

Ecuador

PRE-HISPANIC ERA

Ecuador offers little archeological evidence of its preHispanic civilizations. Nonetheless, its most ancient artifacts-- remnants of the Valdivia culture found along the coast north of the modern city of Santa Elena in Guayas Province--date from as early as 3500 B.C.. Other major coastal archaeological sites are found in the provinces of Manabí and Esmeraldas; major sites in the Sierra are found in Carchi and Imbabura provinces in the north, Tungurahua and Chimborazo provinces in the middle of the Andean highlands, and Cañar, Azuay, and Loja provinces in the south. Nearly all of these sites are dated in the last 2,000 years. Large parts of Ecuador, including almost all of the Oriente, however, remain unknown territory to archaeologists.

Knowledge of Ecuador before the Spanish conquest is limited also by the absence of recorded history within either the Inca or pre-Inca cultures as well as by the lack of interest taken in Ecuador by the Spanish chroniclers. Before the Inca conquest of the area that comprises modern-day Ecuador, the region was populated by a number of distinct tribes that spoke mutually unintelligible languages and were often at war with one another. Four culturally related Indian groups, known as the Esmeralda, the Manta, the Huancavilca, and the Puná, occupied the coastal lowlands in that order from north to south. They were hunters, fishermen, agriculturalists, and traders. Trade was especially important among different coastal groups, who seem to have developed considerable oceanic travel, but the lowland cultures also traded with the peoples of the Sierra, exchanging fish for salt.

The Sierra was populated by elements, from north to south, of the Pasto, the Cara, the Panzaleo, the Puruhá, the Cañari, and the Palta cultures. These people lived mostly on mountainsides and in widely dispersed villages located in the fertile valleys between the Cordillera Occidental (Western Chain) and the Cordillera Oriental (Eastern Chain) of the Andes. The Sierra natives were a sedentary, agricultural people, cultivating maize, quinoa, beans, and many varieties of potatoes and squashes. The use of irrigation was prevalent, especially among the Cañari. A wide variety of fruits, including pineapples and avocados, was grown in the lower, warmer valleys. Historians believe that political organization centered around local chieftains who collaborated with one another in confederations or were subjected to "kings." Such local chiefs had considerable authority; they could raise armies, for example, and administer communal lands.

The Inca expansion northward from modern-day Peru during the late fifteenth century met with fierce resistance by several Ecuadorian tribes, particularly the Cañari, in the region around modern-day Cuenca; the Cara in the Sierra north of Quito; and the Quito, occupants of the site of the modern capital, after whom it was to be named. The conquest of Ecuador began in 1463 under the leadership of the ninth Inca, the great warrior Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui. In that year, his son Topa took over command of the army and began his march northward through the Sierra. After defeating the Quito, he moved southward along the coast, and from there he launched an extensive ocean journey that took him, depending on the account, to the Galápagos Islands or to the Marquesas Islands in Polynesia. Upon his return, he tried unsuccessfully to subdue the populations around the Gulf of Guayaquil and the island of Puná. By 1500 Topa's son, Huayna Capac, overcame the resistance of these populations and that of the Cara, and thus incorporated all of modern-day Ecuador into Tawantinsuyu, as the Inca empire was known.

The influence of these conquerors based in Cuzco (modern-day Peru) was limited to about a half century, or less in some parts of Ecuador. During that period, some aspects of life remained unchanged. Traditional religious beliefs, for example, persisted throughout the period of Inca rule. In other areas, however, such as agriculture, land tenure, and social organization, Inca rule had a profound effect despite its relatively short duration. Farming remained the major form of subsistence, but the Inca introduced a variety of new crops, including yucca, sweet potatoes, coca, and peanuts. The use of llamas and irrigation was expanded considerably. Largely in private hands previously, land became, in theory at least, the property of the Inca emperor. In practice, most land was held collectively by the *ayllu*, an agrarian community group headed by a *curaca*, that was the basic social grouping under the Inca. Within the *ayllu*, each domestic family unit was allotted a small plot of arable land to grow food for its own consumption. The state and the clergy also held a substantial amount of land, which was worked by the emperor's subjects as part of their obligatory public service.

Emperor Huayna Capac became very fond of Quito, making it a secondary capital of Tawantinsuyu and living out his elder years there before his death in about 1527. He preferred to rule through local *curacas* as long as they were willing to accept the divine authority of the Inca and to pay tribute. When he met opposition, the emperor dispersed large parts of local populations to other areas of the empire and replaced them with colonists who were brought from as far away as Chile. This wholesale movement of

populations helped spread Quechua, the language of Cuzco, into Ecuador. A standing army, a large bureaucracy, and a temporally important clergy further enforced the rule of the emperor.

Huayna Capac's sudden death from a strange disease, described by one Spanish chronicler as "probably smallpox or measles," precipitated a bitter power struggle between Huascar, a son borne by Huayna Capac's sister and thus the legitimate heir, and Atahualpa, a son who, although borne by a lesser wife, was reputedly his father's "favorite." This struggle raged during the half-decade before the arrival of Francisco Pizarro's conquering expedition in 1532. The key battle of this civil war was fought on Ecuadorian soil, near Riobamba, where Huascar's northbound troops were met and defeated by Atahualpa's southbound troops. Atahualpa's final victory over Huascar in the days just before the Spanish conquerors arrived resulted in large part from the loyalty of two of Huayna Capac's best generals, who were based in Quito along with Atahualpa. The victory remains a source of national pride to Ecuadorians as a rare case when "Ecuador" forcefully bettered a "neighboring country."

DISCOVERY AND CONQUEST

The discovery and conquest of Ecuador by Spanish forces in the early sixteenth century are adjuncts to the history of the conquest of Peru, the richest of the New World prizes won for the Spanish crown. The central figure of that history is Pizarro, an illiterate adventurer from Trujillo in the Spanish region of Extremadura, who had accompanied Vasco Núñez de Balboa in his crossing of the Isthmus of Panama to discover the Pacific in 1513. Eleven years later, Panamanian governor Pedro Arias de Avila ("Pedrarias") authorized Pizarro, in partnership with an equally questionable character, a Castilian named Diego de Almagro, and a priest named Fernando de Luque, financing to explore southward down the west coast of South America. Their first two voyages, in 1524 and 1526, ended in failure; not until the third voyage, launched in 1531, would the Peruvian prize be won and the Inca be conquered.

The first European to set foot on the territory of modern-day Ecuador was probably Bartolomé Ruiz de Estrada, the pilot for Pizarro on his second voyage, who pushed southward while Pizarro explored the Colombian coast and Almagro returned to Panama for supplies. Pizarro himself landed on the Ecuadorian coast later during his exploratory voyage and traveled as far as Tumbes in the extreme north of present-day Peru, in defiance of official orders to return to Panama.

Having thus lost the favor of the king's representatives in Panama, Pizarro was forced to return to the royal court in Spain to petition King Charles I personally for authorization of a third voyage. Flush with the success of Hernán Cortés in Mexico and tantalized by the gold pieces brought by Pizarro from Tumbes and growing fables of great wealth in the South American interior, Charles granted Pizarro authorization and much more: the titles of governor and captain-general of Peru, a generous salary, and extensive territorial concessions. Almagro was granted important, although less generous, titles and privileges; his resentment of this slight would affect relationships for the rest of the conquest. At the time that Charles granted various titles to Pizarro and Almagro, he named de Luque Bishop of Tumbes. Before returning to Panama in 1530, Pizarro recruited for the conquest several immediate family members, including two full brothers named Gonzalo and Juan as well as two half-brothers. The participation of so many of Pizarro's relatives further strained relations between the two partners in conquest.

Pizarro then embarked from Panama with some 180 men while Almagro remained there to gather additional recruits. After thirteen days at sea, Pizarro landed once again on the coast of Ecuador, where he procured some gold, silver, and emeralds, which were dispatched to Panama and put to good use in Almagro's efforts. Although the capture of the Inca stronghold of Tumbes was Pizarro's first objective, he was forced to spend several months in Ecuador, first nursing a rash of ulcers and then fighting the fierce warriors of the island of Puná. By the time the conquerors arrived in Tumbes, it had been destroyed by the Puná warriors and its population dispersed. Just to the south, they founded the first Spanish settlement in Peru, San Miguel de Tangará. Upon their fateful departure to Cajamarca on September 24, 1532, Pizarro left a lieutenant, Sebastián de Benalcázar, in charge of protecting and developing San Miguel as a Spanish base of operations. Two years later, Benalcázar would lead the conquering forces that moved northward into Ecuador.

Meanwhile, Atahualpa was resting near Cajamarca, in the Sierra of northern Peru, following the defeat and capture of his brother. He had known of the arrival of foreign invaders for several months; it is not clear why he did not order their obliteration before they could penetrate into the heart of the empire. After a march of almost two months, Pizarro arrived in Cajamarca and summoned Atahualpa from the nearby thermal baths known today as the Baños del Inca. Reluctantly, accompanied by several thousands of his best troops, Atahualpa went to Cajamarca's central plaza, where he was met, not by the conquistadors, but by their chaplain, Fray Vicente de

Valverde, who called upon the Inca emperor to submit to the representatives of the Spanish crown and the Christian god. Atahualpa replied disparagingly and, upon his throwing a Christian prayer book to the ground in contempt, concealed Spanish soldiers opened fire, killing thousands of Atahualpa's defenders and taking the Inca emperor captive. This slaughter, called "the decisive battle" of the conquest of Peru by historian Hubert Herring, took place on November 16, 1532.

A panic-stricken Atahualpa, fearing that Pizarro might be planning to depose him in favor of his rival brother, summoned Huascar, at this time imprisoned in Cuzco, to Cajamarca, then ordered him to be executed along with hundreds of Huascar's nearest of kin. It served the Spaniards' purposes to allow Atahualpa the freedom, from his cell, to command his forces. Thus continued the rapid annihilation, through a vicious civil war that now overlapped with the Spanish conquest, of the army and leadership of one of the great polities of modern history. Pizarro was not planning to depose Atahualpa, of course, but to execute him. First, however, he had Atahualpa fill his cell, once with gold, then twice with silver (estimated at 4,850 kilograms of gold and 9,700 kilograms of silver) supposedly as ransom for his release. Instead the Spaniards garrotted Atahualpa on August 29, 1533, following a mock trial at which he was convicted of every charge that Pizarro could invent for the occasion. Having deprived the Inca empire of leadership, Pizarro and another conquistador, Hernando de Soto, moved south to Cuzco, the heart of Tawantinsuyu, which they captured in November 1533; they then led their men in an orgy of looting, pillaging, and torture in search of more precious metals.

