8

The Roots of Unstable Authoritarianism

Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay

Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay had relatively unstable authoritarian regimes throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Like their South American neighbors, these three countries were plagued by internal rebellions during the nineteenth century, which were encouraged by the weakness of their armed forces. Although they sought to strengthen and professionalize their militaries at the beginning of the twentieth century, they made much less progress than other South American countries. Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay were relatively small and poor nations that could not easily afford to build modern, professional armies that would provide them with a monopoly on violence. As a result, they continued to suffer from frequent revolts during the early twentieth century, which provoked state repression and undermined constitutional rule.

The weakness of parties in Bolivia, Ecuador, and, to a lesser extent, Paraguay also hindered their prospects of democratization. Parties arose in all three countries in the late nineteenth century, but they remained highly personalistic and factionalized institutions with only minimal organizational structures well into the twentieth century. The weakness of parties enabled presidents to concentrate authority, undermine rivals, and extend their hold on power. Opposition parties, in particular, were too weak to restrain the president, compete in elections, or enact democratic reforms that would have leveled the electoral playing field. Instead, opposition parties often boycotted national elections and sometimes sought power via armed revolt. These revolts undermined the prospects for democracy since they provoked government repression and civil strife. Moreover, opposition parties that took power through force tended to rule by force, intervening in elections and repressing their opponents, just as their predecessors had done.

Although Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay all had unstable authoritarian regimes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they differed

in important ways. Bolivia, for example, took greater steps to professionalize its military than did the other two countries. Although these efforts ultimately failed, they helped Bolivia enjoy a modicum of political stability during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Paraguay, by contrast, enjoyed political stability in the early nineteenth century thanks to the powerful coercive apparatus it developed. The Paraguayan armed forces were destroyed in the War of the Triple Alliance (1864–1870), however, which led to a wave of revolts in the country that continued into the early twentieth century. Paraguay developed stronger parties than either Bolivia or Ecuador in the early twentieth century, but the weakness of the Paraguayan military undermined any sustained move toward democracy since the opposition continued to seek power via armed revolt. As a result, all three countries ended the third decade of the twentieth century still under authoritarian rule.

THE MILITARY AND REVOLTS IN BOLIVIA

During the nineteenth century, Bolivia's army was relatively small, often numbering fewer than 2,000 men. Indeed, for much of the nineteenth century, the personal militias of regional leaders outnumbered the regular army's troops (Shesko 2012, 36). The army would typically swell in size when Bolivia faced a major war or rebellion, then decline rapidly after the conflict came to an end. The military, for example, rose to as many as 4,500 men during the War of the Confederation (1836–1839), then descended to fewer than 2,000 men after the Battle of Ingavi in 1841, and fell to only 500 men in 1865 (Scheina 2003, 263; Díaz Arguedas 1971, 26). It expanded again in the run-up to the War of the Pacific, then shrank afterwards, remaining at approximately 1,000 troops for the rest of the nineteenth century (Díaz Arguedas 1971, 28, 71).

The military was also quite top heavy. In 1841, for example, Bolivia had one general for every 102 soldiers and one officer for every six soldiers (Scheina 2003, 263). Even during the 1890s, it was common for commissioned officers to represent more than 10 percent of the army, with noncommissioned officers accounting for another 25 percent (Dunkerley 2003, 71).

Discipline tended to be poor among the troops. Soldiers were typically recruited by force and drawn overwhelmingly from the poor, although tribute-paying indigenous people were often exempted. The military paid the troops poorly and, at times, treated them quite brutally. During the late 1870s and 1880s, soldiers earned sixteen bolivianos per month, whereas a captain earned seventy-four bolivianos and a colonel made 225 per month (Dunkerley 2003, 70). The harsh conditions, brutal discipline, poor pay, lengthy term of service (5–8 years), and requirements of the harvest led to frequent desertions. Even in the 1880s, it was common for the desertion rate to approach 75 percent (Dunkerley 2003, 22).

Neither officers nor troops had much training. The military education system was rudimentary at best during the nineteenth century and military

schools were often closed (Díaz Arguedas 1971, 76–77, 115–117). The government granted promotions based on personal and political connections, rather than on education or experience (Díaz Arguedas 1971, 26–27). Presidents sought to gain control of the military by promoting those officials who they believed would be loyal to them personally. Changes in the presidency thus often led to wholesale purges of the officer corps. Officers and troops also moved back and forth frequently between the army and the country's various militias.

The Bolivian army had limited access to modern military materiel, and the weaponry it did have frequently broke down and could not easily be repaired. Often only the premier battalions, such as the Colorado Battalion, had modern equipment such as repeating rifles – other troops had to make do with antiquated weaponry (Díaz Arguedas 1971, 28). The Bolivian military was also short on artillery: During the War of the Pacific, it had only two old Krupp cannons (Díaz Arguedas 1971, 28; Dunkerley 2003, 48).

The weakness and lack of professionalization of the military encouraged frequent revolts. According to LARD, Bolivia had thirty-seven major revolts between 1830 and 1899, more than any other South American country (see Table 8.1).[1] Major revolts took place in forty of the seventy years during this period. Some of the revolts were quite violent: Six revolts, for example, involved deaths of more than 1,000 people. Opposition leaders typically spearheaded the rebellions: Twenty-one of the revolts were insurrections by opposition elites, ten were military coups, and six were popular uprisings. Nevertheless, the opposition elites who led the revolts were often former military officers, and active military units sometimes joined the rebellions.

The revolts undermined constitutional rule and hindered the prospects for democracy. Thirteen of the rebellions during this period overthrew the president, which was more than any other South American country except Peru. Even those revolts that failed to overthrow the government deepened authoritarian rule by provoking state repression. Bolivian constitutions typically provided the president with the right to exercise emergency powers and suspend constitutional guarantees in the event of revolts. An extreme example was the 1843 constitution, which declared that in cases of internal commotion or external danger, the president could take "whatever security measures he deems convenient" without regard to congressional review or the rights of Bolivian citizens (Loveman 1993, 244). Presidents, frequently, took advantage of these provisions, declaring states of siege, suspending constitutional guarantees, shutting down independent newspapers, and arresting, exiling, and even executing members of the opposition. In response to an 1857 rebellion in Cochabamba, Bolivian president Jorge Córdova called on his troops to kill the

[1] If minor rebellions are counted, the number of revolts was much higher. According to Aranzaes (1918), there were 185 revolts, mutinies, and coups or coup attempts in Bolivia between 1826 and 1903. Scheina (2003, 268), meanwhile, counts at least sixty rebellions.

TABLE 8.1 *Major revolts in Bolivia, 1830–1929*

Year	Description of revolt	Type of revolt (outcome)
1839	General José Miguel de Velasco seized power, repudiating the authority of President Andres de Santa Cruz.	Military coup (took power)
1839	José Ballivián gained control of three battalions and one squadron and declared himself president, but his troops were defeated.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1841	General Sebastian Agreda seized power from President Velasco whom he deported to Argentina.	Military coup (took power)
1841	José Miguel de Velasco invaded with 1,200 men, but the government defeated them. Subsequent pro-Velasco revolts were also vanquished.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1841	José Ballivián revolted and seized power and then defeated a Peruvian invasion.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1847–1848	José Miguel de Velasco and his supporters rebelled and eventually overthrew the government. Velasco became president.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1847–1848	Manuel Belzú and his supporters rebelled. He allied with Velasco and became minister of war when they overthrew the government.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1848	Minister of War Belzú rebelled and defeated President José Miguel de Velasco in the Battle of Yamparaez. Belzú became president.	Military coup (took power)
1849	José Ballivián rebelled against President Belzú but was defeated when the citizens of La Paz rose up against him.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1849	José Miguel de Velasco and José María Linares invaded from Argentina with 2,000 men, but Belzú defeated them.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1853	Velasco and Linares invaded again from Argentina with 2,000 men, but Belzú suppressed the revolts.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1854	Colonel José María de Achá revolted with his military regiments, but he was defeated by forces loyal to President Belzú.	Military coup (suppressed)
1855	A series of revolts in favor of José María Linares broke out, but they were quickly suppressed by forces loyal to President Jorge Córdova.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1857	José María Linares and his supporters rebelled against President Jorge Córdova who fled into exile. Linares became president.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1860	José Martínez initiated a revolt in Santa Cruz and organized an army of 600 men, but they were quickly defeated by the government.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)

(*continued*)

TABLE 8.1 (*continued*)

Year	Description of revolt	Type of revolt (outcome)
1861	Minister of War Achá carried out a coup overthrowing President Linares. Congress then elected Achá president.	Military coup (took power)
1861	At the instigation of Ruperto Fernández, revolts were initiated in La Paz and Sucre, but the rebellions were suppressed by President Achá.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1862	Mariano Torrelio and others rebelled in support of Belzú with 1,500 men. Forces loyal to President Achá defeated the rebels.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1862	General Gregorio Pérez rebelled with support of regiments he commanded in Oruro and La Paz. President Achá defeated the rebels.	Military coup (suppressed)
1864	General Mariano Melgarejo carried out a coup, taking President Achá prisoner and proclaiming himself president.	Military coup (took power)
1865	Belzú returned from exile and conquered La Paz. President Melgarejo marched from Oruro and defeated and killed Belzú.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1865	Various revolts broke out calling for the restoration of the constitution, but the government of Melgarejo suppressed them.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1868	Revolts in favor of constitutional rule broke out, but President Melgarejo suppressed them.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1869	More than 5,000 indigenous people rebelled and occupied land in Tiquina, but the uprising was brutally suppressed. 600 deaths.	Popular uprising (suppressed)
1870	Thousands of indigenous people rebelled over land rights in rural La Paz, but they were brutally repressed. 2,000 deaths.	Popular uprising (suppressed)
1870–1871	Opposition forces rebelled and overthrew Melgarejo after extended fighting and 1,087 deaths. Agustín Morales became president.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1874–1875	Revolts in support of Quintín Quevedo broke out and included 2,500 rebels, but they were defeated by forces loyal to President Frías.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1876	General Hilarión Daza, who was head of the 1st Battalion, carried out a coup against President Frías and Congress proclaimed him president.	Military coup (took power)
1878–1879	The military command overthrew President Daza in a bloodless coup. General Narciso Campero became president.	Military coup (took power)
1880	Colonel Uladislao Silva, the inspector general of the army, mobilized his battalions against President Aniceto Arce, but protests led him to flee.	Military coup (suppressed)

TABLE 8.1 (*continued*)

Year	Description of revolt	Type of revolt (outcome)
1886	More than 3,000 indigenous people in Omasuyos revolted over land claims, but the rebellion was repressed after one month.	Popular uprising (suppressed)
1888	3,000 indigenous people revolted in Sacasaca over land issues, but they were repressed. 50 deaths.	Popular uprising (suppressed)
1888	Colonel Eliodoro Camacho and the Loa Battalion rebelled against President Arce with 800 men. Arce's forces defeated them.	Military coup (suppressed)
1890	Liberals carried out several simultaneous revolts against President Arce, but they were all defeated rather easily.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1891	Several thousand Chiriguano indigenous people revolted in Santa Cruz, but they were brutally repressed with about 1,000 killed.	Popular uprising (suppressed)
1892	Indigenous people in Tiwanaku and elsewhere in La Paz rebelled over land rights. They were repressed.	Popular uprising (suppressed)
1898–1899	Liberals rebelled with support of indigenous people and overthrew the Conservative government. Colonel José Pando became president.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1920	Bautista Saavedra, with the support of some officers, overthrew the government in a nearly bloodless revolt. Saavedra became president.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1921	Thousands of indigenous people rebelled in Jesús de Machaca and Yungas. The government repressed the rebellion and killed hundreds.	Popular uprising (suppressed)
1924	A separatist anti-government revolution erupted in Santa Cruz with 2,000 rebels. The government easily defeated this revolt.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1927	5,000 indigenous people rose up in Chayanta in a rebellion that spread to more than 100,000 people. The government quelled the rebellions.	Popular uprising (suppressed)

Source: Latin American Revolts Database.

residents without pity, promising his soldiers "all the booty of the city" including the young girls (Arguedas 1975, 199–200; Loveman 1993, 247–248).

