FROM HOPE TO REGRET:

THE "POPULIST IMAGINARY" OF ECUADOR'S LUCIO GUTIÉRREZ

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ABSTRACT

Framed within a discussion of populism, this thesis provides a critical analysis of the campaign and short tenure in office of Ecuadorian President Lucio Gutiérrez Borbúa. It outlines a multi-dimensional approach to populism that is characterized by five components: (1) personalistic leadership, (2) a heterogeneous coalition of support, (3) top-down political mobilization, (4) an ambiguous ideological discourse, and (5) a redistributive and clientelistic economic approach. Applied to the Gutiérrez case, the multi-dimensional approach highlights the viability and volatility of populism.

This thesis argues that Gutiérrez ascended to the presidency through the successful application of a populist strategy, which generated significant expectations among the public and his political allies. Yet, once in office, Gutiérrez' populist strategy was unable to sustain the support he enjoyed during the campaign. The expectations he generated went unmet as he engaged in clear reversals of the "populist imaginary" created by his candidacy. His twenty-eight months in office were characterized by neoliberalism, corruption, and status quo political machinations that had sunk his predecessors. Tracking Gutiérrez' transition from populist champion to political pariah using the multi-dimensional approach indicates that although populism can be an effective electoral strategy, it can also impose significant limitations on a government. Ultimately, the Gutiérrez case reinforces the important role played by the "populist imaginary" in determining the success or failure of populist leaders.

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

On 20 April 2005, growing public unrest in Ecuador reached a climax following a series of political missteps by the country's once popular President Lucio Gutiérrez Borbúa. Thousands of students, union members, and indigenous groups descended on Quito, the Ecuadorian capital, to demand the President's resignation. This was followed, one day later, by another demonstration, this time by throngs of Quito's citizens who converged on the presidential palace to voice their opposition to the president. Demonstrations against Gutiérrez had recently gained widespread national support after he removed the Supreme Court justices, imposed a state of emergency, and harangued the protestors by labeling them *forajidos*, or criminals. Amidst the unfolding chaos**,** Gutiérrez fled by helicopter from the roof of the presidential palace, the crowds surged against the barricades below, his Congressional opponents voted to remove him from office, and the military rescinded its support.

This political turmoil, institutional breakdown, and demonstration of public anger directed at the President came only twenty-eight months after Gutiérrez' rise to the nation's highest office at the head of a vibrant populist movement. During the presidential campaign, his unexpected success, sudden popularity, and unique coalition with the country's powerful indigenous movement appeared to signal a watershed political moment for Ecuador. Why did such a reversal of fortunes take place and what type of critical analysis could help to explain the President's meteoric rise and fall from power? Motivated by these questions, this thesis argues that Lucio Gutiérrez ascended to the presidency through the successful and skillful application of a populist strategy that generated significant expectations among the public and his political allies. However, once in office, Gutiérrez' populist strategy was unable to sustain the support he enjoyed during the campaign and the expectations he generated went unmet causing significant

opposition to his hold on power. Framed within a discussion of populism and its component parts, this thesis analyzes the Ecuadorian experience through a case study of Lucio Gutiérrez' campaign and presidency. Examining the viability and volatility of populism in Ecuador supports a more nuanced understanding of the populist phenomenon in contemporary Latin American.

This study of populism and Lucio Gutiérrez evolved, in part, out of my brief field experience in Ecuador in late 2004 in the weeks following the president's political maneuvering against the Supreme Court. At this time, there was an obvious tension between the president's message and actions and the public sentiment. A contradiction that was readily apparent in the government's self-aggrandizing signs that declared "*Lucio Construye*" (Lucio Builds) and the simmering public anger demonstrated by the many ready-to-burn effigies of Gutiérrez visible throughout the capital. This case necessitated further review given my firsthand experience and the volatile events of the President's ouster only a few months later. Furthermore, Ecuador's recent history, in particular the preceding decade (1995 to 2005) that saw seven different presidents take office, called for additional analysis of one of Latin America's relatively unexamined countries.

Research Methodology

This thesis employs a qualitative research approach in order to assemble a comprehensive set of data from various sources. Primary sources for research include Ecuadorians' first hand accounts, polling data, statistics, speeches, radio transcripts, government publications, and local and international media coverage of unfolding events gathered during a period of field research. Research journals, books, articles by non-governmental organizations, and reports by international agencies proved to be reliable secondary sources. The case study in Chapter Three

is structured chronologically and relies on media coverage to place events in sequence. Additionally, various primary sources are employed in this section to add depth to the discussion. Where possible local, Spanish language resources were used.

During the course of this project what became obvious was the lack of scholarly work specifically exploring Lucio Gutiérrez' brand of populism. While this presented a challenge in terms of the writing of this thesis, it has highlighted the value of additional work in this area.

Organization

In order to explore the issue of populism in Ecuador, this thesis is organized into five chapters: Chapter One – Introduction, Chapter Two – Understanding Populism, Chapter Three – Lucio Gutiérrez' Rise to Power, Chapter Four – Lucio Gutiérrez' Downfall, and Chapter Five – Conclusion.

Chapter One addresses the goals, framework, and methodology of the thesis. In Chapter Two the theoretical framework of the thesis is presented. It constitutes a survey of the various perspectives on populism and examines its contested nature. To overcome the lack of clarity about the concept, this chapter outlines a multi-dimensional approach to populism by suggesting that there are five key components. As well, Chapter Two reviews populism's relationship to neoliberalism, which is the prevailing socio-economic context of Lucio Gutiérrez' Ecuador. This provides the context for the evaluation that follows in the next two chapters on the campaign and presidency of Lucio Gutiérrez. In Chapter Three, Gutiérrez' campaign for the presidency is surveyed showing that his actions are consistent with the components of the multi-dimensional approach to populism. Chapter Four highlights the expectations generated by Gutiérrez' successful use of a populist strategy during his presidential campaign and his subsequent failure to meet those expectations through his actual policies and practices once in office. Finally,

Chapter Five provides an overview of the major findings, offers concluding observations regarding populism and the Ecuadorian case, and suggests avenues for further study.

CHAPTER TWO – UNDERSTANDING POPULISM

"…few social science concepts can match populism when it comes to nebulous and inconsistent usage…"[1]

Populism is a particularly difficult social science concept to understand given its application to such a wide variety of divergent political phenomena and socio-economic contexts. A workable definition of populism or even a common set of constitutive elements are contested within the academic discourse and, as such, have raised questions about populism's analytical potential.[2] Despite the lack of a widely agreed upon definition, this paper builds on the work of proponents of the concept's analytical potential to assert that populism is a useful concept for an examination of Ecuadorian politics. The goal of this chapter is to provide a brief review of populism's contested nature and to discuss the various perspectives that have been offered. This will be followed by an attempt to re-articulate the concept as a multidimensional phenomenon, that is, one capable of unifying the various perspectives.

In addition to these goals, this chapter surveys populism's (in)compatibility with the prevailing political and socio-economic context of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism – the orientation toward open markets, a circumscribed role of government in the economy, budget austerity, and privatization – provides the contextual undercurrent for Gutiérrez' populist activities in Ecuador. The sometimes complementary and sometimes conflicting relationship between populism and neoliberalism will be examined in order to provide insight into President Gutiérrez' rise to power and subsequent downfall that is examined in Chapter Three.

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[1] Kenneth M. Roberts, "Neoliberalism and the Transformation of Populism in Latin America: The Peruvian Case," *World Politics* 48.1 (1995): 84.

[2] See Paul Drake, "Requiem for Populism," in *Latin American Populism in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Michael L. Conniff (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), 217 – 245.

A Contested Concept

Populism is a murky concept, mired in ill-defined and often conflicting usage. As Canovan states, "although frequently used by historians, social scientists, and political commentators, the term is exceptionally vague and refers in different contexts to a bewildering variety of phenomena."[3] Moreover, the term populism in a Latin American context usually carries a negative connotation: "For most it implies an abnormality, an anomaly, and a passing phenomenon that will eventually, and hopefully, go away."[4] The term has been applied to a vast spectrum of Latin American (and other) leaders from authoritarians (Carlos Ibáñez del Campo in Chile), to socialists (Fidel Castro in Cuba), to progressive reformers (Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre in Peru).[5] Not surprisingly, there is widespread confusion over its meaning.

The difficulty of defining populism relates to the concept's relatively recent emergence in the mid-twentieth century as an area of analysis within the social sciences.[6] In fact, prior to the 1960s, very few academic works utilized the term and even fewer political actors willingly ascribed to the label. Therefore, populism has not achieved widespread agreement on its conceptualization: "for many years political scientists have struggled to provide a meaningful and precise definition."[7] The conceptual vagary surrounding the meaning of the term and its the contested use highlight the need for a more rigorous understanding that can move populism beyond a derogatory adjective.[8]

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[3] Margaret Canovan, *Populism*, (New York: Harcourt, 1981), 3.
[4] Carlos de la Torre, *Populist Seduction in Latin America: The Ecuadorian Experience* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000), ix.
[5] For an examination of the spectrum of Latin American populist leaders, see Robert H. Dix, "Populism: Authoritarian and Democratic," *Latin American Research Review* 20 (1985): 29-52.
[6] Michael L. Conniff, *Latin American Populism in Comparative Perspective*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), 23.
[7] Rudiger Dornbusch and Sebastian Edwards, *The Macroeconomics of Populism in Latin America*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 8.
[8] Salo V. Coslovsky, "Neoliberalism, Populism and Presidential Impeachment in Latin America" (M.A. thesis, Tufts University, 2002), 18.

In part, the contention surrounding the definitional issue results from the broad, and arguably erroneous, categorization of the phenomenon into classical populism and neopopulism. Both categories will be examined in greater detail in the latter part of this chapter. However, classic populism is generally associated with the rise, especially in Latin America, of mass politics and state-sponsored income redistribution in the early twentieth century. While neoliberal populism, also called neopopulism, is typically associated with populist mobilizations undertaken in concert with neoliberal reforms from the 1980s to the present. Classical and neopopulist categorizations provide a basic means for grouping and differentiating among populist manifestations, but their exact characteristics and time periods are a matter of debate and depend greatly on the academic perspective employed. As is detailed later in this chapter, classical populism and neopopulism will be shown to be merely subtypes of an overarching populist phenomenon and not as inherently unique manifestations.

The lack of a concise definition of populism also stems from the difficultly of situating populism neatly within any one academic discourse or from a single widely accepted perspective. Scholars have examined Latin American populism from: (1) the historical/sociological; (2) the ideological/discursive; (3) the economic; or (4) the political perspective.[9] Overall, these four perspectives on populism produce an array of possible attributes that makeup populism, which makes comparative analysis difficult and reduces the utility of the concept.

First, the historical/sociological perspective explains populism as a transitional occurrence that is contingent on a society's linear evolution from a 'traditional' to a 'modern'

[9] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 84; Kurt Weyland, "Clarifying a Contested Concept: Populism in the Study of Latin American Politics," *Comparative Politics* 34.1 (2001): 2.

state.[10] This perspective situates populism within a specific historical and socioeconomic stage of development and typically relies on modernization and dependency theories. The so-called era of classical populism, roughly spanning the period of the 1930s to the 1960s, was often analyzed from the historical/sociological perspective as the period's populists were a reflection of, and motivated by, socioeconomic transitions underway at the time (i.e. urbanization, industrialization, and economic recession). Populism was thus assumed to be a temporary phenomenon that comprised various political strategies for dealing with these changes. However, the historical/sociological perspective is largely discredited as populism has endured beyond a specific time period and has adapted to a wide range of social, economic, and political conditions.

Second, the ideological/discursive perspective defines populism through its rhetorical undercurrent and mode of articulation. This perspective centers analysis on the contents of the populist appeal, which is typically based on an anti-status quo message intended to highlight the struggle between the 'people' and the 'power bloc'.[11] Ernesto Laclau outlines the role of populist discourse in defining populism both by what is said (typically an appeal to the people) and by how it is articulated to produce a populist mode of representation.[12] Specifically, Laclau explains that "populism consists in the representation of popular-democratic interpellations as a synthetic antagonistic complex with respect to the dominant ideology."[13] More simply, populism expresses the will of the people against those in power. One of the potential difficulties of defining populism from the ideology/discursive perspective, however, is that the boundaries of

[10] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 85; Coslovsky, 16.
[11] Yannis Stavrakakis, "Antinomies of formalism: Laclau's theory of populism and the lessons from religious populism in Greece," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 9.3 (October 2004): 256-257.
[12] Ernesto Laclau, "Populism: What's in a Name?," in *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*, ed. Francisco Panizza (London: Verso, 2005), 33-4.
[13] Ernesto Laclau, "Towards a theory of populism," in *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory,* ed. E. Laclau (London: New Left Books, 1977), 143, quoted in Yannis Stavrakakis, "Religion and Populism in Contemporary Greece," in *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*, ed. Francisco Panizza (London: Verso, 2005), 231.

the concept can be so general as to apply to a wide variation of policies and actions framed within a popular rhetoric.

Third, the economic perspective establishes populism as a set of popular economic policies used to achieve political ends. Typically these economic policies include the use of macroeconomic measures for the creation and maintenance of popular support within multi-class coalitions of urban workers and the middle class. Popular policies such as wealth redistribution and food and fuel subsidization have often proven to be ill-conceived and unsustainable in the long-term. The economic perspective features prominently in many interpretations of Latin America's classical populism era, in which politicians relied heavily on these economically redistributive and statist strategies to gain and secure power. However, the economic perspective on populism has been faulted for its tendency to bind populism to specific development models, especially import substitution industrialization, and to reduce populism to mere economic policy, ignoring the importance of populist organizational strategies and relations with supporters.[14] Moreover, from the narrow economic perspective it is difficult to determine if populism's much maligned economic irresponsibility is "due to design or mere constraint."[15]

Fourth, the political perspective defines populism in terms of political strategy, specifically how populists compete for and exercise political power.[16] Prominent in analyses of the neopopulist era of the post-1980s, the political perspective on populism emphasizes the relationship dynamics between the leader and supporters. As well, it focuses on the political methods utilized by populists to translate this relationship into political power. From this perspective, populism is characterized by the deinstitutionalization of political representation, such as through the rejection of political parties, to achieve unmediated relations between the

[14] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 86.
[15] Weyland, "Clarifying," 11.
[16] Weyland, "Clarifying," 11.

leader and supporters. Additionally, the political perspective underscores the importance of personalistic leadership styles, which can facilitate the creation of mass, multiclass, electoral coalitions.[17] While this perspective is useful in unhinging populism from particular economic development models or ideological discourses, it can be faulted for overemphasizing the role of political strategy and tactics to the exclusion of important concerns such as the economy and society.

A Multidimensional Perspective on Populism

When separately employed, these perspectives are less useful for analysis as each disregards important considerations. For this reason, many scholars (including Roberts, Conniff, Knight, and de la Torre)[18] choose to employ a multidimensional perspective that utilizes elements from each of these perspectives and categorizes different populist experiences based on their adherence to core attributes. As Canovan asserts:

> the range and variety of movements lumped together under the general heading of populism make it clear that what we need is not a single essentialist definition, but rather a typology of populisms – one moreover, which is capable of accommodating a wide range of different phenomena seen from different analytical viewpoints.[19]

This thesis will draw on just such an understanding of populism to examine Ecuador's experiences under President Gutiérrez in Chapter Three.