Benalcázar, Pizarro's lieutenant and fellow Extremaduran, had already departed from San Miguel with 140 foot soldiers and a few horses on his conquering mission to Ecuador. At the foot of Mount Chimborazo, near the modern city of Riobamba, he met and defeated the forces of the great Inca warrior Rumiñahui with the aid of Cañari tribesmen who, happy to throw off the yoke of their Inca rulers, served as guides and allies to the conquering Spaniards. Rumiñahui fell back to Quito, and, while in pursuit of the Inca army, Benalcázar encountered another, quite sizable, conquering party led by Guatemalan Governor Pedro de Alvarado. Bored with administering Central America, Alvarado had set sail for the south without the crown's authorization, landed on the Ecuadorian coast, and marched inland to the Sierra. Pizarro had heard of this competing expedition some time earlier and had sent Almagro north to reinforce Benalcázar. Together, Pizarro's two representatives managed to convince Alvarado, with the help of a handsome amount of gold, to call off his expedition and allow the "legal"

conquest to proceed as planned. Most of Alvarado's men joined Benalcázar for the siege of Quito.

Rumiñahui left Quito in flames for the approaching conquistadors. It was mid-1534 and, after the customary orgy of violence, in December the Spanish established the city of San Francisco de Quito on top of the ruins of the secondary Inca capital. Benalcázar was soon off on more conquests in Colombia to the north; it was not until December 1540 that Quito received its first captain-general in the person of Gonzalo Pizarro, the brother of Francisco.

Benalcázar had also founded the city of Guayaquil in 1533, but it had subsequently been retaken by the local Huancavilca tribesmen. Francisco de Orellana, yet another lieutenant of Francisco Pizarro from the Spanish city of Trujillo, put down the native rebellion and in 1537 reestablished this city, which a century later would become one of Spain's principal ports in South America.

Orellana is chiefly remembered, however, for being the first European to travel the length of the Amazon River. This journey, one of the great adventure tales of Spain's conquest of America, began in February 1541, when the lure of spices, particularly cinnamon, led Pizarro's brother Gonzalo to set off from Quito to the eastern jungle with a party that included 210 Spaniards and some 4,000 Indians. Orellana was second in command. After several months of hardship and deprivation during a crossing of the Cordillera Oriental of the Andes that cost the lives of nearly half the party, Gonzalo Pizarro placed Orellana in charge of building a brigantine in the Coca River in present-day Ecuador. Together with fifty-seven Spaniards and several hundred Indians, Orellana sailed downstream in search of food and friendly natives. The explorers never rejoined Pizarro, however, but set out on their own in search of neither food nor spices, but gold. "Having eaten our shoes and saddles boiled with a few herbs," wrote Orellana in a caricature of the ruggedness for which the Extremaduran conquerors were noted, "we set out to reach the Kingdom of Gold." The group reached the mouth of the Amazon, a name given by Orellana because he believed that they had been attacked by the legendary giant female warriors at a point below the Negro River, and sailed northward along the Atlantic coast as far as Venezuela, then back to Spain. The journey completed by the expedition headed by Orellana was not to be repeated for 100 years.

In the same August 1542, as Orellana reached the Atlantic, Gonzalo Pizarro was stumbling back to Quito with the few surviving members of his party. He found Peru in political chaos. Several years earlier, Almagro had entered into open rebellion against Francisco Pizarro and been defeated in battle, tried, and executed in

his newly founded capital city of Lima. The resentment among Almagro's followers did not end, however, and in June 1541, Francisco Pizarro had been assassinated by the remnants of Almagro's army. In an attempt to try to control the unruly conquistadors and to end the enslavement of the native population of America, the Spanish crown had promulgated the New Laws in 1542, which in theory though not in practice abolished *encomiendas*, and two years later it sent its first viceroy to head a newly created colonial administrative system.

Gonzalo, who had little interest in being controlled by anyone, defeated and killed the first viceroy on a battlefield near Quito. After a brief period of glory, however, the younger Pizarro was himself defeated by the forces of a subsequent royal emissary, and in 1548 he was tried and hung for treason. It was the end of the tumultuous era of the conquistadors and the beginning of two and a half centuries of relatively pacific colonial rule

SPANISH COLONIAL ERA

Spain's colonies in the New World were, legally, the personal patrimony of the king, and he held absolute control over all matters in Ecuador. Colonial administration at all levels was carried out in the name of the monarch. The king's chief agency in Madrid was the Council of the Indies, which devoted most of its energies to formulating legislation designed to regulate virtually every aspect of colonial life. The House of Trade, seated in Seville, was placed in charge of governing commerce between Spain and the colonies. In America, the king's major administrative agents were the viceroyalty, the *audiencia* (court), and the municipal council (*cabildo*).

Between 1544 and 1563, Ecuador was an integral part of the Viceroyalty of Peru, having no administrative status independent of Lima. It remained a part of the Viceroyalty of Peru until 1720, when it joined the newly created Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada; within the viceroyalty, however, Ecuador was awarded its own *audiencia* in 1563, allowing it to deal directly with Madrid on certain matters. The Quito *Audiencia*, which was both a court of justice and an advisory body to the viceroy, consisted of a president and several judges (*oidores*). The territory under the jurisdiction of Quito considerably exceeded that of present-day Ecuador, extending southward to the port of Paita in the north of present-day Peru, northward to the port of Buenaventura and the city of Cali in the south of present-day Colombia, and well out into the Amazon River Basin in the east. Quito was also the site of the first (founded in 1547) and most important municipal council within the area

comprising modern-day Ecuador. It consisted of several councilmen (*regidores*) whose extensive responsibilities included the maintenance of public order and the distribution of land in the vicinity of the local community.

The borders of the *Audiencia* (or kingdom as it was also known) of Quito were poorly defined, and a great deal of its territory remained either unexplored or untamed throughout much of the colonial era. Only in the Sierra, and there only after a series of battles that raged throughout the mid-sixteenth century, was the native population fully subjugated by the Spanish. The jungle lowlands in both the Oriente and the coastal region of Esmeraldas were, in contrast, refuges for an estimated one-quarter of the total native population that remained recalcitrant and unconquered throughout most or all of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Despite Orellana's harrowing journey of discovery, the Oriente remained terra incognita to the Spanish until its settlement by Jesuit missionaries beginning in the mid-seventeenth century, and it continued to be largely inaccessible throughout the remainder of the colonial period.

The coastal lowlands north of Manta were conquered, not by the Spanish, but by blacks from the Guinean coast who, as slaves, were shipwrecked en route from Panama to Peru in 1570. The blacks killed or enslaved the native males and married the females, and within a generation they constituted a population of *zambos* (mixed black and Indian) that resisted Spanish authority until the end of the century and afterwards managed to retain a great deal of political and cultural independence.

The relative autonomy of this coastal region nearest to Quito enhanced the effect of the Andes in isolating the Ecuadorian Sierra from the rest of the world during most of the nearly three centuries of colonial rule. Behind these barriers a social system was established that was essentially a replica of the Spanish feudal system at the time of the conquest, with the *peninsulares* (Spanish-born persons residing in the New World) being the ruling, landed elite and the Indians being the subject people who worked the land. Although a few towns, particularly Quito, Riobamba, and Cuenca, grew along with the administrative and Roman Catholic bureaucracies and the local textile industries, colonial Ecuador was essentially a rural society.

The most common form in which the Spanish occupied the land was the *encomienda*. Settlers were granted land, along with its inhabitants and resources, in return for taking charge of defending the territory, spiritually indoctrinating the native population, and extracting the crown's annual tribute (payable half in gold, half in local products) from the *encomienda's* Indian population. By the

early seventeenth century, there were some 500 *encomiendas* in Ecuador. Although many consisted of quite sizable haciendas, they were generally much smaller than the estates commonly found elsewhere in South America. A multitude of reforms and regulations did not prevent the *encomienda* from becoming a system of virtual slavery of the Indians, estimated at about one-half the total Ecuadorian population, who lived on them. In 1589 the president of the *audiencia* recognized that many Spaniards were accepting grants only to sell them and undertake urban occupations, and he stopped distributing new lands to Spaniards; however, the institution of the *encomienda* persisted until nearly the end of the colonial period.

Land that was less desirable was never distributed, but rather was left to traditional Indian communities or simply remained open public land. In the late sixteenth century, the estimated one-quarter of the total native population on such public lands was resettled into Indian towns called *reducciones* in order to facilitate the collection of the Indians' tribute, their conversion to Christianity, and the exploitation of their labor.

Outside the *encomienda*, Indian labor was most commonly exploited through the *mita*, modeled after the Inca institution of the same name. All able-bodied "free" Indians were required to devote one year of their labor to some public or private Spanish concern, be it constructing a church, road, or public building, or working in a textile mill. Although *mitayos* were paid for their labor, the amount was extremely meager, often less than debts accumulated through purchases from their employer, thus requiring the them to continue working, sometimes indefinitely, after their assigned period of service. In this way, the *mita* system disintegrated into debt peonage. Debts were commonly passed on to ensuing generations, in which cases the *mita* was, in effect, slavery. Black slaves, in comparison, were extremely expensive and were thus used almost exclusively in the lowland plantation culture along the hot, humid coast, where the Sierra Indians proved unable to adapt. Black slaves numbered some 60,000 by the end of the colonial period.

The best estimates of the size of Ecuador's native population at the time of the conquest range between 750,000 and 1 million. Diseases imported by the Spanish, particularly smallpox and measles, virtually wiped out the indigenous coastal population during the sixteenth century and also decimated the Sierra population, although not as thoroughly as in the Costa or many other areas of Latin America. Despite a succession of deadly earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, the native population increased steadily during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries except in

the 1690s, when an epidemic of smallpox and diphtheria was reported to have killed one-third of Ecuador's population.

Ecuador's Indians probably owe their relative prosperity during the colonial period to the *audiencia's* lack of mineral resources. The hardships of working in the silver and mercury mines of Peru cost the lives of millions of Indian *mitayos*; Ecuador, in contrast, had only small deposits of gold and silver in its southern provinces of Cuenca and Loja, and these deposits were depleted by the end of the sixteenth century. Its *serrano* economy was based, instead, on agriculture and textiles. Cotton, grown on the eastern slope of the Andes in Quijos Province, and wool, from imported merino sheep that thrived in the high Andean valleys, provided the raw materials for high-quality textiles that were manufactured in hundreds of sweatshops, called *obrajes*, and exported throughout Latin America. Indian *mitayos*, who commonly worked from dawn to dusk chained to their looms, provided the labor. As appalling as were the preindustrial working conditions in the *obrajes*, most historians agree that they were more bearable than those found in the Peruvian mines at the time.