Beginning in the early 1900s, the Bolivian government took steps to professionalize its military to deal with external threats as well as internal ones. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Bolivia lost more than 600,000 square kilometers of land to Brazil and Chile, and it continued to have territorial conflicts with these countries as well as Paraguay (Shesko 2012, 49). Moreover, Bolivia's neighbors, especially Argentina, Chile, and Peru, had taken major steps to strengthen their militaries, which provided the Bolivian government with ample motive to invest in its own armed forces. The export

boom of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century helped pay for the military professionalization efforts, although Bolivia continued to be much poorer than its neighbors. According to estimates by Federico and Tena-Junguito (2016), Bolivia's total exports rose from $5.7 million in 1870 to $14.0 million in 1900 and $46.8 million in 1929.[2]

As part of the professionalization efforts, the military retired 317 active-duty officers between 1899 and 1901 and began to train and recruit new ones with the assistance of foreign officers (Dunkerley 2003, 128). The government reopened the War Academy and the Military College and it established a new school for noncommissioned officers in 1900 (Díaz Arguedas 1971, 76–77, 115, 145). In 1905, the first French military mission arrived in Bolivia led by Colonel Jacques Sever and staffed by four other French officers (Díaz Arguedas 1971, 642–643; Dunkerley 2003, 126–128).[3] Sever was given the rank of brigadier general and served as chief of staff of the Bolivian military from 1906 to 1909 (Shesko 2012, 47). The French mission immediately undertook the task of reforming the curriculum of all three military schools along French lines and sent officers to train in France, Germany, Chile, and Argentina (Dunkerley 2003, 129). It also began to import significant amounts of weaponry from France, including a shipment of Schneider-Creusot cannons (Bieber 1994, 96, 99). In addition, the French mission reorganized the general staff and helped implement a new system of officer ranks with age limits (Díaz Arguedas 1971, 642–643; Shesko 2012, 42; Dunkerley 2003, 127–129). Perhaps most importantly, the French mission helped draft an obligatory military service law, which was enacted in 1907. This law, which governed military conscription in Bolivia for a half century, required all Bolivian men from age eighteen to forty-nine to perform military service, with relatively few exemptions (Shesko 2012, 42).

In 1909, however, the Bolivian military decided not to renew the contract of the French mission, replacing it with a much larger German mission in 1911 (Shesko 2012, 58). Major Hans Kundt headed the new mission, which also included three captains, one lieutenant, and thirteen sergeants (Shesko 2012, 58–59). Although the German mission came to an end in 1914 with the outbreak of World War I, German officers returned after the war and continued to train the Bolivian military into the 1930s.[4] Indeed, between 1900 and 1935,

[2] Tin production took off in the late nineteenth century: By 1900, tin accounted for 41 percent of Bolivia's exports, and by 1921–1925 it represented 70.5 percent (Volk 1975, 29).

[3] As Bieber (1994, 87) points out, the French delegation was not a military mission in the strict sense of the term because the officers were privately contracted, but it is commonly referred to as such owing to its size.

[4] The German officers that returned to Bolivia after World War I came under private contracts and did not represent a German mission per se. Under the treaty of Versailles, Germany was forbidden from sending foreign military missions after the war and the government discouraged the activities of Kundt and other German officers in Bolivia. Kundt, however, became a Bolivian citizen in 1920 and ignored the warnings of German diplomats to refrain from involvement in the military affairs of the country (Bieber 1994, 91–92).

Bolivia had more German instructors than any other Latin American country except Argentina and Chile (Bieber 1994, 86). The German mission overhauled the training of the Bolivian military, focusing mostly on noncommissioned officers and soldiers. The number of officers declined, but officer salaries went up, which helped strengthen the officer corps (Dunkerley 2003, 131–132). In the 1920s, Kundt also reorganized the command structure of the military, creating new divisions (Díaz Arguedas 1971, 647). At the advice of the German mission, Bolivia bought large quantities of German weapons, spending five million marks on German military equipment from 1911–1913 alone (Bieber 1994, 97; Shesko 2012, 59). The Bolivian military gradually diversified its acquisitions, however, and Germany ceased to be its most important source of military equipment beginning in 1927 (Bieber 1994, 101).

The foreign military missions in Bolivia did not have the transformative impact that they had in some other countries. According to Díaz Arguedas (1971, 643), the French mission came to a premature end without achieving many of its aims or bringing much new to the Bolivian military. Dunkerley (2003, 128–129) suggests that it was "predictable that four [French] officers could not generate big changes, especially without the support of all of the establishment." The German mission reportedly had more of an impact, especially during its initial years (Díaz Arguedas 1971, 644, 648; Dunkerley 2003, 131). Nevertheless, it too encountered significant obstacles, including poorly educated and undisciplined soldiers and resistance from Bolivian officers who opposed the reforms and accused the missions of profiting unfairly at the expense of the Bolivian government.[5] Indeed, more than 150 officers signed a petition in 1926 that called for the government to prevent the return of Kundt to the country (Klein 1969b, 173). Opposition politicians, especially the Liberals, also bitterly criticized Kundt's involvement in politics and sought to resist the reforms.

Despite the professionalization efforts, the Bolivian military did not acquire a monopoly on violence in the early twentieth century. The number of revolts declined in the early twentieth century. Aside from a minor Conservative uprising in 1903, there were no revolts of significance during the first couple of decades of the twentieth century (Dunkerley 2003, 119). Yet in the 1920s, revolts began to occur again. Most of these rebellions were indigenous uprisings, but the Bolivian government also experienced major opposition revolts in 1920 and 1924. Revolts continued to take place frequently in the decades that followed, and some of them succeeded in toppling the government. These revolts subverted the rule of law, provoked state repression, and undermined the country's prospects for democracy.

The failure of the foreign missions to transform the Bolivian military became clear during the Chaco War, which Bolivia fought with Paraguay between 1932 and 1935. The Bolivian armed forces performed dismally in this war,

[5] Some Bolivian officers also preferred the French mission to the German one.

losing more than 50,000 men and 240,000 square kilometers of territory to a much smaller neighbor (Bieber 1994, 105).[6] According to Bieber (1994, 105), "if all of [Bolivia's military] investment had made sense, the war with Paraguay would have demonstrated it." The Chaco War further weakened the Bolivian military, destroying its morale and discipline and paving the way for more revolts in the decades that followed, including the Bolivian revolution of 1952.

WEAK PARTIES AND AUTHORITARIAN RULE IN BOLIVIA

The weakness of Bolivian parties also obstructed the emergence of democracy during the early twentieth century. Bolivian parties during this period were personalistic institutions, which had little in the way of ideology or organization. The parties were prone to splits and defections, and none of them developed an enduring following. Of the many parties that appeared in Bolivia in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, only the Liberal Party lasted more than a few decades, and even it never held power after 1920.

For most of the nineteenth century, Bolivia had only loose electoral clubs and personalist electoral vehicles. Toward the end of the War in the Pacific (1879–1883), however, two main groups emerged that formed the basis of parties: the pacificists and the war hawks. Whereas the pacifists, who were led by southern elites, formed the Conservative Party, the war hawks, who came mostly from La Paz, Oruro, and Cochabamba, established the Liberal Party (Dunkerley 2003, 54–56; Irurozqui 1997, 404–405; Klein 1969b, 15, 19–21). The division over the war quickly faded, however, and the two parties ended up with relatively few ideological differences since they both represented the elites and sought to maintain the existing social and economic system. Conservatives were closer to the Catholic Church and Liberals embraced some of the standard postulates of nineteenth-century liberalism, but both parties relied more on personalistic than ideological linkages to the electorate (Dunkerley 2003, 61–62; Irurozqui 2000, 399–400; Klein 1969b, 22; Lora 1987, 95–97). As Bolivian president Bautista Saavedra wrote: "The [Conservative] Party has not been a conservative party, just like the so-called Liberal Party has not been a purely liberal grouping. In Bolivia, allegiances to people, to caudillos, more than principles, are what have determined the formation of political parties" (cited in Irurozqui 1997, 400).

The Conservative Party initially dominated, governing from 1884 to 1899, a period that became known as the Conservative oligarchy.[7] The party's initial electoral victories stemmed not from its organization or strong ties to the electorate but rather from the willingness of its wealthy leaders, such as the silver

[6] General Kundt presided over the most devastating defeats in this war and was relieved of his command as a result.

[7] The Conservative Party, which emerged from an 1884 alliance of the Democrat Party and the Constitutional Party, was sometimes known as the Constitutional Party or the National Party.

magnates Aniceto Arce and Gregorio Pacheco, to spend large sums to win elections (Dunkerley 2003, 58; Irurozqui 2000, 242).[8] Conservative victories were also facilitated by the fact that Bolivia restricted the franchise to literate male citizens above twenty-one years of age, which limited the number of votes they had to buy to win elections. During the nineteenth century, the number of votes cast in Bolivia never constituted more than 2.6 percent of the population.