In particular, this thesis borrows from the work of Kenneth Roberts, who presents a particularly clear and useful conceptualization of populism. He employs a multidimensional perspective that contains five core attributes: (1) a personalistic mode of leadership, (2) a heterogeneous political coalition based in the subaltern sectors, (3) a top-down political

[17] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 87; Weyland, "Clarifying," 14.
[18] See Roberts, "Peruvian Case;" Conniff, *Latin American Populism*; Alan Knight, "Populism and Neo-populism in Latin America, Especially Mexico," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 30 (1998); and de la Torre, "Populist Seduction."
[19] Canovan, 12-3.

mobilization, (4) an eclectic, anti-establishment ideology, and (5) an economically redistributive or clientelistic approach.[20] He defends this perspective on populism, which he terms a "synthetic construction,"[21] as the best means of understanding the term's complexity and adaptive properties that are less apparent through the four isolated approaches outlined previously. By clearly defining the five core characteristics of populism, the multidimensional approach also allows for the possibility of various populist sub-types that empirically reflect only some of the attributes. Within the Ecuadorian context, the multidimensional definition is particularly helpful; its breadth allows for the incorporation of the broad spectrum of prevailing elements and thus better captures the nuance and complexity of the Ecuadorian case. Moreover, this understanding of populism allows the concept to be less restricted by a particular time period or economic model, allowing for a continuity of analysis from the so-called classical populist to the neopopulist manifestations.

Components of the Multidimensional Perspective

The first element of the multidimensional perspective on populism focuses on leadership style and strategy. Typically, the populist employs a personalistic, paternalistic, and, occasionally, charismatic method of leadership.[22] He/she uses personal attributes, history, and actions to create an appeal to supporters that is based on implied strengths, unique qualifications, and/or popular image. For example, Peruvian populist President Alberto Fujimori, capitalized on his Japanese heritage, lack of connection to the Creole political elite, and humble origins to establish a personal connection with average Peruvians.[23] As part of their personalistic appeal, populist leaders take a paternalistic approach to supporters creating the illusion that they are

[20] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 88.
[21] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 88.
[22] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 88.
[23] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 94-5.

protectors of the public's best interest. However, populist paternalism tends to be a means for leaders to interpret and act on the popular will in a manner that best suites their political ambitions. Charisma, often confused with populism in mainstream discourse, can also be a definitive element of populist leadership. An engaging and appealing persona reinforces the populist's leadership by creating a symbolic cult of personality and strengthening the bond between the leader and followers.[24] The existence of charismatic leadership focuses politics on the character and image of the leader rather than definitive, tangible issues.

The second component of the multidimensional perspective refers to the populist's base of support, which is typically a heterogeneous, multiclass political coalition concentrated within the subaltern[25] sectors of society.[26] Instead of receiving support solely from elite power brokers or political parties, populists rely on the support of a mass-based political coalition. This coalition can contain a plethora of atomized individuals and organized groups that represent various interests, socioeconomic classes, ethnicities, and regional affiliations (such as urban and rural, highland and costal). For instance, Abdala Bucaram, Ecuador's short-lived President of the mid-1990s, allied with those who were marginalized and excluded from the centres of power: economic elites lacking social prestige, poor workers rebelling against their employer's candidate, and displaced professionals and intellectuals.[27] As this example highlights, populism characteristically finds support in broad coalitions of which the politically dispossessed and marginalized – the non-dominant, subaltern sectors – are a majority.

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[24] Knight, "Populism and Neo-populism," 231.
[25] The term subaltern is employed as a more inclusive and less ideologically burdened terminology than lower class or working class and it reflects the increase in Latin America's informal economy and decrease in the centrality of the labour movement. Borrowed from Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 89.
[26] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 88.
[27] Carlos De La Torre, "Neopopulism in Contemporary Ecuador: The Case of Bucaram's Use of the Mass Media," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 12.4 (1999): 567.

The third element of the multidimensional perspective on populism is the distinctive political mobilization process that is directed from the top-down and either circumvents institutional forms of mediation or subordinates them to more direct linkages between the leader and supporters.[28] Given populism's use of personalistic leadership and mass coalitions, a hierarchical political mobilization is a natural fit as the leader embodies and interprets the popular will, claiming to give voice to the marginalized masses. Political mobilization under populism relies on the direct, largely unmediated, relationship between the leader and supporters that removes the influence of intermediate institutions (such as legislatures, political parties, the media, or civil society groups) that can dilute the control of populist leaders over their supporters. Moreover, populists can build strong, personal loyalties that motivate supporters to action at the ballot box, in the streets, or in confrontations with oppositional institutions by dominating, circumventing, or subordinating institutional forms of mediation. Finally, populists gain or maintain support by utilizing executive powers to control and reorder the state through referenda, constituent assemblies, and appointments.

The fourth facet of the multidimensional perspective shows that populism is characterized by an amorphous or eclectic ideology that is most often expressed through an anti-elite and/or anti-establishment discourse praising subaltern sectors of society.[29] In order to attract and motivate a broad coalition of support, populists tend to reject ideological classification on the left or right of the political spectrum and focus on politically popular ideals and policies. Critical of the current status-quo, populists imbue their discourse with a strong anti-elite, anti-establishment message that is "propeople"[30] aimed at drawing in new groups and

[28] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 88.
[29] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 88.
[30] Nicos Mouzelis, "On the Concept of Populism: Populist and Clientelist Modes of Incorporation in Semiperipheral Polities," *Politics & Society* 14.3 (1985): 344.

motivating divergent groups towards a common goal. As well, populism's oppositional discourse tends to align supporters against existing political forces (i.e. "the establishment") and with a popular force (i.e. "the populist leader") emerging outside and, thus, unbound by the political establishment. For example, the 2006 election of President Rafael Correa in Ecuador relied on his "fresh-faced outsider" image, attacks on the Congress as a "sewer" of corruption, and his calls for constitutional reforms to benefit people over political parties.[31]

Finally, the fifth component of the multidimensional perspective on populism is an economic approach that employs redistributive or clientelistic methods in order to create a material foundation for popular support.[32] During electoral contests, populists mobilize supporters by relying heavily on promises of future economic benefits. Take, for instance, the case of Álvaro Noboa, Ecuador's richest man and perennial presidential candidate, who used his 2002 campaign stops as spectacles of his largess, handing out wheelchairs to the disabled and loans to street vendors.[33] Such actions, while an overt attempt to buy votes, created a popular image of Noboa's potential presidency as one that would be economically beneficial to the marginalized. Once in power, populists craft economic policies that ensure the maintenance and continual generation of popular support, especially among subaltern groups.[34] The specific economic policies employed depend largely on the capacity of the state to use resources in a redistributive or clientelistic manner. Thus, this characterization of economic populism can incorporate the macro-level redistribution policies, prominent in the era of classical populism, and the micro-level clientelism frequently employed in the neopopulist era in which neoliberal

[31] Monte Hayes, "Correa Looks Toward Reforms in Ecuador," *Washington Post*, 27 November 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com>. [Retrieval Date May 2007].
[32] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 88.
[33] Alexandra Valencia, "Ecuador's Noboa Takes Populist Tack to Presidency," *Reuters*, 13 November 2006, <http://www.reuters.com>. [Retrieval Date November 2006].
[34] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 89.

policies have restricted the financial and redistributive capacity of the state. While populism's economic approach may seem to disparage the ability of voters to make rational choices, Roberts aptly notes that "in contexts of grinding poverty and urgent social needs, the poor can hardly be blamed for exchanging political loyalty for handouts from a paternalistic state."[35]

In sum, Roberts' multidimensional approach provides a useful framework for understanding the nature of populism because it encapsulates the various academic perspectives within the five core characteristics. As well, it offers a means for populist analysis to overcome the static and reductionist tendencies that are the main fault of the unidimensional perspectives on populism (i.e. sociological/historical, ideological/discursive, economic, and political perspectives). Given populism's complexity, this multidimensional approach is most effective for interpreting change and continuity in various populist experiences over time, thereby reducing the distinctions between classical populism and populism in the neoliberal era.[36] The ability to traverse the various manifestations of populism that are otherwise separated by a strict focus on specific constitutive elements, such as socioeconomic conditions or economic development models, allows populism to remain a useful conceptual tool. Ultimately, the multidimensional perspective provides a basic set of characteristic elements against which we can assess the actions of a politician to determine if he/she is a populist and, if so, evaluate his/her use of populism as a political strategy.

Reconciling Neoliberalism and Populism

The inclusiveness of the multidimensional approach counters the supposed disappearance of populism that was predicted in the wake of Latin America's return to democratic government

[35] Kenneth M. Roberts, "Populism and Democracy in Latin America" (paper presented at the "Challenges to Democracy" Conference, The Carter Center, Washington, D.C., October 2000, 18).
[36] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 83.

and the rise of the neoliberal development model.[37] Neoliberalism's economic cannon, also known as the Washington Consensus, which calls for governments to adopt a free-market orientation, a reduced role in the allocation of state resources, fiscal austerity, and global economic integration appeared to create significant pressures and constraints for classical populism.[38] On the surface, the tenets of neoliberalism appeared to be antithetical to Latin America's populist experiences spanning from the 1930s to the 1970s, wherein populists relied on an interventionist, economically nationalist state that engaged in subsidization, price controls, and protections for industry in order to create and maintain mass popular support. However, populism's contemporary resurgence as a widely used political strategy, in concert with the pressures and limitations imposed on governments by the neoliberal development model, has created a "novel paradox."[39] In the following sections this novel paradox will be examined in terms of its areas of compatibility and incompatibility.

Compatibilities Between Populism and Neoliberalism

Consistent with the constituent elements of populism outlined above it is possible to identify certain "underlying affinities that make neoliberalism and contemporary populism coincide in important, inherent ways."[40] Weyland and Roberts identify three central areas of convergence between populism and neoliberalism: (1) an anti-organizational/anti-institutional inclination; (2) a tendency towards the concentration of power; and (3) a predilection for economic clientelism.

[37] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 82; Kurt Weyland, "Neopopulism and Neoliberalism in Latin America: How Much Affinity?" (paper presented at the XXIV International Congress, Latin American Studies Association, Dallas, TX, 27-29 March 2003), (Pittsburg, PA: University of Pittsburg, 2003), 17.
[38] Coslovsky, 11.
[39] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 82.
[40] Weyland, "Affinity," 2.

Shared Anti-Organizational, Anti-Institutional Inclination

The first point of convergence between populism and neoliberalism is the tendency of each to eschew organizational and institutional mechanisms. Ad hoc political movements or coalitions that lack a strong organizational and institutional bent typically characterize populism. For instance, Peru's President Fujimori created a new "political party" for each of four electoral contests between 1990 and 2000 that lacked significant institutionalization and were ultimately fronts for highly personalistic political vehicles.[41] In cases more closely associated with the era of classical populism, in which populists institutionalized political parties or organized coalitions with the labour movement (i.e. Argentina's President Juan Perón, 1946-55, and his Justicialist/Peronist Party with strong ties to unions), these actions can be understood as a means to further the political aspirations and agenda of the leader. Moreover, populism, as noted earlier, is characterized by the creation of direct, unmediated mobilizations of atomized followers by personalistic leaders, which inherently denies and limits a role for institutions and organizations.

Weyland goes further in stating that during the era of neoliberalism populism has not just lacked organization and institutionalization, but is actually anti-organizational and encourages only low-level institutionalization.[42] The rationale for such an assertion stems from the populist's mobilization of support among the poor and marginalized who lack strong group loyalties and harbour significant distrust of public institutions, which they perceive as corrupt, illegitimate, and ineffective.[43] In addition, populists tend to forgo or deemphasize the support of

[41] Kenneth M. Roberts, "Populism, Political Conflict, and Grass Roots Organization in Latin America," *Comparative Politics* 38.2 (2006):133,139. Fujimori's "party" organizations included Cambio 90, Nueva Mayoría, Vamos Vecinos, and Peru 2000.
[42] Weyland, "Affinity," 2.
[43] Charo Quesada, "The Problem with Politics," *IDB America*, April 2005, <http://www.iadb.org/idbamerica/index.cfm?thisid=3461>. [Retrieval Date February 2007].

existing organizations such as business groups and labour unions given their weakened position in the neoliberal context of growing informal employment, trade liberalization, increased foreign competition, and deregulation of labour markets. Populism's compatibility with neoliberalism is bolstered by the anti-organizational and anti-institutional orientation of neoliberalism that emphasizes protecting the market from special interests and rent-seeking groups. Drawing a parallel between the unfettered market and the unorganized masses, Weyland observes that "the undifferentiated mass of the people following the leader is akin to the unstructured market."[44]

Populism and neoliberalism's shared anti-institutional/anti-organizational bias is furthered by their shared anti-status quo discourse. Like populism, neoliberalism shares a similar discourse, especially noticeable during the initial stages of the neoliberal transformation, that seeks to alter the status quo structure and organization of the economic and political space. As Ellner observes, "the marginalized sectors of the population, having lost out as a result of long-standing import substitution policies, were responsive to neopopulist discourse."[45] The failures of previous regimes to institute economic changes beneficial to the subaltern sectors have allowed for a convergence of populist mobilization and neoliberal reform in opposition to existing political actors and organizations. Additionally, the relationships which once existed between social stratification and political orientation have changed to the point that class identities are no longer an accurate predictor of political behaviour.[46] The traditional orientation of subaltern voters towards left-wing politics, for example, is a less reliable predictor of political behaviour given marginalization of the labour movement, increasing economic informality, and

[44] Weyland, "Affinity," 3.
[45] Ellner, 142.
[46] Anton Derks, "Populism and the Ambivalence of Egalitarianism. How Do the Underprivileged Reconcile a Right Wing Party Preference with Their Socio-Economic Attitudes?," *World Political Science Review* 2.3 (2006): 175-200.

growing atomization among voters.[47] Thus, populist leaders have been able to capitalize on neoliberal demands for structural change that appeal to subaltern voters who are upset with current political and economic conditions. The convergence of anti-institutional and anti-organizational orientations in both populism and neoliberalism leads to the second affinity between the two: the tendency toward the concentration of power.

Shared Tendency to Concentrate Power

Another key area of convergence between populism and neoliberalism is their shared tendency toward a concentration of power that creates a surprisingly symbiotic relationship.[48] The inclination of populist leaders to concentrate power has its origin in their personalistic leadership style, which centers politics on the leader, and away from public policy changes promised to supporters during the electoral cycle.[49] Popular and transformative measures are more easily achieved through the domination of weakened organizations, like the labour movement, and institutions like the judiciary, congress, and public service.

Similarly, neoliberalism has been seen as reliant on concentrating power in strong, bold leaders to achieve the initial transformation of the economic and political space, despite opposition from entrenched interests.[50] In Brazil for instance, President Collor de Mello's 1989 populist electoral victory achieved through "his denunciation of the political establishment and his direct appeal to the people, circumventing existing political parties," allowed him to implement contentious reforms by presidential decree, including a freeze on financial assets.[51]

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[47] Derks, 176.
[48] For more on this relationship and its potential for the development of plebiscitarian, authoritarian government see René Antonio Mayorga, "Outsiders and Neopopulism: The Road to Plebiscitarian Authoritarianism," (paper presented at The Crisis of Democratic Representations in the Andes Conference of the Kellogg Institute of International Affairs, University of Notre Dame, 13-14 May 2002).
[49] Mayorga, 4.
[50] Weyland, "Affinity," 3.
[51] Francisco Panizza, "Beyond Delegative Democracy: Old Politics and New Economics in Latin America," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 32.3 (2000): 749.