The coastal economy revolved around shipping and trade. Guayaquil, despite being destroyed on several occasions by fire and incessantly plagued by either yellow fever or malaria, was a center of vigorous trade among the colonies, a trade that was technically illegal under the mercantilist philosophy of the contemporary Spanish rulers. The guiding principle of mercantilism in the New World was that the colonies existed to serve the commercial needs of Spain. Since trade among the colonies would not enrich Spain, it was banned. In addition to textiles and other light manufactures from the Sierra, hardwoods and cacao from coastal plantations were exported from the port of Guayaquil to points all over Spanish America, while a wide variety of items were imported, including foods and wines from Peru. Guayaquil also became the largest shipbuilding center on the west coast of South America before the end of the colonial period.

The Ecuadorian economy, like that in the mother country, suffered a severe depression throughout most of the eighteenth century. Textile production dropped an estimated 50 to 75 percent between 1700 and 1800. Ecuador's cities gradually fell into ruins, and by 1790 the elite was reduced to poverty, selling haciendas and jewelry in order to subsist. The Indian population, in contrast, probably experienced an overall improvement in its situation, as the closing of the *obrajes* commonly led Indians to work under less arduous conditions on either haciendas or traditional communal lands. Ecuador's economic woes were, no doubt, compounded by

the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767 by King Charles III. Missions in the Oriente were abandoned, and many of the best schools and the most efficient haciendas and *obrajes* lost the key personnel that made them outstanding institutions in colonial Ecuador.

The Bourbon kings were best known for their economic and administrative reforms, which, like the expulsion of the Jesuits, were designed to enhance the flagging power of the crown in Spanish America. As a result of those reforms, the Quito *Audiencia* was transferred in 1720 from the authority of the Peruvian viceroyalty to the newly created Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada, whose capital was in Bogotá. In the process, the Quiteño authorities gained jurisdiction over their own political and military affairs, while the *audiencia's* southern and eastern boundaries were delineated more specifically and retracted. A royal decree (*cédula*) in 1802 further shrank the area of the *audiencia* by transferring the provinces of Quijos and Mainas in the Oriente to Peru. Another decree by Charles IV in 1803 transferred the port of Guayaquil to Peru, but resistance by port citizens led to its being returned to the jurisdiction of Quito in 1819.

Between 1736 and 1745, a French scientific mission with some of the best minds in Europe resided in Quito and contributed to the development of ideas in Ecuador. While carrying out their scientific mission--measuring the earth's circumference at the equator--the members of the mission disseminated the message of the Enlightenment, which stressed nationalism, individualism, and a questioning of authority and tradition. Works of Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Thomas Paine, introducing such revolutionary concepts as equality and freedom, managed to elude the censors of both the Inquisition and a languishing political authority, and penetrated Ecuador's historical cultural isolation. The most famous Ecuadorian intellectual of the age, Eugenio de Santa Cruz y Espejo, was a physician and a writer who advocated emancipation from Spain and a republican, democratic system of government. Honored today as the precursor of Ecuadorian independence, Espejo was imprisoned for his ideas and died in jail in 1795.

The coming of independence was also foreshadowed by the numerous civil disturbances that rocked the Ecuadorian Sierra from the 1760s until the end of the colonial era. In 1765 the Quiteño white and mestizo or *cholo* (a person of mixed white and Indian ancestry) population revolted against reforms in the colonial tax system. Potentially more serious was a subsequent series of Indian rebellions in Latacunga and Riobamba. Although clearly of a political nature, calling for the overthrow of the Spanish regime and the

expulsion of all the whites from the land in addition to putting an end to the odious *mita* system, these uprisings never led to such large-scale insurrections as occurred in Peru at the same time. Ironically, the passing of the colonial era, according to most historians, occasioned a worsening of conditions for the indigenous population.

THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

The struggle for independence in the Quito *Audiencia* was part of a movement throughout Spanish America led by criollos (persons of pure Spanish descent born in the New World). The criollos' resentment of the privileges enjoyed by the *peninsulares* was the fuel of revolution against colonial rule. The spark was Napoleon's invasion of Spain, after which he deposed King Ferdinand VII and, in July 1808, placed his brother Joseph Bonaparte on the Spanish throne.

Shortly afterward, Spanish citizens, unhappy at the usurpation of the throne by the French, began organizing local juntas loyal to Ferdinand. A group of Quito's leading citizens followed suit, and on August 10, 1809, they seized power from the local representatives of Joseph Bonaparte in the name of Ferdinand. Thus, this early revolt against colonial rule (one of the first in Spanish America) was, paradoxically, an expression of loyalty to the Spanish king.

It quickly became apparent that Quito's criollo rebels lacked the anticipated popular support for their cause. As loyalist troops approached Quito, therefore, they peacefully turned power back to the crown authorities. Despite assurances against reprisals, the returning Spanish authorities (Bonaparte's men) proved to be merciless with the rebels and, in the process of ferreting out participants in the Quito revolt, jailed and abused many innocent citizens. Their actions, in turn, bred popular resentment among Quiteños, who, after several days of street fighting in August 1810, won an agreement to be governed by a junta to be dominated by criollos, although with the president of the Audiencia of Quito acting as its figurehead leader.

In spite of widespread opposition within the rest of the Quito *Audiencia*, the junta called for a congress in December 1811 in which it declared the entire area of the *audiencia* to be independent. Two months later, the junta approved a constitution for the state of Quito that provided for democratic governing institutions but also granted recognition to the authority of Ferdinand should he return to the Spanish throne. Shortly thereafter, the junta elected to launch a military offensive against the Spanish, but the poorly

trained and badly equipped troops were no match for those of the viceroy of Peru, which finally crushed the Quiteño rebellion in December 1812.

The second chapter in Ecuador's struggle for emancipation from Spanish colonial rule began in Guayaquil, where independence was proclaimed in October 1820 by a local patriotic junta under the leadership of the poet José Joaquín Olmedo. By this time, the forces of independence had grown continental in scope and were organized into two principal armies, one under the Venezuelan Simón Bolívar Palacios in the north and the other under the Argentine José de San Martín in the south. Unlike the hapless Quito junta, the Guayaquil patriots were able to appeal to foreign allies, Argentina and Venezuela, each of whom soon responded by sending sizable contingents to Ecuador. Antonio José de Sucre Alcalá, the brilliant young lieutenant of Bolívar who arrived in Guayaquil in May 1821, was to become the key figure in the ensuing military struggle against the royalist forces.

After a number of initial successes, Sucre's army was defeated at Ambato in the central Sierra and he appealed for assistance from San Martín, whose army was by now in Peru. With the arrival from the south of 1,400 fresh soldiers under the command of Andrés de Santa Cruz Calahumana, the fortunes of the patriotic army were again reversed. A string of victories culminated in the decisive Battle of Pichincha, on the slopes of the volcano of that name on the western outskirts of Quito, on May 24, 1822. A few hours after the victory by the patriots, the last president of the Audiencia of Quito signed a formal capitulation of his forces before Marshal Sucre. Ecuador was at last free of Spanish rule.

Two months later Bolívar, the liberator of northern South America, entered Quito to a hero's welcome. Later that July, he met San Martín in Guayaquil and convinced the Argentine general, who wanted the port to return to Peruvian jurisdiction, and the local criollo elite in both major cities of the advantage of having the former Quito *Audiencia* join with the liberated lands to the north. As a result, Ecuador became the District of the South within the Confederation of Gran Colombia, which also included present-day Venezuela and Colombia and had Bogotá as its capital. This status was maintained for eight tumultuous years.

They were years in which warfare dominated the affairs of Ecuador. First, the country found itself on the front lines of Bolívar's war to liberate Peru from Spanish rule between 1822 and 1825; afterward, in 1828 and 1829, Ecuador was in the middle of an armed struggle between Peru and Gran Colombia over the location of their common border. After a campaign that included the near destruction of

Guayaquil, the forces of Gran Colombia, under the leadership of Sucre and Venezuelan General Juan José Flores, proved victorious. The Treaty of 1829 fixed the border on the line that had divided the Quito *audiencia* and the Viceroyalty of Peru before independence.

The population of Ecuador was divided during these years among three segments: those favoring the status quo, those supporting union with Peru, and those advocating autonomous independence for the former *audiencia*. The latter group was to prevail following Venezuela's withdrawal from the confederation during an 1830 constitutional congress that had been called in Bogotá in a futile effort to combat growing separatist tendencies throughout Gran Colombia. In May of that year, a group of Quito notables met to dissolve the union with Gran Colombia, and in August, a constituent assembly drew up a constitution for the State of Ecuador, so named for its geographic proximity to the equator, and placed General Flores in charge of political and military affairs. He remained the dominant political figure during Ecuador's first fifteen years of independence.

THE FIRST CENTURY OF THE REPUBLIC

Before the year 1830 drew to a close, both Marshal Sucre and Simón Bolívar would be dead; the former, murdered (on orders from a jealous General Flores, according to some historians), and the latter, from tuberculosis. Heartbroken at the dissolution of Gran Colombia, Bolívar is quoted as saying shortly before his death, "America is ungovernable. Those who have served the revolution have plowed the sea." These words would seem prophetic during the chaotic first thirty years in the life of the Republic of Ecuador.

Initial Confusion, 1830-60

Independence did not occasion a revolutionary liberation of the masses of Ecuadorian peasants. On the contrary, as bad as the peasants' situation was, it probably worsened with the loss of the Spanish royal officials who had protected the indigenous population against the abuses of the local criollos. This criollo elite, which had spearheaded the struggle for independence, was to be its principal beneficiary. The early battle to define the political parameters of the new state was fought, to a great extent, among the various sectors--Ecuadorians and foreigners, military personnel and civilians--of this elite.

Flores was of the foreign military variety. Born in Venezuela, he had fought in the wars for independence with Bolívar, who had appointed him governor of Ecuador during its association with Gran

Colombia. Although of humble origins with little formal education, Flores married into the Quiteño elite, gaining acceptance, initially at least, within the local criollo upper class. As a leader, however, he appeared primarily interested in maintaining his power. Military expenditures, from the independence wars and from an unsuccessful campaign to wrest Cauca Province from Colombia in 1832, kept the state treasury empty while other matters were left unattended.

