 200 or 300 men, and that few foreigners had chosen to re-enlist. An estimated 5,700 Mexicans died fighting for Maximilian's empire.

Weapons

The weapons carried by the Imperial troops were provided by the French – around 14,000 muskets and 1,000 carbines being supplied between October and December 1863 alone. There were further shipments, and by 1866 it was estimated that some 46,000 muskets had been distributed to the Imperial forces. These muzzle-loading percussion weapons would have been either smoothbore French infantry muskets which had been upgraded to the rifled system in 1857, or the M1857 itself. In the latter part of the intervention rifles of various origins were issued. In 1866 some *Cazadores de Mexico* battalions had a mixture of arms, the 1st Battalion carrying Belgian short rifles with sword bayonets, the 2nd and 3rd having Enfield rifles with sword bayonets, the 7th being armed with an unspecified American rifle, and the 9th with Belgian short rifles and sword bayonets. French M1853 carbines had also been upgraded in 1857. The sabres were the French M1822. Cavalry lances had white pennants.

Imperial Mexican gunners did not have rifled artillery, instead they used the older smoothbore M1853 'Napoleon', and some M1827 Valée system cannon supplied by France. They appear never to have been armed with rifled artillery, nor trained to use it. When the French evacuated they took their rifled cannon with them, leaving the Imperial artillery outgunned by the Republicans.

Uniforms

From the time of their formation in 1863 the regular Imperial troops had uniforms furnished by the French. The resulting army dress was a curious combination of Mexican style and elaborate French fashion. The basic tunic was of the same general style as the Mexican M1856, but could have the French-style epaulettes. While dark blue appears to have been the ground colour for the majority of units, one could find, for example the 11th Line Battalion in light grey with red collar, cuffs and piping; the 3rd Light Battalion wearing a dark green frock coat with yellow cuff laces and white trousers; the 1st Cavalry



Gen. Tomás Mejía, Mexican Imperial Army, in the full dress uniform worn up to November 1865. (Musée royal de l'Armée, Brussels)

in a red coatee faced dark blue with white lace and buttons and dark blue trousers with a red stripe. Sketches by Capt. Vanson in 1865 (an important source for this, as for the Crimean War), show dark blue coats for infantry, with sky-blue collar and cuffs in one case, and red or white trousers. Cavalry were shown in short single-breasted jackets with French-style baggy trousers and soft black leather 'false boots'. A coloured sketch of a cavalryman shows a plain green jacket, and grey trousers with red piping and black 'false boots'. Artillery and engineers had similar uniforms to the French. The *képi* or the leather shako, nearly always with a white sun cover or curtain, were worn.

On 1 November 1865 Maximilian decreed new uniforms for his army; over fifty dress, undress and field uniforms were specified for the various Imperial troops. The following sample gives details of the main features:

Line infantry: red single-breasted blouse (Austrian-inspired, with visible pocket flaps) with green cuffs



Gen. Miramon, the commander of the Mexican Imperial Army, seen here wearing the November 1865 regulation full dress uniform. (Musée royal de l'Armée, Brussels)

and collar trimmed with brass buttons; green trousers with red stripes, or white trousers in hot weather; short white gaiters, black belts holding a black cartridge box and a bayonet frog, and a straw hat with a fairly narrow brim and red band.

Cavalry of the Line: Same uniform but with white metal buttons, baggy trousers with buttons on the outside of the leg.

Artillery: As for the infantry, but the blouse dark blue with crimson collar and cuffs, and dark blue trousers with crimson stripe.

Engineers: As for the infantry, but dark blue blouses with black collar and cuffs, dark blue trousers with crimson stripes.

Imperial Gendarmerie: Dark blue jackets with sky-blue collar and cuffs, dark blue trousers with sky-blue stripes, dark blue *képi* with sky-blue band and white piping, silver buttons. In the field – tan trousers, brown 'Russian' boots, grey *sombrero* with a dark blue band.

Presidial cavalry companies: Straw hat as the Line infantry and cavalry with a green band, green jacket with a standing collar of the same colour and white metal buttons, natural leather trousers.

Invalid battalion: dark blue frock and trousers, dark blue *képi* with white piping, silver buttons.

Ensigns had one lace (in silver or gold according to button colour) edging the cuffs and on the *képi*, lieutenants two, captains three, commandant four, lieutenant-colonels five in gold and silver alternating, colonels five. Commandants and above had crimson sashes, with gold or silver tassels for lieutenant-colonels and colonels.

The most colourful unit was the Emperor's Imperial Palace Guard – his 'Palatine Guard' – in resplendent Germanic-style gala dress consisting of a silver helmet surmounted by a gilt Mexican eagle, scarlet tunic with broad silver lace with a green central line, white leather breeches and high black patent leather boots. The bearded members of the Guard had been wearing this uniform for some months before the regulation made it official.

Maximilian's choice of the red uniform brought his Mexican troops close to mutiny. Red was the colour of the Republicans and Liberals, for whom Maximilian's Conservative allies had nothing but scorn. Whatever the Emperor's motive it was hardly a wise choice, and caused much discontent within his army. This measure profoundly injured the feelings of old soldiers who would have preferred to continue wearing the French style rather than Maximilian's abhorred red uniforms. Nevertheless some units had to wear it. The 1st (Emperor's) Battalion wore the new red blouse but had a *képi* rather than the straw hat, which does not appear to have found much favour with regulars. The 2nd Line Battalion was sketched by Capt. Vanson in 1866 wearing the new blouse with turn-down collar bearing the numeral '2' and a *képi* with a white cover. In theory, the army should have been wearing the new order of dress by May 1866; in fact, many units still had the French style uniforms in the spring of 1867. The artillery still had their old uniforms, some cavalry had green or dark blue jackets, while some infantry units still had dark blue trimmed with red. The Celaya Battalion got around the difficulty by wearing brown blouses.

The *Cazadores de Mexico* battalions raised in 1866 had a grey hat with green band and brim edging;

a dark blue blouse with green bugle badges or tabs on the collar and green pointed chevrons at the cuffs, and white metal buttons; a grey Zouave vest edged green, and a light blue sash worn under the blouse; grey baggy trousers with green piping, white gaiters, and brown or black belts. The undress cap was a *képi*, probably blue with green band and piping. The 'red' hussar regiment formed from Austro-Hungarian volunteers had a red uniform with white or silver braid. The Municipal Guard of Mexico had a white hat and plume, a dark blue tunic with red collar, epaulettes and piping and white metal buttons, and dark blue trousers piped red. The Imperial state militias were to wear light grey with dark blue or red facings. The Imperial *Rurales* wore a grey Mexican costume trimmed with crimson; and the 'half soldier, half bandit' *Exploradores* simply wore their national costume, including an embroidered *sombrero*.