Likewise, President Carlos Menem of Argentina (1989-99) capitalized on the economic failures of his predecessor and the institutional crisis of the state to concentrate power in the executive. With a combination of popular support, union backing, congressional control, and a cooperative majority of state governors, Menem was able to temporarily promote urgent neoliberal reforms at any cost.[52] Thus, populism and neoliberalism's tendency to support the concentration of power provides populist leaders with compatible neoliberal approaches that "give their own power hunger a rational, modern justification."[53]

Shared Predilection For Clientelism

The third point of convergence between populism and neoliberalism is their use of clientalistic mechanisms that provide targeted opportunities to reinforce popular support. Although neoliberalism is often thought to restrict populism's traditional spending powers through budget austerity demands and market constraints, it also provides a limited means of reinforcing support through low-cost, direct, and highly visible programs and political opportunities. The structural adjustment programs of key neoliberal institutions, like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, have coincided with targeted initiatives by these institutions to address issues like poverty and inequality. These initiatives typically focus on capacity building, local or rural development, social sector spending, and private sector job creation in order to mitigate some of the worst impacts of macro-economic structural adjustment. The provision of benefits through such programs can fulfill voters' demands for material redistribution and are often received favorably because of their appearance as simple, direct solutions to societal and political problems. For instance, under the guise of neoliberal technocratic public management reform, populist leaders are able to remove recalcitrant

[52] Panizza, "Beyond Delegative Democracy," 747.
[53] Weyland, "Affinity," 3.

members of the bureaucracy and reward political supporters with positions. Ecuador's President Abdalá Bucaram forsook ideology and party affiliation to gain the support of specific sectors by engaging in clientelism at the cabinet level. His actions provided him with needed political capital and resulted in the unusual appointment of both feminists and ultraconservatives within the same cabinet.[54] Additionally, targeted spending programs, can create clientelistic exchanges between the leader and specific sectors of society in much the same way as the macro-level economic redistribution policies used by classical populists. The purpose of creating this clientelistic exchange is to show that the leader meets the needs of 'the people' while also strengthening his image. This is supported by institutions like the IMF and the World Bank that, for example, are willing to fund targeted poverty relief programs. Although clientelism may seem to conflict with populism and neoliberalism's reluctance to give in to special interest groups, in this case the leader determines the client, service, and price to best benefit himself. For instance, using international contributions to support his social programs, President Fujimori directed poverty relief, food assistance, and school construction programs from the president's office in order to garner votes among the atomized masses.[55] In sum, neoliberal market reforms can provide beneficial options for populists to strengthen their leadership by successfully initiating clientelistic programs or political patronage appointments.

The affinities between neoliberalism and populism help to explain the relative success enjoyed by the neoliberal era's early populists, like Fujimori and Menem, within the context of sweeping economic adjustment and intense social disruption. However, while these affinities provide evidence to support the use of populist politics to achieve and maintain power in spite of

[54] Amy Lind, "Gender and Neoliberal States: Feminists Remake the Nation in Ecuador," *Latin American Perspectives* 128.30 (2003): 203.
[55] Roberts, "Grass Roots," 140.

and on occasion in concert with neoliberal policies, they also offer insight into the potential collapse of populist rule.[56]

Incompatibilities Between Populism and Neoliberalism

In principle, the synergy between populism and neoliberalism offers significant insight into the success of populists in the current era, but in practice there exist many variables and contextual elements which have the potential to limit or erode this compatibility and lead to the downfall of Latin America's populists. As Roberts notes, the combination of populist politics and neoliberal policies is not exempt from contradictions and over time will not necessarily be effective in creating widespread support for populists and their neoliberal reforms.[57] The early years of neoliberal transformation, for instance, especially favoured cooperation among neoliberal advocates and populist politicians who both championed radical political and economic changes. During electoral contests, populists could rail against the failures of previous governments, leaders, and political parties to stop inflation, stimulate growth, attract investment, and increase employment. With this strategy, they were able to win significant popular support. At the same time, neoliberals could encourage bold structural adjustment schemes that promised to solve these problems and to promote growth, employment, and prosperity. As a result, in implementing drastic neoliberal reforms populist leaders could initially claim they were preserving national sovereignty by enhancing their nation's ability to deal with globalization and were bolstering democracy by representing the popular will for change.[58]

However, over time the economic stresses and the social costs stemming from the neoliberal reforms generated opposition from large portions of the population that were adversely affected. The restructuring often increased the price of basic goods, reduced social

[56] Weyland, "Affinity," 3.
[57] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 91.
[58] Ellner, 142.

spending in areas of education and health care, and created unemployment through privatization and increased international competition.[59] Not surprisingly, the groups most affected by these policies were among the subaltern sectors, the key political constituency of mass support for populists. This not only weakened the support for populists, but also emboldened their political opponents in civil society and within the institutions of government.

The result of combined political and public opposition typically creates political deadlock and social upheaval that limits populist leaders' abilities to govern and, in many Latin American cases, their ability to remain in power. Ecuador, for instance, has struggled with the confluence of neoliberal reform and populist government, in the post-transition period of the late 1990s resulting in the ousting of three consecutive, democratically elected presidents (Abdalá Bucaram, Jamil Mahuad, and Lucio Gutiérrez) by congressional and public opposition.

The synergy between neoliberalism and populism that was manifest in the concentration of power in the upper levels of the executive also faced contradictions as the process of neoliberalism advanced and became entrenched. The dominance of political authority during the early phase of neoliberal transformation offered opportunities for populists to overcome political deadlock and social resistance. However, the movement away from populism toward authoritarianism can generate its own pitfalls.

By the early 1990s, the form (if not the function) of democratic government had become the norm across Latin America. As such, the concentration of power by neoliberal populists was opposed locally, by nascent civil society organizations, and worldwide, by international organizations and global public opinion. The desire for the maintenance of the democratic form of government created significant barriers to the overt concentration of power. In addition, as

[59] Jean Carriere, "Neoliberalism, Economic Crisis and Popular Mobilization in Ecuador," in *Miraculous Metamorphosis: The Neoliberalisation of Latin American Populism*, ed. J. Demmers, A. Fernandez Jilberto, and B. Hogenboom (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001), 141-147.

neoliberal reform entered the consolidation phase, its local technocratic proponents, in concert with international financial institutions, increasingly advocated the rule of law, deregulation, and, more generally, government's non-interference with the market. Such neoliberal dictates limited the discretion of populist leaders and clashed with their personalistic interpretations of the popular will. Increasingly, "the concentrated political authority of neopopulist leaders, which had served so well for enacting reform, turned into a potential threat to the smooth functioning of the new market model."[60]

As well, the beneficial concurrence of populism and neoliberalism that can be achieved through economic and political clientelism can also be constrained within the context of neoliberal reform. Targeted spending programs and policies, which help to build political support for neoliberal populists among the subaltern sectors, require a funding and administrative capacity within the state to ensure high visibility and impact. Budget austerity, privatization, and reductions in the state bureaucracy as part of neoliberal financial and structural reform make it more difficult for populists to effectively manage the distribution of special benefits and positions for political backing. Indeed, the micro-level redistribution undertaken by neoliberal populists, while potentially useful in maintaining support among specific groups, offers no guarantee "that it will prove effective over the long-term in reproducing a popular political constituency to undergird a neoliberal project."[61] Furthermore, neoliberal reform, in the initial stages, tends to be generally exclusionary by distributing income upward rather than downward to the mass of populist supporters among the poor and marginalized.[62]

As a result, the inflation of societal expectations that typically forms the discourse of populist political campaigns clashes with the circumscribed ability of populists to meet those

[60] Weyland, "Affinity," 12.
[61] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 91.
[62] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 89-90.

demands to the satisfaction of their mass of supporters and international financiers. The lower wages, reduced formal sector employment, and diminished legal protections for labourers that often emerges following neoliberal reform are not offset by the economically clientelistic mechanisms available to neoliberal populists: "The present situation of greater economic stability, yet volatile and, on average, mediocre growth has narrowed the probability distribution of potential outcomes."[63] While economic clientelism has proven effective as a limited redistributive mechanism to reinforce popular support, it is unclear if this is sufficient to maintain a populist government within a strongly neoliberal framework.

Conclusion

In conclusion, using a multidimensional approach allows us to examine populists from the classical to neoliberal era against a consistent set of characteristics. The use of a personalistic political style, heterogeneous coalition of supporters, and top-down political mobilization in concert with an eclectic, anti-organizational ideology and an economically redistributive or clientelistic set of policies form the core characteristics of this analysis. Moreover, this multidimensional methodology allows contemporary populist manifestations occurring in an environment of neoliberalism, that is referred to in the literature as neopopulism, to be understood as part of the ongoing phenomenon of populism, which has proven opportunistic and adaptable within this new economic framework. The synergies outlined between a populist mode of politics and neoliberalism overcome their apparently antithetical relationship as both can benefit from the use of clientelistic methods, the concentration of political power, and anti-organizational or anti-institutional orientations. However, these underlying affinities between populism and neoliberalism are tempered by the complex outcomes of the transition from import substitution industrialization to neoliberalism, the effects

[63] Weyland, "Affinity," 16.

of the consolidation of the neoliberal model, and the myriad of situational and political factors that can constrain neoliberal populist leaders based on their unique national settings.

Ultimately, the affinities between populism and neoliberalism allow us to understand how it is possible that populism remains a viable mode of politics in Latin America in the context of neoliberalism and why this combination can prove significantly challenging to the viability of populist leaders. In the following chapter, the multidimensional approach to populism will be employed to categorize Ecuador's President Lucio Gutiérrez as a populist leader. Additionally, the (in)compatibility of populism and neoliberalism will support the analysis of President Gutiérrez' downfall amidst the complications and contradictions of his adherence to populism and neoliberalism.

CHAPTER THREE – LUCIO GUTIÉRREZ' RISE TO POWER

"The country's privileged sectors have profiteered enough; it is time for the poor to hope for better days, and it is to this end that I will dedicate my efforts."[1]

Introduction

In Chapter Two, the concept of populism was reviewed from various perspectives and a multi-dimensional approach was outlined in order to frame this chapter's discussion of populism in Ecuador under President Lucio Gutiérrez. Here the objective is to analyze Gutiérrez' rise to power showing how his actions were consistent with the each component of populism. In terms of organization, this chapter illustrates Gutiérrez' successful use of populism as an electoral strategy by reviewing his adherence to the constituent elements of the multidimensional approach. Importantly, this chapter emphasizes the significant expectations that he created in order to mobilize the support of Ecuador's marginalized and impoverished subaltern sectors. Chapter Four will build on this analysis by exploring the factors that contributed to the rapid loss of this support and the eventual ousting of President Gutiérrez after less than twenty-eight months in office.

Populist Rise to Power

Ecuador's recent socio-economic and political environment has frequently been fraught with crisis and, in 2002, was ripe for a populist electoral mobilization. Typically, populism's emergence is rooted in periods of economic, political, social, and cultural upheaval wherein "previously stable relations of representation and subordination became unsettled and dealigned,

[1] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in James Petras and Henry Veltmeyer, *Social Movements and State Power: Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador*, (Ann Arbor, MI.: Pluto Press, 2005), 150.

and thus open to new forms of identification."[2] During the 1990s in Ecuador, the institutions of the state, especially the presidency, struggled for both legitimacy and stability; the democratically elected Presidents Abdala Bucaram (1996) and Jamil Mahuad (1998-2000) were ejected from office well before the end of their mandates. Moreover, at the end of the twentieth century, Ecuadorians were in the midst of a severe financial crisis including a collapse of the banking system, a default on the external debt, and nearly 70% of citizens living below the poverty line.[3] Within this environment of unstable political representation and economic hardship, Lucio Gutiérrez staged a meteoric rise to the presidency despite facing better-known and better funded competition from the established political parties and perennial presidential candidates. Gutiérrez' political strategy conformed closely to the multidimensional approach to populism established in Chapter Two, which included the following components: (1) a personalistic mode of leadership, (2) a heterogeneous political coalition based in the subaltern sectors, (3) a top-down political mobilization, (4) an eclectic, anti-establishment ideology, and (5) an economically redistributive or clientelistic approach.[4] With these characteristic elements of populism in mind, it is possible to trace Gutiérrez' successful use of populism to capture Ecuador's presidency in 2002.

Gutiérrez' electoral success was, in part, rooted in the context of the preceding crisis that developed during Jamil Mahuad's short-lived presidency, which created the opportunity for Gutiérrez to utilize a populist strategy to take power. In the final years of the 1990s, Ecuador faced one of the worst financial crises in the nation's history resulting from the culmination of a banking system collapse, a default on external debt, natural disasters related to the *El Niño*

[2] Panizza, *Populism in the Mirror of Democracy*, 11.
[3] Poverty estimate for 2001 from "Ecuador," *The World Factbook 2002,* Central Intelligence Agency, <http://www.umsl.edu/services/govdocs/wofact2002/geos/ec.html> [Retrieval Date August 2009].
[4] Roberts, "Peruvian Case," 88.

weather phenomenon, and a significant decline in the price of oil, the nation's major export. Most significant among these crises, the banking system collapse initiated the political downfall of then-President Mahuad's government.

Between 1998 and 2000, Mahuad presided over a massive fiscal catastrophe centered on the banking industry that resulted from widespread mismanagement and corruption throughout the sector. This crisis led to the failure of the nation's largest financial institution and sixteen of the nation's forty-two banks.[5] In order to stabilize the banking sector, the government transferred six billion dollars, roughly 23% of the GNP, to the banks in the form of bailouts.[6] This transfer is estimated to represent the combined amount that was spent on education in the preceding thirteen years, health care in the last thirty-nine years, and agricultural development in the last forty-two years.[7] The economic fallout from this crisis decreased the GNP by 7.3%, foreign investment by 34.7%, imports by 38.4%, and the value of the Sucre, the national currency, plummeted by 362% against the dollar.[8]

Not only were Ecuadorians facing the erosion of the nation's financial structure, they were also detrimentally affected by the neoliberal policies, especially fiscal austerity measures, implemented to manage the crisis. Already among the poorest nations in the hemisphere, with high income inequality and informal sector employment, Ecuadorians were further burdened with the consequent decreases in social spending stemming from the government's austerity policies. Faced with a national economic crisis and pressure from international lenders for economic stability, President Mahuad initiated the replacement of the Ecuadorian Sucre with the U.S. dollar. His dollarization policy launched widespread protests lead by the Confederation of

[5] Jose Antonio Lucero, "High Anxiety in the Andes: Crisis and Contention in Ecuador," *Journal of Democracy* 12.2 (2001): 62.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Lucero, 60.

Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE - *Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador*), Ecuador's powerful indigenous movement.

The dollarization policy would provide the means for currency stabilization; however, it adversely affected the poor, especially rural indigenous peoples and savings-dependent seniors, while leaving the rich, who held many of their assets in dollar investments, largely untouched.[9] This policy reinforced the Mahuad government's determination to take steps to ensure economic stability with an apparently limited regard for the immediate impact on the majority of Ecuadorians. As would be expected, this economic crisis and neoliberal adjustment strategy initiated a concurrent political crisis, which further eroded public trust in the institutions and individuals responsible for political representation. In fact, polling during this period showed that 91% of Ecuadorians disapproved of his handling of national affairs and 53% felt the president should be removed from office.[10] Mahuad's dollarization policy would prove to be fatal to his embattled administration that also faced corruption allegations and intensifying protests in the nation's capital.