In 1833 four intellectuals who had begun publishing *El Quiteño Libre* to denounce the "pillaging of the national treasury by foreigners" were killed by the authorities at a time when Flores was absent from Quito. Although not directly responsible for the killings, Flores inevitably became associated with them, and criticism of his regime grew. In 1834 opponents staged a rebellion in an effort to place José Vicente Rocafuerte y Rodríguez de Bejarano, a member of the Guayaquil aristocracy who had recently returned from fourteen years abroad, into the presidency. The rebels effort failed; Flores then coopted his opponent and sponsored Rocafuerte as a presidential candidate. For four years following this Machiavellian political move--in effect the nation's first coup d'état--Flores continued to wield considerable power from behind the scenes as commander of the military.

President Rocafuerte's most lasting contribution was to begin development of a public school system. Although he had previously condemned Flores's violations of civil liberties, Rocafuerte argued that "the backwardness of Ecuador makes enlightened despotism necessary." At the end of his term in 1839, Rocafuerte returned to his native Guayaquil as provincial governor, while in Quito Flores was again inaugurated into the presidency. After four years in office, Flores summoned a constitutional convention that wrote a new constitution, dubbed "the Charter of Slavery" by his opponents, and elected him to a new eight-year term of office.

After 1843 the opposition to Flores often manifested itself in unpleasant ways: in reference to the dark skin of Flores and his fellow Venezuelan and Colombian soldiers, Rocafuerte (by now exiled in Lima) wrote that "the white oppressors of the peninsula were less oppressive than the Negro vandals who have replaced them." A young student named Gabriel García Moreno--later to become the most infamous of all of Ecuador's nineteenth century dictators--tried unsuccessfully to assassinate Flores. Discontent had become nationwide by 1845, when an insurrection in Guayaquil forced Flores from the country. Because their movement triumphed in March (*marzo*), the anti-Flores coalition members became known as *marcistas*. They were an extremely heterogeneous lot that

included liberal intellectuals, conservative clergymen, and representatives from Guayaquil's successful business community.

The next fifteen years constituted one of the most turbulent periods in Ecuador's century and a half as a nation. The *marcistas* fought among themselves almost ceaselessly and also had to struggle against Flores's repeated attempts from exile to overthrow the government. The first *marcista* president was a businessman, Vicente Ramón Roca, who served a full four-year term of office. The most significant figure of the era, however, was General José María Urbina, who first came to power in 1851 through a coup d'état, remained in the presidency until 1856, and then continued to dominate the political scene until 1860. During this decade and the one that followed, Urbina and his archrival, García Moreno, would define the dichotomy--between Liberals from Guayaquil and Conservatives from Quito--that remained the major sphere of political struggle in Ecuador in the 1980s.

Liberalism under Urbina took on anticlerical, ethnic, and regional dimensions. In 1852 he accused a group of Jesuit priests-- admitted by his predecessor, Diego Noboa, only a year earlier--of political meddling and expelled them. Urbina freed the nation's slaves exactly one week after his coup of 1851, and six years later, his successor and life-long friend, General Francisco Robles, finally put an end to three centuries of required annual payments of tribute by the Indian population. Henceforth, liberalism associated itself with bettering the position of Ecuador's non-white population. Urbina's and Robles's favoring of the Guayaquil business classes over the Quito landowners reinforced the regional aspect of the political dichotomy.

Opposition against Robles intensified after his signing, in 1857, of an unpopular contract aimed at alleviating the burdensome foreign debt. By 1859--known by Ecuadorian historians as the Terrible Year--the nation was on the brink of anarchy. Local caudillos had declared several regions autonomous of the central government. One of these caudillos, Guayaquil's Guillermo Franco, signed the Treaty of Mapasingue ceding the southern provinces of Ecuador to an occupying Peruvian army led by General Ramón Castilla. This action was outrageous enough to unite some previously disparate elements. García Moreno, putting aside both his project to place Ecuador under a French protectorate and his differences with General Flores, got together with the former dictator to put down the various local rebellions and force out the Peruvians. This effort opened the last chapter of Flores's long career and marked the entrance to power of García Moreno.

The Era of Conservatism, 1860-95

García Moreno is the father of Ecuadorian conservatism and no doubt the most controversial figure in the nation's history, condemned by Liberal historians as Ecuador's worst tyrant but exalted by Conservatives as the nation's greatest nation-builder. In the end, both appraisals may be accurate; the man who possibly saved Ecuador from disintegration in 1859 and then ruled the nation with an iron fist for the subsequent decade and a half was, in fact, an extremely complicated personality. Born and raised under modest circumstances in Guayaquil, he studied in Quito, where he married into the local aristocracy, then traveled to Europe in the aftermath of the 1848 revolutionary uprisings and studied under the eminent Catholic theologians of the day.

García Moreno's religious education had a profound impact on the future president. In the words of historian Frederick B. Pike:

His personal experiences seem to have influenced his attitudes toward governing his country. In his own case, liberalism and religious indifference had gone hand-in-hand with personal debauchery and lack of self-control, while religious fervor had been intertwined with a life of rigorous self-control and spartan discipline. After coming to the presidency, García Moreno set out to rekindle religious fervor among Ecuadorians in the expectation that the entire country could be made to undergo a transformation paralleling his own.

President García Moreno saw Roman Catholicism as the ingredient of Ecuadorian culture that, through its emphasis on order, hierarchy, and discipline, could unite the nation and save it from the multiple crises and disorder of the 1850s. Catholicism thus held a prominent position in each of the two new constitutions that he introduced: the charter of 1861 named Catholicism as the exclusive religion, and its replacement in 1869, in addition to providing for a six-year presidential term and unlimited reelection, made citizenship dependent on one's adherence to the Roman Catholic religion. In 1863 García Moreno promulgated Ecuador's first concordat with the Vatican, bestowing vast powers on the Ecuadorian Roman Catholic Church, especially with respect to education. A decade later, the dictator's puppet congress dedicated the republic to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Despite such proclerical measures that have led many historians to dub his regime a theocracy, the local clergy believed García Moreno to be fanatical and criticized him for it. The president, in turn,

replaced many local clergymen with foreign priests in an effort to revitalize the Roman Catholic Church in Ecuador, which he considered degenerate and dissolute.

The highly anticlerical Liberals were, of course, livid. Urbina organized an invasion in 1864, which was defeated with the help, once again, of General Flores. García Moreno was ruthless in his repression of the captured rebels, as he was commonly with less formidable opponents as well. Nor did he hesitate to manipulate the presidential succession. Finding his hand-picked successor deficient after two years in office, in 1867 García Moreno presided over the installation of a second puppet, whom he also overthrew in 1869, when it appeared that the Liberals might win scheduled elections. In 1869 García Moreno also formally established the Conservative Party (Partido Conservador--PC).

Shortly after the onset of his third presidential term in 1875, García Moreno was hacked to death with a machete on the steps of the presidential palace. The exact motives of the assassin, a Colombian, remain unknown, but the dictator's most outstanding critic, the liberal journalist Juan Montalvo, exclaimed, "My pen killed him!"

Although maligned for his highly proclerical and dictatorial ways, García Moreno made a number of vital contributions to the development of the nation. Perhaps the most important advances were in education. The generation of many new schools at all levels, from primary to the polytechnical training school in Quito, elicited universal praise, despite the fact that the Jesuits were largely responsible for these accomplishments. Transportation links with Quito were also vastly improved with the building of roads to Esmeraldas and to Babahoyo, near Guayaquil, as well as the first portion of the railroad linking Quito with Riobamba and Guayaquil. These public works not only promoted national unity but also helped Quito begin a long-delayed effort to overcome the geographic barriers that had historically caused its isolation, an isolation that had hindered the nation's integration into the world economy.

Between 1852 and 1890, Ecuador's exports grew in value from slightly more than US\$1 million to nearly US\$10 million. Production of cacao, the most important export product in the late nineteenth century, grew from 6.5 million kilograms to 18 million kilograms during the same period. The agricultural export interests, centered in the coastal region near Guayaquil, became closely associated with the Liberals, whose political power also grew steadily during the interval. After the death of García Moreno, it took the Liberals twenty years to consolidate their strength sufficiently to assume control of the government in Quito.

Five different presidents governed during the two decades of transition between Conservative and Liberal rule. The first, Antonio Borrero, tried valiantly to return the nation to the rule of law, but, after only ten months in office, he was overthrown by the only military dictator of the period, Ignacio de Veintemilla. Although he came to power with the help of the old Liberal General Urbina, Veintemilla later evolved into a populist military dictator rather than a politician with any party or ideological affiliation. He was extremely popular with his troops and able to woo the masses with employment on public works programs and large-scale public festivals and dances during holiday periods. In office until 1883, Veintemilla enjoyed a period of relative prosperity resulting primarily from increased maritime activity while Peru, Bolivia, and Chile were mired in the War of the Pacific.

José María Plácido Caamaño, a Conservative, then served as president until 1888, and he remained a powerful figure during the administrations of the duly elected Progressive Party (Partido Progresista) presidents who followed him, Antonio Flores Jijón and Luis Cordero Crespo. Flores, who was the son of President Juan José Flores, intended progressivism to represent a compromise position between liberalism and conservatism. The Progressive program called for support for the Roman Catholic Church, rule by law, and an end to dictatorship and military rule. Although neither Caamaño, Flores, nor Cordero was able to curtail the growing animosity between Conservatives and Liberals, their periods in office were, for the most part, characterized by relative political stability and prosperity. The latter resulted more from favorable international circumstances for cacao exports than from astute government policy making.

In 1895, midway through his term in office, Cordero fell victim to scandal and charges of "selling the flag" over an agreement made with Chile. Cordero allowed the warship *Esmeralda*, which Chile was selling to Japan, to fly the Ecuadorian flag briefly in order to protect Chile's neutrality in the conflict between Japan and China. Bribes were apparently involved and, tremendously weakened by the scandal and also challenged by the outbreak of several military rebellions, the president resigned in April. In June the Liberals seized power in Guayaquil in the name of their most popular caudillo, General José Eloy Alfaro Delgado. Three months later, "the old battler" (a name Alfaro had earned during his armed struggle against García Moreno) returned after a decade of exile in Central America and marched triumphantly into Quito. It was the end of Ecuador's brief experiment with progressivism and the beginning of three stormy decades of rule by the Radical Liberal Party (Partido

Liberal Radical--PLR), commonly referred to as the Liberal Party (Partido Liberal).