Imperial Mexican general officers were usually photographed in dark blue uniforms with collar, cuffs and lapels covered with elaborate gold laurel and palm pattern embroidery. The November 1865 regulations called for a dark blue frock without lapels with the same embroidery as the full dress, gold epaulettes and crimson sash. The undress uniform was a dark blue frock coat with moderate embroidery and a dark blue *képi* with gold lace.

FOREIGN CONTINGENTS

Maximilian was the younger brother of the Emperor Franz-Josef of Austria-Hungary. Maximilian's wife Charlotte-Amélie, usually called Carlota in Mexico, was the daughter of Leopold, King of the Belgians. A result of this match was the arrival in Mexico of the 8,500-strong 'Imperial Mexican Corps of Austrian and Belgian Volunteers' in late 1864 and early 1865.

The Austrian contingent of 6,800 men was organized as follows: three *Jäger* (rifle) battalions each of six companies; the 'Emperor Maximilian' hussar regiment (five squadrons); an *Uhlan* (lancer)

Count Bombelles, commandant of the Palatine Guards of the Mexican Imperial Guard,

c. 1865–1866. He is shown here in the officer's full dress uniform. (Musée royal de l'Armée, Brussels)

regiment (five squadrons); three mountain artillery batteries armed with 3-pdr. guns; two pioneer companies, gendarmerie, etc. Volunteers came from all parts of the Danube Monarchy, and beyond – including several hundred Polish refugees from the ill-fated uprising of 1863. It was hoped that these men would settle in Mexico, as a result bachelors of the Roman Catholic faith were preferred.

The Austrian corps was brigaded with Mexican Imperial units to form the 2nd Territorial Division, under the command of the Austrian Maj. Gen. Thun, in Puebla. Usually, one or two Austrian rifle com-



panies, with cavalry and artillery support and Mexican auxiliaries, operated as flying columns in typical counter-insurgency fashion. The Austrian contingent was mostly deployed in eastern Mexico, where it gave good service. However, by the end of 1866 many men were disheartened by events as the French withdrew; and upon learning that they were to be put



under the command of the Mexican Gen. Marquez they protested, resulting in the dissolution of the Austro-Belgian Volunteer Corps in December 1866. Of the remaining 4,500 Austrians, 3,428 went back to Europe. About a thousand joined the Mexican Imperial army, where they formed the core of the 18th Line Infantry and the new 'Red Hussars' Regiment. These two Austro-Mexican units did not follow Maximilian to Querétaro, but stayed in Mexico City and only surrendered on 21 June 1867. Less than half of the Austrians who had remained in Mexico returned to Europe by the end of 1867.

For uniforms, the Austrians (most of whom grew beards and cultivated a 'wild' appearance) in all units wore a dark blue blouse, a practical garment with turn-down collar and four outside pockets. With the exception of the cavalry, all wore either light grey hats (with a grey plume for *jägers*, red for artillery, white for pioneers) to which white sun covers could be attached, or simple red side caps with fold-down visors. Vests and baggy trousers were dark red, with grey gaiters. All ranks had brown overcoats, with a hood buttoned to the collar. Buttons and braid were white (silver for officers). The Hussars had tight red breeches (with white/silver Austrian knots); black Hungarian boots; small grey Hungarian felt hats with a feather; and dark green *attilas* with white/silver braid, hung pelisse-style over the left shoulder when wearing the blue blouse. The *Ulhans* had baggy dark green trousers with a red stripe; and dark green jackets with red cuffs, collar patches and piping, worn pelisse-style over the shoulder with the blue blouse. Two types of white-topped 'Polish' lancer caps were worn, one with a fur trim around the bottom, the other resembling the British lancer's cap. On campaign straw *sombreros* were often worn instead of the regulation headgear. All Austrians were armed with Lorenz firearms – short rifles for foot troops, pistols for cavalry – and sidearms. Officers sometimes had revolvers of various makes. The *Uhlans* also had lances with red-white-green pennants. All belts were of black leather.

The Belgian contingent, often called the Belgian

Palatine Guard of the Mexican Imperial Guard, 1865–1866, undress uniform: green frock coat with scarlet cuffs, silver

buttons, green trousers with red stripe, white képi with green band and piping. (Musée royal de l'Armée, Brussels)

Legion, was a two-battalion infantry regiment of 1,500 men which arrived in Mexico during December 1864 and January 1865. The grenadiers were grouped into an 'Empress' Battalion and the voltigeurs in a 'King of the Belgians' Battalion and sent north. Uniforms consisted of a black round hat, a dark blue tunic with brass buttons, and light blue-grey trousers. The hat, tunic, and trousers were trimmed with red lace for the grenadiers, green lace for the voltigeurs, white lace for musicians, and gold (black for undress) lace cords for officers. While in Mexico, grey *képis* with a dark blue band were adopted with white covers, white linen trousers and gaiters were also worn in the field.

The Belgians were unlucky in Mexico. They lost 300 men in their first engagement at Tacámbero, but later had more success. Marshal Bazaine had, like some Frenchmen, a profound animosity towards Belgians and this brought the legion some undeserved slander. On 12 December 1866 the Belgian Legion was dissolved, and 754 survivors reached Belgium in March 1867.

Another foreign unit was the 450-man Egyptian Battalion, this was sent to Mexico in February 1863 by the Bey of Egypt to relieve French troops in Veracruz. It was believed that the black Sudanese soldiers would stand a better chance than Europeans of surviving the ravages of yellow fever. They were assigned to pacify the unhealthy, low-lying state of Veracruz, which they did by a reign of terror, giving no quarter. Nevertheless, they were highly praised by the French and considered 'the most orderly' of the Imperial troops. They lost 126 killed, wounded and deserted before returning to Alexandria in May 1867. The enlisted men's uniform comprised a white jacket, baggy trousers and gaiters, red sash, and red fez with black tassel.