Within this volatile context, Colonel Lucio Gutiérrez, a critic of the Mahuad government,[11] entered Ecuador's national political scene as a leading member of a short-lived coup d'état.[12] His actions during this coup would later form the foundation of his populist image and appeal to Ecuadorians during the 2002 election campaign. As a colonel in the Ecuadorian

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[9] Lind, 203; Michael A. Weinstein, "Cycle of instability in the Andes: Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru," *Power and Interest News Report*, 31 January 2005, <http://www.pinr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=262>. [Retrieval Date April 2006].

[10] Allen Gerlach, *Indians,Oil, and Politics: A Recent History of Ecuador* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2003), 148.

[11] Just prior to Gutiérrez's involvement in the coup against Mahuad he had been reprimanded by military officials for refusing to shake Mahuad's hand during a promotion ceremony to the rank of Colonel. In addition, he had on two occasions expressed his lack of confidence in the Mahuad administration to senior members of the military. See Roberto Ortiz de Zárate, "Lucio Gutiérrez Borbúa," *Biografías de Lideres Políticos*, Centro de Investigación de Relaciones Internacionales y Desarrollo, 28 November 2007, <http://www.cidob.org/es/documentacion/biografias_lideres_politicos/america_del_sur/ecuador/lucio_gutierrez_borbua>. [Retrieval Date 05 October 2008].

[12] See Gerlach's *Indians, Oil, and Politics* for a detailed account of the precursors and complexities involved in the bloodless "coup" against Jamil Mahuad.

army, Gutiérrez was given the responsibility of protecting Quito's government buildings while thousands of students, unionists, and indigenous protestors rallied against the Mahuad government. When ordered to suppress the protestors on January 21, 2000, Gutiérrez and four hundred junior officers chose instead to side with them, allowing the takeover of the Congress buildings and Gutiérrez' temporary installation as one of the leaders in a military-indigenous governing triumvirate of "national salvation." Faced with international calls for the continuation of constitutional democracy from the Organization of American States and the United States, among others, and failing to secure high-level support within the Ecuadorian military, this government lasted only a few hours.[13] The ruling triumvirate was peacefully removed and replaced by Vice-President Noboa,[14] who was symbolically sworn in from the offices of the Ministry of Defense. Gutiérrez was imprisoned for six-months for his role in the coup, but, as is discussed in more detail later, he would then launch a successful bid for the presidency despite his limited political experience and relative obscurity. Many political observers felt Colonel Gutiérrez had very little chance of success, however they did not take into account the potency of the populist strategy he would employ.

The continuation of constitutional democracy under President Noboa held Ecuador's fragile political system together, but was unable to rectify the outstanding issues created by dollarization and economic hardship. Noboa's status as a caretaker president in advance of the 2002 presidential election saw the continuation of the Mahuad government's economic policies, including dollarization, and an ongoing failure to satisfy the public's demands for economic relief. During this period, widespread protests continued and Noboa's weak government was

[13] Liisa North, "Obstacles to Social Reform Patterns of Domination and Financial Crisis in Ecuador," in *Politics in the Andes: Tradition, Violence and Reform* (tentative title), ed. Philip Mauceri and Jo-Marie Burt, (forthcoming), 4; Gerlach, 188-90.

[14] Alvaro Noboa, presidential candidate and banana magnate, is not to be confused with and is not related to then-Vice-President Gustavo Noboa, who became President following the 2000 Mahuad coup.

often forced to capitulate to the demands of various entrenched interests, including the indigenous movement, unions, and liberation theology adherents in the Catholic Church.[15] Understandably, Ecuadorians' trust and faith in the institutions of democracy was weak given the frequent recurrence of economic crises and deep political turmoil. In 1999, polling data reflected widespread pessimism in the political life of the nation: only 6% of the population supported political parties, 11% had faith in Congress, and only 28% believed democracy could solve their problems.[16] Additionally, a nation-wide survey ranking various institutions on a scale of one (low) to one hundred (high) found that democracy, the government, the justice system, congress, and political parties scored below fifteen.[17] Such low support for Ecuador's political institutions reflected their limited ability to address public demands and offer opportunities for political self-expression. Capitalizing on this political dissatisfaction, Gutiérrez successfully campaigned for the presidency by employing a populist strategy consistent with the five components of the multidimensional approach to populism outlined in Chapter Two. Each of these components will be discussed below to show that Gutiérrez' political strategy is decidedly populist.

Personalistic Leadership

The first fundamental component of populism that adherents utilize is a personalistic style of leadership as seen in Gutiérrez' strategy of appealing to the electorate based on his persona. Roberts argues that "although populist leaders may build parties or otherwise organize their followers, their political support is a function of personal attributes more than organizational loyalties."[18] Gutiérrez capitalized on his personal story and made his leadership a reflection of the interests of the average Ecuadorian. As one Ecuadorian declared, "he was born

[15] For more on these social movements see North, "Obstacles to Social Reform."
[16] Lucero, 60.
[17] Lucero, 64.
[18] Roberts, "Populism and Democracy," 6.

of humble origins, and I am also from humble origins … I trusted Gutiérrez."[19] In order to gain the confidence of indigenous and mestizo voters, who make up a large proportion of the population, Gutiérrez drew attention to his own modest background, mestizo heritage, and childhood spent in Ecuador's predominately indigenous Amazon provinces.[20]

Moreover, Gutiérrez emphasized his military affiliation, which capitalized on the Ecuadorian military's relatively respected institutional position and history of social development in the 1970s. He campaigned throughout the country in his military fatigues calling attention to his rank of Colonel and his long career of military service.[21] His connection to the military also offered him an opportunity to remind voters of his "patriotic sacrifice" for the nation during the Mahuad coup. His previous actions were symbolic of his capacity and intention to stand-up for marginalized Ecuadorians in the face of a seemingly corrupt and uncaring neoliberal government. Gutiérrez' military persona combined with his involvement in the coup built upon his broad appeal to "the Church, the communications media, businessmen and bankers, and other opinion leaders, workers, women and men" to provide "ideas to change the country."[22] Though such statements by Gutiérrez were vague and insubstantial, they represented his attempt to garner appeal among a cross-section of Ecuadorians and situate himself as a national saviour. In addition, the six months the Colonel spent in a military prison following the failed coup lent him a certain degree of legitimacy and gained him some measure of reverence as he was seen as someone willing to make personal sacrifices for the oppressed. More than any other element, the role Gutiérrez played in the 2000 presidential coup allowed

[19] Reel, A13.
[20] Roberto Ortiz de Zárate, "Lucio Gutiérrez Borbúa," *Biografías de Lideres Políticos*, Centro de Investigación de Relaciones Internacionales y Desarrollo, 28 November 2007, <http://www.cidob.org/es/documentacion/biografias_lideres_politicos/america_del_sur/ecuador/lucio_gutierrez_borbua>. [Retrieval Date 05 October 2008].
[21] Similarly, his running mate, Alfredo Palacio, a former health minister and physician campaigned in his scrubs to capitalize on his link to the medical profession.
[22] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in North, 3.

him to pursue a populist strategy utilizing the personalistic leadership component of the multidimensional approach to establish himself as a champion of the people.

Heterogeneous Coalition of Support

The cultivation of supporters among a cross-section of society and, especially within the subaltern sectors, is the second fundamental component of the populist approach and was key to Gutiérrez' electoral success. His actions on behalf of the largely indigenous protestors during the Mahuad coup were an important catalyst for the development of his coalition of supporters among Ecuador's subaltern sectors. Most significantly, in June 2002, he was able to negotiate a programmatic and legislative alliance with the Pachakutik Party (*Movimiento de Unidad Plurinacional Patchakutik-Nuevo País*), the political wing of CONAIE, to engage the indigenous movement in his campaign. This coalition allowed Gutiérrez to expand his political mobilization among indigenous communities and avoid direct competition with an indigenous candidate. As well, this coalition represented the first time the autonomous indigenous movement had allied itself with a non-indigenous presidential candidate, thus establishing Gutiérrez symbolically at the head of Ecuador's most powerful and organized social movement.

The agreement between Gutiérrez and Pachakutik resulted from intense negotiations on a basic electoral orientation that CONAIE characterized as one in which the government would strive to achieve "the defense of national sovereignty, of natural resources, the reactivation of the economy with an eye towards equity, and a commitment to peace."[23] With this coalition in place, Gutiérrez enhanced and further legitimized his popular image as an ally of the subaltern sectors and captured a dense organizational structure through which he could mobilize electoral support among these constituencies.

[23] Leonidas Iza, Humberto Cholango, and José Quenamá, "Indigenous Movement Breaks with President Lucio Gutiérrez," *Pueblos En Camino*: *Weaving Autonomies*, 06 August 2003, <http://www.en-camino.org/node/13>. [Retrieval Date July 2006].

Additionally, this alliance with the indigenous movement afforded Gutiérrez the opportunity to strengthen his appearance as a socially progressive candidate committed to the indigenous movement's campaign for a more inclusive, equitable, and just nation. His support for and from Ecuador's indigenous movement also allowed him to appropriate some of the widespread "ambivalent sympathy"[24] for the indigenous movement among a majority of non-indigenous Ecuadorians. Furthermore, Gutiérrez' support from the politically left-of-centre indigenous movement aided in attracting supporters from among Ecuador's political left, which facilitated his development of a more heterogeneous coalition of support. Leftist political parties, including the Ecuadorian Communist Party, the Movement for Popular Democracy, the Communist Marxist-Leninist Party of Ecuador, and the Socialist party, initially supported Gutiérrez in his presidential bid,[25] and the Labour and Democracy Movement (MTD – Movimiento Trabajo y Democracia), which represented an "urban-based leftist political grouping," created an umbrella group that allowed these groups to coordinate efforts.[26] Gutiérrez' professed left-of-centre political orientation, discussed in detail in the ideology section of this chapter, played an important role in motivating this support and, when considered in addition to his affiliation with the indigenous movement, helped to consolidate his left-of-centre political support.

Top-Down Political Mobilization

The third component of the multidimensional populist approach is the mobilization of support from the top down. In this regard, Gutiérrez founded his own political movement called the Patriotic Society Party of January 21 (PSP - *Partido Sociedad Patriótica 21 de Enero*) to

[24] North, 3.
[25] Sundaram, "Lucio Gutiérrez: A 'Revolution' that Never Was," *Liberation Central Organ of the Communist Party of India*, February 2004, <http://www.cpiml.org/liberation/year_2004/febraury/Ecuador.htm>. [Retrieval Date August 2009].
[26] Petras and Veltmeyer, 149.

reflect its leader's personalistic orientation by evoking Gutiérrez' important role in the January 21, 2000 Mahuad coup. Moreover, the party provided a basic electoral organization that allowed for the incorporation of various sectors into Gutiérrez' political coalition and would offer a grouping of supporters in the congress to serve his presidential agenda. Through the PSP, Gutiérrez implemented a vertical mobilization of supporters that had the appearance of grassroots development, but actually reflected his simultaneous disdain for working with existing political organizations and his desire for an electoral vehicle that would allow him to pursue his interests and coordinate supporters.

The PSP offered Gutiérrez the opportunity to incorporate close military and familial connections within the party to support his candidacy in much the same way as he would later use the presidency to reward former military associates, family members, and coup plotters with key government posts.[27] Petras and Veltmeyer note that the PSP was little more than an instrument to incorporate the military officers who supported the Mahuad coup into Ecuadorian politics and later introduce retired police and armed forces members into the party.[28] Moreover, the party included "several wealthy ex-military business operators, and groups of petit-bourgeois 'professionals'" that gave Gutiérrez' political coalition a broader reach and, in line with the populist model, a more heterogeneous base of support.[29]

[27] Former military officers who joined Gutiérrez during the Mahuad coup played important roles in the PSP and would later be appointed to key government posts once Gutiérrez became president. Examples of these military connections include former Colonels: Patricio Acosta, who was named Secretary-General to the President, and Patricio Ortiz, who was appointed Minister of Social Welfare. As well, Gutiérrez's wife, Dr. Ximena Bohorquez, and his brother, Gilmar Gutiérrez, were key party organizers and ran successfully as candidates for congress under the PSP banner. For a detailed account of Gutiérrez's use of nepotism as president see Ortiz de Zárate, "Lucio Gutiérrez Borbúa" or Fredy Rivera Velez and Franklin Ramirez Gallegos, "Ecuador: Democracy and Economy in Crisis," in *Andes in Focus: Security, Democracy, and Economic Reform,* eds. Russell Crandal, Guadalupe Paz, and Riordan Roett, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), 136.
[28] Petras and Veltmeyer, 154.
[29] Petras and Veltmeyer, 154.

This hierarchical mobilization through the PSP was also essential to the creation of a bond between Gutiérrez and the disillusioned, detached, and marginalized subaltern voters that no longer felt represented by the existing parties. Ecuador's typically weak, undemocratic, and ideologically ambiguous political parties have a history of exclusion and regional fragmentation, which has frequently allowed populists like Gutiérrez to step in and take power by organizing and appealing to these voters. In such cases, citizens typically vote on the basis of perceived leadership qualities rather than partisan membership or ideological loyalty. Given Ecuador's weak party system, political organizations that should "channel and filter political ambitions" by regulating access to public office through their recruitment and socialization activities are unable to provide a counterweight to populist mobilizations.[30] In Ecuador, the party system is unable to effectively regulate political ambitions and, as such, populist leaders tend to arise frequently from outside the system. As well, they often indulge in the creation of temporary political vehicles organized around the leadership of individuals with personalistic followings. As Roberts notes, "given the weight of personalistic authority, partisan vehicles founded by populist movements are inevitably instruments that serve their leaders' interests."[31] Gutiérrez' PSP was representative of such a party, organized around the leader and his elite cadre of supporters in order to coordinate a popular ratification of his leadership and to present the disenchanted masses with an alternative to those parties perceived as responsible for the preceding socio-economic crisis.

Ambiguous Ideological Discourse

Gutiérrez also effectively utilized the fourth component of the multidimensional populist approach that is a strongly anti-establishment and features an ideologically vague discourse.

[30] Roberts, "Populism and Democracy," 7.
[31] Roberts, "Grass Roots," 17.