The Rule of the Liberals, 1895-1925

Eloy Alfaro is the outstanding standard-bearer for Ecuador's Liberals, much as García Moreno is for the Conservatives. Some Marxist groups have also looked to Alfaro; although his political program was in no way socialist, it did prove to be revolutionary in the extent to which it stripped the Roman Catholic Church of the power and privileges previously granted to it by García Moreno. Catholic officials and their Conservative allies did not give up without a fight, however. During the first year of Alfaro's presidency, Ecuador was ravaged by a bloody civil war in which clergymen commonly incited the faithful masses to rise in rebellion against the "atheistic *alfaristas*" and were, just as commonly, themselves victims of *alfarista* repression. The foreign-born Bishops Pedro Schumacher of Portoviejo and Arsenio Andrade of Riobamba led the early resistance to Alfaro. A fullfledged bloodbath may well have been averted only through the magnanimous efforts of the outstanding historian and Archbishop Federico González Suárez, who urged the clergy to abandon the pursuit of politics.

This final ecclesiastical struggle for control of Ecuador was in vain, however. By the end of the Liberals' rule in 1925, Roman Catholicism was no longer the constitutionally mandated state religion, official clerical censorship of reading material had been suppressed, many powerful foreign clergy had been expelled, education had been secularized, civil marriage as well as divorce had been instituted, the concordat with the Vatican had been broken, most of the church's rural properties had been seized by the state, and the republic was no longer dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Roman Catholic Church in Ecuador would never again hold prerogatives as extensive as those it enjoyed during the late nineteenth century.

The other accomplishment for which the three decades of PLR rule are remembered is the completion, in 1908, of the GuayaquilQuito railroad. At the time, however, Alfaro was condemned by his critics for "delivering the republic to the Yankees" through a contract signed with North American entrepreneurs to complete the project begun by García Moreno. Although the criticism did not halt Alfaro on this project, a similar nationalistic outcry did force him to end negotiations with the United States, which wanted to protect the soon-to-be-completed Panama Canal, over military base rights in Ecuador's Galápagos Islands. Alfaro's affinity for the United States was also evident in 1910, when war between Peru and Ecuador over

their perennial boundary dispute was narrowly averted through the mediation of the United States, together with Brazil and Argentina.

The Liberals can be credited with few further accomplishments of major proportions. The system of debt peonage that lingered in the Sierra came under government regulations, albeit weak ones, and imprisonment for debts was finally outlawed in 1918. These and other limited social benefits gained by the Indians and the mixedblood *montuvio* (coastal mestizo) working class were overshadowed by the ruinous economic decline world wide and the severe repression of the nascent labor movement at the hands of the Liberals during the early 1920s. Furthermore, Liberal rule did little to foster the development of stable democracy. On the contrary, the first half of the period saw even more illegal seizures of power and military-led governments than in previous decades.

A major cause of the instability of the period was the lack of unity within the PLR itself. Alfaro and a second military strongman, General Leónidas Plaza Gutiérrez, maintained a bitter rivalry over party leadership for almost two decades. Following Alfaro's first period in the presidency, Plaza was elected to a constitutional term of office that lasted from 1901 until 1905. In 1906, shortly after a close associate of Plaza had been elected to succeed him, however, Alfaro launched a coup d'état and returned to the presidency. Alfaro, in turn, was overthrown in 1911 after refusing to hand power over to his own hand-picked successor, Emilio Estrada. Four months later, Estrada's death from a heart attack precipitated a brief civil war that climaxed the rivalry between Alfaro and Plaza. Alfaro returned from his exile in Panama to lead the Guayaquil garrison in its challenge to the Quito-based interim government, which was under the military authority of General Plaza. The rebellion was quickly defeated, however; Alfaro was captured and transported to Quito via the same railroad that he had done so much to complete. Once in the capital, Alfaro was publicly and unceremoniously murdered, along with several of his comrades, by a government-instigated mob.

Shortly thereafter, Plaza was inaugurated into his second presidential term in office. It was the first of four consecutive constitutional changes of government: following Plaza (1912-16) came Alfredo Baquerizo Moreno (1916-20), then José Luis Tamayo (1920-24), and Gonzalo S. Córdova (1924-25). Real power during this second half of the period of Liberal rule was held, not by the government, but by a plutocracy of coastal agricultural and banking interests, popularly known as *la argolla* (the ring), whose linchpin was the Commercial and Agricultural Bank of Guayaquil led by Francisco Urbina Jado. This bank gained influence by loaning vast

quantities of money to the free-spending government as well as to private individuals. According to Ecuadorian historian Oscar Efrén Reyes, the bank was influential "to the point that candidates for president and his ministers, senators, and deputies had to have the prior approval of the bank." Many of the private loans were to members of the Association of Agriculturists of Ecuador, an organization that also received government funds intended to promote an international cartel of cacao growers, but which instead were used to line members' pockets.

All parties involved in *la argolla*, from the government officials to the bankers and the growers, were professed militants of the Liberal cause. It was not only the political fortunes of the party that fell victim to their financial activities, however, but also the national economy, which experienced runaway inflation as a result of the printing of money by the private banks. The severe economic problems during the final years of Liberal rule were also partially caused by factors beyond the control of the politicians. A fungal disease that ravaged Ecuador's cacao trees and the growth of competition from British colonies in Africa abruptly ended conditions that had favored Ecuador's exportation of cacao for over a century. What was left of the nation's cacao industry fell victim to the sharp decline in world demand during the Great Depression.

Ecuador's economic crisis of the early 1920s was especially devastating to the working class and the poor. With real wages, for those lucky enough to have jobs, eaten away by inflation, workers responded with a general strike in Guayaquil in 1922 and a peasant rebellion in the central Sierra the following year. Both actions were aimed at improving wages and working conditions; both were put down only after massacres of major proportions.

President Córdova, closely tied to *la argolla*, had come to office in a fraudulent election. Popular unrest, together with the ongoing economic crisis and a sickly president, laid the background for a bloodless coup d'état in July 1925. Unlike all previous forays by the military into Ecuadorian politics, the coup of 1925 was made in the name of a collective grouping rather than a particular caudillo. The members of the League of Young Officers who overthrew Córdova came to power with an agenda, which included a wide variety of social reforms, the replacement of the increasingly sterile Liberal-Conservative debate, and the end of the rule of the Liberals, who had become decadent after three decades in power.

Reform, Chaos, and Debacle, 1925-44

The reformist officers initially named a governing junta consisting of prominent opponents of the Liberal plutocracy, but neither it nor a succeeding junta was able to consolidate the power necessary to govern effectively. In 1926 they named as provisional president Isidro Ayora, a dedicated reformer who, although married into one of the wealthiest coastal families, possessed a social conscience and the vision to see that reform would help preserve the status of the upper classes. Ayora quickly assumed dictatorial powers, with which he set out to institute reforms that were partly of his own making and partly the making of the League of Young Officers.

An advisory mission from Princeton University, headed by Edwin W. Kemmerer, was invited to propose measures to reorganize Ecuador's fiscal and monetary structures. Its major accomplishment was the creation of the Central Bank of Ecuador (Banco Central), which replaced the private banks' authority in the issuing of currency; in addition, the Kemmerer mission also reorganized the state budgeting and customs agencies. The appropriation of these functions, which were previously under the control of *la argolla*, brought a revenue windfall to the government during the next half-decade. In addition to building state fiscal and social agencies, the funds were used to initiate a number of programs, including pensions for state workers, that enhanced the security of the middle and lower economic sectors of the population. A range of social legislation--quite progressive for its day--intended to protect the working class from unscrupulous employers and to improve working conditions emerged from the enactment of the 1929 constitution.

The same constitution, Ecuador's thirteenth in just under a century as a republic, also provided for a powerful legislative body with authority to censure presidential ministers. This diminution of executive power, the appearance of a wide variety (socialist, communist, and populist) of new groupings in political competition with the traditional parties and with the military, and the devastating effects of the Great Depression combined to make Ecuador's political record especially unstable during subsequent years. Ayora was the first of fourteen chief executives during the 1930s.

World demand for cacao and other Ecuadorian export crops dropped precipitously in the wake of the 1929 Wall Street crash: export crop value fell from US\$15 million in 1928 to US\$7 million in 1931 and US\$5 million in 1932, causing widespread unemployment and misery. Few objections were voiced in 1931 when Ayora was the victim of a military coup. Neptalí Bonifaz Ascázubi was then elected with the help of a quasi-fascist grouping of the *serrano* lower classes called the Consolidation of National Workers (Compactación

Obrera Nacional). In August 1932, after various Liberal and leftist elements in Congress blocked Bonifaz's assumption of power, the Compactación fought a bloody four-day civil war against other paramilitary forces amassed by opponents of the president-elect. The latter were victorious, largely because the great majority of the government military forces remained in their barracks rather than defend Bonifaz.

Another election two months later brought victory for the Liberal candidate, Juan de Dios Martínez Mera, but soon accusations arose that the election had been fraudulent. The congressional opposition censured virtually every minister as soon as he was named and also encouraged the Compactación to lead demonstrations against the president in the streets of Quito. The campaign against Martínez was led by the charismatic president of the Chamber of Deputies, José María Velasco Ibarra, who at the time professed a "total lack of presidential ambitions." In September 1934, less than a year after Martínez was forced to resign, Velasco assumed the presidency after having won popular elections by an overwhelming margin.

The first of Velasco's five periods as president lasted only eleven months. He was overthrown by the military after attempting to assume dictatorial powers by dissolving Congress and jailing his congressional opponents. Shortly thereafter, the military placed Federico Páez in the presidential palace. An engineer and former senator, Páez ruled precariously for two years, first with the political support of the socialist left and then with that of the right, and he tried to advance the reforms undertaken by Ayora a decade earlier. Ongoing fiscal difficulties severely limited Páez's efforts, however, and in September 1937 he was overthrown by his minister of national defense, General Alberto Enríquez Gallo. Although he ruled for less than a year, Enríquez achieved note as a social reformer by his promulgation of the Labor Code of 1938.

Enríquez is also remembered for having initiated a protracted confrontation with the United States-based South American Development Company over the terms of its Ecuadorian concession and the wages it paid its Ecuadorian employees. The company refused to comply with Enríquez's entreaty that more of the profits from its mining operations stay in Ecuador, and it won the support of the United States Department of State. The Ecuadorian government continued its demands despite United States pressure. In 1940 the United States, hoping to obtain Ecuadorian cooperation in its anticipated war effort, ended its support for the mining firm. Ecuadorian President Carlos Alberto Arroyo del Río, in turn, proved generous in his cooperation with the Allies, allowing the United

States to build a naval base on the Galápagos Islands and an air base at Salinas on the Ecuadorian mainland.