Once the Conservative Party took office, it used its powers to ensure that it held on to the presidency and won a majority in Congress. Local-level authorities, especially the prefects, controlled the voting process during the nineteenth century, but the central government had a great deal of influence over these officials (Klein 1969b, 23). To help government-supported candidates, local authorities detained opposition leaders, purged the voter registries of opposition supporters, and blocked the access of opposition voters to the voting tables, while allowing government supporters to vote multiple times (Demélas 2003, 470). A popular saying at the time was "the prefect who doesn't win elections is not a prefect" (cited in Dunkerley 2003, 140).

The Liberal Party, which was the main opposition party during the period of Conservative dominance, did not have the organizational strength to resist the government's electoral manipulation. Nor did it have the resources to engage in electoral intervention on the same scale as the ruling party since it did not control as many local-level authorities or have equivalent access to state coffers. Like the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party was fragmented, personalistic, and weakly organized. The party had close ties to the armed forces, which provided its main leaders, but the army officers lacked the financial resources of the Conservative leaders. In the 1884 election, for example, Liberals spent only a third as much as each of the two Conservative candidates (Irurozqui 2000, 242).[9]

The Liberals complained frequently about the unfairness of the elections and called for reforms, but the only electoral reforms enacted during this period were relatively minor measures (Irurozqui 2000, 143, 173–174).[10] Although the Liberals typically had representation in the legislature, they did not control enough seats to pass major democratic reforms on their own.[11] The Liberals' lack of party discipline also impeded reform. For example, in 1888,

[8] Dunkerley (2003, 58) reports that Pacheco spent 3.5 million pesos and Arce another 3 million pesos on the 1884 campaign. The funds went to buy votes as well as pay for publicity and electoral agents (Klein 1969b, 21).

[9] The Conservatives also controlled more newspapers than the Liberals. In 1884, supporters of Pacheco had at least twenty-five newspapers, supporters of Arce had twenty-one, and the Liberals had eighteen (Irurozqui 2000, 241).

[10] Congress did debate a major electoral reform in 1883 that would have shifted the electoral system to proportional representation, but this reform proposal failed to win majority support (Irurozqui 2000, 143).

[11] The Liberals, for example, won thirty seats in congress, about two-fifths of the total, in 1884 (Irurozqui 2000, 237; Klein 1969b, 23).

their leader, General Eliodoro Camacho, presented legislation declaring that year's presidential elections to be null and void, but he failed to get support for it from many of the Liberals in the legislature (Irurozqui 2000, 249).

In response to government electoral interference, the Liberals sometimes abstained from elections. In 1892, for example, the Liberals boycotted the elections in various provinces, accusing the government of intimidating voters, attacking Liberal clubs, supplying false documents, liberating prisoners to allow them to vote, and cancelling the registrations of opposition supporters (Irurozqui 2000, 254–255). At other times, the Liberals resorted to uprisings, but these revolts deepened authoritarian rule since the Conservative governments typically reacted to them with repression. In the wake of the 1888 rebellion, for example, President Arce declared a state of siege, exiled prominent Liberal leaders, asserted his party's control over the legislature, and purged and even executed some rebellious officers (Dunkerley 2003, 65; Irurozqui 2000, 250). Similarly, after reports of planned Liberal uprisings in 1892, the government declared a state of siege, imprisoning and exiling Liberal leaders and expelling their members from Congress (Dunkerley 2003, 66–67; Irurozqui 2000, 256; Klein 1969b, 27).

The first major Liberal revolt occurred in September 1888 after Camacho lost the presidential elections to Arce amid allegations of widespread fraud (Aranzaes 1918, 330–333; Demélas 2003, 457; Dunkerley 2003, 65–66; Irurozqui 2000, 250). Liberals, with the support of some renegade troops, seized the presidential palace in Sucre, declaring Camacho to be president. President Arce escaped, disguised as a monk, and went to Cochabamba, where he assembled a force of 1,000 men, which defeated the rebels (Aranzaes 1918, 330–333; Dunkerley 2003, 65–66). Another major Liberal rebellion occurred in 1890 when General Camacho, who had been exiled to Peru in the aftermath of the previous revolt, returned to Bolivia with some insurgents (Aranzaes 1918, 334–335). Liberals then rose up in various provinces, but the government managed to suppress these revolts (Aranzaes 1918, 335–337; Dunkerley 2003, 66).

The Liberals did not take power until the end of the century when Colonel José M. Pando spearheaded a successful revolt. The Liberals rebelled partly in response to a government decision to make Sucre the permanent capital of the country, which antagonized the citizens of La Paz.[12] The Bolivian military's small size, poor training, and lack of equipment contributed to its defeat, as did the fact that the Liberals were able to win the support of numerous indigenous communities. In addition, at the outset of the conflict, President Severo Fernández Alonso dismissed officers and troops that had ties to La Paz because of concerns about their loyalty, which reduced the size of the Bolivian military by approximately one-third (Shesko 2012, 39).

[12] A worldwide decline in silver prices had also provoked a destabilizing economic crisis that undermined the government of Severo Fernández Alonso (Dunkerley 2003, 89–90).

Once in power, the Liberals abandoned many of the ideological stances they had taken as an opposition party, including support for federalism, democratic reform, and individual rights. Instead, they engaged in the same electoral abuses that they had decried when they were in the opposition (Klein 1969b, 37, 40). In the 1904 elections, for example, President Pando intervened to support the election of Ismael Montes despite his pledge of noninterference. The opposition accused the government of blocking the registration of opposition supporters and preventing the exercise of the secret ballot, among other infractions (Irurozqui 2000, 267).

Opposition parties, however, were too weak to defeat the Liberals or resist electoral manipulation. The Conservatives had failed to build a strong party organization during their period in power and they gradually disintegrated after being overthrown (Dunkerley 2003, 60; Irurozqui 2000, 243; Klein 1969b, 23). Some Conservatives joined or allied with the ruling Liberals, while others ran as independents or retired from political life altogether (Shesko 2012, 175). The Conservatives presented presidential candidates in 1904 and 1909, but they won relatively few votes, and the party soon disappeared (Irurozqui 2000, 268, 275–276).[13]

New opposition parties arose from within the Liberal Party, but these parties were also too weak to compete with the Liberals or prevent electoral manipulation. The party's first major split came shortly after they took power when the so-called Puritan Liberals broke from the party and ran their own presidential candidate in 1904. The Puritans criticized the government for its intervention in elections as well as the Liberals' other departures from their traditional principles. Montes, however, easily won the 1904 elections with 76 percent of the vote, and in the years that followed, he gradually asserted his control of the Liberal Party. He resisted building a strong party organization, which enabled him to control party nominations and win a second presidential term in 1913. The Puritans, meanwhile, disintegrated.

A more consequential split occurred in 1914 when various prominent Liberals, including Bautista Saavedra and Daniel Salamanca, broke with Montes during his second term as president and formed the Republican Party. The government responded to this new threat with harsh repression, declaring a state of siege, exiling forty opposition leaders, and shutting down thirteen newspapers. The new party denounced the repression and called for "free elections, an independent parliament and a judiciary free from executive influence," but the Republicans did not have the power to resist the measures or to enact democratic reforms (Klein 1969b, 48–49; Chávez Zamorano, Paredes Zárate, and Velasco Agular 2007, 278–280). Nor did the Republican Party have the organization or the following necessary to win elections in the face of electoral intervention by the government. Although the Republicans achieved some

[13] Dunkerley (2003, 136) suggests that the Conservative Party was virtually extinct by 1905.

successes in municipal elections, their performance in national elections was disappointing. In the 1917 presidential elections, the Republican candidate, José M. Escalier, won only 8,904 votes, which was 11 percent of the total votes cast (Irurozqui 2000, 299; Chávez Zamorano, Paredes Zárate, and Velasco Agular 2007, 284).[14] According to various reports, the Liberals ensured their victory with their usual mix of vote buying, fraud, and intimidation, even organizing a paramilitary force, called the White Guard, to harass the opposition (Dunkerley 2003, 144; Irurozqui 2000, 298; Shesko 2012, 180).[15]

In the wake of these losses and the burning of an opposition newspaper's headquarters by a Liberal mob, the Republicans declared they would abstain from the 1920 elections (Dunkerley 2003, 144; Klein 1969b, 57).[16] At the same time, some Republicans began to plot to overthrow the Liberal government, which had been weakened by internal splits. The Republican leader Bautista Saavedra had been in contact with military officers since 1918, but he initially received little support from them for his plans (Dunkerley 2003, 145–146; Shesko 2012, 188–189). In July 1920, however, some key army colonels and junior officers joined the conspiracy and carried out a successful revolt, installing Saavedra in the presidential palace with little bloodshed.

The Republican seizure of power did not bring democracy to Bolivia. Instead, Saavedra and his allies practiced the same electoral manipulation they had denounced when they were in the opposition. Saavedra also consolidated power by creating his own military organization, the Republican Guard, establishing his own party newspaper, and building up a personal following, especially among urban workers (Klein 1969b, 65). The Saavedra administration did enact electoral reforms in 1920 and 1924 that overhauled the electoral registries, created citizen commissions to oversee the elections, and established minority representation through the incomplete list, but these measures failed to bring an end to government electoral intervention (Chávez Zamorano, Paredes Zárate, and Velasco Agular 2007, 298–311; Irurozqui 2000, 312–313; Whitehead 1981, 316).

Opposition parties remained too weak and fragmented to resist government electoral manipulation. Saavedra's main rivals within the Republicans Party, José María Escalier and Daniel Salamanca, quickly became disenchanted with his government and founded the Genuine Republican Party in July 1921, but the new party lacked organization and a social base. Moreover, the opposition was divided between the Genuine Republicans and the Liberals. The opposition grew somewhat stronger over time thanks to defections from the

[14] In 1916, only three Republicans were elected to the Chamber of Deputies and none to the Senate, and in 1918 the Republicans only won ten seats in congress (Klein 1969b, 52, 54).

[15] Elections during this period were relatively violent with both sides organizing clubs to try to take control of the squares where elections were held (Klein 1969b, 50–51; Dunkerley 2003, 140).

[16] The decision to abstain, however, was not supported by Salamanca and the Republican Party committees of Oruro and Potosí (Irurozqui 2000, 304).

ruling party, and it even briefly captured control of Congress in late 1922, but Saavedra responded by dissolving the legislature and calling for new elections in May 1923 (Dunkerley 2003, 160; Klein 1969b, 82–83). Saavedra's determination to intervene in these elections and his decision to exile many Genuine Republican leaders led most of the opposition to abstain from these elections and, as a result, the ruling party gained firm control of the legislature (Dunkerley 2003, 180; Klein 1969b, 83).