Campaigning in a crowded field of eleven presidential candidates, each reflecting the various political, regional, and ideological divisions that perennially mark Ecuador's fractious politics, Gutiérrez distinguished himself as a political outsider and novice. When he entered the race in 2002, public opinion polls placed his support at a mere 7%.[32] However, Gutiérrez appealed to disenchanted and marginalized Ecuadorians by vilifying current political leaders and their parties as entrenched power brokers that were complicit in the people's suffering. In contrast, he portrayed himself as an honest, idealistic, and selfless newcomer to politics whose sole interest was the nation's well-being. What he did, in essence, was to implement the well-tested populist tactic of exploiting popular discontent "by attacking established parties and political elites for their venality and incompetence, while portraying …[himself and his team] as untainted outsiders who incarnate popular sentiments for change."[33]

Gutiérrez' anti-establishment appeal also rested on a personalistic and antagonistic discourse of allusions to his role in the Mahuad coup on the side of "the people" against the power-bloc represented by Ecuador's "corrupt bankers" and political class.[34] The issue of corruption in previous administrations, which he claimed absorbed 40% of the national budget, formed a significant portion of his rhetoric.[35] Gutiérrez was able to glorify his coup activity while denigrating established candidates and the political system. As he charged, "during the government of Dr. Jamil Mahuad, a series of blatantly corrupt acts were committed. The state constitution was violated systematically. Given such constant criminal acts to satisfy the demands of a small group of shameless bankers and business leaders, the military must defend

[32] Rivera and Ramirez, 137.
[33] Roberts, "Populism and Democracy," 9.
[34] Lobsang Espinoza, "La Semiótica de la Política en Ecuador: La Segunda Vuelta Electoral," *Razón y Palabra* 32, April – May 2003, <http://www.razonypalabra.org.mx/anteriores/n32/lespinoza.html>. [Retrieval Date May 2006].
[35] Hannes Kuiz and Joachim Zeplin, "Gutiérrez to Push IMF Accord: Ecuador's President-Elect Hoping to Balance the Budget by Buying on the Net," *The Financial Times*, 18 December 2002, 8.

the people."[36] Additionally, Gutiérrez situated his involvement in the Mahuad coup in a broad context that emphasized his quest for justice in the face of political corruption:

> What happened in Ecuador is similar to what is happening in the rest of Latin America, caused by the neoliberal system that has been completely hurtful and prejudicial to the interests of every one of our countries. Enemy number one of democracy is not the military, the social movements, or the people. Enemy number one is corrupt politicians, those who destabilize our country. They are ungovernable, not the people…. I think that very few countries in the world would support what the Ecuadorean people have supported, so much injustice.[37]

Additionally, Gutiérrez' campaign slogan, *Un Presidente Para Todos* (A President for Everyone), aptly captures his attempt to establish a direct link with a broad cross-section of society and to create a contrast between himself and the denigrated political class. This tactic reinforced his image as an untainted outsider who helped end the apparent corruption of the Mahuad government. At the same time, it exploited what Lobsang Espinosa describes as a natural tendency of voters to recall the negative and accept a simple direct message: "they are bad, I am the solution, vote for me."[38]

Adding to his anti-establishment rhetoric, Gutiérrez was vague and inconsistent on both his ideology and policy. As Petras and Veltmeyer explain: "Gutiérrez' political discourse over the course of his electoral campaign was not anchored in any specific ideology or programmatic plan for governing the country. It had no ideological consistency or coherence and it shifted with the changing winds of political opportunism."[39] This lack of specificity, while effective in making a broad popular appeal during the electoral contest, would be especially detrimental for Gutiérrez as he became defined by the public's perceptions of what he would stand for as

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[36] Lucio Gutiérrez, interviewed by Phillip Babich, "A Popular Uprising: A Look at Ecuador's Coup," *Making Contact*, National Radio Project, 17 May 2000, <http://www.radioproject.org/transcript/2000/0020.html>. [Retrieval Date May 2007].
[37] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in Gerlach, 237.
[38] Espinosa, "La Semiótica de la Política en Ecuador".
[39] Petras and Veltmeyer, 154.

president. In fact Gutiérrez asserted, "I do not define myself ideologically, and I am not a populist, but rather popular."[40] Indeed, much of Gutiérrez' campaign rested on a popular "political imaginary"[41] that fostered, as Gutiérrez said, "hope for better days" and the struggle of average Ecuadorians over political and economic realities.[42]

The inferences garnered from his alliance with the indigenous movement, support from Ecuador's political left, and vague declarations for political change, poverty reduction, and a "new" economic model for Ecuador situated Gutiérrez on the ideological left. His leftist credentials, originating with his involvement in the Mahuad coup, were reinforced by reports that hailed him as "a champion of the poor, the indigenous people and as a crusader against neo-liberal economic policies and US imperialism."[43] Yet, Gutiérrez' campaign platform rested on the achievement of an ideologically ambiguous set of "five securities": social, citizen, judicial, environmental and food, and employment security, that were to be achieved through increased competitiveness.[44] His commitment to these policy goals, exemplified by vague and largely meaningless statements, did little to clarify his ideological orientation. He described himself thus: "I'm a pragmatic person and my only ideology is my people, and I'm happy to have the support of grassroots movements."[45]

During the initial portion of Gutiérrez' presidential campaign, he affirmed that the PSP's policy blueprint supported the rejection of "neoliberal globalization or any form of external

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[40] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in Juan Forero, "'Rebel Colonel:' Ecuador Favorite Adopts Capitalist Look," *New York Times*, 22 November 2002, late ed., A9.
[41] The "political imaginary" created by Gutiérrez' campaign is discussed by Petras and Veltmeyer, 150. They refer to it as a type of "false homology" that erroneously connected Gutiérrez' actions and rhetoric with the goals and ideals expressed during the 2000 indigenous-military coup against President Mauhad. The term is used throughout this thesis in reference to the political expectations created by Gutiérrez' populist campaign.
[42] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in Petras and Veltmeyer, 150.
[43] Sundaram, "Lucio Gutiérrez: A 'Revolution' that Never Was."
[44] Marc Saint-Upéry, "Ecuador: el Coronel Tiene Quien le Escuche," *Nueva Sociedad* 182, November – December 2002, 6, <http://www.nuso.org/upload/articulos/3083_1.pdf>. [Retrieval Date July 2005].
[45] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in Montserrat Vendrell, "Gutiérrez: It Would Be Suicide for Ecuador to Join FTAA," *Europe Intelligence Wire*, 01 November 2002, Gale, University of Saskatchewan, <http://find.galegroup.com.cyber.usask.ca/gps/start.do?prodId=IPS>. [Retrieval Date August 2009].

intervention of international groups or foreign powers."[46] Moreover, he strengthened his left-of-centre credentials with promises to take action to decrease foreign debt payments, oppose the privatization of public enterprises, isolate Ecuador from the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), and, generally, avoid neo-liberal measures.[47] He called for an end to American military and economic influence in the country by proposing the abandonment of Ecuador's dollarization policy and the removal of the U.S. military's unpopular counter-drug installation located at the Eloy Alfaro Airbase in Manta, Ecuador. Similarly, he called for popular democratic reforms to tackle the politicization of the judiciary; he committed to restructure party representation in congress; and he advocated transparency, efficiency, and accountability in public institutions.

Redistributive and Clientelistic Approach

Gutiérrez utilized the fifth, and final, element of the multidimensional populist approach, which is the creation of popular support through the promise of economic redistribution and/or clientelistic benefits once the leader is elected. Accordingly, his ideological and policy rhetoric suggested that his government would offer voters direct economic benefits. For instance, Gutiérrez infused his eclectic platform with popular assertions that promised economic relief through the redistribution of national wealth from, what he would call, the profiteering and privileged oligarchy to the subaltern sectors. During the campaign, these assertions were an effective means of appealing to a large cross-section of supporters.

Typically, Gutiérrez limited his economic proposals to vague generalizations that conformed to both the redistributive methods of populism's classical era and to the clientelistic strategies of the neoliberal era. He promoted macro-level redistribution schemes, akin to those

[46] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in Forero, A9.
[47] Eva Palma, "Ecuador: Indigenous Groups Demand Presidential Resignation," *Resource Center of the Americas,* 10 November 2006, <http://www.americas.org/item_15408/>. [Retrieval Date November 2006]; Petras and Veltmeyer, 155.

used in the classic era of populism. To gain class-based support from indigenous peoples and the poor, Gutiérrez pledged not to raise taxes, continue food and fuel subsidies, take measures to alleviate poverty, and to restore social welfare spending. [48] Likewise, he used contemporary micro-level populist strategies of clientelism to target supporters by proposing to exchange benefits for political support. For example, during the campaign he frequently made pledges to help Ecuador's rural population, which is largely indigenous and centered in the Andean highlands and Amazonian regions where Gutiérrez would later capture an overwhelming majority of his electoral support.[49] Moreover, it was from the rural indigenous population, particularly Protestant indigenous communities, that Gutiérrez' PSP recruited and networked as a means of bypassing, co-opting, and undermining CONAIE's rural support networks.[50] As one young indigenous man explained, he supported Gutiérrez because he was a "small-town man who became a national leader" and "the majority of the past presidents of Ecuador only did things for the cities, not for the rural areas, [but Gutiérrez] did almost nothing for the cities and worked in the small towns."[51]

On the whole, Gutiérrez' economic intimations prominently featured a rhetorical discourse that was meant to appeal to his left-of-centre political allies and the subaltern sectors. For instance, he called for limiting the privatization of state entities in the electricity, oil, and telecommunications industries that his supporters viewed as vital social services and national

[48] Subsidies on staple goods were increasingly relied upon by subaltern sectors following the banking crisis of 1998-2000, especially given Ecuador's eight million impoverished people, half of whom the World Bank estimated to be living on less than one dollar per day and subject to high inflation and under/unemployment. See Petras and Veltmeyer, 148.
[49] Marc Becker, "Ecuador Elections: Populist President-elect Gutiérrez has Indigenous Backing; But Supporters Already Uneasy About Policy Contradictions," *North American Congress on Latin America,* 25 November 2002, <https://nacla.org/bodies/body46.php>. [Retrieval Date November 2005]; Andy Webb-Vidal, "Gutiérrez Loses Backing of Indigenous Groups," *The Financial Times*, 17 February 2004, 2.
[50] Leon Zamosc, "The Indian Movement and Political Democracy in Ecuador," *Latin American Politics and Society* 49:3 (2007): 14-15.
[51] Monte Reel, "Long Fall in Ecuador: Populist to Pariah," *Washington Post,* 23 April 2005, late ed., A13.

resources.[52] In fact, Gutiérrez made explicit declarations against privatization saying that "it would be very bad for a poor nation like Ecuador, if in a couple of years we find ourselves without public utilities and just as poor…all we have in terms of wealth is public utilities."[53] Statements such as these were well received by his left-of-centre allies and were useful in securing their support on election day.

Ultimately, Gutiérrez capitalized on the widespread economic dislocation experienced by Ecuadorians under the preceding administrations by exhorting the people to trust in his ability to find a new and better economic strategy. With the endorsement of CONAIE/Pachakutik, Gutiérrez' economic credentials were ratified and he was able to legitimize his populist appeal and gain a diversity of supporters.

Gutiérrez Obfuscates His Populist Message

In the Ecuadorian presidential system, the winning candidate must secure over 40% of the vote and have at least a 10% lead over his/her nearest rival on the first ballot to avoid a run-off ballot between the top two contenders. During the first round of voting in Ecuador's 2002 campaign eleven candidates competed for the country's presidency, each reflecting the various political, regional, and ideological divisions that perennially plague Ecuador's elections. Given this fragmentation, Gutiérrez received only 20% of the votes and was unable to avoid a second ballot in November against his closest competitor, Alvaro Noboa, a multimillionaire banana magnate and Ecuador's richest man, who received 17% of the vote. Both candidates utilized populist political strategies during the campaign, but captured only a minority of the total votes in the compulsory voting system. This outcome underscored the considerable desire among

[52] Petras and Veltmeyer, 151.
[53] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in "Ecuador and the IMF," *Inside Capital: News From the Streets and Suites of Washington and the World*, National Radio Project and Free Speech News, 11 April 2000, <http://www.radioproject.org/archive/insidecapital.html>. [Retrieval Date July 2005].

some Ecuadorians, especially the subaltern sectors, for a change from the status quo that is often cited as a causal factor in the rise of populists. However, it also indicated a majority of the population was not yet convinced by these political outsiders.

In the run-off campaign, Gutiérrez began to consolidate his support among left-of-centre parties and the indigenous movement as they rallied against the more overtly neoliberal policy solutions advocated by Noboa.[54] However, Gutiérrez also began to moderate his rhetoric and to adopt a stance less critical of neoliberalism, which represented a significant shift in his discourse and would soon lead to the erosion of the political image that he had created for himself during the early campaign. Nevertheless, given the success of his populist mobilization, Gutiérrez' true political intentions would not be fully understood before he was able to capture the presidency in the second round of the vote. He, therefore, continued to utilize a populist strategy in order to maintain his base of supporters, though he obfuscated his left-of-centre message in an attempt to garner broader support domestically and assuage fears internationally.

There are several examples of Gutiérrez' shift in tactics and image during the second ballot campaign. For instance, while continuing to rely on allusions to his personal history and military background, he no longer campaigned in military garb, but instead wore business suits. This alteration of his image corresponded with attacks from his competitor, who claimed that Gutiérrez would "become a dictator and give you bullets, bullets, and bullets."[55] It was also, in part, an attempt to distance himself from frequent comparisons by Noboa to fellow military man and populist President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela. Importantly too, these shifts countered growing concerns, especially in the United States and amongst Ecuador's elite, of a Latin

[54] Unlike Gutiérrez, Noboa was more clearly oriented toward neoliberal policies. For instance, as Becker notes, he strongly supported greater free trade to turn Ecuador into "a huge tax-free zone" to entice "foreign banks, industry, and international trade." See Becker, "Ecuador Elections."
[55] Alvaro Noboa, quoted in Forero, A9.

American "shift to the left" following President Luiz 'Lula' Inacio da Silva's election in Brazil. Gutiérrez even traveled to the United States to meet with financial analysts on Wall Street and with the International Monetary Fund to re-assure them that he was not of the same mold as Lula or Chavez. He noted:

> this trip [to the United States] has served to quash fears and false rumors intended to harm me. …[W]hat happened in Venezuela will not occur [in Ecuador] because the basis of my platform is government by consensus, so that together with the productive sector – that is, honest bankers and businessmen – we can propel the country forward.[56]

Such appeals were a clear indication of his adherence to populism through ongoing attempts to create a heterogeneous, multi-class coalition of supporters both within the subaltern sectors and with significant elements of Ecuador's powerful corporate elite.

Gutiérrez' populist discourse retained an intense focus on his opposition to corruption within the country and on Ecuador's disillusionment with it's political class and oligarchy, with which Noboa was associated. He stated, "the main enemy of democracies, especially in Latin America and also around the world, is corruption. Corruption is the main enemy."[57] By emphasizing the domestically and internationally popular struggle against corruption, Gutiérrez was able to soften his radical image as the "rebel colonel"[58] and characterize Noboa as a right-wing radical who would take ownership of Ecuador and use it as his own personal *hacienda*.[59]

Ultimately, Gutiérrez' alteration of his populist discourse to include the possibility that he was not fully against neoliberal reform, or entirely beholden to the demands of his left-of-centre allies, allowed him to expand his appeal to additional social sectors without completely alienating existing supporters. In so doing, he claimed: "I am standing in the political center of

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[56] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in Vendrell, "Gutiérrez: It Would Be Suicide for Ecuador to Join FTAA."
[57] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in "Ecuador and the IMF," *Inside Capital*.
[58] Forero, A9.
[59] Guy Hedgecoe, "Ecuador Maverick Invents His Own Rules for Election: Some Fear That If Alvaro Noboa Becomes President He Could Turn the Country Into His Hacienda, But Mainstream Politicians Have a Lot to Answer For," *The Financial Times*, 12 November 2002, 2.

my country because I want to unite all the Ecuadoreans…the process will be done in unity and harmony, looking for consensus."[60] Gutiérrez' populist overtures to the electorate, especially the indigenous movement, and his nebulous message on neoliberal reform efforts allowed him to win the presidency with 54.7% of the votes on 24 November 2002.[61]

Conclusion

The populist political imaginary that Gutiérrez created during the early campaign established a predominantly left-of-centre, anti-neoliberal platform that the electorate expected him to implement as government policy once in power. However, Petras and Veltmeyer note that Gutiérrez was a career military man with no previous connections to the Ecuadorian political left. Not only did he categorically deny that the PSP was a leftist movement, but a majority of provincial PSP leaders were politically right-of-centre and former activists of right-wing parties.[62] Such contradictions between his populist strategy and Ecuador's political realities highlight the fundamental flaw of Gutiérrez' use of populism to secure political power. The strategic application of populism through an oppositional discourse against Ecuador's corrupt oligarchy, a mobilization of a diverse cross-section of society, an intense focus on the *persona* of the leader, an indiscernible economic orientation, and an opportunistic alliance with the indigenous movement and leftist parties directed from above by the PSP allowed Gutiérrez to capture the presidency. Nevertheless, the expectations that he created with this strategy would diverge sharply from the actual policies and actions his government pursued leading to the erosion of his support

[60] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in Forero, A9.
[61] Saint-Upéry, 4.
[62] Petras and Veltmeyer, 153-4.