In addition to being a genuine friend and admirer of the United States, Arroyo del Río was the leader of the PLR and a representative of the Guayaquil-based "plutocracy." He came to power constitutionally in November 1939 upon the death of his predecessor, but he continued in office in January 1940 through fraudulent elections that were universally believed to have been won by Velasco, and continued in power later, through repression. Despite such antipopular methods of ruling, he managed to remain in office for almost four years, thanks to economic support by the United States and the recuperation of Ecuador's export markets as worldwide economic depression gave way to recovery during World War II.

Arroyo del Río's undoing was the disastrous 1941 war with Peru. Although the prior sequence of events--the breakdown of talks aimed at resolving the boundary issues in 1938, followed by repeated border skirmishes--had given ample warning of a possible outbreak of large-scale hostilities, Ecuador was unprepared to meet the July 5 Peruvian invasion. Furthermore, the president's fear of being left unprotected from his opponents led him to keep the nation's best fighting forces in Quito while Peruvian troops continuously attacked the nation's southern and eastern provinces until a ceasefire went into effect on July 31.

Peru's occupation ended only after January 1942, when the two nations signed the Protocol of Peace, Friendship, and Boundaries while attending the Third Conference of Foreign Ministers of the American Republics in Rio de Janeiro. Under the terms of the Rio Protocol, the informal name of the agreement, Ecuador renounced its claim to some 200,000 square kilometers of territory. Shortly afterward, the Rio Protocol was ratified by a bare plurality of the Ecuadorian legislature.

The Ecuadorian government quickly regretted having become a party to the Rio Protocol. The protocol became the focus of a surge of Ecuadorian national pride and concomitant opposition to Arroyo in a new coalition--the Democratic Alliance. The coalition brought together a wide array of Ecuadorian politicians dedicated to replacing the "president who had been unable to defend the national honor." Arroyo's rejoinder that he would remain in office the full four years, "neither one day more nor one day less," and his being prominently hailed in Washington as "the Apostle of PanAmericanism " only increased his political isolation. A persistent inflation that whittled away at the purchasing power of salaried workers was a further cause of popular resentment against Arroyo.

In May 1944, following an uprising in Guayaquil that pitted the military and civilian supporters of Velasco against Arroyo's police, the president finally resigned. The military handed power to the Democratic Alliance, which in turn named Velasco, whose electoral candidacy had recently been vetoed by Arroyo, as the popularly acclaimed president of the republic. The populist master returned triumphantly from exile in Colombia, greeted by throngs of enthusiasts during a three-day journey to Quito, to assume the presidency for the second time.

THE POSTWAR ERA, 1944-84

The *Quiteño* multitudes standing in the pouring rain on May 31, 1944, to hear Velasco promise a "national resurrection," with social justice and due punishment for the "corrupt Liberal oligarchy" that had been responsible for "staining the national honor," believed that they were witnessing the birth of a popular revolution. Arroyo partisans were promptly jailed or sent into exile, while Velasco verbally baited the business community and the rest of the political right. The leftist elements within Velasco's Democratic Alliance, which dominated the constituent assembly that was convened to write a new constitution, were nonetheless destined to be disappointed.

In May 1945, after a year of growing hostility between the president and the assembly, which was vainly awaiting deeds to substantiate Velasco's rhetorical advocacy of social justice, the mercurial chief executive condemned and then repudiated the newly completed constitution. After dismissing the assembly, Velasco held elections for a new assembly, which in 1946 drafted a far more conservative constitution that met with the president's approval. For this brief period, Conservatives replaced the left as Velasco's base of support.

Rather than attending to the nation's economic problems, Velasco aggravated them by financing the dubious schemes of his associates. Inflation continued unabated, as did its negative impact on the national standard of living, and by 1947 foreignexchange reserves had fallen to dangerously low levels. In August, when Velasco was ousted by his minister of defense, nobody rose to defend the man who, only three years earlier, had been hailed as the nation's savior. During the following year, three different men briefly held executive power before Galo Plaza Lasso, running under a coalition of independent Liberals and socialists, narrowly defeated his Conservative opponent in presidential elections. His inauguration in September 1948 initiated what was to become the longest period of constitutional rule since the 1912-24 heyday of the Liberal plutocracy.

Constitutional Rule, 1948-60

Galo Plaza differed from previous Ecuadorian presidents. The son of former President Plaza Gutiérrez, he had been born in the United States, where he also attended several universities. His ties to the United States grew even closer as a result of serving there as ambassador under President Arroyo del Río. These links, as Pike points out, "rendered him vulnerable to charges by Velasco Ibarra and other demagogic opponents of being the lackey of U.S. imperialism." Galo Plaza was not a professional politician, but a gentleman farmer with a sizable cattle ranch near Quito, where he customarily spent weekends throughout his four years as president.

Galo Plaza brought a developmentalist and technocratic emphasis to Ecuadorian government. He invited a wide variety of foreign experts in economic development and in governmental administration to recommend and catalog reforms in both areas. In large part because of a lack of political will within either the executive or the legislature, however, virtually none of the recommended reforms was enacted. Nevertheless, the economy experienced a marked improvement, with inflation finally slowing down and both government budget and foreign currency accounts balancing for the first time in many years. This achievement was even more remarkable in light of the series of major earthquakes, landslides, and floods suffered by Ecuador in 1949 and 1950.

No doubt Galo Plaza's most important contribution to Ecuadorian political culture was his commitment to the principles and practices of democracy. Galo Plaza endorsed such democratic guarantees as freedom of the press and the freedom of opponents to voice their opinions, to assemble for political purposes without fear of being jailed or worse, and to be elected to the legislature without fear of being defrauded or arbitrarily dismissed. Galo Plaza was able to create a mystique around the idea of his completing his term in office, something no president had accomplished since 1924, and this mystique no doubt helped him achieve his goal.

As Galo Plaza readily admitted, however, his greatest asset, both politically and economically, was the onset of the nation's banana boom, as diseases plaguing plantations in Central America turned Ecuador into an alternative supplier to the huge United States market. Ecuador's banana exports grew from US\$2 million to US\$20 million between 1948 and 1952. During these years, Ecuador also benefited from sizable price increases--generated by the Korean War--for its commodity exports.

A proof of the politically stabilizing effect of the banana boom of the 1950s is that even Velasco, who in 1952 was elected president for the third time, managed to serve out a full four-year term. He continued to spend as before--building bridges, roads, and schools at will and rewarding his political supporters (including, this time, the military) with jobs, salary increases, and weapons-- but, in contrast to his previous times in office, there were now sufficient funds to pay for everything.

Always the master populist, Velasco (who by now liked to be known as "the National Personification") again came to power with the support of the common man, this time through the vehicle of the Guayaquil-based Concentration of Popular Forces (Concentración de Fuerzas Populares--CFP). Once in office, however, he arrested and deported the CFP boss, Carlos Guevara Moreno, together with several other party leaders. Guevara Moreno reassumed control of the CFP in 1955 following a three-year exile. Velasco's subsequent party support during the 1950s came from the Conservatives, the conservative Social Christian Movement (Movimiento Social Cristiano--MSC), and the highly nationalistic, anticommunist, quasi-fascist Ecuadorian Nationalist Revolutionary Action (Acción Revolucionaria Nacionalista Ecuatoriana --ARNE).

On repeated occasions, members of ARNE acted as thugs and shock troops, attacking students, labor unions, and the press. In 1955 Velasco also chose to pick a fight with the United States. In the opening round of what would later become known as the "tuna war," Ecuadorian officials seized two fishing boats carrying the United States flag, charging them with fishing inside the 200-nautical-mile limit claimed by Ecuador as territorial seas under its sovereignty.

In 1956 Camilo Ponce Enríquez, the MSC founder who had served in Velasco's cabinet, assumed the presidency after a close election replete with allegations of fraud. Although late support from Velasco proved crucial to Ponce's victory, shortly afterward "the National Personification" became the principal opponent of the new chief executive. In a display of statesmanship and political acumen, Ponce co-opted the Liberal opposition by including it, along with Conservatives and the MSC, in his cabinet.

Although Ponce did not enact the Social Christian reforms of which he spoke vaguely during the campaign, the relative political calm that prevailed during his four years in office was, in itself, an accomplishment given the worsening economic situation. Ponce's term saw the end of the banana boom that had sustained more than a decade of constitutional rule. Falling export prices led to rising unemployment and a social malaise that briefly erupted into

riots in 1959. By the following year, the effects of the discontent were ready to be exploited by the populist appeal of the irrepressible Velasco, who was elected with his widest margin of victory ever. Velasco's fourth turn in the presidency initiated a renewal of crisis, instability, and military domination and ended conjecture that the political system had matured or developed a democratic mold.

Instability and Military Dominance, 1960-72

The instability began immediately. Ponce was so angry over Velasco's vicious campaign attacks on his government that he resigned on his last day in office rather than preside over the inauguration of his successor. During his campaign, "the National Personification" had promised government support to the masses of urban poor, many of whom had recently migrated to Guayaquil and other major cities in search of a decent job and a place to live. Velasco's populism continued into his inaugural address, when he renounced the hated 1942 Rio Protocol. He thus came to power with the adoration of the masses, but he saddled himself with expensive commitments to the poor at a time when deficits in the state coffers were approaching a critical level. Additionally, Velasco threatened Ecuador's shaky economy with what amounted to a declaration of hostilities against Peru and the guarantors of the Rio Protocol, namely Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and the United States.

Sensing the direction of the political wind in the wake of the Cuban Revolution, Velasco magnified his anti-United States rhetoric and included leftists in his government. Meanwhile, the United States encouraged Latin American governments to break diplomatic relations with Cuba. Before long, Ecuador's widening political polarization became manifest in outbreaks of violence between leftist students and the anticommunist right.

The rapidly deteriorating economic situation soon brought about a split in the *velasquista* coalition, however, with the left, led by Vice President Carlos Julio Arosemena Monroy (who was also president of the Chamber of Deputies) openly opposing the government in July 1961. By October relations between Velasco's government and Congress had deteriorated to the point where legislators and progovernment spectators engaged in a gun battle. Although dozens of bullet holes were later found in the Chamber, no one was injured.

A series of new sales taxes imposed during the same month in order to raise desperately needed revenues then sparked a general strike and a series of demonstrations and riots in several major

cities. Amid growing chaos, Velasco ordered the arrest of his vice president, a move that opened him to charges of violating the constitution. On November 8, after only fourteen months in office, Velasco was ousted by the military and replaced by Arosemena, who was his constitutional successor as well as his leading opponent.