The inability of the opposition to compete electorally in the face of Saavedra's authoritarian maneuvers led it to encourage the military to overthrow the president (Dunkerley 2003, 155; Shesko 2012, 198). The first such attempt came shortly after Saavedra was sworn in as president in January 1921, when one of the leaders of the July 1920 coup rebelled. Another military mutiny occurred in March 1921, which was quickly followed by a popular rebellion of 3,000 indigenous peasants in Jesús de Machaca (Dunkerley 2003, 167–168; Shesko 2012, 200–203). Further plots and revolts took place in the years that followed. In February 1924, for example, the opposition torched the barracks of the Republican Guard and a Liberal general staged a rebellion in Yacuiba on the frontier (Dunkerley 2003, 165; Shesko 2012, 212). Even more threatening, in July 1924 Genuine Republican leaders enlisted the support of five army colonels and mounted a major secessionist rebellion in Santa Cruz (Dunkerley 2003, 165–166; Shesko 2012, 212).

Saavedra responded to all of these revolts with further repression (Dunkerley 2003, 159). As a result, Bolivia was under a state of emergency for 890 days during Saavedra's four-year term, as opposed to only 222 days during the previous twenty-one years of Liberal rule (Klein 1969b, 84). Saavedra also brought back the German General Hans Kundt as chief of staff of the armed forces in February 1921, and Kundt began to weed out opponents of the government from the military and erect a network of spies to detect any conspiracies within it (Bieber 1994, 88–89; Loveman and Davies Jr. 1978, 57; Dunkerley 2003, 162–164, 194). In addition, the president slashed the size and budget of the army, while building up his Republican Guard so that it was a larger, better paid, and better equipped force (Dunkerley 2003, 160–161; Shesko 2012, 208). Although these measures did not bring an end to the revolts, they helped the president complete his term.

Toward the end of his term, Saavedra sought to extend his mandate, but even his own party refused to go along, which led him to turn to a largely unknown loyalist, José Gabino Villanueva, to run as his successor. Thanks in part to the government's electoral interference, Villanueva won the May 1925 election easily, earning 45,826 votes to 8,252 votes for Daniel Salamanca, the candidate of the Genuine Republicans (Irurozqui 2000, 317). After the election, however, Villanueva began to demonstrate some political independence, leading Saavedra to call out the troops in La Paz to pressure the legislature to nullify the election on the grounds of a technicality. Congress agreed to hold new elections in December 1925, but Saavedra's own party obliged him to accept

Hernando Siles as the party's presidential candidate, even though Siles was a rival whom Saavedra had exiled in 1923 (Dunkerley 2003, 171; Klein 1969b, 85–86). Under pressure from Saavedra, Siles agreed to sign a document pledging to respect party discipline and to allow Saavedra's brother to run as the party's vice-presidential candidate (Klein 1969b, 85). The opposition abstained from the December 1925 elections because of concerns about electoral manipulation, which enabled Siles to win unopposed (Irurozqui 2000, 318).

Once in office, Siles moved to consolidate his power, employing the same authoritarian measures as his predecessors. The Siles administration, for example, harassed the opposition, maintained a state of siege for most of his tenure, and intervened in elections regularly to ensure the ruling party's dominance (Klein 1969b, 95, 107).[17] To strengthen his hold on power, Siles also dismantled Saavedra's Republican Guard and staffed the military with his supporters, such as General Kundt and Colonel David Toro (Klein 1969b, 88; Dunkerley 2003, 172–173). Siles formed his own party, which became known as the Nationalist Party, but he kept it weak and largely under his control. In addition, he sent Vice-President Abdón Saavedra on a diplomatic tour and then encouraged demonstrations to prevent him from returning.

The opposition parties initially cooperated with the Siles administration, but they quickly became disaffected with the president's authoritarian ways. The weakness and fragmentation of the opposition parties, however, made it impossible for them to resist government electoral intervention or enact reforms.[18] Instead, the opposition mostly abstained from elections and began to plot to overthrow the government (Dunkerley 2003, 177; Klein 1969b, 107). Siles claimed in 1927 that there had already been fourteen attempts on his life (Dunkerley 2003, 177). The government responded to these plots and protests with repression, imposing a state of siege, shutting down opposition newspapers, and exiling opposition leaders, including Ismail Montes (Klein 1969b, 95, 107). When an indigenous rebellion began in Chayanta, Potosí in 1927 and grew to include more than 100,000 people around the country, the government responded with even harsher repression, leading to the deaths or imprisonment of hundreds of indigenous people (Shesko 2012, 215).

With the support of General Kundt and Colonel Toro, Siles managed to retain the backing of the military for most of his tenure. As his term came to an end, however, Siles called for a constituent assembly with the aim of revising the constitution to permit him to stay in power. Siles then resigned and handed power over to a council of ministers, which called for elections for this constituent assembly to be held in June 1930 (Klein 1969b, 109). This move

[17] Thanks to electoral manipulation, the Nationalist Party won twenty-one of thirty-four congressional seats and four of seven senate seats in the May 1927 elections – it also won a majority in the 1929 congressional and municipal elections (Dunkerley 2003, 186; Klein 1969b, 95, 107).

[18] One faction of the Republican Party, the so-called Government Republicans, supported Siles for most of his tenure (Klein 1969b, 109).

immediately prompted riots and protests as well as an armed rebellion by forty leftists who invaded from Argentina (Klein 1969b, 109). Opposition parties and politicians, along with military dissidents, also accelerated their plotting against the regime (Klein 1969b, 109). On June 25, a violent revolt broke out in various cities, and the rebels, who included armed students as well as military officers and cadets, seized power after three days of fighting. Siles, along with Kundt and Toro, fled into exile. The military coup did not bring democracy to Bolivia, however. Indeed, Bolivia continued to be plagued by political instability and authoritarianism in the years that followed.

Thus, the weakness of the military and parties hindered democratization in Bolivia during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The military's weakness led to frequent revolts throughout the nineteenth century, which prompted authoritarian clampdowns. Efforts in the early twentieth century to strengthen the military brought a temporary end to revolts, but they resurged beginning in the 1920s, which further undermined the rule of law. The weakness of opposition parties, meanwhile, made it difficult for them to compete in elections, resist government electoral manipulation, and enact democratic reforms. Instead, opposition parties often boycotted elections and/or sought to overthrow the government by force. Even where these revolts were successful, they did not lead to democratization, however, since opposition parties that took power via force tended to use the same tactics as their predecessors to maintain themselves in power.

THE MILITARY AND REBELLIONS IN ECUADOR

During the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Ecuador, like Bolivia, was an unstable authoritarian regime. The government regularly manipulated elections, the country's military was weak, and the state barely penetrated many areas of the geographically fragmented country. As a result, the opposition frequently sought power via armed revolts and sometimes managed to overthrow the government.

Ecuador in the nineteenth century was a relatively poor country, which could not afford to arm and maintain a large modern military. According to data from the Maddison Project, Ecuador's GDP per capita in the late nineteenth century was the lowest in South America (there are no data on GDP for Bolivia and Paraguay during this period), ranking significantly below Colombia and Peru (Bolt et al. 2018). Ecuador had extensive foreign debts left over from the wars of independence, but it could not afford to pay them, which foreclosed its access to foreign loans. Moreover, the country's tax collection system was woefully inadequate (Rodríguez 1985, 53–55, 73–75).

Military spending initially represented more than 50 percent of the state's budget, but the government reduced it, and by the late nineteenth century it typically constituted less than 30 percent (Rodríguez 1985, 223–224). The military cutbacks meant that the troops often had shortages of weaponry and

those weapons they did have were poorly maintained (Quintero López and Silva 1991, 82). There were also efforts to reduce the number of officers since officer pay constituted the bulk of military expenditures (Quintero López and Silva 1991, 82). President Diego Noboa cut 163 officers from the force in the early 1850s because of fiscal pressures (Spindler 1987, 44).

In addition, Ecuadorian governments pared down the number of troops. In the wake of independence from Gran Colombia, the military had 1,300 soldiers, many of them from Colombia or Venezuela, but by order of Congress the size of the army fell to under 1,000 in 1847 (Arancibia Clavel 2002, 158–159; Ayala Mora 2011, 172). As late as 1894, the army had only 1,777 troops (Martínez Bucheli 2017, 16). Soldiers were recruited primarily from the poorest sectors, often by force, and were only paid intermittently (Scheina 2003, 141). As a result, military discipline was poor and mutinies were common (Van Aken 1989, 47–48, 55, 287). In the words of one historian, soldiers of this period were "hungry, naked, and immoral" (cited in Van Aken 1989, 54).

Some Ecuadorian politicians sought to keep the army small, not just because of fiscal concerns but also because of fears of excessive military influence and intervention (Van Aken 1989, 46–47). These concerns led Congress to ban military men from serving as legislators and even from voting at times (Van Aken 1989, 57, 100). They also led the government to create a national guard in the 1830s to serve as a counterweight to the military. By 1858, the national guard consisted of more than 18,000 troops, although they tended to be poorly trained and equipped and did not operate with any regularity (Ayala Mora 2011, 116–121, 182).[19]

Throughout the nineteenth century, promotions in the military were based mostly on political affiliations and personal connections, rather than education or experience. Numerous presidents sought to restructure the military and ensure its loyalty by elevating officers who belonged to their political party or faction, while removing or marginalizing those from other parties or factions (Bravo, Macías Núñez, and Aguilar Echeverría 2005, 8–9). Rebel victories in civil wars typically led to wholesale purges of the military.

There were periodic efforts to professionalize the military but none of them prospered. A Military College was opened in 1838, but it only had a few students and shut down in 1845 (Arancibia Clavel 2002, 159; Romero y Cordero 1991, 147–154; Van Aken 1989, 109, 129, 307–308). In the 1860s, President Gabriel García Moreno sought unsuccessfully to find foreign military officers to help professionalize the country's military; when this effort failed, in part because of a lack of funds, he imported some weaponry and created a

[19] All Ecuadorian males between sixteen and sixty were required to register for the national guard, but indigenous people and slaves were exempted because the government was reluctant to arm and train them (Ayala Mora 2011, 117). In 1861, García Moreno enacted a new law regulating the national guard, while cutting the size of the military and imposing stricter discipline on it (Henderson 2008, 150–151; Romero y Cordero 1991, 269–270; Spindler 1987, 64).

school for military cadets (Henderson 2008, 150–151). The military academy was closed after his death in 1875, however, and did not reopen until 1892 (Lauderbaugh 2012, 65; Arancibia Clavel 2002, 159). The irregular functioning of military academies meant that even upper-level officers often lacked a military education (Arancibia Clavel 2002, 161).