Organized in two cavalry squadrons from October 1862, Colonel Du Pin's corps of Contra-Guerrillas grew to a peak of nearly 850 men in two cavalry squadrons, four infantry companies and a two-gun mountain artillery battery, by June 1864. It was considered part of the Imperial Mexican forces and a necessary evil by French officers. Of all the desperados on both sides during these terrible years, few could match the men of this corps. The commander himself would announce his troops' pacification programme when arriving in a town: 'I am Colonel



Artillery (left) and infantry (right) officers of the Imperial Army, c. 1866, in uniform, with a seated friend. (Musée royal de l'Armée, Brussels)

Du Pin. Obey or you are dead! All resistance is futile . . . I protect the good but have no mercy for evil men [the Republicans]. I kill men, I rape women, I murder children; I exterminate the enemy by fire, by steel and by blood; remember my words!' Opinion may be divided as to whether these were empty threats; but Du Pin executed enough Republican officers for their widows to put a sizeable reward on his head. He was a savagely harsh but brilliant officer of undaunted courage, leading a mixed bag of cut-throat adventurers who knew no discipline except his word. As Mrs Williamson observed, their brutality 'insured the submission of the people [but] was not likely to engender loyalty'.

In 1862–1863 the uniform of the Contra Guerrillas was a *sombrero* laced with silver; a grey vest with sky-blue cuffs cut to a curved point; grey trousers with sky-blue stripe and yellow leather strapping, and silver buttons. From about 1864 mounted troops wore a grey or black felt *sombrero*; a red dolman with



dark blue cuffs and collar, brass buttons and trimmed with black braid; off-white or sand-coloured loose trousers; and brown leather boots with Mexican spurs. When the second squadron was raised it wore sky-blue dolman with red cuffs and collar and yellow cords. All were armed with sabres and revolvers. Artillerymen had yellow crossed cannon and a grenade on the sleeve of their dolman. The foot troops had a *sombrero* or a red *chéchia* with black tassel, red Zouave jacket and vest trimmed with black, white trousers and gaiters. They were armed with muskets and bayonets. All mounted and foot troops wore a red sash. This uniform earned them the name *diabolos colorados* – ‘the Red Devils’.

Finally, a number of Confederate officers and men took refuge in Mexico in 1865, bringing with them everything that could be transported (even cannon), and sided with the Imperial government. They did not form distinct units and their influence on the Imperial army was negligible.

Flags

Imperial units used their version of the red, white and green tricolour of Mexico. In the centre was the eagle and snake motif in natural colours, wearing the Imperial Crown with IMPERIO MEXICANO and unit designations below. The staff had a golden imperial eagle instead of a spearhead finial.

CONCLUSION

The failure of the French intervention confirmed the independence from Europe of Latin American countries. In Mexico, the Republican soldiers, with no foreign army on their side, had militarily outmanoeuvred the European corps and forced them to evacuate, before quickly vanquishing the last European-led Imperial Mexican forces and their puppet emperor. The lessons of the disastrous ‘Mexican Adventure’ were clear: the days of large-scale European military interventions and empire-building on the American continent were a thing of the past.

Infantryman of the Municipal Guard Battalion of Mexico City, Imperial Army, c. 1866. (Musée royal de l’Armée, Brussels)

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THE PLATES

A1: Private, Field Artillery, Mexican Republican Army, 1856–1869

The 1853 dress of the artillery and engineers was amended in 1856, the artillery having a single-

breasted coatee with bombs at the collar and double pocket flaps inspired by the Spanish artillery. For full dress, shako cords were worn. (Regulations of 20 June 1853, 29 April and 27 August 1856)

A2: Private, 6th Line Infantry Battalion, Mexican Republican Army, 1856–1869

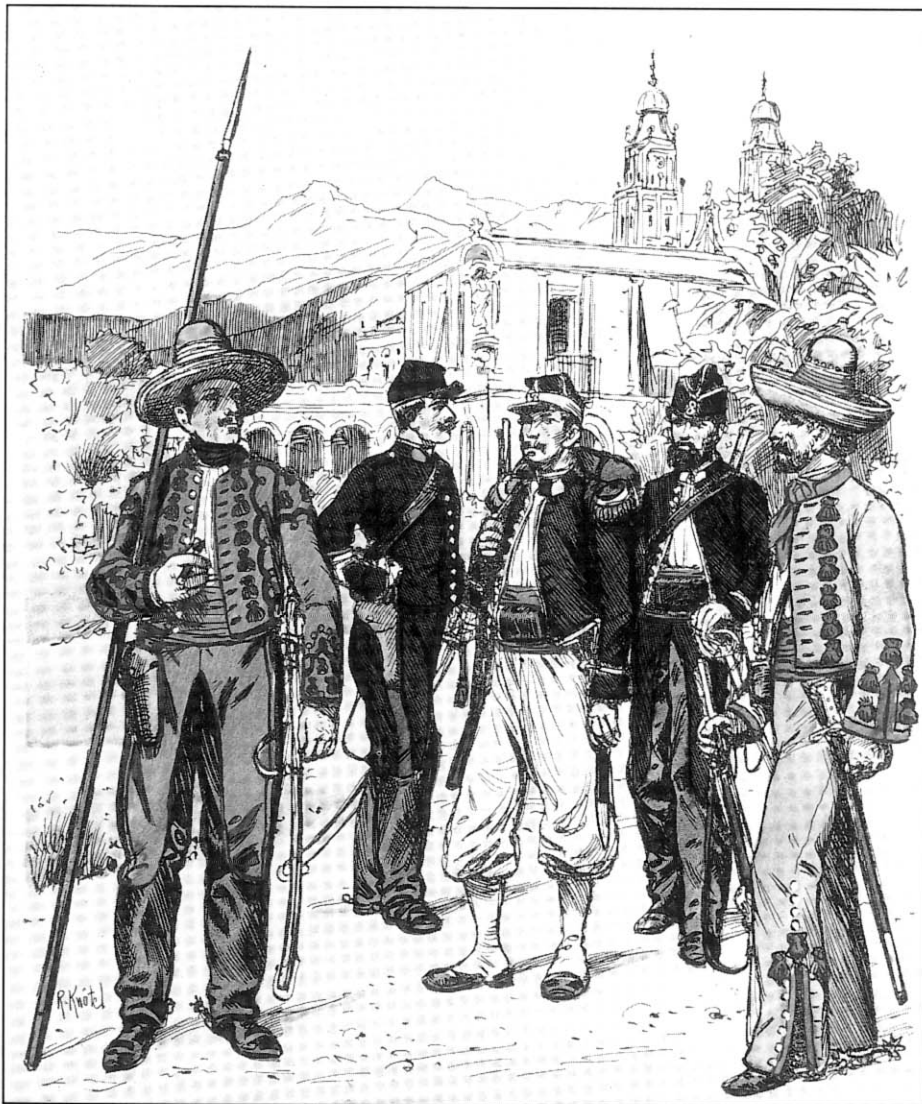
The 1856 regulation full dress uniform for infantry was the simple short tunic and trousers with scarlet cords on the black leather shako. The only unit distinction was the regiment's brass number on the shako. The basic equipment of Mexican foot troops comprised white cross belts for the bayonet and a plain black cartridge box with a waist-belt. (Regulation of 29 April 1856)