CHAPTER FOUR – LUCIO GUTIÉRREZ' DOWNFALL

"Know once and for all that in Ecuador it is Lucio Gutiérrez Borbúa who commands and governs and that he who governs Ecuador is a patriot, who is willing to give up his own life so that Ecuador may have a better future for our children."[1]

Introduction

Building on the work in Chapter Three, this chapter examines Lucio Gutiérrez' failure to meet the expectations generated by his populist campaign. Despite significant campaign rhetoric against neoliberalism, corruption, and the political status quo, Gutiérrez' presidency is characterized by significant reversals on these issues. This chapter reviews Gutiérrez' policies and actions, which result in his transformation from Ecuador's populist champion to political pariah. The conclusion that emerges from this analysis is that although Gutiérrez maintained his use of a populist strategy, the contradictions between the expectations his campaign generated and his actual policies and practices overwhelmed his hold on power in the politically volatile Andean nation.

Contradictions Within Gutiérrez' Populist Strategy

President Gutiérrez' downfall can be understood in terms of specific contradictions between his populist campaign and his actions as president. These contradictions involve: (1) the alienation of his supporters through neoliberal policies and actions; (2) his involvement in corruption scandals; and (3) his autocratic removal of the Supreme Court.

[1]Lucio Gutiérrez, "Mensaje a la Nación del Señor Presidente Constitucional de la República con Motivo del Primer Año de Gobierno," *Discursos Presidente*, Republic of Ecuador, 15 January 2004. <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/benson/lagovdocs/ecuador/federal/presidente/informe.html> [Retrieval Date March 2005]. Translation from Spanish.

It is important to note that despite decreasing popularity Gutiérrez maintained his use of populism undeterred by the obvious contradictions between his promises during the campaign and his actions as president. The potential compatibility of neoliberalism and populism, given Chapter Two's discussion of their relationship, accounts, in part, for Gutiérrez' continuing use of populism as president. However, by analyzing the contradictions *within* his multidimensional populist approach we can come to understand Gutiérrez as an unsuccessful populist and avoid the pitfalls of oversimplifying and mislabeling him as a populist campaigner who became a neoliberal president.

The Struggle Between Campaign Promises and Neoliberal Policy

The first contradiction between Gutiérrez' campaign and presidency resulted from his about-face on neoliberalism. During the campaign he was successful in mobilizing supporters, in part, by creating the impression that his government would implement the policies and programs that were advocated by his leftist, indigenous, and marginalized supporters. Nevertheless, upon taking office Gutiérrez' actions repudiated the public perceptions he had generated through his political alliances. The alliance Gutiérrez crafted with Pachakutik/CONAIE and Ecuador's political left was an essential element of his populist strategy during the electoral process and had the potential to provide a strong base of support for his coming presidency. Moreover, this political alliance represented the potential for the achievement of the popular aims Gutiérrez professed during his campaign and could be interpreted as an extension of the general aims sought during the 2000 overthrow of the Mahuad government.[2] However, the coalition between Pachakutik and Gutiérrez remained largely

[2] For further discussion of the nature of the link between the 2000 coup against Mahuad and the election of Gutiérrez in 2002 see Petras and Veltmeyer, 150-2.

undefined even after his win.[3] Neither Pachakutik nor any other group that had endorsed Gutiérrez provided the candidate with a concrete plan to tackle Ecuador's political and economic crisis. In exchange for their support, which was founded on "value pronouncements and general expectations,"[4] these allied groups expected positions of influence in the government.[5] But, while President-elect Gutiérrez selected his cabinet from an inner circle of military and banking associates with links to the business sector and IMF, his allies were offered positions that appeared to signal a de-emphasis of the political left and indigenous movement within the government.[6]

Pachakutik members were selected for the cabinet portfolios of Agriculture, Education, Tourism, and Foreign Affairs while the Environment Ministry was assigned to the coalition's leftist partner, the Democratic Popular Movement (MPD - *Movimiento Popular Democrático*). The symbolic significance of the appointment of Foreign Minister Nina Pacari, a prominent indigenous activist, politician, and first Amerindian woman to hold such a position, was overshadowed by the lack of decision-making power these portfolios entailed and the constraints imposed on ministers by the government's increasingly neoliberal policy orientation.[7] As Rivera and Ramirez note, "the formation of Gutiérrez' cabinet left the indigenous movement with a clearly secondary role, immediately upsetting the stability of his alliance."[8] The PSP-Pachakutik alliance, established on a tenuous basis and for the purpose of electoral success, appeared to have little resonance or constitutive power within the new government. This reinforced the top-down, personalistic nature of Gutiérrez' populist strategy and his intention to use an initial popular

[3] Rivera and Ramirez, 137.
[4] Petras and Veltmeyer, 156.
[5] As such, the populist coalition arranged by Gutiérrez could be interpreted as a clientalistic exchange among political elites that had a limited connection to the popular aims advanced by Gutiérrez' populist coalition.
[6] Zamosc, 14.
[7] Petras and Veltmeyer, 157.
[8] Rivera and Ramirez, 137.

endorsement to run the government unrestrained by one-time allies. In a typically populist fashion, Gutiérrez showed a preference for support through the ballot box and the occasional public mobilization, but not through active democratic citizenship.

The assignment of the prominent Economy portfolio to Mauricio Pozo, a well-known banker and proponent of neoliberal reform, was further evidence of a shift in the political orientation of the government and a change in the indigenous movement's status within it. Strategically important government positions were given to "monetarists and neoliberals"[9] and Gutiérrez, while visiting the United States, was endorsed by President Bush as "the best ally and friend of the U.S."[10] These actions raised serious doubts about how he would maintain the popular anti-neoliberal positions he had previously advanced while at the same time moving closer to neoliberal Washington. Paradoxically, Gutiérrez also declared he would maintain the previous government's dollarization policy despite strong opposition by CONAIE and despite dollarization being the impetus for the coup that brought Gutiérrez to national attention. Notwithstanding these contradictions, when Gutiérrez' inauguration took place in January 2003, CONAIE declared: "This is a historic day. We have been excluded for a long time and we now have hope for change; and not only for the indigenous sector but for all sectors that are dispossessed and neglected and have been deceived by various administrations."[11] Yet, this hopeful sentiment expressed by the indigenous movement became increasingly tempered by the growing realization that Gutiérrez' populist campaign strategy had obscured serious contradictions.

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[9] Petras and Veltmeyer, 157.
[10] George W. Bush, quoted in Bill Vann, "Ecuador: Drug Scandal Rocks Gutiérrez Government," *World Socialist Web Site*, The International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), 06 December 2003, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2003/dec2003/ecua-d06.shtml>. [Retrieval Date June 2005].
[11] "President of Indian Confederation CONAIE Welcomes Gutiérrez's Victory," *Asia Africa Intelligence Wire*, 25 November 2002, Gale, University of Saskatchewan, <http://find.galegroup.com.cyber.usask.ca/gtx/start.do?prodId=GRGM>. [Retrieval Date August 2009].

The weakening of Gutiérrez' alliance with the Pachakutik party and left-of-centre allies even before he officially took office represented a serious setback for the stability and legitimacy of his presidency and emphasized the reversal of his campaign promises. While the indigenous movement chose initially to maintain their support for Gutiérrez, it was contingent on a reiteration of fundamental campaign priorities. These priorities included a commitment to increasing productivity, fighting corruption, supporting increased education and social spending, rejecting the FTAA and other interests associated with Washington, and a moratorium on IMF negotiations.[12]

However, in a further move that directly conflicted with the indigenous movement's priorities and his populist rhetoric, Gutiérrez announced plans to secure an accord with the IMF to gain access to international financing and avert a default on Ecuador's 11.4 billion USD of external debt.[13] Having taken office with an estimated 722 million USD of budget arrears that represented salaries owed to the public sector (specifically the armed forces, teachers, and health care workers), Gutiérrez possessed few options to address the country's economic problems.[14] Reinforcing his unwillingness to be hampered by political allies, he stated, "I will be the one to make all the decisions on economic and foreign policy."[15] His pursuit of an IMF agreement represented a series of policy choices, which differed fundamentally from the anti-neoliberal priorities he claimed to support during the campaign.

The contents of Ecuador's IMF structural adjustment package and the legislation that resulted, according to Petras and Veltmeyer, represented "the most orthodox expression of the

[12] Saint-Upéry, 9; Kuiz and Zepelin, 8.
[13] Nicholas Moss, "Fund Moves on Ecuador Deal," *The Financial Times,* 09 January 2003, 9.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in Kuiz and Zepelin, 8.

current of thinking that has dominated Latin America over the last two decades,"[16] namely neoliberalism. The IMF agreement was based on the need to avert both an impending default on Ecuador's debt and the government's cash flow problems within the public sector. As well, the 240 million USD standby loan negotiated with the IMF was, in characteristically neoliberal language, targeted at economic stabilization, sustained growth, tax reform, access to additional multilateral lending opportunities, and progress on addressing key social needs.[17] These priority areas would be pursued through strict budget austerity to ensure continued debt repayment, public sector reforms including privatization and the encouragement of foreign administration of public utilities, legislation to limit corruption and improve taxation, continued dollarization, and unrestricted free trade.

The agreement with the IMF violated the demands of Gutiérrez' political allies and its implementation further contradicted the promises he had made during the election. For instance, Gutiérrez' pursuit of budget austerity and debt servicing clashed with his campaign commitment to prioritize and increase investments in health and education.[18] His government's proposal to the IMF allocated 35.7% of the budget to debt servicing and only 19.5% to social programming in the combined areas of health, education,[19] housing, and welfare.[20] These budget austerity measures were also combined with a 25% to 30% increase in the price of fuel, a broad based increase in income taxes,[21] and a value-added tax on medicines and electricity.[22] Pachakutik was

[16] Petras and Veltmeyer, 158.
[17] Mauricio Yepez Najas and Mauricio Pozo, "Letter of Intent, Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies, and Technical Memorandum of Understanding," *Country's Policy Intentions Documents*, International Monetary Fund, 10 February 2003, <http://www.imf.org/external/np/loi/2003/ecu/01/index.htm>. [Retrieval Date August 2006].
[18] Rivera and Ramirez, 137.
[19] This budget allocation actually implied a reduction in education funding compared to 2002 levels.
[20] Petras and Veltmeyer, 249.
[21] The base threshold for paying income taxes was reduced from 6,200 to 5,000 USD
[22] Nicholas Moss, "Ecuador President Launches Austerity Package," *The Financial Times*, 21 January 2003,10; Najas and Pozo, "Letter of Intent."

successful in forcing the government to maintain subsidies on domestic cooking gas that would have resulted in a fivefold price increase, yet, Minister Pozo stated that the issue "has been postponed, not forgotten."[23]

Although the contents of Gutiérrez' populist appeal changed to reflect a more overt neoliberal orientation, he continued to use populist language in an attempt to maintain his support: "The main objective of the government," noted Ecuador's Letter of Intent to the IMF, "is to improve the living conditions of all Ecuadoreans, particularly the poor, through sustained growth with low inflation, improvements in the social safety net, and the provision of better public services."[24] On the surface, the sentiments expressed in the Letter of Intent coincided with Gutiérrez' previous populist rhetoric and his mobilization strategy directed at subaltern supporters. However, neoliberal policy solutions were touted as the means to achieve these goals. For example, the government pursued privatization efforts called for by the IMF in order to achieve greater efficiency, reduce subsidies, improve Ecuador's business climate, and attract more private investment. Proposals to privatize the telecommunications (Pacifictel and Andinatel), electricity, and energy (Petroecuador) sectors again placed Gutiérrez at odds with his campaign rhetoric on the strategic importance of public utilities and their key role in the generation of wealth in Ecuador.[25]

Gutiérrez also pursued public expenditure reductions through aggressive public service reforms, which included a 10% reduction in wages and staff, a two-year wage freeze, and the elimination of overtime allowances.[26] Such actions were balanced with personalistic measures such as a 20% reduction in the president's salary and a 10% reduction in the salaries of

[23] Maurico Pozo, quoted in Moss, "Ecuador President Launches Austerity Package."
[24] Najas and Pozo, "Letter of Intent."
[25] See in particular the quote from Gutiérrez on page 44 regarding the importance of public utilities.
[26] Najas and Pozo, "Letter of Intent."

government appointees.[27] Reform in the public sector pitted the president against public employees and their unions that Gutiérrez characterized as corrupt, overpaid, privileged, and abusive of their excessive powers.[28] This anti-labour rhetoric, which distanced him from his supporters on the political left, was heightened by "a campaign against public sector workers with a policy of intimidation and repression" that included arrests and firings of union leadership.[29]

Again, consistent with the compatibilities between populism and neoliberalism outlined in Chapter Two, Gutiérrez' pursuit of public sector reform, through extensive purges of the senior levels of the bureaucracy and public companies, offered opportunities to satisfy his populist strategy with well-received attacks on the perceived corruption and inefficiency of the public sector. These purges allowed Gutiérrez to impose greater control over the public sector through key appointments and advance his IMF obligations for reform. In 2003, unions, community groups, left-wing organizations, teachers, and oil-workers protested Gutiérrez' attack on organized labour in the public sector and the pursuit of privatization and foreign control of public enterprises.[30] These protests, which were symptomatic of the contradictions apparent in Gutiérrez' populist discourse, corresponded to a precipitous drop in his approval rating[31] from 63% in January to 49% in April 2003.[32] Gutiérrez defended his actions since becoming president by explaining, "when I came to power I found [a] deep economic crisis … I couldn't wait for more time. So I had to change strategy, temporarily."[33] His affirmation of change in orientation

[27] Ibid.
[28] Petras and Veltmeyer, 158.
[29] Petras and Veltmeyer, 159.
[30] Guy Hedgecoe, "Ecuador May Face New Strike by Oil Workers," *The Financial Times*, 11 June 2003, 9.
[31] This poll also indicated that public opposition to his administration had more than doubled since January when 20% of those surveyed had rated Gutiérrez as doing a bad or very bad job.
[32] "Gutiérrez Losing Support in Ecuador," *Angus Reid Global Monitor*, 19 April 2003, <http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/125/gutirrez_losing_support_in_ecuador>. [Retrieval Date May 2006].
[33] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in Rivera and Ramirez, 138.

reflects the inherent difficulty of balancing popular demands for social reform with Ecuador's political and economic realities. Nevertheless, this "temporary" economic strategy, which Gutiérrez had promised to oppose during the campaign, conformed to the pattern of neoliberal economic reform that had been attempted in Ecuador since President León Febres Cordero pursued "Andean Thatcherism" in 1984. [34]

While budget austerity and privatization efforts posed a significant probability of alienating supporters and breaking up Gutiérrez' political coalition, some elements of the IMF agreement presented the president with opportunities to reinforce his populist strategy. In particular, he was able to show strong personal leadership on his popular anti-corruption rhetoric through related legislation and cooperation with his allies. The government's first legislative efforts were aimed at reforming Ecuador's customs administration with the intention of reducing corruption, improving revenues, and restoring business confidence.[35] With the congressional support of his allies from the campaign, Gutiérrez' legislation attempted to place ports and customs under military control, but was opposed by the congress' largest party – the coastal, business-friendly, right-of-centre *Partido Social Cristiano* (PSC – Social Christian Party). Faced with an oppositional congress, a watered down, compromise version of the bill was eventually passed and allowed the president to claim a small victory against corruption.