The lack of resources, politicization, and frequent disruption of the military prevented it from developing into a strong national institution in the nineteenth century. This, in turn, made it difficult for the government to defend itself against external or internal threats. As a result, Ecuador lost the brief wars or skirmishes it fought against Colombia and Peru during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. These losses further debilitated the country's armed forces.

The weakness of the military encouraged frequent internal revolts. As Table 8.2 indicates, between 1830 and 1899, Ecuador suffered more than a dozen major revolts and countless small rebellions. The revolts, which sometimes dragged on for months or even years, typically pitted Liberals against Conservatives but sometimes involved fighting between different factions of the same party. Opposition leaders, many of whom had military backgrounds, typically commanded the rebel troops, who consisted of members of civilian militias, the police, and paramilitary forces as well as soldiers or regiments that defected from the regular army or had formerly served in it. Foreign countries, especially Colombia and Peru, sometimes helped finance or arm the rebels, and often provided an embarkment point for invasions.

The revolts undermined the prospects for democracy in Ecuador. Owing to the relative weakness of the Ecuadorian military, the opposition sometimes triumphed in these revolts. Indeed, on eight occasions between 1830 and 1899, the opposition overthrew the government and took power via armed rebellion, thus subverting constitutional rule. The revolts also typically provoked state repression. Ecuadorian constitutions gave the president emergency powers in the event of "internal commotion" and presidents used these powers frequently (Loveman 1993).[20] President Antonio Borrero, for example, declared a state of siege for four months in 1876 in the wake of an insurrection (Loveman 1993, 197). At times, presidents went beyond what was permitted by the constitution. President Vicente Rocafuerte established a policy of executing captured rebel officers without trial and exiling all rebels who surrendered without fighting (Van Aken 1989, 98). García Moreno also executed rebel leaders and sought to weed out potentially rebellious officers with whippings and banishments (Van Aken 1989, 269).

After the 1895 Liberal Revolution, the new president, Eloy Alfaro, took more significant steps to professionalize the military and to acquire a monopoly on the use of force. In 1899, the Alfaro government issued a decree requiring

[20] Gabriel García Moreno's 1869 constitution enabled the government to suspend virtually all individual rights in case of internal strife (Loveman 1993, 195).

TABLE 8.2 *Major revolts in Ecuador, 1830–1930*

Year	Description of revolt	Type of revolt (outcome)
1830–1832	*Secession from Gran Colombia*. General Juan José Flores, the governor of Ecuador, sides with secessionists in Quito. Flores becomes president.	Military coup (took power)
1833–1834	*War of the Chihuahuas*. Liberals led by Vicente Rocafuerte rebelled with support of the navy. They were defeated, but Rocafuerte was promised the presidency. 900 deaths.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1834–1835	Ecuadorian exiles led by José Felix Valdivieso and General Isidoro Barriga invaded Ecuador, but the government crushed 2,000 rebels at the Battle of Miñaruca.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1845	*March Revolution*. Guayaquil-based Liberals rebelled and defeated the government army. Vicente Ramón Roca, a Conservative, became president.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1850	Liberal General José María Urbina pushed out President Manuel Ascásubi. Diego Noboa became president in a peaceful transition.	Military coup (took power)
1851	General José María Urbina and other Liberal generals overthrew President Noboa. General Urbina became president.	Military coup (took power)
1852	General Juan José Flores invaded from Peru with a small flotilla and 700 men. The rebels attacked Guayaquil, but they were driven off by the army.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1859–1860	Conservatives rebelled in Quito. After an extended civil war and shifts in power, Conservative Gabriel García Moreno became president.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1869	Gabriel García Moreno organized a coup to overthrow President Javier Espinosa and prevent free elections. García Moreno became president.	Military coup (took power)
1871	Fernando Daquilema led an indigenous rebellion in Riobamba that was suppressed by well-armed government troops.	Popular uprising (suppressed)
1876	General Ignacio Veintemilla, the military commander of Guayaquil, rebelled and took power with the support of Liberals, overthrowing President Borrero. 1,000 deaths.	Military coup (took power)
1877	Conservatives led by General Manuel Santiago Yépez rebelled but were defeated by the government after twenty hours of fighting.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1882–1883	*War of the Restoration*. Liberals and Conservatives overthrew General Veintemilla after he declared himself dictator. They elected a Conservative president, José Caamaño.	Elite insurrection (took power)

TABLE 8.2 (*continued*)

Year	Description of revolt	Type of revolt (outcome)
1886–1887	Eloy Alfaro and his Liberal supporters attempted to overthrow President Caamaño in various uprisings, but they were defeated.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1895	Eloy Alfaro and Liberals overthrew Conservatives with indigenous support. Alfaro became president. 1,000 deaths.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1896	Conservatives revolted at various locations and seized the town of Cuenca, but the government suppressed the rebellions.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1898–1899	Conservatives revolted at numerous locations. At the Battle of Sanancajas, the government defeated 1,300 rebels. 437 deaths.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1906	The Campaign of Twenty Days. Military garrisons revolted and overthrew President Lizardo Garcia and restored Eloy Alfaro to the presidency. 1,000 casualties.	Military coup (took power)
1911	The president-elect Emilio Estrada led a popular revolt after Eloy Alfaro sought to block him from taking power. Alfaro went into exile, and Estrada became president.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1911–1912	War of the Generals. Eloy Alfaro, Flavio Alfaro, and Pedro Montero revolted against the government. They were defeated in bloody fighting and subsequently killed by a mob.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1913–1916	Colonel Carlos Concha Torres, a supporter of Alfaro, launched a lengthy guerrilla uprising in Esmeraldas. It petered out after he was captured.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1914	Colonel Carlos Andrade and his brothers invaded Ecuador from Colombia with an army of 600 rebels, but they were defeated by the government.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1924	Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño led a Conservative revolt of 1,000 men in response to fraud in the 1924 presidential election. They were defeated with forty-nine killed.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1925	July Revolution. Junior military officers overthrew the government of Gonzalo Córdova and established a provisional military/civilian junta.	Military coup (took power)

Source: Latin American Revolts Database.

that people turn in any state-owned weapons or munitions that were in their possession (Moncayo Gallegos 1995, 152). That same year, the Ecuadorian military sent some officers to enroll in a military academy in Chile, and it also hired a Chilean military mission to train officers in Ecuador (Arancibia Clavel

2002, 190–196). At the instigation of the Chilean mission, the government created a few new schools, including a military preparatory school, a war academy, and a school for noncommissioned officers, and they sought to model the training in these schools along Prussian lines. These schools, which did not charge tuition and admitted students based on merit, attracted many officers from the middle classes (Moncayo Gallegos 1995, 152–154; Fitch 1977, 17).

The efforts at professionalization continued in subsequent administrations. The Chilean mission trained officers in Ecuador until 1916, and the Ecuadorian military continued to send officers to study in Chile until 1928, dispatching approximately 100 Ecuadorian officers there (Arancibia Clavel 2002, 212, 261–266). In addition, Chile sold a variety of military equipment to Ecuador, including rapid-fire artillery, torpedoes, submarine mines, and radiotelegraphic equipment, and Ecuador began to purchase sophisticated weaponry from France and Germany as well (Arancibia Clavel 2002, 212). With the assistance of the Chilean mission, the government of General Leonidas Plaza (1901–1905) also drew up a new Organic Law of the Military regulating the entire functioning of the Ecuadorian military including promotions, retirement, and salaries – this law remained in force until 1923 (Arancibia Clavel 2002, 200). The new regulations prohibited battlefield promotions, banned solders from joining parties or electoral clubs, established military pensions, and made military service obligatory (Moncayo Gallegos 1995, 155; Fitch 1977, 15).

The professionalization efforts were financed in part by the export boom that Ecuador experienced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Exports grew at an annual rate of 5.6 percent between 1870 and 1929, one of the higher rates in South America (Bértola and Ocampo 2013, 86). The export growth made it possible to pay for a sharp increase in military spending at the end of the nineteenth century. Military expenditures rose to 42 percent of all government spending in 1899 and 1900, up from 24.9 percent in 1893 (Rodríguez 1985, 224). Nevertheless, Ecuador remained a poor country, which could scarcely afford extensive investments in the military. Indeed, in 1900, GDP per capita was still only $594 (Bolt et al. 2018). Not surprisingly, military expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures declined sharply in 1902 and remained low in the years that followed (Rodríguez 1985, 224–225). The government gradually reduced the size of the standing army and reduced officer pay, causing military salaries to fall behind those of civilian employees (Fitch 1977, 16).

The professionalization efforts failed to transform the Ecuadorian military. Indeed, the Ecuadorian army remained highly politicized in the first few decades of the twentieth century, and senior Ecuadorian officers continued to be promoted, demoted, and discharged based on their personal and political affiliations (Fitch 1977, 16). Romero y Cordero (1991, 380–383) suggests that the long-term influence of the Chilean mission was relatively superficial, and even Arancibia Clavel (2002, 267) acknowledges that the Chilean efforts took a while to bear fruit. The Chileans encountered a great deal of resistance to their efforts to reshape the Ecuadorian military. Some Ecuadorian officers

opposed the Chilean mission for nationalistic reasons or because it threatened their interests. The Head of the Chilean Legation in 1906 complained that the Ecuadorian soldiers were not accustomed to working as much as the Chileans demanded, but he also acknowledged that the Chilean officers at times behaved badly and lacked sensitivity (Arancibia Clavel 2002, 206–208).

As a result, the Ecuadorian military remained relatively weak and could not bring an end to revolts. The opposition continued to carry out numerous rebellions during the first two decades of the twentieth century, and some of these revolts were successful. Rebels overthrew the government in 1906 and 1911, and nearly did so again in the bloody 1911–1912 civil war. The military also had a very difficult time suppressing a guerrilla rebellion that ravaged the province of Esmeraldas from 1913 to 1916, and some blamed the Chilean mission for not teaching tactics that were appropriate for jungle warfare (Macías Núñez 2012, 43–44). The continued revolts not only created political instability but they also prompted state repression. Eloy Alfaro, for example, created an informal secret police, known as *garroteros* (thugs), to ferret out insubordination and intimidate the opposition (Loveman 1993, 201; Lauderbaugh 2012, 89, 91–92).