A3: Private, 3rd Battalion, Mobile National Guard, Mexican Republican Army, 1862

The Mobile National Guard raised in Mexico City during 1862 were assigned this blue uniform with the large cuff laces as a distinction. The battalion number was worn on the black leather shako, with a green pompon. (Decree of 11 June 1862)

B1: Engineer officer, Mexican Republican Army, c. 1863–1867

Most photos of officers of the Republican army show them in double-breasted undress frock coats and *képis*. This figure is based on the photo of Lt. Col. Emilio Rodriguez, a senior Corps of Engineers officer. Note the twisted point of the cuff, then very



Imperial Army, 1867. From left to right: (1) Lancer of the Empress Regiment in Mexican-style dress consisting of grey sombrero with white and crimson trim, light crimson jacket trimmed with black, light crimson sash and light crimson trousers strapped with black leather. (2) Artillery NCO wearing dark blue képi with red piping, dark blue jacket with red collar tab and brass buttons, dark blue trousers with broad red stripe and black 'false boots'. (3) Chasseur of the 3rd Battalion wearing dark blue képi with yellow band and piping, dark blue jacket with yellow collar tab and piping, brass buttons, green epaulettes with yellow crescent, red sash, white trousers and gaiters. (4) Mounted chasseur of the 8th Cavalry wearing dark blue fatigue cap with yellow piping and tassel, dark blue jacket with yellow collar tab and piping, brass buttons, red sash, dark blue trousers with yellow stripes strapped with black leather. (5) Querétaro Rural Guard in grey Mexican style dress trimmed with light crimson. Plate by Richard Knötel, based on the recollections of veterans. (Private collection)

popular on Mexican uniforms. (Regulations of 20 June 1853, 29 April, 27 August and 2 December 1856; photo in Tronconso's *Diario*)

B2: Private, Line Infantry, Mexican Republican Army, 1856–1869

The 1856 regulations specified the field and garrison dress of white cotton as shown, with blue piping, although this extra trim may not have always been applied. The *képi*, on the other hand, would often have a white cover, and sandals would often be worn. The *soldadera* was not a mere 'camp follower' but an essential part of the support and logistics of Mexican armies. (Regulation of 29 April 1856)

B3: Private, 2nd Morelia Battalion, Mexican Republican Army, 1863

In principle State National Guard battalions, such as those from Puebla, wore uniforms similar to the regular army, but in practice this was not always possible. The 2nd Morelia State Battalion was described at the 1863 siege of Puebla wearing the undress headgear, red shirts and white trousers. Black accoutrements were common among National Guard units. (*Reglamento para la Guardia Nacional del Estado ... de Puebla*, 26 May 1862, reissued 23 May 1867; Tronconso's *Sitio*)

C1: Trooper, Corps of Rurales, Mexican Republican Army, 1862–1863

The grey, faced with scarlet, cavalry jacket was worn with typical Mexican clothing. (*Los Cuerpos Rurales*, Mexico, 1889; Decree of 6 May 1861)

C2: Trooper, irregular cavalry, Mexican Republican Army, 1866–1867

Irregular cavalry formations, usually grouped in 'guerrilla' bands, continually harassed the French and Imperial troops. This figure is based on the nearly complete suit of a captured trooper, now in the Musée de l'armée, Paris.

C3: Trooper, Line Cavalry, Mexican Republican Army, 1866–1867

By the closing stages of the French intervention the Republican regular cavalry had abandoned the grey and green 1856 uniform for blue or grey jackets with red cuffs and collar. (Several battle paintings at the



Two night watch police of Mexico City during the Imperial regime, c. 1866. The uniform was dark blue with white trim, the

trousers having a white stripe. Note the hanger. (Musée royal de l'Armée, Brussels)

Museo Nacional de Historia, and others reproduced in *El Ejercito Mexicano*, Mexico, 1979)

D1: Private, state militia infantry, Mexican Republican Army; southern Mexico, 1863–1867

State militiamen in the south, mostly poor peasants, often wore their own clothes and lacked modern arms and supplies. This figure wears a white cotton costume, sandals, *sombrero* with red band, and is armed with a machete and an old flintlock 'Brown Bess'. (Miguel Covarrubias, *Mexico South: The Isthmus of Tehuantepec*, London, c. 1960)

D2: Private, infantry, Mexican Republican Army, 1866–1867

By the last year of the intervention supplies were pouring in from the United States to some of the National Guard battalions from northern Mexico. This figure wears a US Army blue four-button 'sack coat' and *képi* with white cover, sky blue US Army trousers turned up Mexican style and showing the

white cotton undergarments, and sandals; he has received a US Springfield rifled musket and black US equipment. (Miller, *Arms across the border . . .*; Albert Hans, *Querétaro*, Paris, 1869)

D3: Private, Supremos Poderes Battalion, Mexican Republican Army, 1867

This was the élite Republican infantry unit during the last year of the war and was part of Gen. Escobedo's Army of the North. 'Almost all of them were tall', wrote José Blasio; and observers were impressed by the no-nonsense bearing of the men, enhanced by the unit's simple grey uniform, with only the yellow cuff lace denoting élite soldiers. They had black shakos and, by late 1866, Henry breech-

loading '16-shot' rifles. (Hans, *Querétaro*; Blasio, José Luis, *Maximilian Emperor of Mexico: Memoirs of his Private Secretary*, Yale, 1934)

E1: Private, French Line Infantry, 1863-1867

This figure is based on a sketch of the 95th Line in Durango during 1865. Generally, French infantrymen wore their standard uniform when marching across Mexico, with *képis* under white covers. Straw hats and white baggy trousers might be worn instead. At times the light blue-grey overcoats were worn.