Arosemena came from a well-known Guayaquil family; his father had briefly served as president following a previous anti-Velasco coup in 1947. In an attempt to allay concerns about his being a dangerous leftist (as Velasco's vice president he had expressed warm sympathy for Cuban leader Fidel Castro Ruz and made a much-criticized trip to the Soviet Union), Arosemena named a cabinet that included Liberals and even Conservatives and quickly sent former President Galo Plaza on a goodwill trip to Washington.

Arosemena's insistence on maintaining relations with Cuba, however, became a major domestic political issue in Ecuador. Political opponents labeled Arosemena a dangerous communist, and part of the military went into open rebellion in March 1962. The following month, Ecuador broke diplomatic relations with Cuba, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. The crisis over Cuba proved to be very costly for Arosemena, who lost not only much of his local political support, but also the self-confidence to pursue his own, independent course. Afterward, the government drifted with little leadership from the president, who allegedly indulged in frequent drinking bouts.

The brief appearance of a guerrilla movement in the coastal jungle and a rash of small-scale terrorist incidents (many of which later were found to have been staged by right-wing provocateurs) also left Arosemena open to accusations of being either unable or unwilling to stop communist subversion. By early 1963, military conspiracy was again afoot. On July 11 the high command of the armed forces decided, without dissent, to depose Arosemena.

The four-man military junta that seized power announced its intention not to return the nation to constitutional rule until the institution of basic socioeconomic reforms, which both Velasco and Arosemena had promised but never implemented. This failure by their two civilian predecessors, the junta believed, had become a source of growing frustration within the lower classes, thus making them more receptive to the lure of communism. The junta combined its reformist anticommunism with the more traditional hard-line variety. After jailing or exiling the entire leadership of the communist left, the new government reorganized the nation's two leading universities in an effort to eliminate them as sources of left-wing political activity.

In July 1964, the junta decreed the Agrarian Reform Law to commemorate the first anniversary of its assumption of power. The law abolished the *huasipungo* system, the feudalistic land tenure arrangement widely used in the Sierra. However, the law resulted in little real improvement in the lives of the long-suffering Sierra peasants and died from lack of funding under subsequent civilian governments.

Meaningful reform was precluded, in part at least, by the increasingly cumbersome process of decision making within the politically heterogeneous, plural executive. Insubordination by the air force representative on the junta led to his dismissal and arrest in November 1965; thereafter, the junta had only three members.

In 1965 Ecuador also saw a dramatic drop in its revenue from banana exports and, despite generous development assistance from the United States government and the Inter-American Development Bank, the junta suddenly faced an economic crisis of major proportions. The announcement of increased taxes on imports sparked the opposition of the powerful Guayaquil Chamber of Commerce, which in March called for a general strike. Long-disgruntled student groups and labor unions were only too happy to join in the protest, which rapidly spread to other cities. On March 29, 1966, following a bloody and demoralizing attack on the Central University in Quito, the disillusioned military reformers stepped down.

The following day, a small group of civilian leaders named Clemente Yerovi Indaburu, a non-partisan banana grower who had served as minister of economy under Galo Plaza, to be provisional president. In October a popularly elected constituent assembly drafted a new constitution and elected Otto Arosemena Gómez, a cousin of Carlos Julio and a political centrist, to act as a second provisional president. During his twenty months in office, the new constitution went into effect in May 1967, and popular elections for president were held in June 1968. Incredibly, Velasco--now seventy-five years old--was voted into the presidency for the fifth time, an incredible thirty-four years after his initial victory.

The weakness of Velasco's mandate--he managed only a plurality of barely one-third of the popular vote in a crowded field of five candidates--foreshadowed political difficulties that plagued him during his final term. His newly formed National Velasquista Federation (Federación Nacional Velasquista--FNV) was far short of a majority in either house of Congress, and a failure to build any working coalition made for a stalemate in the legislative process. Even Velasco's own vice president, a Guayaquileño Liberal named Jorge Zavala Baquerizo, turned into a strident and vocal critic.

Cabinet ministers came and went with astonishing frequency. This political impasse soon combined with the fiscal and balance-of-payments crises, which by now had become customary under the spendthrift habits and administrative mismanagement associated with each of Velasco's terms in office, to spawn a major political crisis. The turning point came on June 22, 1970, when Velasco, in an action known as an *autogolpe* (self-seizure of power), dismissed Congress and the Supreme Court and assumed dictatorial powers.

Velasco subsequently decreed a number of necessary, though extremely unpopular, economic measures. After devaluing the sucre for the first time since 1961, he placed tight controls on foreign exchange transactions and then decreed a number of new tax measures, the most controversial of which raised import tariffs considerably. Velasco attempted to compensate for his lost prestige by baiting the United States, seizing and fining United States fishing boats found within 200 nautical miles of the Ecuadorian coast. The intensification of the "tuna war" inflamed tempers in both countries; Ecuador dismissed United States military advisers, and the United States withdrew almost all economic and military aid to Ecuador. Such nationalistic adventures were of only momentary value to Velasco, however. In 1971, amid mounting civic unrest that verified the extent of the opposition, he was forced to cancel a scheduled national plebiscite in which he hoped to replace the 1967 constitution, with the charter written under his own auspices in 1946 the Constitution, Velasco argued, made the president too weak to be effective.

The president's *autogolpe* and his continuance in power were possible because of support from the armed forces. Velasco's key ally was his nephew and minister of defense, General Jorge Acosta Velasco, who continually reshuffled the high command in order to retain *velasquistas* in key posts. In the wake of a failed attempt to oust the powerful commandant of the Quito military academy in April 1971, however, Acosta himself was forced to resign his ministerial portfolio and was summarily dispatched to Madrid as ambassador. Having lost the man who was his linchpin in the armed forces and the only apparent heir to the *velasquista* throne, Velasco was left to the mercy of the high command.

Two circumstances proved critical in persuading the military to overthrow Velasco before the scheduled completion of his term in 1972. On the one hand, the state was due very shortly to begin reaping vast revenues under a 1964 petroleum concession. On the other hand, the overwhelming favorite to win the presidency in 1972 was Asaad Bucaram Elmhalm, a former street peddler who in 1960 had seized the leadership of the CFP from Guevara Moreno

and later had twice been an extremely popular mayor of Guayaquil. Both the military and the business community regarded Bucaram as dangerous and unpredictable and unfit to be president, especially at a time when unprecedented income was expected to flow into the state coffers. On February 15, 1972, four months before the scheduled elections, the military once again overthrew Velasco, who was sent into his final period of exile. He was replaced by a three-man military junta headed by the Army chief of staff, General Guillermo Rodríguez Lara.

Direct Military Rule, 1972-79

The military regime called itself "nationalist and revolutionary," but the well-known connections of Rodríguez Lara to the Guayaquil business community signaled disappointment for those who anticipated that he would head a progressive military regime such as was ruling in Peru at the time. It shortly became apparent that, ideologically, the Rodríguez Lara regime was a hybrid, reflecting a tenuous equilibrium among the widely divergent political tendencies within the Ecuadorian armed forces. Nevertheless, like the contemporary Peruvian and Brazilian regimes, the regime of Rodríguez Lara, he promised, would not be an interim government, but rather a long-term venture dedicated to introducing structural changes thought necessary to unfreeze the development process.

Rodríguez Lara's regime gave early emphasis to a campaign designed in part to exert firm control over the nation's petroleum resources and in part to consolidate the government's political authority. Several former political leaders, including ex-President Otto Arosemena, were tried for corruption in connection with oil concessions granted during the 1960s. In addition, a large number of functionaries of the Velasco government, supporters of Bucaram, as well as drug traffickers, legitimate importers, and customs officials were charged with corruption and "illegal enrichment." Although it thus assailed its major opponents from the start the military regime, however, failed to build its own civilian base of political support.

Promises of a "meaningful agrarian reform" under the auspices of Minister of Agriculture Guillermo Maldonado, a dedicated reformer, were frustrated by intense opposition from traditional elites. Maldonado was eventually forced out, and by the end of Rodríguez Lara's four years in office less than 1 percent of Ecuador's cultivable land had changed hands under the reform. More notable achievements came in the areas of building infrastructure projects, such as the major oil refinery and petrochemical complex in Esmeraldas; various highway and electrification projects; and state

capitalist enterprises, particularly the Ecuadorian State Petroleum Corporation (Corporación Estatal Petrolera Ecuatoriana-- CEPE). The latter corporation was founded in 1972 and grew to become the major actor in Ecuador's exploitation of its oil reserves.

Oil policy was the regime's vehicle for its most forceful expression of nationalism. Minister of Natural Resources Gustavo Jarrín Ampudia presided over Ecuador's 1973 entry into the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), with all its attendant prestige and economic benefits. He was also responsible for Ecuador's renegotiation of a number of oil concessions, including the key Texaco-Gulf concession in the Oriente, on terms much more favorable to the state, such as substantial increases in both the royalties paid by foreign firms and the tax rate they paid on petroleum exports. These efforts were initially successful in allowing the government to retain a larger share of Ecuador's petroleum earnings.

The oil companies became increasingly disconcerted, however, when Jarrín proposed in late 1974 that the share of stock in the Texaco-Gulf subsidiary held by CEPE be increased from 25 to 51 percent. Claiming that the terms of their concessions negotiated with Jarrín had priced Ecuadorian oil beyond the world market price, the oil companies cut back drastically on their exports, at a cost to the government of hundreds of millions of dollars over the following nine months. This intense financial pressure finally led to a July 1975 announcement that taxes on the oil companies' exports were being reduced. It was thus clear that the military regime had overplayed its nationalistic oil policy, having failed to keep in mind that Ecuador was, after all, a relatively small oil producer and thus not a powerful player within OPEC.

The moderation of the regime's oil policy, however, did not result in the anticipated resolution of mounting economic problems. Oil exports rose only slightly, while imports, particularly of luxury items, continued to soar, aided by a low-tariff policy that had been designed to soak up petroleum earnings, and thus control inflation. In excess of 22 percent during 1974, inflation was rapidly eroding the real value of wages within the middle class.

In August, in an effort to resolve its balance-of-payments difficulties, the regime decreed a 60 percent duty on imported luxury items. The measure was condemned by the Chambers of Commerce in Quito and Guayaquil, whose constituents had grown dependent on the sale of imports, and caused, a week later, a bloody attempt led by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Raúl González Alvear, to overthrow Rodríguez Lara. Although this coup attempt failed, at a cost of twenty-two lives, on

January 11, 1976, a second, bloodless coup was successful in removing Rodríguez Lara. He was replaced by a Supreme Council of Government consisting of the commanders of the three armed services.