Beginning in the 1920s, however, the cycle of opposition rebellions began to come to an end. Although there were a few opposition revolts after 1916, the military easily and rapidly crushed these rebellions (Rodríguez 1985, 37). The gradual strengthening of the armed forces, which continued with the arrival of an Italian mission in 1922, helped bring an end to these revolts by reducing the likelihood that the opposition could prevail. In addition, improvements in state capacity and infrastructure, such as the railroads, made it easier for the government to mobilize troops quickly, transport them where they were needed, and communicate with them in the field. Finally, the memories of the bloody civil war of 1911–1912 helped dissuade the opposition from launching further insurrections. In this war, both sides had highly lethal modern weapons, including repeating rifles and machine guns, that left an estimated 3,000 people dead in one month of fighting in January 1912 (Rodríguez 1985, 49). The slaughter, which culminated in the mob lynching of opposition leaders, including Eloy Alfaro, shocked and horrified many Ecuadorians, thus reducing the appeal of the armed struggle.

WEAK PARTIES AND AUTHORITARIAN RULE IN ECUADOR

Although the professionalization of the military eventually brought an end to opposition revolts, it did not bring democracy to Ecuador. Ecuador remained firmly under authoritarian rule during the early twentieth century in large part because of the weakness of the country's parties. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, opposition parties were too weak to overcome government electoral manipulation or enact democratic reforms. Instead, the opposition often boycotted elections and/or resorted to violent uprisings.

For most of the nineteenth century, Ecuador lacked parties altogether. Personalist leaders dominated Ecuadorian politics during this period, and these leaders tended to eschew party building, preferring to concentrate power in their persons rather than diffuse it through parties and institutions. Gabriel García Moreno, for example, strengthened the powers of the executive and reformed Ecuador's electoral laws to consolidate his hold on power (Henderson 2008, 57–60; Spindler 1987, 58–59). His 1869 constitution extended the presidential term to six years, permitted presidential reelection, and allowed presidents to appoint mayors and governors and to declare a state of siege without consulting Congress (Lauderbaugh 2012, 64). Although García Moreno and other personalist leaders, such as Juan José Flores, held power for a long time, their movements disintegrated as soon as the leaders died since they lacked organizational structures.

Although leaders during the nineteenth century often came to power via armed revolts, they typically sought to legitimize their rule through elections.[21] Ecuadorian governments thus held elections regularly but intervened in these elections to ensure that their preferred candidates won. According to Van Aken (1989, 140), "intimidation of voters and candidates, violation of the secrecy of voting, and improper manipulation of electoral assemblies were among the methods used by the government to maintain control." Until 1860, the franchise was limited to literate Ecuadorian males who met certain economic requirements. This significantly reduced the size of the electorate – less than 0.5 percent of the population voted in 1830 – which made it easier for the government to control elections (Quintero López and Silva 1991, 100).

The opposition often protested government electoral manipulation, but its lack of organization and close linkages to the electorate made it difficult to overcome government intervention and compete in elections. Nor did the opposition control enough seats in the legislature to enact democratic reforms.[22] Between independence and 1874, opposition candidates won only 23 percent of the vote in presidential elections on average, and the margin between the victor and the runner-up averaged 60 percent. In no presidential election during this period did an opposition candidate win. Although the opposition did occasionally take power via armed rebellion, once they came to power, they typically resorted to the same electoral manipulation that they had decried previously while in the opposition.

Parties first emerged in Ecuador during the 1880s and they gradually developed constituencies and basic organizational structures (Rodríguez 1985, 45; McDonald and Ruhl 1989, 309; Ayala Mora 1989, 12–18; 1982). Two of the

[21] Many of these leaders described themselves or were described by others as conservatives or liberals, but they predated the founding of the Conservative and Liberal parties.

[22] The opposition did achieve occasional victories, such as when it managed to persuade the legislature, which was dominated by pro-government members, to annul the fraudulent elections in Cuenca in 1840, but these victories tended to be short lived (Van Aken 1989, 141).

parties – the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party – proved enduring, surviving into the twenty-first century. The parties were led by and represented elites, but they drew increasing support from the masses over time and they had distinctive ideologies and bases of support. The Conservative Party, which had its main base in the highlands, advocated strong church–state ties and relied heavily on the organizational support of the Catholic Church. The Liberal Party, which was stronger on the coast, pushed for the secularization of the state and enjoyed the backing of the Masonry. A third party, the Progressive Party, arose from a split within the Conservative Party in the 1880s and sought to carve out a middle path, but it disintegrated after it lost power in 1895.

The emergence of parties initially helped bring about greater electoral competition. Legislative elections were hotly contested during the late 1880s and early 1890s, and the legislature was divided relatively evenly between Conservatives and Liberals and/or Progressives (Quintero López and Silva 1991, 209). Presidential elections were also at times vigorously contested. In 1883 a constituent assembly that had thirty-five conservatives and twenty-seven liberals had to go through multiple rounds of voting before electing the Conservative leader, José María Caamaño, as interim president (Spindler 1987, 117–118). The assembly then drafted a new constitution that represented a democratic advance in that it mandated direct presidential elections. As a result, the elections in 1888 and 1892 took place via popular vote. Although the 1888 election was a lopsided contest, the 1892 elections represented the most vigorously contested election to date, with Dr. Luis Cordero, the candidate of the governing Progressives, prevailing over the candidate of the Conservatives with 58 percent of the vote.

Even in the late nineteenth century, however, most elections continued to be marred by government manipulation, which the opposition was powerless to prevent. For example, the government shut down Liberal newspapers and harassed Liberal leaders in the run-up to the 1883 constituent assembly elections (Spindler 1987, 150). Similarly, President Caamaño intervened extensively in the 1888 elections, using fraud as well as violence to ensure the victory of his brother-in-law, Dr. Antonio Flores of the Progressive Party, with 96 percent of the vote. One newspaper reported that "there were more gun shots than votes" in this election (Ayala Mora 1982, 191–192). Flores, who had been serving as a diplomat in Europe during the campaign, offered to resign when he found out about the extent of the electoral abuses, but Congress rejected his resignation (Spindler 1987, 126). Four years later, the Conservative opposition accused the Flores administration of fraud in the closely contested 1892 election, although the evidence in this case is not entirely clear (Ayala Mora 1982, 194–196; Reyes 1982, 183; Spindler 1987, 137–138).

The opposition, meanwhile, continued to carry out revolts throughout most of this period, taking advantage of the relative weakness of the military. Conservatives rebelled unsuccessfully against the liberal General Ignacio Veintemilla in 1877, and then joined forces with disaffected liberals in

1882–1883 to oust Veintemilla in the War of Restoration. The most persistent rebel was the Liberal leader Eloy Alfaro, who led more than a dozen revolts against the government beginning in the 1860s before finally overthrowing the Cordero administration in the 1895 Liberal Revolution. These revolts prompted further state repression, including the exile, imprisonment, and even execution of opposition leaders (Spindler 1987, 155).

Once in power, Alfaro engaged in the same types of electoral abuses and repressive activities that he had protested while in the opposition. He jailed and exiled his opponents and used his secret police to harass the media and leaders of the opposition (Spindler 1987, 195; Lauderbaugh 2012, 89). Alfaro convened elections for a constituent assembly, but he banned the clergy from participating, leading the Conservative Party to boycott the elections (Spindler 1987, 169–170; Ayala Mora 1994, 112–114). As a result, Alfaro's supporters won the vast majority of the seats in the constituent assembly and promptly elected him interim and then constitutional president. Subsequent elections that Alfaro presided over, such as the 1901 and 1906 presidential elections, were also rigged. In the 1901 election, Alfaro picked his right-hand man, General Leonidas Plaza, as the party's presidential nominee, and Plaza then won with 88 percent of the vote in an election that the Conservatives denounced as fraudulent (Ayala Mora 1994, 131). In the 1906 elections to the National Assembly, the government again intervened to ensure that supporters of Alfaro won. The assembly then overwhelmingly elected Alfaro for a second term, even though the new constitution called for direct elections (Spindler 1987, 197–198).

Opposition parties protested the electoral abuses and repression, but they were too weak to prevent or overcome them. The Progressive Party fell apart after the Liberal Revolution of 1895, and while the Conservative Party held together, it did not have the organizational strength or partisan ties to compete on a tilted playing field. It abstained from presidential elections until 1912 and fared poorly in the elections it participated in thereafter. During the Liberal era, the main electoral competition came from within the Liberal Party, but even it was quite muted. In the twenty years of Liberal dominance (1895–1924), the winning presidential candidate won by an average of 93.6 percent of the vote.

Because the military remained weak, the opposition during the Liberal era continued to focus to a large extent on the armed struggle. Conservatives, for example, carried out major revolts in 1896 and 1898–1899, but neither of these were successful. More threatening were the revolts from within the Liberal Party. Soon after nominating Plaza as his successor in 1901, Alfaro broke with his erstwhile ally and sought to force his resignation before Congress could confirm his election. Plaza refused to resign, however, and used his influence in the military and Congress to prevail over Alfaro who was then marginalized from power.[23] Plaza engineered the election of his successor, Lizardo García,

[23] Under Plaza, state repression declined, although electoral manipulation continued.

in 1905, but García had scarcely taken office when Alfaro overthrew him in a brief but bloody revolt. Alfaro managed to serve out most of his second term as president despite various plots and revolts against him, and nominated his old friend, Emilio Estrada, to succeed him in 1911. Shortly after Estrada's election, however, Alfaro again regretted his choice and sought to persuade Estrada to withdraw. When Estrada refused, Alfaro convened a session of Congress to annul the election, but he was again unsuccessful. Supporters of Estrada in the military then rose up and overthrew Alfaro, enabling Estrada to be sworn in as president. The violence did not end there, however. In late 1911, Estrada died of heart and kidney disease, leading Eloy Alfaro, along with his nephew, General Flavio Alfaro, and General Pedro Montero to initiate a revolt. General Plaza, however, took command of the government troops and defeated the three generals in a bloody one-month war. In the wake of their surrender, a mob seized and lynched the rebel leaders, desecrating and burning their bodies.

In the wake of Alfaro's death, the Ecuadorian political situation stabilized somewhat. General Plaza was elected to a second term as president in September 1912, and with the support of the military and a coastal-based economic elite known as The Ring, he dominated Ecuadorian politics for the next dozen years. Ecuador held regular elections throughout this period, but Plaza and his cronies determined the winners. According to Rodríguez (1985, 45): "From 1912 to 1924 liberal governments perfected the techniques of political control … The authorities employed violence and intimidation only in the countryside … If it appeared that the government's candidate would not win, the police or military would be ordered to stuff the ballot boxes." During this period, opposition parties remained too weak to overcome government electoral manipulation, and they often withdrew prematurely or boycotted elections altogether.

The opposition continued to carry out occasional revolts after Alfaro's death, but they did so less frequently and with less success than in the past, owing to the gradual modernization of the military. Carlos Concha Torres, a supporter of Alfaro, launched a guerrilla insurgency in Esmeraldas that lasted from 1913 to 1916, but it never posed a serious threat to the government. Conservatives carried out rebellions in 1912, 1914, and 1924, but none of these revolts prospered.