E2: Corporal, French Foreign Legion, 1863

This legionnaire wears the typical French infantry campaign dress as it appeared at the famous battle at



Imperial Army, 1867. From left to right: (1) Private, Municipal Guard of Mexico, in grey hat with white band, dark blue frock coat with red collar, epaulettes and piping edging the top of the cuffs, the front and around the skirt, white metal buttons, dark blue pants with red stripes. (2) Private, 18th Line Infantry Battalion, in dark blue képi piped red with a red band, dark blue jacket with red collar tab, shoulder strap and piping edging the top of the cuffs, the front and around the skirt, white metal buttons, white trousers and gaiters. (3) Emperor Maximilian in the dress he wore at Querétaro: a grey sombrero laced with silver, a dark blue frock coat with red piping and silver lace and buttons, red sash, dark blue trousers with red stripes. (4) 'Red Hussars' officer wearing a completely red uniform trimmed with silver lace, grey cap with a broad silver lace and red sash. Plate by Richard Knötel, based on the recollections of veterans. (Private collection)

Camerone fought on 30 April 1863. There, the sixty or so men of Capt. Danjou's 3rd Company, 1st Battalion, *Régiment Étranger*, trapped by a far superior Mexican force, fought at odds of about thirty to one. Nearly all the legionnaires were eventually killed or wounded; but even the last few would not surrender and, when they had fired their last rounds, they charged the enemy with fixed bayonets. Out of 65 officers and men, only 13 survived. The severely wounded drummer, Casimir Lai, managed to evade capture and was the only one to make it back to the French lines. This action became legendary, and to this day the heroic stand at Camerone is celebrated in the Legion as the corps' holy day. The *képi* bears the regimental number on the band in red, but was usually obscured by the white 'havelock' cover. The *veste* or everyday jacket bore three-point red tabs on the collar, red junior NCO rank stripes, and sometimes had the tunic epaulettes attached. The M1831 sabre of NCOs and flank companies was only worn by the former, if at all, when in the field. Sashes were in various unregulated colours. The white trousers and gaiters were as worn in Algeria. (Louis Delperrier, 'The Legion at Camerone, 1863', *Military Illustrated*, No. 22, Dec. '89-Jan. '90)

E3: Private, French Chasseurs à pied, 1863-1867

Campaign dress, with white *képi* cover. This was probably the appearance of the 18th Battalion of *Chasseurs à pied* which served on the Texas border in 1865. (E. Nussbaum, 'L'infanterie au Mexique', *Le Passepoil*, 1935)

F1: Private, infantry, Mexican Imperial Army, 1863-1865

The uniforms worn by the Imperial army – mostly imported from France – were more varied than those of their Republican opponents, and could feature epaulettes, red trousers, and collars and cuffs of various colours. (From a sketch by Capt. Vanson, Musée de l'Armée, Paris)

F2: Trooper, cavalry, Mexican Imperial Army, 1863-1865

There were some outlandishly dressed cavalry units in the Imperial army, including one of 'Horse Grenadiers' with a brass helmet with black mane,



Lt. Ferdinand Schram, Lancer officer of the Austrian Legion, photographed in Vienna before his departure for Mexico in 1864, hence showing a proper 'regulation dress': white 'Polish' cap with black fur trim and eagle feather, dark green tunic with red collar patches, silver buttons and cord on left shoulder (common to all

Austrian Legion officers), red (pointed for cavalry) cuffs laced silver, red piping edging the collar, pocket flaps, front and skirts; dark green baggy trousers with broad red stripe. He wears a black tie with silver fringes, an item worn by all Austrian Legion officers. His pouch belt is laced with silver. (Ph. 21708, Austrian Army Museum, Vienna)



Capt. Ferdinand Bräunel, Lancers of the Austrian Legion, photographed in Puebla, c. 1866, showing how uniforms could change on service in Mexico. He wears his lancer tunic open showing

a non-regulation vest, and he sports tight tan leather breeches. Note the képi (probably green laced silver) which has replaced the lancer cap. (Ph. 21691, Austrian Army Museum, Vienna)

blue coatee with red turnbacks, white breeches and high boots. In the field, however, most units appear to have been dressed simply, as illustrated. (From a sketch by Capt. Vanson, Musée de l'Armée, Paris)

F3: Trooper, 1st Squadron, Contra-Guérillas, 1865-1867

After an original uniform of the 1st Squadron in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris.

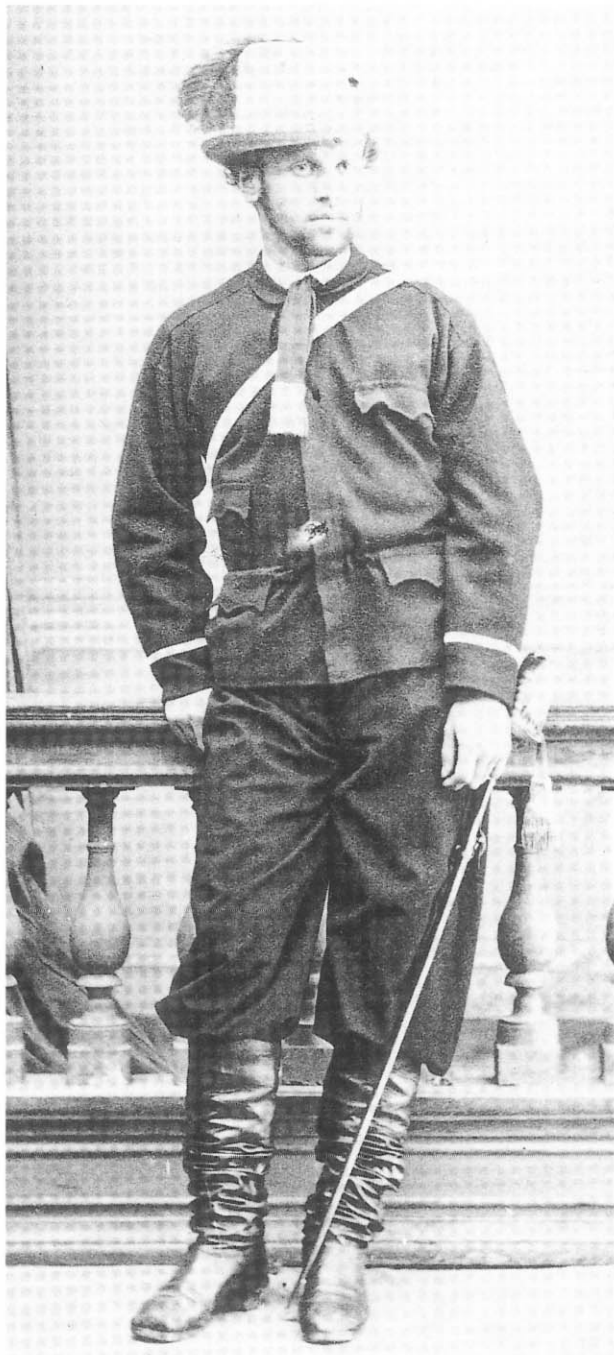


Austrian Legion Hussar field officers photographed in Puebla, probably in late 1865. Standing at left is Count Karl Khevenhüller-Metsch, later to command the 'Red Hussars' of the Mexican Imperial Army in 1867. He wears the full dress uniform: grey felt hat with eagle feather, dark green attila with silver braid, red Hungarian breeches and black boots, all decorated