Further anti-corruption efforts were undertaken with the creation of the *Unidad Anti-Corrupción* (Anti-Corruption Unit), a new authority under Gutiérrez' direct control. However, this action faced significant criticism from the existing *Comisión de Control Cívico de la Corrupción* (CCCC – Civil Corruption Control Commission). In attempting to capitalize on the

[34] This term is borrowed from David W. Schodt, *Ecuador*: *An Andean Enigma,* (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1987).
[35] "President Pushes Reform Despite Opposition," *The Economist Intelligence Unit: Country ViewsWire*, 02 June 2003, Gale, University of Saskatchewan, <http://find.galegroup.com.cyber.usask.ca/gps/start.do?prodId=IPS>. [Retrieval Date August 2009].

potential synergies between his populist discourse and neoliberal economic policies, Gutiérrez faced the difficult task of satisfying his base of subaltern supporters without diverging from his accord with the IMF. Appearing to tackle corruption – in a nation ranked among the most corrupt in the world by Transparency International – offered Gutiérrez opportunities to support his popular appeal.[36] Even so, achieving results in this area proved difficult and Gutiérrez' efforts lacked the timely impact needed to maintain (or generate) an effective and consistent base of support.

Gutiérrez Is Abandoned By Initial Supporters

As President Gutiérrez continued to distance himself from the left-of-centre political orientation he had professed only months before, his political allies and supporters in the indigenous and leftist movements, and among individual voters, were quick to abandon him. His commitment to dollarization, support for the FTAA that he had termed "suicide" during the campaign, privatization efforts, and austerity reforms were too contradictory to avoid a rupture with his populist coalition. As Weyland explains, populist leaders appeal to the public in personalistic and paternalistic terms that paint them as extraordinarily capable of fixing the nation's problems; however, "when the leader is perceived as having failed the people or broken his promises, the electorate, which often lacks firm organization under the populist model of government, quickly abandons the leader."[37] Within six months of his inauguration, Gutiérrez had plummeted in the polls and his leftist allies in the MPD, who had praised him as "a figure symbolic of the popular consciousness of the people in Ecuador for change," now called for an

[36] Robin Hodess and Marie Wolkers, *Report on the Transparency International Global Corruption Barometer 2004*, (Berlin: Transparency International, 2004), <http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/gcb/2004>. [Retrieval Date December 2007].
[37] Kurt Weyland, "Will Chávez Lose His Luster?," *Foreign Affairs* 80.6 (2001): 76.

insurrection against the government for its pursuit of neoliberal reforms and abandonment of its agenda.[38]

The indigenous movement, which had invested several decades worth of its hard won legitimacy, independence, and political capital in Gutiérrez' election, could no longer overlook his divergence from their principles and platform. CONAIE asserted that Gutiérrez' government had "betrayed the mandate given to it by the Ecuadorian people in the last election" and it called on all Pachakutik members of the government to resign their posts.[39] The official withdrawal of Pachakutik from the government involved the resignation of hundreds of officials, including party members in "five ministries, eight sub-secretaries, and the hundreds of positions in the sectional and local governments across the country."[40] The loss of his populist coalition, especially the official support of the indigenous movement that linked Gutiérrez directly to Ecuador's subaltern sectors, was dramatic evidence of the extent of his divergence from the rhetoric he used during the presidential campaign.

Gutiérrez Attempts To Mobilize New Supporters

Given Gutiérrez' declining popular support and the loss of many of his initial allies, he struggled to mobilize new groups among Ecuador's traditional and populist political parties in the congress. In an attempt to advance his agenda of reforms and meet the expectations of the IMF agreement amidst growing public resentment, Gutiérrez increasingly relied on ad hoc coalitions of support from the parties that represent *la oligarquía*, the political class he so strongly derided during the election. These new allies included members of the PSC (*Partido Social Cristiano*) headed by former President Leon Febres Cordero, the PRIAN (*Partido Renovador Institucional Accion Nacional*) led by Alvaro Noboa, who had competed for the

[38] Sundaram, "Lucio Gutiérrez: A 'Revolution' that Never Was."
[39] Iza, Cholango, and Quenamá, "Indigenous Movement Breaks with President Lucio Gutiérrez."
[40] Petras and Veltmeyer, 159.

presidency against Gutiérrez, and the PRE (*Partido Roldosista Ecuatoriano*) controlled from exile by the former President Abdala Bucaram. Although he was able to forge some congressional coalitions, these allies were "notoriously fickle bedfellows, and the president remain[ed] just one crisis away from being left alone again."[41] Furthermore, although the introduction of new cabinet members into the Gutiérrez administration added to the heterogeneous nature of the president's political support, it also created volatility and instability within the executive. The pressure to conform with the IMF agreement advanced by Economy Minister Pozo and the popular social spending demands coming from other ministers, congressional opposition, the public, and even Vice-President Palacio, left Gutiérrez with the unenviable task of balancing competing and very divergent demands while maintaining his supporters. Gutiérrez faced the growing difficulty of garnering small victories to shore up his presidency amidst a volatile and self-centred group of congressional allies who made demands on him in exchange for their support:

> "When the hydrocarbons bill was before Congress in June, for instance, the Partido Roldosista Ecuatoriano (PRE) withheld its support in the hope of forcing Mr. Gutiérrez to find some way to allow the exiled Roldosista leader, Abdala Bucaram, back into the country without the risk of facing arrest and prosecution on several corruption charges pending in the nation's courts. The Partido Social Cristiano (PSC), for its part, wanted firm guarantees that major electrical power utilities in Guayaquil and in the Guayas province, as well as the Pacific Coast telecommunications monopoly, would be placed under the control of party friends and relatives. Alvaro Noboa, the leader of Partido Renovador Institucional Accion Nacional (PRIAN), demanded full control over banana pricing and export policies, along with increased influence on general foreign trade issues."[42]

Gutiérrez, once the political outsider and rebel commander, had become the ultimate political insider and power broker.

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[41] "Ecuador Politics: President Gutiérrez Regains His Footing," *The Economist Intelligence Unit: Country ViewsWire*, 20 January 2004, <http://www.proquest.com.cyber.usask.ca/>. [Retrieval Date August 2009].
[42] "Ecuador politics: Congress derails government oil policy, " *Economist Intelligence Unit: Country ViewsWire*, 17 August 2004, <http://www.proquest.com.cyber.usask.ca/>. [Retrieval Date September 2007].

His administration was also more routinely viewed as adversarial towards civil society opposition and its demands for social reform. Popular protests, which have a strong tradition in Ecuador, were often matched by small, government-organized counter-demonstrations of presidential supporters and significant mobilizations of the Ecuadorian military. Following its break with the government, the indigenous movement was regularly at the centre of these popular protests against Gutiérrez' economic agenda. As a result, indigenous activists became the focus of persecution. For instance, Humberto Cholango, leader of the indigenous group *Ecuarunari*, was briefly jailed for calling Gutiérrez a liar,[43] Leonidas Iza, president of CONAIE, was attacked in an apparent assassination attempt,[44] and Lenin Cali Najera, the national youth leader of Pachakutik was murdered in Guayaquil.[45] As well, radio and television stations critical of the government were frequently sent package bombs.[46] While these examples of political violence and intimidation were, in many cases, not directly attributed to the government, they reflected the inherent dangers of criticizing Gutiérrez' administration.

In addition to political violence, the government was seen as actively co-opting the indigenous movement. Following CONAIE's initial inclusion in the government, which was itself labeled cooptation of the movement by some indigenous analysts,[47] Gutiérrez' administration attempted to take advantage of the movement's internal divisions. In some cases, local indigenous groups were engaged in clientalistic exchanges of social spending projects for

[43] Carla Bass, "Intrigue and Scandal Damp Quito Hopes for a New Era: Ecuadorian President Lucio Gutiérrez has had to Turn to Politicians He Once Despised as He Fights for Survival, Writes Carla Bass," *The Financial Times*, 24 December 2003, 5.
[44] Webb-Vidal, "Gutiérrez Loses Backing of Indigenous Groups."
[45] Duroyan Fertl, "Ecuador: Gutiérrez Under Threat," *Green Left Weekly*, ZNet, 20 February 2005, <http://www.zmag.org/znet/viewArticle/6838>. [Retrieval Date May 2006].
[46] Ibid.
[47] Jeff Corntassel, "To Be Ungovernable," *New Socialist, 58, September – October 2006,* <http://newsocialist.org/newsite/index.php?id=1088>. [Retrieval Date February 2007].

political support.[48] Government resources and positions were also used to legitimize particular indigenous groups, specifically the *Federación Ecuatoriana de Indígenas Evangélicos* (Ecuadorian Federation of Evangelical Indigenous Peoples), in order to strategically demobilize and weaken the representativeness of the national indigenous organization,[49] CONAIE.[50] Given ongoing corruption, heightened political violence, and mounting unpopularity, many commentators and former political allies speculated that Gutiérrez would soon suffer the same fate as Ecuador's two previously elected presidents.

Corruption Further Weakens Gutiérrez

The second major contradiction plaguing Gutiérrez' administration was between his popular rhetoric against corruption and his alleged misuse of public office and questionable practices as president. Within months of his inauguration in January 2003, evidence of blatant nepotism and unscrupulous financial dealings began to surface. The Ecuadorian media reported widely on Gutiérrez' indulgence in nepotism through the appointment of military associates, friends, and family members to senior posts within the public service including at the state bank and in various diplomatic postings. Additionally, relatives and associates received positions in public utilities such as the state oil company, Petroecuador, and state telecommunications company, Anditel.[51] These appointments appeared to fit with the long-standing pattern of Ecuadorian politics that Gutiérrez had promised to ardently oppose.

The president's nepotism was highlighted by a series of scandals involving his appointees. It was discovered that Nelson Álvarez, Minister of Urban Development and

[48] "Corruption Claims Hound President," *The Economist Intelligence Unit: Country ViewsWire*, 07 June 2004, <http://www.proquest.com.cyber.usask.ca/>. [Retrieval Date August 2009].
[49] As well, CONAIE's political wing, Pachakutik, suffered from frequent political defections related to Gutiérrez's use of political patronage. See "The Political Scene: Does CONAIE Have a Future?," *Country Report Ecuador,* The Economist Intelligence Unit, 01 February 2005, <http://www.eiu.com.cyber.usask.ca>. [Retrieval Date March 2007].
[50] Petras and Veltmeyer, 169.
[51] Ortiz de Zárate, "Lucio Gutiérrez Borbúa."

Housing, had been twice indicted for forgery of bank documents and embezzlement and, as such, was forced to resign. As well, Gutiérrez' brother-in-law, Napoleon Villa, a former police officer and head of the *Fondo de Solidaridad* (Solidarity Fund), the government's social welfare and political patronage mechanism, had been previously removed from the national police force for running a corruption ring and accepting bribes for promotions.[52] When this information was made public by the media, Villa was removed from the *Fondo de Solidaridad*, but he remained a close advisor to the president and a member of his administration. Given Gutiérrez' strong anti-corruption rhetoric and opposition to elite *oligarquía* networks, these scandals tainted his image as an outsider and as "A President for Everyone."

Further accusations of corruption that personally implicated Gutiérrez soon surfaced and severely challenged his integrity. His presidential campaign was publicly accused of accepting 30,000 USD from a former provincial governor who had been arrested for exporting half a ton of cocaine to Mexico.[53] While Gutiérrez strongly denied accepting drug money and considered the accusation part of a conspiracy to discredit him, the public and his supporters were again alienated from his populist appeal. Evidence continued to mount linking the president, his family, party officials, and members of his cabinet to the suspected drug dealer and his associates. As a result, Gutiérrez' approval rating continued its downward trend to only 18% support, while an additional poll showed 85% of the public did not believe his denial of involvement.[54]

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[52] "Accusations Prompt Resignations," *The Economist Intelligence Unit: Country ViewsWire*, 02 June 2003, Gale, University of Saskatchewan, <http://find.galegroup.com.cyber.usask.ca/gps/start.do?prodId=IPS>. [Retrieval Date August 2009].
[53] "Ecuador Politics: A Bad, Bad Trip in Quito," *The Economist Intelligence Unit Country ViewsWire*, 02 December 2003, <http://www.proquest.com.cyber.usask.ca/>. [Retrieval Date August 2009].
[54] Ibid.

Despite the corruption accusations against him, his family, and members of his administration, Gutiérrez maintained a strong anti-corruption discourse throughout his presidency: "I will either put an end to the corrupt oligarchy that has become rich at the cost of the Ecuadorian people's pain and tears, or I will die trying."[55] Such rhetoric appeared increasingly to be a diversionary tactic and an attempt to bolster his failing presidency. Moreover, his position as the head of the government's Anti-Corruption Unit cast doubt on the government's actual willingness and ability to tackle endemic corruption. Despite Gutiérrez' efforts and statements, corruption remained a damaging and reoccurring theme during his presidency and reduced the legitimacy of institutional attempts to combat it.

Autocratic Removal of The Courts

The third major contradiction between his populist campaign and presidency relates to Gutiérrez' manipulation of the courts. In late 2004, mounting opposition to President Gutiérrez resulted in a push for his impeachment in Congress on the grounds of corruption, specifically the alleged embezzlement of state funds to support his Patriotic Society Party during mid-term elections. With weakened public and political support, the president faced the strong likelihood that the opposition parties would be able to gather the fifty-one votes out of one hundred needed to begin removal proceedings in the congress. However, the president was able to engage a slim majority of parties, including the PRE and PRIAN, in a pro-government coalition to stop impeachment proceedings and advance his stagnating legislative agenda of reforms to the oil and electricity industries and social security.

[55] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in "President Gives Positive State of Nation Address Amid Political Crisis," *World News Connection* 16 January 2005, EBSCO, International Security and Counter Terrorism Reference Center Database, University of Saskatchewan, <http://search.epnet.com.cyber.usask.ca/>. [Retrieval Date January 2006].