Beginning in the 1920s, coups represented a much greater threat to the Ecuadorian government than did opposition revolts. Indeed, as the military grew stronger and acquired a corporate identity and monopoly on violence, it became increasingly tempted to take power for itself. In 1925, junior officers overthrew the government and created a provisional military junta as part of the so-called Julian Revolution, bringing an end to the era of Liberal dominance. The military handed power to a civilian dictator the following year, but it would return to power again and again over the course of the twentieth century, and, in some instances, the military stayed in power for years. The opposition played a role in many of these coups, encouraging the military to intervene to topple governments that it opposed. In 1932, for example,

the Quito military garrison rebelled with the support of the opposition after Congress blocked the Conservative leader Neptalí Bonifaz from taking power in the wake of his victory in the 1931 presidential election.

Thus, the weakness of parties and the military undermined the prospects for democracy in Ecuador throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Opposition parties lacked the organization and partisan ties to compete effectively in elections, enact democratic reforms, or resist government electoral manipulation. Instead, they mostly focused on seizing power by force, taking advantage of the relative weakness of the military. The slow professionalization of the Ecuadorian military eventually brought an end to opposition revolts, but it took longer in Ecuador than in most other South American countries. As a result, Ecuador continued to have a relatively unstable authoritarian regime during the early twentieth century.

PARAGUAY

Paraguay pursued a somewhat different path from Bolivia and Ecuador for much of the nineteenth century, but it wound up in a similar place, transitioning from a stable to an unstable authoritarian regime beginning in 1870. During the first sixty years after independence, Paraguay suffered from harsh but stable dictatorships that built up the country's coercive apparatus and used it to repress all dissent. The War of the Triple Alliance (1864–1870), however, destroyed the country's repressive apparatus and, in its wake, Paraguay enacted a liberal constitution that established universal male suffrage, created a bicameral legislature, restricted presidential reelection, guaranteed civil liberties, and declared all citizens to be equal (Lewis 1993, 16; Abente 1989; González de Oleaga 2000). Democracy failed to emerge in Paraguay during the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, however. Because of the weakness of the country's military, the opposition often abstained from elections and sought to overthrow the government by force. A number of these uprisings proved successful, but even when the opposition took power it failed to democratize. Instead, it used the same authoritarian tactics to hang on to power that it had decried when it was in the opposition. Although Paraguayan parties began to develop strong ties to the electorate during the early twentieth century, party organization remained feeble, and the opposition continued to focus on the armed path to power.

PARAGUAYAN MILITARY AND REVOLTS

For much of the nineteenth century, Paraguay enjoyed significantly greater stability than did most other countries in the region. The country's leaders centralized power and built a strong coercive apparatus, which enabled them to avoid the frequent rebellions that plagued other South American countries during this period. In the wake of independence, José Gaspar Rodríguez da

Francia, who became known as the Supreme Dictator and governed from 1814 until he died in 1840, created a repressive and highly personalistic dictatorship. He strengthened and co-opted the military in order to prevent internal rebellions and defend the country from its larger and more powerful neighbors.[24] Between 1816 and 1820, the military grew from 842 soldiers to a high of 1,793 troops, in a country that had a population estimated at only 120,000 at the at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Williams 1979, 13; White 1978, 87).[25] Francia imported significant amounts of weapons and built factories to manufacture weapons, ammunition, and ships, causing military expenditures to take up 80 percent of the government's total budget (White 1978, 87, 102–104, 143–144, 181–186). To ensure that the military was not used against him, Francia created an army battalion that was placed directly under his command, giving him control of half of the country's troops and munitions (White 1978, 54). He also named his followers to the most important commands, rotated officers throughout the country so they could not easily conspire against him, ensured that no officer commanded enough troops to be a real threat, and kept the best troops in Asunción where they could defend him (Williams 1979, 60–61; 1975, 85). Finally, the dictator developed a large network of spies and imprisoned, tortured, and executed his suspected enemies (White 1978, 88–92; Hanratty and Meditz 1988, 20). His jails were full of political prisoners, many of whom hailed from the elite. One former prisoner testified that: "We were six hundred prisoners in that jail in 1840, and scarcely a third were murderers and thieves. Four hundred or more men belonged to the most decent and cultured class of the country" (cited in White 1978, 92).

After Francia's death in 1840, Carlos Antonio López quickly rose to power. López's rule was just as personalistic and repressive as Francia's, and he also invested significantly in the country's armed forces.[26] He brought in foreign officers, such as the Hungarian Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Wisner, to modernize and train the army (Williams 1979, 179; 1977, 237–243). López also imported large quantities of weapons and expanded the domestic arms industry and railroads with the help of foreign assistance (Williams 1979, 110–111; Hanratty and Meditz 1988, 24). By 1858, the country's industries were producing cannons, ammunition, ships, and naval equipment (Williams 1979, 183). To assist in the maintenance of internal order, López also created a police force and a national guard, although both of these institutions remained quite small (Williams 1979, 123–124).

[24] Williams (1975, 73–76) argues that the militarization of Paraguay dates back to the colonial era when the Crown kept a large militia in the country to fend off hostile indigenous people, slave raids from Brazil, and fear of Portuguese expansionism.

[25] Francia maintained a great deal of secrecy about the military and encouraged exaggerations about its size in order to deter foreign invasions (White 1978, 150–151).

[26] López's policies differed from Francia's in that he invested more in education and infrastructure and opened the country to foreign trade and influence.

Upon López's death in 1862, his son, Francisco Solano López (1862–1870), took control of the country and accelerated the military buildup, expanding the army to 30,000 troops in 1864, including thirty infantry regiments, twenty-three cavalry regiments, and four artillery regiments (Hanratty and Meditz 1988, 205). Although the Paraguayan military was not professionalized – its officers and troops, for example, typically lacked training – the Paraguayan military was quite large and strong by regional standards.

The investments in the military, along with the state repression, discouraged revolts. Paraguay also managed to avoid becoming involved in foreign conflicts until Solano López became president. In response to a Brazilian invasion of Uruguay that helped overthrow an allied government, Solano López invaded Brazil and then sent forces into Argentina, triggering a war against all three countries. Paraguay quickly mobilized 75,000 soldiers to fight in this war, which represented approximately half of the male population of military age (Cooney 2004, 31–32). Although the Paraguayan military fought valiantly, the allied blockade impeded its access to foreign weapons and ammunition, and it eventually succumbed. According to one estimate, Paraguay lost about two-thirds of its total population in the war (Whigham and Potthast 1999, 185). By the time the war ended, the country's economy was in ruins and the Paraguayan army had been reduced to a few hundred poorly armed troops.

The destruction of the Paraguayan military and the death of Solano López ushered in a period of instability in Paraguay that lasted until the mid-twentieth century. Owing to the devastation of the Paraguayan economy, there was little money to devote to the military after the war (Hanratty and Meditz 1988, 206). In 1881, Paraguay had an army of only 57 officers and 550 men, and eleven years later the army still had only 600 men (Warren 1985, 31–32). In 1893, the British minister remarked that "Paraguay, owing to her unfortunate circumstances, pecuniary and other, need scarcely be taken into account at present. She has but one small gunboat, and no army to speak of worthy of the name" (cited in Warren 1985, 32). The troops, which were conscripted, generally came from the poorest sectors of the population and they lacked discipline and training. Soldiers typically considered military service a prison sentence (Gatti Cardozo 1990, 32–33; Warren 1949, 32–33). In 1898, Paraguay created a national guard to counterbalance the army, but few men joined (Warren 1985, 32; Bareiro Spaini 2008, 76; Lewis 1993, 88).

The military was not only small and poorly trained in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it was also factionalized. Soldiers were loyal to individual leaders not to the military as an institution. Officers were promoted based on their political connections and affiliations rather than merit. Often when a new party or faction came to power, it sought to dismantle and rebuild the military to strengthen its co-partisans, as the Liberals did when

they assumed the presidency in 1904 (Gatti Cardozo 1990, 32). As late as the 1920s, Paraguay still lacked anything resembling a professional army because of decades of political manipulation of promotions and assignments (Lewis 1993, 133). For most of this period, Paraguay had no real military schools, and officers typically had little, if any, training, although a few were sent abroad for their education (Gatti Cardozo 1990, 32–33; Bareiro Spaini 2008, 75; Warren 1949, 33). In addition, the Paraguayan military lacked modern equipment. The government acquired 10,000 rifles in 1905, but these deteriorated quickly and many were lost in uprisings (Riart 1990, 37). According to Riart (1990, 46), "the state of the armed forces in the middle of 1924 was truly disastrous."

Given the weakness and factionalization of the military, it is not surprising that revolts were frequent in Paraguay throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. As Table 8.3 indicates, at least twenty-two major revolts took place between 1870 and 1922, along with a host of conspiracies and minor uprisings. Some of the rebellions devolved into civil wars with prolonged and extensive fighting: This was the case, for example, in 1873–1874, 1904, 1911–1912, and 1922–1923. Military officers typically participated in or led the revolts, but they sought power for themselves and their factions or parties, rather than for the military per se. Sometimes they were not even serving in the military at the time of the revolt.[27] Argentina and Brazil, which occupied Paraguay until 1876 and continued to intervene in the country afterwards, encouraged many of these rebellions as they jockeyed to maintain their influence in the country.

The revolts often prompted state repression, which deepened authoritarian rule in Paraguay. In 1891, for example, Liberals carried out a revolt after Colorado soldiers and thugs stole ballot boxes, attacked Liberals, and prevented them from voting in many areas (Warren 1985, 81–83; Lewis 1993, 71). The government quickly suppressed this revolt, declared a state of siege, and arrested 150 Liberal sympathizers, including the editors of opposition papers (Lewis 1993, 74; Warren 1985, 83).

Nevertheless, owing to the weakness of the military, many of the rebellions were successful, which subverted constitutional rule. Rebels overthrew the government in 1874, 1880, 1894, 1902, 1904, 1905, 1908, and four times in 1911–1912. By contrast, the opposition never won a presidential election during this period and typically did not even contest them. Thus, armed struggle was clearly the most promising path to power for the opposition in Paraguay during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Beginning in the 1920s, Paraguay undertook some concerted efforts to strengthen and professionalize the military. Growing tensions with Bolivia

[27] Most of the important politicians in Paraguay during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century had a military background.