with silver braid. His officer's black tie with silver fringes is tied into a neat bow. His cuffs appear to have the broad silver lace worn by majors. The officer seated at the lower right also wears the dress uniform, while the other two wear the blue service dress blouse; one has tan leather breeches. (Ph. 21725, Austrian Army Museum, Vienna)

G1: Guardsman, Imperial Palatine Guard, Mexican Imperial Army, 1865-1867

The full dress of the Imperial bodyguard shown here was a very Germanic apparition in the halls of Chapulpetec Castle, Mexico City. Each carried a different type of ceremonial halberd. (Regulations of 1 November 1865 in *Coleccion de layes . . . del Imperio*; watercolour by Lahalle, Musée de l'Armée, Paris)



Austrian Legion Artillery 2nd Lt. Josef Doner, photographed in Puebla, c. 1865, wearing the regulation uniform. Grey felt hat with a red plume for artillery, plain blue blouse with covered buttons, silver rank lace on

cuffs, dark red baggy trousers, black boots, red leather pouch belt laced silver, silver sword-knot, black tie with silver fringes. (Ph. 21717, Austrian Army Museum, Vienna)



A lieutenant of the Austrian Legion in Mexico, c. 1865–1866, showing a liberal interpretation of uniform regulations. His dark red cap with button-up visor and neck-flap is folded in a peculiar way; the blue blouse (two silver rank laces on cuffs) is worn open showing a non-

regulation white vest, and he has tight, light-coloured breeches – possibly tan – reinforced with black leather set in an unusual way, complete with riding crop. A poncho-like garment hangs on the chair. (Ph. 21710, Austrian Army Museum, Vienna)



G2: Jäger, Austrian Legion, 1865

The regulation dress was a serviceable, though warm, uniform. Hats were sometimes replaced by the straw *sombrero*. NCOs wore broad white stripes on the upper sleeve while officers had silver laces above the cuffs. The officer's silver pouches bore the cipher 'MIM' (Maximilian Emperor Mexico), and they had silver sword-knots. (No detailed study exists as yet of the Austrian Legion. Erwin A. Schmidl's introduction of Lt. Fleissig's memoirs published for the Austrian State Archives' *Mitteilungen*, 1984, comes the closest. Dr. Schmidl kindly supplied the Austrian Legion's uniform data for this book.)

G3: Private, King of the Belgians Battalion, Belgian Legion, 1865

The fancy uniform with high crowned hat and laced tunic was often laid aside. This Belgian volunteer, taken from an 1865 sketch, wears simply the fatigue

Various orders of dress of the Belgian Legion in 1865. Officers are at the centre, with elaborate gold lace on the sleeves and chest.

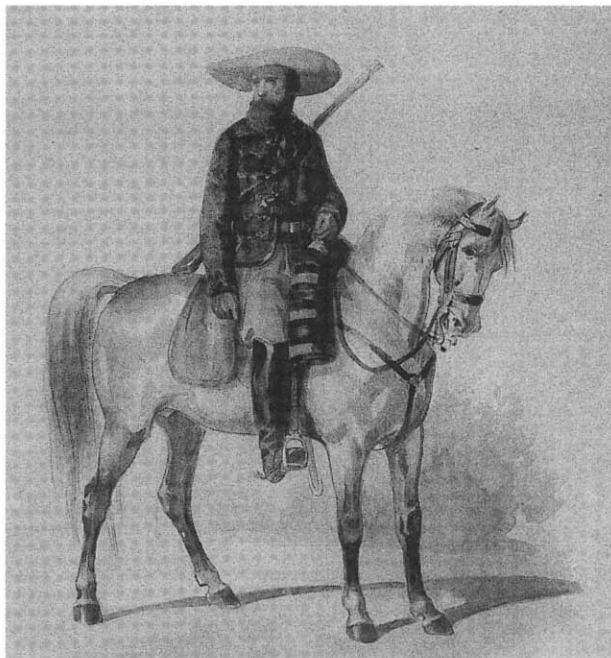
Képis with white sun covers and white baggy trousers were added in Mexico. (Musée royal de l'Armée, Brussels)

cap and a plain blue short jacket for everyday duties in Mexico City. (Sketch by Capt. Vanson, Musée de l'Armée, Paris; Albert Duchesne, *Au Service de Maximilien et de Charlotte*, Brussels, 1967; in English see: Funken, 'The Forgotten Legion', *Campaigns*, Jan.-Feb. 1981)

H1: Private, 2nd Infantry Battalion, Mexican Imperial Army, 1866-1867

According to Capt. Vanson, this unit wore a *képi* with white cover displaying the number '2'. Maximilian's hated red blouse is shown with '2' on the green turn-down collar, and has what appears to be green wings – an item not mentioned in the regulation. (Regulation

of 1 November 1865 in *Coleccion de leyes ... del Imperio*; Albert Hans, *Querétaro*, Paris, 1869; sketch by Capt. Vanson, Musée de l'Armée, Paris)