This political maneuvering described as "horse-trading in appointments and promises,"[56] required the president to make considerable, and ultimately politically fatal, concessions to his new allies. Most significantly, Gutiérrez supported the pro-government coalitions' constitutionally illegitimate removal of members of the Constitutional Court and Supreme Electoral Tribunal on 24 November 2004 and the dismissal of the justices of the Supreme Court on 08 December 2004. Although Gutiérrez attempted to frame the purge of the nation's highest courts in terms of democratic reform and the depoliticization of the judicial system, it was widely perceived to be a politically expedient move that would save him from impeachment by replacing the court with another that was "just as partisan, only with more and different patrons."[57] Internationally, the reorganization of the courts, which concentrated control of all three branches of government in the pro-Gutiérrez coalition, was viewed as a worrisome movement toward authoritarian control and an attack on democratic institutions.[58] The United Nations special rapporteur ordered to investigate the situation for the international community found that "the country was no longer governed by the rule of law and that the conduct of the Congress and the Government was propelling the country into a deepening crisis."[59]

The president responded to strong criticism from legal professionals, non-governmental organizations, and students by announcing his government's intention to gain a popular endorsement through a referendum on institutional changes. However, this populist mechanism was overshadowed by Gutiérrez' political machinations and those of his congressional supporters, whose new judicial appointees cleared former Presidents Alvaro Noboa and Abdala

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[56] "The Judiciary and Politics in Latin America," *Latin American Newsletters: Special Report*, August 2005, 11, <http://www.latinnews.com.cyber.usask.ca/lsr/secure/tjapil.pdf>. [Retrieval Date August 2007].
[57] "The Judiciary and Politics in Latin America," *Latin American Newsletters: Special Report,* 1.
[58] Richard Lapper, "Ecuador faces frustration in search for reform," *The Financial Times*, 13 January 2005, 3.
[59] The United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Civil and Political Rights, Including the Questions of Independence of the Judiciary, Administration of Justice, Impunity: Follow-up report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers Leandro Despouy*, Commission on Human Rights, Sixty-Second Session, 31 January 2006, 4.

Bucaram of corruption related charges.[60] Such blatant manipulation of the judicial system for political payoffs increased polarization and, as such, the public expressed growing disregard for the nation's political institutions by calling for the president's resignation, the replacement of the partisan courts, and the dismissal of Congress.[61]

Public protests became increasingly common across the country, often featuring parallel demonstrations of government supporters and detractors. As the scale of the anti-Gutiérrez protests grew and the pro-government coalition unraveled, the president indulged in strongly populist rhetoric. He labeled himself a "dictocrat" who would protect the poor from the country's "corrupt oligarchy" and he encouraged his supporters to take to the streets to prevent a coup by the traditional parties.[62] A week of nationwide mass protests reached the tipping point on 14 April 2005 when Gutiérrez labeled protestors in Quito *forajidos*, Spanish for criminals or outlaws. The derision became a focal point for action as protestors vented their frustrations over local radio and demonstrations were "spontaneously formed throughout Quito by boys, girls, young people, women, men, the elderly…all of whom, repeatedly insisted: 'we are all *forajidos*.'"[63] The president found himself in the same unenviable position as his predecessors Mahuad and Bucaram, with protests in major centres across the country, a CONAIE mobilization of indigenous peoples in the rural areas, and daily demonstrations in the capital city (where security had to be mobilized to guard government buildings against demonstrations).

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[60] Abdala Bucaram, the leader of the PRE, was widely considered a potential contender for the 2006 presidential contest should he return from self-imposed exile in Panama. Within two days of the courts' decision he returned to Ecuador and promised to lead a "revolution of the poor." However, he fled the country within hours of Gutiérrez's removal from office. See "Return of Ex-president Shakes Up Political Scene," *The Economist Intelligence Unit Country ViewsWire*, 05 April 2005, <http://www.proquest.com.cyber.usask.ca/>. [Retrieval Date August 2009].
[61] "The Judiciary and Politics in Latin America," *Latin American Newsletters: Special Report,* 11.
[62] Hector Tobar and Orlando Perez, "Rival Protests Demonstrate Split Over President," *Los Angeles Times*, 17 February 2005, <http://www.latimes.com/>. [Retrieval Date July 2007].
[63] Alberto Acosta, "Ecuador: ecos de la rebelión de los forajidos," *Nueva Sociedad* 198 (Julio – Augusto 2005), 45, <http://www.nuso.org/upload/articulos/3270_1.pdf>. [Retrieval Date October 2005].

To control the situation, Gutiérrez declared a state of emergency on 15 April 2005, which suspended civil rights, mobilized the armed forces, and led to violent repression and numerous arrests. As well, in an attempt at appeasement, he issued an unconstitutional decree dismissing the new Supreme Court appointed by Congress in December, but the very next day was forced to withdraw the decree and negotiate with members of Congress on a process for reforming the courts.[64] By 19 April 2005, students led a 100,000 person strong demonstration, comprising of individuals from all walks of life, to the Presidential Palace. Here, protestors clashed with police and Gutiérrez' paid "supporters" who had been bused in to the capital from various provinces.[65] On the following day, Gutiérrez faced the consequences of his failed populist strategy as events combined to end his fragile hold on power. The chief of police resigned, protestors stormed Congress, and sixty-two opposition legislators of the one hundred member congress met elsewhere in the capital and voted to remove Gutiérrez from the presidency for rumored abandonment of his post. The final blow was the military's withdrawal of support in favour of Vice-President Palacio. Gutiérrez had few options and fled into political asylum.

Conclusion

After barely two-years into his elected mandate, the self-styled "President for Everyone," who had claimed he would "change Ecuador or die trying,"[66] left the country's highest institutions, and the public's trust in government, in arguably worse condition than when he had taken office. As a presidential candidate he had prophetically stated, "In Ecuador democracy has been reduced to elections, the candidates deceive the people with all manner of promises that they never fulfill. Once the candidates get into power they forget about the people."[67] Gutiérrez'

[64] "The Judiciary and Politics in Latin America," *Latin American Newsletters: Special Report,* 11.
[65] Fertl, "Ecuador: Gutiérrez Under Threat;" Acosta, 47.
[66] Lucio Gutiérrez, quoted in Acosta, 48.
[67] Lucio Gutiérrez, interviewed by Phillip Babich, "A Popular Uprising: A Look at Ecuador's Coup."

successful use of populism as an electoral strategy allowed him to make an unexpected rise to political power on the people's desperate hope for change and, in so doing, he established a strong political imaginary with concurrent public expectations. However, his policy reversals and (in)actions once in office defied those expectations, denying a voice to the politically frustrated and marginalized sectors with whose votes he had won the presidency. A populist champion of radical change for Ecuador, Gutiérrez' populist strategy once in office served only to increase institutional fragility, political polarization, and instability, all while obfuscating his involvement in more of the same corruption, political infighting, and IMF structural adjustments that sunk his predecessors.

Returning to the multidimensional approach to populism that frames this thesis, we see that Gutiérrez' rise to power conformed to and relied upon the five components of populism: (1) personalistic leadership, (2) a heterogeneous coalition of support, (3) top-down political mobilization, (4) an ambiguous ideological discourse, and (5) a redistributive and clientelistic economic approach. Through populism, Gutiérrez successfully captures the presidency, which highlights its viability as an electoral strategy. However, as we see from Gutiérrez' rapid political downfall, populism as a governing strategy is susceptible to contradiction and failure when the strong political imaginary created during the campaign for president is not fulfilled. Gutiérrez' inconsistencies, especially on neoliberalism and corruption, propelled him toward increasingly desperate political maneuverings and autocratic measures that compromised his hold on power. Moreover, these contradictions damaged his integrity, which, whether perceived or real, was fundamental to his populist strategy and made it impossible for him to meet the public's expectations. Tracking Gutiérrez' rise and fall using a populist framework indicates that

although populism is a beneficial electoral approach, this strategy can impose significant limitations on a government.

CHAPTER FIVE – CONCLUSION

While the multi-dimensional approach to populism employed in this thesis is a synthetic construction, built from five components common to populist manifestations, it has supported this paper's objective of providing a critical analysis of the rise and fall of Lucio Gutiérrez. The development of this approach in Chapter Two and its application to the Gutiérrez case in Chapters Three and Four have shown that populism is a viable, yet volatile, political strategy. Importantly, the role of expectations in the populist approach has emerged as a vital element of this analysis and helps to explain populism's precariousness:

> The betrayal of expectations by a populist government, and more to the point, the incapacity to make good on unrealistic – even if well intended – promises of a messianic nature, further destroy what little trust in governments and institutions the people might still have. By repeating the well-known cycles of hope and frustration, populism creates deeper wounds in the social fabric and increases political volatility.[1]

Gutiérrez' inability to meet the demands of his indigenous allies, stand-up for his purported left-of-centre values, or act on his anti-corruption rhetoric made his time in office untenable, which resulted in the degeneration of his support and his removal from office by a disenchanted public. In the aftermath of his defeat, Ecuadorians repudiated Gutiérrez, the institutions of government, and politics in general. Approval of Gutiérrez' performance plummeted from 62% in 2002 to 19% following his removal in 2005 with a strong 75% disapproval rating.[2] As well, disapproval of the National Congress' performance was measured in the high eighties[3] and confidence in the institution fell to single digits.[4] Caretaker president,

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[1] Vladimir Torres, "The Impact of 'Populism' on Social, Political, and Economic Development in the Hemisphere," *FOCAL Policy Paper*, July 2006, <http://www.focal.ca/pdf/VT_The_Impact_of_Populism.pdf>. [Retrieval Date June 2008].
[2] "Ecuador's Gutiérrez Left With Poor Rating," *Angus Reid Global Monitor*, 07 May 2005, <http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/7104/ecuadors_gutirrez_left_with_poor_rating>. [Retrieval Date February 2006].
[3] "Most Ecuadorians Give Congress Low Marks," *Angus Reid Global Monitor*, 14 August 2005, <http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/8511/most_ecuadorians_give_congress_low_marks>. [Retrieval Date February 2006].

Alfredo Palacio, saw a steady decline in his approval as his government attempted to reconcile the constitutional and political ruptures Gutiérrez created. In fact, less than a year after Gutiérrez' removal, only 19% of the public felt the ouster had improved the situation in Ecuador.[5]

The impact of Gutiérrez' failure to meet the expectations generated by his populist strategy is further highlighted in terms of Ecuador's economic performance. While ongoing economic hardship would be a plausible explanation for Gutiérrez' short tenure in office, the continuation of dollarization and implementation of neoliberal policies actually resulted in controlled inflation, economic stability, and impressive economic growth of 3.6%, 7.9%, and 4.7% in 2003, 2004, and 2005 respectively.[6] Here the potential for neoliberalism and populism to thrive together is apparent – if Gutiérrez could have reconciled his neoliberal actions with his campaign commitments. However, Ecuador's macro-level economic successes through neoliberalism did little to provide tangible benefits like employment or social welfare schemes in the immediate term. Moreover, these economic achievements failed to avert public anger or solidify the support of political allies because they were accomplished through a reversal of electoral promises. In Gutiérrez' case, populism proved to be a viable electoral strategy that enabled a little-known colonel to craft a diverse coalition of supporters and win the presidency on vague promises and loosely held convictions. Yet, this same populist strategy also proved volatile, as Gutiérrez' government failed to live up to the "political imaginary" that he created.

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[4] "Low Numbers for Ecuadorian Politicians," *Angus Reid Global Monitor*, 07 October 2005, <http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/9286/low_numbers_for_ecuadorian_politicians>. [Retrieval Date February 2006].
[5] "Ecuadorians Upset With Current State of Affairs," *Angus Reid Global Monitor*, 02 January 2006, <http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/10416/ecuadorians_upset_with_current_state_of_affairs>. [Retrieval Date February 2006].
[6] "Ecuador Country Profile 2007," *Economist Intelligence Unit*, Ecuador Country Profile 2007, pg. 41.

A movement away from populism in Ecuador would be expected in light of the public's disappointment with Gutiérrez' inability to fulfill their expectations. Nevertheless, an ongoing desire for stability and strong leadership on political reform helped Rafael Correa score a populist victory in the 2006 presidential election. Considered in terms of the multi-dimensional approach to populism, Correa's electoral campaign too conformed to the components of a populist strategy. His personalistic leadership style blended charisma and outsider appeal with an insider's knowledge that was based on his Harvard credentials and short stint as an out-spoken finance minister under President Palacio. His campaign skillfully referenced his last name (which means "belt" in Spanish) using the tag line "Dale Correa," implying that voters can give the nation's entrenched interests the lash by electing him.[7] Correa also appealed directly to the poor and those who had lost faith in Ecuador's institutions. Not surprisingly, the indigenous movement, leftist parties, and urban and rural social movements endorsed him. Correa promised fundamental institutional change through a constituent assembly tasked with rewriting the constitution, an end to the corruption of traditional political parties and the power of the oligarchy. Additionally, to reinforce his commitment to change he ran for office with no party affiliation and no candidates for Congress. Widely considered a reformer in the style of his friend President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, Correa promised to renegotiate oil contracts, increase social spending, and "bring you happiness, hope, honesty and a promise of change."[8]

Three years and two presidential elections later, President Correa appears to have succeeded with his populist strategy where Gutiérrez failed. As of 2009, Correa's constitutional reforms have been implemented, for the first time in 30 years no run-off vote was needed to

[7] Interestingly, the phrase "Dale Correa" carries the double meaning of the voter punishing entrenched interests that Correa campaigned against and of Rafael Correa, personally, as the tool for political reform.
[8] "Ecuador leftist softens outsider tone before vote," *Reuters*, 21 November 2006, <http://www.reuters.com/>. [Retrieval Date November 2006].

secure his second term,[9] and he has taken a hard line in bargaining concessions from oil companies to fund his implementation of "21st-century socialism."[10] His support among subaltern sectors remains high, and his performance has consistently been rated above 50% since the beginning of his second term.[11] As well, he has increased social spending by more that 50%, doubled capital spending on infrastructure, and provided 1.3 million poor households with a $30 per month stipend.[12] With constitutional maneuvering behind him, it remains to be seen if Correa will be able to avoid volatility and continue addressing, or appearing to address, the expectations of Ecuadorians.

As briefly seen in Ecuador's experience under Correa, the multi-dimensional approach to populism provides a framework for examination and a means for comparative analysis. The articulation of populism in this thesis offers a starting point for further research including comparative examinations of populist experiences in Ecuador and across Latin America. Interesting work could be pursued by comparing the successes achieved by populists such Correa and Chavez or contrasting these experiences with the failure of populists like Gutiérrez. In asserting that populism is both a viable and volatile political strategy this thesis advances its study by raising questions about the importance of the public's expectations as a factor in a populist's success or failure. Moreover, this thesis begs further examination of populist manifestations to determine additional factors that influence viability or volatility including political history, social context, and the economic environment. While these factors were

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[9] "Most Ecuadorians Still Content With Correa," *Angus Reid Global Monitor*, 17 August 2009, <http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/34028/most_ecuadorians_still_content_with_correa>. [Retrieval Date August 2009].
[10] Jeanneth Valdicieso, "Easily re-elected, Ecuador's Leftist President Rafael Correa Faces Stiff Leadership Challenges," *Associated Press*, 20 June 2009, <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/world/ap/48688432.html>. [Retrieval Date July 2009].
[11] "Most Ecuadorians Still Content With Correa," *Angus Reid Global Monitor*.
[12] Mark Weisbrot, "Ecuador's Election Shows Why Left Continues Winning in Hard Times," *Centre for Economic and Policy Research*, May 2009, <http://www.cepr.net/index.php/op-eds-&-columns/op-eds-&-columns/ecuadors-election-shows-why-left-continues-winning-in-hard-times/>. [Retrieval Date July 2009].

addressed here to some extent, the Ecuadorian case could be further illuminated by more extensive research on electoral politics and the corresponding policies and programs Gutiérrez attempted to implement while in government. On the surface, Lucio Gutiérrez' presidency appeared to be an unfortunate series of missteps. However, the examination of his actions through populism has shown that his violation of the principles and promises that catapulted him to power resulted in his ejection from Ecuador's highest office.

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