Virtually the only item on the agenda of the new military triumvirate was to preside over a return of the government to constitutional, civilian rule. The bloody September 1975 coup attempt had revealed the depth of the breach in the institutional unity of the armed forces. Handing the government back to civilians, it was hoped, might remove the causes of divisions within the military, or at least make it easier to hide them from public view.

The original timetable, announced in June 1976, called for a transition that was to culminate in presidential elections in February 1978. First, new government charters and electoral laws were to be drafted by appointed commissions, and then a public referendum would choose between two proposed constitutions. The transition was repeatedly slowed down, however, and in the end, instead of the less than two years originally scheduled, three years and eight months elapsed between the 1976 coup and the inauguration of a civilian president.

Two reasons are commonly cited for the delay: the slowness of decision making within the Supreme Council of Government because of ongoing disagreement within the military high command and repeated maneuverings by the military government to manipulate the electoral process, thereby controlling its outcome. Like the Rodríguez Lara government, the Council was particularly interested in seeing a poor electoral performance by the CFP and, especially, preventing Bucaram from winning the presidency.

The national referendum to choose the constitution was finally held on January 15, 1978. The results saw 23 percent of the voting population nullify their ballots, an action that had been advocated by the traditional right; 31 percent of the population voted in favor of a revised version of the 1945 constitution, and a plurality of 44 percent voted in favor of the newly drafted national charter. The charter was the more progressive of the two constitutions, its major reforms being the acknowledgement of a role for the state in socioeconomic development, the legalization of a worker self-managed (*autogestional*) sector in the economy, a unicameral legislature, no presidential reelection, and, for the first time in Ecuador, electoral suffrage for illiterates.

Five candidates then campaigned for the presidency. The consistent favorite in polls was Rodrigo Borja of the social democratic Democratic Left (Izquierda Democrática--ID). Because the Supreme

Council of Government made sure that Bucaram was barred from running, the CFP strongman named his second in command, Jaime Roldós, to be the party's candidate. In order to broaden the appeal of the ticket, Osvaldo Hurtado, the leader of the Christian Democratic Party (Partido Demócrata Cristiano--PDC), was tapped to be Roldós's vice presidential running mate. The traditional rightist vote was split between two candidates, and the various parties of the Marxist left coalesced to name one candidate. After a lengthy recount, the final results of the July 16 election confirmed the initial tally of a surprise victory by Roldós, with 27 percent of the national vote. Sixto Durán Ballén, candidate of a coalition of rightist parties, finished second with 24 percent. The electoral law mandated that when no candidate achieved a majority vote, a run-off election between the two top finishers be held.

It was more than nine months before the second-round election took place, however. They were months of considerable political tension and doubt as to whether the transition would proceed as planned. First, widespread problems in organizing the election and in the vote count during the first round left serious doubts as to the competence and honesty of the electoral authorities. The Supreme Electoral Tribunal (Tribunal Superior Electoral--TSE) was, as a result, completely reorganized. Second, the government--remembering a campaign slogan calling "Roldós to the government, Bucaram to power"--was understandably dismayed with results of the first-round election. By delaying the second round, the government sought to give rightists the time to build an anti-Roldós coalition under which Durán could emerge as the second-round victor. To complicate matters further, Abdón Calderón Muñoz, a populist candidate who had won 9 percent of the vote in the first round, was murdered under circumstances implicating the government. Finally, as a further distraction during this difficult period, Velasco returned from exile to bury his wife and died in March 1979 at age eighty-six.

The second round was finally held on April 29, 1979, with the Roldós-Hurtado ticket sweeping to an overwhelming 68.5 percent victory against a weak performance by Durán. Doubts persisted, however, up to the moment that the winners took office three months later, that the military would allow them to assume their duly elected offices. The size of their popular mandate and, according to political scientist John D. Martz, pressure from the administration of President Jimmy Carter in Washington made it difficult for the military to stop the "democratization" process at this late date. The military did extract as a price, in any case, unprecedented powers to name representatives to the boards of directors of major state corporations and to participate directly in

the naming of the minister of defense. The outgoing government also made it clear to Roldós (who had an early campaign slogan of "we will not forgive, we will not forget") that it would not tolerate any investigation into the behavior of the military with respect to human rights. With his autonomy thus diminished, Roldós finally assumed the presidency on August 10, and thus Ecuador returned to constitutional, civilian rule after almost a decade of dictatorship.

Return to Democratic Rule, 1979-84

Roldós presided over a nation that had undergone profound changes during the seven years of military rule. During the ceremony to pass the mantle of power to Roldós, Admiral Alfredo Poveda Burbano pointed proudly to impressive indicators of economic growth between 1972 and 1979: the government budget expanded some 540 percent, whereas exports as well as per capita income increased a full 500 percent. Industrial development had also progressed, stimulated by the new oil wealth as well as Ecuador's preferential treatment under the provisions of the Andean Common Market (Ancom, also known as the Andean Pact).

Past export "booms" in cacao and bananas were managed by and for private coastal interests, but the state controlled the petroleum bonanza and thereby transformed the social landscape. Quito--the seat of the bureaucracy and the closest major city to the oil fields--reaped the benefits of the economic growth. The capital city lost much of its sleepy Sierra character and in the 1980s competed with Guayaquil as a center of modern economic endeavor. Employment in the public sector grew in excess of 10 percent annually throughout the late 1970s, creating a new consumption-oriented middle class in Quito. But such change highlighted the persistence of the traditional rural campesino and the unskilled urban subproletariat; petroleum revenues thus widened Ecuador's habitual inequality in income distribution.

Expectations that the economic and social changes would transform the traditional political culture were unfulfilled. Customary aspects of civilian politics, such as regionalism and personalism, reflected in the proliferation of political parties; and rivalry between the executive and legislature persisted during the five years that Roldós and his vice president, Osvaldo Hurtado, were in power.

The most destructive of these traditions was evident in the intense rivalry that developed between Roldós and Bucaram, the strongman of the president's own CFP who, having twice been prevented from running for the presidency, was now determined to run the country from his power base in the unicameral legislature, the National

Congress (Congress Nacional--hereafter, Congress). Bucaram's coalition building secured him the presidency of the legislature during the first year of the new government. The president, for his part, was determined to retain his independence from the autocratic and increasingly conservative party boss. Bucaram had no apparent agenda other than blocking the reformist agenda of the president, who was thus forced to spend most of his first year in office scratching together his own political base, independent of the CFP, in order to achieve a legislative majority.

Roldós proved successful in this effort; in August 1980, his candidate for the congressional presidency narrowly defeated the *bucaramista* candidate, and the CFP also suffered major losses in the municipal and provincial elections in December. The president was not able to enjoy the fruits of his success, however; on May 24, 1981, he was killed, along with his wife and the minister of defense, in an airplane crash in the southern province of Loja.

The death of Roldós generated intense popular speculation. Some Ecuadorian nationalists attributed it to the Peruvian government because the crash took place near the border where, four months previously, the two nations had participated in a bloody flare-up in their perpetual border dispute. Many of the nation's leftists, pointing to a similar crash that had killed Panamanian President Omar Torrijos Herrera less than three months later, blamed the United States government.

Roldós's constitutional successor, Hurtado, immediately faced an economic crisis brought on by the sudden end of the petroleum boom. Massive foreign borrowing, initiated during the years of the second military regime and continued under Roldós, resulted in a foreign debt that by 1983 was nearly US\$7 billion. The nation's petroleum reserves declined sharply during the early 1980s because of exploration failures and rapidly increasing domestic consumption.

The economic crisis was aggravated in 1982 and 1983 by drastic climatic changes, bringing severe drought as well as flooding, precipitated by the appearance of the unusually warm ocean current known as "El Niño". Analysts estimated damage to the nation's infrastructure at US\$640 million, with balance-of-payments losses of some US\$300 million. The real gross domestic product fell to 2 percent in 1982 and to -3.3 percent in 1983. The rate of inflation in 1983, 52.5 percent, was the highest ever recorded in the nation's history.

Although widely considered a center-leftist, Hurtado confronted the economic crisis by instituting highly unpopular austerity measures aimed at gaining the approval of the International Monetary Fund

and the international financial community at large. Hurtado eliminated government subsidies for basic foodstuffs--thus contributing to both inflation and the impoverishment of the masses--and substantially devalued the sucre. With unemployment increasing to as high as 13.5 percent, the United Workers Front (Frente Unitario de Trabajadores--FUT) launched four general strikes during Hurtado's period in office. The most militant of these nationwide strikes, in October 1982, was called off after forty-eight hours because of union leaders' fears of provoking a coup d'état.

Outside observers noted that, however unpopular, Hurtado deserved credit for keeping Ecuador in good standing with the international financial community and for consolidating Ecuador's democratic political system under extremely difficult conditions. The political right, nevertheless, believing that the economic crisis was caused by presidential policies that were inimical to free-enterprise capitalism, bitterly criticized Hurtado. The right united for the 1984 elections in order to back León Febres Cordero Ribadeneyra, a businessman from Guayaquil, with Borja running a close second. As Febres Cordero entered office on August 10, there was no end in sight to the economic crisis nor to the intense struggle that characterized the political process in Ecuador.

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Beginning in the 1960s, Ecuadorian historiography benefited from publication of a handful of excellent studies, most of which grew out of doctoral dissertations. Nicolas P. Cushner's *Farm and Factory* and John Leddy Phelan's *The Kingdom of Quito in the Seventeenth Century* offer some of the best research ever conducted on colonial Spanish America. On the post-independence period, Osvaldo Hurtado's *Political Power in Ecuador* and Agustín Cueva's *The Process of Political Domination in Ecuador* are both excellent general studies by Ecuadorian scholars and have been translated into English. Frederick B. Pike's *The United States and the Andean Republics* is also extremely valuable, although the reader interested in Ecuador might jump over extensive analyses of Peru and Bolivia.

A number of political analyses are also useful to the historian of the modern period. John Samuel Fitch's *The Military Coup d'Etat as a Political Process: Ecuador, 1948-1966* is a pioneering, in-depth study of the political mindset of the Latin American armed forces. John D. Martz's *Ecuador: Conflicting Political Culture and the Quest for Progress* is a more general study that concentrates on the 1960s. Literature on the military government of the 1970s remains scarce; David W. Schodt's "State Structure and Reformist Politics" provides useful information on the public sector during that period,

however. *Crisis, Conflicto y Consenso: Ecuador, 1979-84* by Nick D. Mills, Jr. is a valuable study of the turbulent Roldós-Hurtado period.