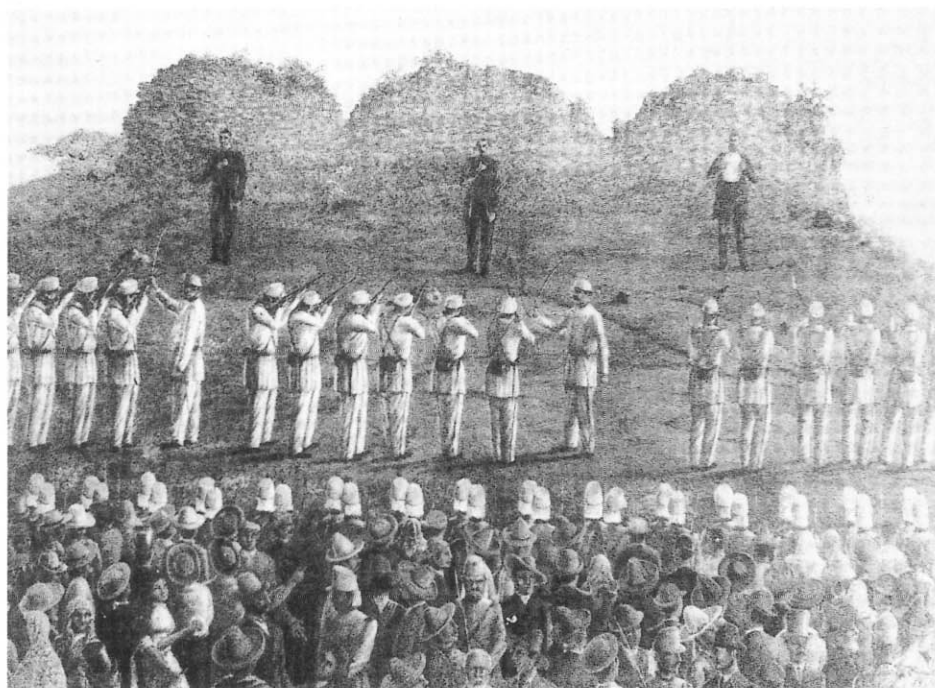
Above: Contra-Guerrilla of the 2nd Squadron, c. 1865, wearing a sky-blue dolman with red cuffs and yellow cords, red sash, sand-coloured breeches. Unsigned contemporary watercolour. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University)

H2: Private, Cazadores de Mexico, Mexican Imperial Army, 1866–1867

There was some variation in the blue blouse. It usually had green three-pointed collar patches and two green chevrons on the cuffs; but some sketches show green hunting horns instead, one chevron at the cuffs, or what appears to be a plain pointed cuff. The hue of green was bright rather than dark. The grey felt hat was edged with green and had green ribbons, with a Mexican green-white-red cockade bearing a silver horn badge at the centre. Accoutrements could be brown or black. (From sketches and notes by Capt. Vanson, Musée de l'Armée, Paris)

H3: Officer, Cazadores de Mexico, Mexican Imperial Army, 1866–1867

The officer's uniform was basically the same as the men's, except that the blue blouse had silver shoulder cords, silver and green cord and lace decorated the hat, and the belts and revolver cords were also silver and green. The grey trousers had a wide green band. (From sketches and notes by Capt. Vanson, Musée de l'Armée, Paris)



Execution of Maximilian (right) and Imperial generals Meijá (left) and Miramon (centre) at Querétaro, 19 June 1867. Painting after a period photo. (Museo Nacional de Historia, Mexico)

A Uniforme réglementaire de 1853 modifié par le règlement de 1856. Dans la mesure des articles disponibles, ce règlement couvrit tous les uniformes républicains jusqu'en 1869. A2 Comme le soldat précédent, celui-ci porte un uniforme de grande tenue selon le règlement de 1856. La seule distinction entre unités était le numéro en cuivre sur le shako. A3 Les unités mobiles de gardes nationaux formées à Mexico City portaient cet uniforme, avec le numéro de bataillon sur le shako.

B1 La plupart des photographies d'officiers républicains montrent des manteaux et képis de petite tenue à double boutonnage. Ce tableau s'est inspiré d'une photographie du Lt.Col. Rodriguez. Notez le détail de manchette, caractéristique de la mode mexicaine. B2 En uniforme de combat et de garnison ces vêtements blancs gansés de bleu (en théorie) étaient de rigueur. Le képi avait souvent une housse blanche et les sandales étaient pratiquement universelles. Les soldaderas n'étaient pas de simples suivives de camp ces femmes faisaient partie intégrante du soutien logistique des armées mexicaines. B3 Les unités de la Garde Nationale d'Etat portaient théoriquement un uniforme similaire à celui des Lignes, mais en pratique cela se produisait bien moins souvent. Cette figure du 2ème Bataillon Morelia est inspirée de témoignages.

C1 Costume mexicain typique porté par cette gendarmerie provinciale efficace qui s'opposa aux envahisseurs en cavalerie légère. C2 Typique des irréguliers qui hantaient les lignes de communication françaises et impériales. Cette figure est inspirée d'un costume capturé qui se trouve actuellement au Musée de l'Armée à Paris. C3 Exemple typique de la fin de la guerre des modifications de l'uniforme de cavalerie qui semblent avoir été introduites progressivement depuis 1862.

D1 Dans les provinces du Sud, les membres de la Milice d'Etat portaient souvent le costume des paysans les plus pauvres et utilisaient les armes de fortune sur lesquelles ils pouvaient mettre la main mêmes les armes à feu les plus rudimentaires étaient rares. D2 Soldat d'infanterie de l'une des unités équipées de surplus de l'armée américaine à la fin de la guerre. D3 L'unité d'infanterie d'élite de la République en 1867, armée du mortel fusil à répétition Henry.

E1 L'uniforme réglementaire de mars 1860 était porté au Mexique, mais toujours avec le képi officiellement abandonné à la place du shako, souvent avec une housse blanche, ou un chapeau de paille local. Un pantalon en lin blanc de coupe moins exagérée que le rouge réglementaire remplaçait ce dernier sur le terrain. E2 Uniforme de campagne typique tel qu'il était porté par l'un des héros de Camerone képi couvert, veste courte, pantalon blanc et guêtres. Le sabre coupe-choux M1831 était porté uniquement par les NCO, et encore pas toujours. Les ceintures étaient de diverses couleurs, non réglementées. E3 Uniforme de campagne avec distinctions de Chasseur comme le portait le 18ème bataillon à la frontière du Texas en 1865.

F1 Inspiré d'un croquis de Vanson. Les uniformes impérialistes étaient très variés ils alliaient des styles locaux aux modes françaises. F2 Uniforme de combat simple typique. Certains uniformes de grande tenue suivaient l'extravagant style européen. F3 L'uniforme germanique de grande tenue des gardes du palais de l'Empereur Maximilien.

G1 Inspiré d'un uniforme d'origine qui se trouve actuellement au Musée de l'Armée à Paris. Le 2ème Escadron portait du bleu ciel avec un parement rouge et des galons jaunes. Il s'agit du corps irrégulier meurtrier dirigé par le sauvage Colonel du Pin. G2 L'uniforme réglementaire était pratique mais chaud et le couvre-chef était quelquefois remplacé par le sombrero de paille que l'on retrouve partout. G3 Un croquis de 1865 illustre cet uniforme de combat pratique à la place de l'uniforme réglementaire qui comportait un chapeau à calotte haute et une tunique lacée.

H1 Inspiré d'un croquis de Vanson. C'est Maximilien qui choisit la blouse rouge une décision mal avisée, comme d'habitude, qui enragea ses soldats car le rouge était la couleur traditionnelle de leurs ennemis républicains. H2 On constatait des variations de détail dans ce corps certains avaient des écussons de col verts, d'autres des badges verts à cor de chasse, d'autres enfin des chevrons de manchette verts deux, un ou aucun. Inspiré d'un croquis de Vanson. H3 Inspiré de croquis de Vanson.

A1 Die 1853er Dienstiniform, wie sie durch die Vorschriften des Jahres 1856 abgeändert worden war. Diese Vorschriften galten, soweit es versorgungstechnisch möglich war, bis 1869 für alle republikanischen Uniformen. A2 Wie der vorige Soldat trägt auch dieser die komplette Paradeuniform laut der 1856er Vorschriften; das einzige Einheitskennzeichen ist die Messingnummer auf dem Tschako. A3 Die Einheiten der Mobilen Nationalgarde, die in Mexico City aufgestellt wurden, trugen diese Uniform mit der jeweiligen Bataillonsnummer auf dem Tschako.

B1 Auf den meisten Fotografien sind republikanische Offiziere in zweireihigen Interimsgehörcken und Käppis abgebildet. Dieses Bild beruht auf einer Fotografie von Lt.Col. Rodriguez. Man beachte das Detail an der Manschette, das für den mexikanischen Kleidungsstil charakteristisch ist. B2 Beim Feld- und Garnisonsanzug entsprach diese weiße, (theoretisch) blau paspelierete Kleidung den Vorschriften. Das Käppi hatte oft einen weißen Überzug, und man trug weitgehend Sandalen. Die Soldaderas zogen nicht einfach der Truppe nach, diese Frauen stellten einen wichtigen Teil der logistischen Unterstützung der mexikanischen Truppen dar. B3 Einheiten der staatlichen Nationalgarde trugen theoretisch Uniformen, die denen der Frontsoldaten sehr ähnlich waren, in der Praxis war das jedoch selten der Fall. Diese Abbildung eines Angehörigen des 2. Morelia-Bataillons beruht auf Augenzeugenberichten.

C1 Diese diensttaugliche Provinz-Gendarmerie, die die Angreifer als leichte Kavallerie bekämpfte, trägt typisch mexikanische Kleidung. C2 Die Kleidung dieser Figur ist typisch für die Freischärler, die die französischen und kaiserlichen Nachschublinien heimsuchten, und beruht auf einer eingekommenen Tracht, die heute im Musée de l'Armée in Paris ausgestellt ist. C3 Ein typisches Beispiel für die Änderungen der Kavallerieuniform, die seit 1862 allmählich vorgenommen worden waren, aus der Zeit gegen Kriegsende.

D1 In den südlichen Provinzen trug die Staatsmiliz oft die ärmlichste Bauernkleidung und hatte an Waffen nur, was gerade zur Hand war – selbst an den ältesten Gewehren herrschte Mangel. D2 Infanterist einer mehrerer Einheiten, die gegen Kriegsende aus Beständen aus den Reservelagern der US-Armee ausgerüstet wurden. D3 Die Elite-Infanterieeinheit der Republik 1867, die mit dem tödlichen Henry-Repetiergewehr bewaffnet war.

E1 Die Dienstiniform von März 1860 wurde in Mexiko getragen, doch stets mit dem offiziell abgeschafften Käppi anstelle des Tschako, oft mit einem weißen Überzug, oder auch dem einheimischen Strohhut. Im Feld trug man anstatt der roten Diensthosen lässiger geschnittene Hosen aus weißem Leinen. E2 Typischer Kampfanzug, wie ihn einer der Helden von Camerone trug: Käppi mit Überzug, kurze Veste, weiße Hosen und Gamaschen. Der Coup-choux-Säbel M1831 wurde, wenn überhaupt, nur von Unteroffizieren getragen. Die Schärpen hatten unterschiedliche Farben, da keine besondere vorgeschrieben war. E3 Kampfanzug mit Chasseur-Abzeichen, wie ihn das 18. Bataillon 1865 an der Grenze in Texas trug.

F1 Einer Vanson-Zeichnung nachempfunden. Die kaiserlichen Uniformen waren recht unterschiedlich, da einheimische Kleidungsstile mit der französischen Mode kombiniert wurden. F2 Typische, einfache Felduniform; bei einigen Paradeuniformen zeigten sich überschwengliche, europäische Stilrichtungen. F3 Die germanische Paradeuniform der Palastwache des Kaisers Maximilian.

G1 Einer Originaluniform nachempfunden, die heute im Musée de l'Armée in Paris ausgestellt ist. Die 2. Schwadron trug himmelblau mit roten Aufschlägen und gelbem Kordelbesatz. Dies war das mörderische Freischärlerkorps, das vom rohen Colonel Du Pin angeführt wurde. G2 Die Dienstiniform war zwar praktische, aber sehr warm, und die Kopfbedeckung wurde manchmal durch den allgegenwärtigen Strohsombrero ersetzt. G3 Eine Zeichnung aus dem Jahr 1865 zeigt diesen praktischen Feldanzug anstelle der Dienstiniform, die einen Hut mit hohem Kopf und eine geschnürte Tunika aufwies.

H1 Nach einer Vanson-Zeichnung. Maximilian hatte die rote Uniformjacke gewählt – eine typisch unüberlegte Entscheidung, die seine Soldaten erzürnte, da rot die traditionelle Farbe der republikanischen Gegner war. H2 In diesem Korps unterschieden sich die Uniformen in den Details, einige hatten grüne Kragstücke, einige Hornabzeichen; einige hatten zwei grüne Manschettenwinkel, einige einen, andere gar keine. Nach einer Vanson-Zeichnung. H3 Nach Vanson-

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