TABLE 8.3 *Major revolts in Paraguay, 1830–1929*

Year	Description of revolt	Type of revolt (Outcome)
1841	An infantry unit overthrew the junta that governed after José Gaspar de Francia's death. Sergeant Ramón Dure presided over the triumvirate that took charge.	Military coup (took power)
1841	A junior officer, Mariano Roque Alonso, led a military overthrow of Dure. Carlos Antonio Lopez, a lawyer, became one of two governing consuls and assumed control.	Military coup (took power)
1873–1874	A rebel army of 4,000 men supported by Argentina and Brazil defeated the government of Salvador Jovellanos. General Bernardino Caballero became president.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1874	Major José Dolores Molas rebelled with General Caballero's former troops, but he was defeated when Brazilian troops intervened to save the government.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1877	Juansilvano Godoi and Major Jose Dolores Molas assassinated the president, Juan Bautista Gill, but their attempt to take power in a revolt was crushed.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1879	Juansilvano Godoi and Nicanor Godoi invaded Paraguay with 500 men, but the Paraguayan military sent 2,000 men to suppress the invasion.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1880	After President Bareiro's death, the military arrested the vice-president on orders of the war minister. Interior Minister Bernardino Caballero took over as president.	Military coup (took power)
1891	Major Eduardo Vera and Liberal Party leaders revolted but the government suppressed the rebellion. Vera was killed and 150 Liberals were jailed.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1894	General Egusquiza overthrew President González in a nonviolent coup with the support of Brazil and many Colorado leaders. The vice-president took over until the elections.	Military coup (took power)
1902	Colonel Juan A. Escurra, the war minister, overthrew President Aceval in a nonviolent coup with the support of Caballero and Colorado leaders. The vice-president took over.	Military coup (took power)
1904	Benigno Ferreira, with the support of Liberals and some Colorados, defeated President Escurra in a civil war after several months of fighting.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1905	General Ferreira and Chief of Police Garcia overthrew President Gaona in a nonviolent coup. Cecilio Báez, the finance minister, became president.	Military coup (took power)

TABLE 8.3 (*continued*)

Year	Description of revolt	Type of revolt (Outcome)
1908	Radicals allied with Major Albino Jara and Lieutenant Colonel Escobar revolted and overthrew President Benigno Ferreira after two days of fighting.	Military coup (took power)
1909	Colorados and Cívicos led by Colonel Gill and supported by Caballero and Ferreira invaded from Argentina but were quickly defeated.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1911	Colonel Jara rebelled when the Minister of Interior Riquelme tried to arrest him. Most military and police units supported the revolt, which overthrew the government.	Military coup (took power)
1911	Radical Liberals led by Adolfo Riquelme revolted but were defeated by the Jara government after several battles.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1911	Interior Minister Cipriano Ibañez participated in a nonviolent coup that overthrew President Jara and replaced him with the leader of the Radicals, Liberato Marcial Rojas.	Military coup (took power)
1911	Colorados led by Police Chief Romero Pereira overthrew President Rojas and named Pedro Peña as the new president.	Military coup (took power)
1911–1912	Radical Liberals led by Eduardo Schaerer invaded from Argentina and overthrew the government after much fighting. 5,000 casualties.	Elite insurrection (took power)
1912	Colonel Jara led a rebellion of Liberal Cívicos and Colorados against the government. It was suppressed after fierce fighting.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1914	Liberal Cívicos carried out a revolt led by Colonel Manuel J. Duarte and Gómez Freire Esteves. The government bombarded their position and they surrendered.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)
1918	General Patricio Escobar rebelled after the president refused to sanction an officer that he accused of insulting him. The rebellion was quickly suppressed.	Military coup (suppressed)
1922–1923	*Civil war of 1922–1923*. Colonel Adolfo Chirife and the Schaeristas rebelled and almost overthrew the government but were defeated after prolonged fighting.	Elite insurrection (suppressed)

Source: Latin American Revolts Database.

over the Chaco region provided the main impetus for the investments in the military, but an export boom helped fund the professionalization efforts – Paraguayan exports rose from $11.5 million in 1910–1914 to $76.2 million

in 1925–1929 in constant 1980 dollars (Bértola and Ocampo 2013, 86).[28] In response to Bolivian incursions into disputed territory in the Chaco desert, President Eligio Ayala (1923–1928) reorganized the general staff command, purchased European weapons, and began to build forts and run telegraph lines to the Chaco (Lewis 1993, 142; Riart 1990, 45, 54–61; Bareiro Spaini 2008, 77). In 1925, the government hired a French military mission, and subsequently it recruited an Argentine mission, although the latter pulled out in 1932 when Paraguay went to war with Bolivia (Bareiro Spaini 2008, 76–77). During this period, the government also created various military academies, including the Military School (1915), an Aviation School (1923), a school for officers in the military reserve (1924), a Higher War College (1931), and a school for noncommissioned officers (1932) (Bareiro Spaini 2008, 76–77; Gatti Cardozo 1990, 33; Sosa 2004, 102–103).

These reforms gradually strengthened the military, helping it defeat Bolivia in the Chaco War (1932–1935), the longest and bloodiest international war in Latin America during the twentieth century. The strengthening and professionalization of the military also led to a reduction in the number of outsider revolts. Nevertheless, the Paraguayan military remained relatively politicized. Widespread disenchantment with the treatment of the soldiers and the condition of the military led to a revolt by soldiers that overthrew the Liberal government in 1936. Subsequent years saw further coups and coup attempts. It was not until the 1950s when General Alfredo Stroessner seized power and strengthened Colorado Party control of the military that the cycle of coups and rebellions in Paraguay came to an end.

PARTIES AND AUTHORITARIAN RULE IN PARAGUAY

Parties arose relatively late in Paraguay but developed more quickly than in most other countries in the region. By the early twentieth century, Paraguayan parties had already begun to forge relatively strong ties to the electorate. Nevertheless, the parties had little in the way of organizational structures, and they were plagued by internal divisions, which made it difficult to compete for power on the national level or enact democratic reforms. Although the opposition usually contested legislative elections after 1869, it typically abstained from presidential elections and often sought power via armed revolt, seeking to take advantage of the weakness of the military.

Prior to 1870, Paraguay had a highly repressive political environment that was not conducive to the emergence of parties. In the aftermath of the war, however, political clubs arose to compete in elections and these political clubs gradually evolved into political parties. Paraguay's small size and lack

[28] Paraguay had the second lowest level of per capita exports in the region in 1910–1914, after Ecuador, but by 1925–1929 it ranked in the middle of the pack in the region (Bértola and Ocampo 2013, 86).

of geographical fragmentation facilitated the development of the parties. The country lost half of its land and, perhaps, two-thirds of its population in the War of the Triple Alliance. In 1887, the country had a population of only 329,000 people and a territory of 253,000 square kilometers (Kleinpenning 1992, 477). More importantly, three-quarters of its inhabitants were concentrated in the central zone, a relatively small and flat area surrounding the capital (Lewis 1993, 32; Kleinpenning 1992, 476–477).

Nevertheless, Paraguay did not have the kinds of social cleavages that were conducive to the development of parties during this period. By the late nineteenth century, Paraguay was a relatively homogenous *mestizo* nation without significant religious or territorial divisions (Lewis 1993, 6; 1986, 489).[29] Although the Catholic Church had been strong in Paraguay during the colonial era, the dictators that governed Paraguay until 1870 systematically co-opted, persecuted, and undermined it, and most of the country's clergy died in the War of the Triple Alliance. As a result, by the late nineteenth century, the Paraguayan Church was, perhaps, the weakest in South America and could hardly serve as the basis for a strong party (Mecham 1934, 244). Paraguayan governments implemented some secularization policies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, but these measures never became a major source of division within the political arena in part because of the weakness of the Church (Mecham 1966, 196).

The main two parties, the Colorado Party and the Liberal Party, did not take different positions on religious issues, nor did they represent distinct ideologies (Nichols 1970; Hicks 1971, 92; 1967, 275; Warren 1985, 94; Lewis 1993, 18). Both parties largely embraced the liberal ideas then prevalent among the dominant economic classes of Paraguay, although their enthusiasm for such principles waned when they conflicted with their political or economic interests. The Liberals, for example, protested governmental corruption and electoral abuses when they were in the opposition, but they committed the same types of abuses after taking power in 1904.

Parties in Paraguay initially sprang from government–opposition divisions (Warren 1985, 72–73; Lewis 1993, 62–67; Abente 1989, 535).[30] A variety of wealthy elites established the predecessor of the Liberal Party, the Democratic Center, in July 1887 in part because they had grown critical of governmental repression and corruption and of the sale of Paraguayan land to foreigners (Lewis 1993, 62–67). In response, supporters of the government, led by

[29] As Lewis (1993, 6) notes, "the usual bases for ideological conflict – class, race, language, and regionalism – are absent" in Paraguay.

[30] Pro-Colorado politicians and scholars subsequently sought to trace the parties to divisions stemming from the War of the Triple Alliance, arguing that the founding members of the Colorado Party were supporters of President Francisco Solano López in this war, and the founding members of the Liberal Party had fought with Argentina and Brazil against López. In fact, more of the founding members of the Colorado Party had fought against López than had the founding Liberals (Lewis 1993, 64–66; Chartrain 2013, 198–200).

General Bernardino Caballero, formed the National Republican Association, which became known as the Colorado Party, that same year.

From the outset, both parties enjoyed the support of many elites. At least 128 men attended the Democratic Center's founding assembly and 106 men participated in the founding of the Colorado Party (Lewis 1993, 63–64; Warren 1985, 73). The relative balance of forces helped contribute to the endurance of the two parties. Although both parties represented elites, their leadership varied slightly. Whereas the Colorado Party had more high-ranking generals, landowners, and traditional families in its ranks, the Liberal Party had more junior officers, professionals, and businessmen (Chartrain 2013, 200–201; Lewis 1993, 63–66; Warren 1985, 69–70; Hicks 1971, 92).

The two parties gradually developed strong personalist and patronage-based linkages to the masses thanks in large part to the influence and resources of their founding members (Caballero Aquino and Livieres Banks 1993, 50; Hicks 1971, 92; Nichols 1970, 29–31).[31] The 1870 constitution, which mandated universal male suffrage, encouraged the parties to reach out to the masses (Abente 2021, 131).[32] Moreover, peasants depended heavily on merchants for food, credit, and transportation, creating ties that the patrons exploited for political purposes (Abente 1989: 537). Party elites also used state resources to build up a base of loyal followers, and each party controlled the government for long periods of time, which gave it access to patronage. The Colorados and their precursors held the presidency from 1882 to 1904 and the Liberals controlled it from 1904 to 1936. Moreover, each party typically had representation in the legislature and held some public offices even when it did not control the government, which ensured that it maintained some access to state resources.

The Colorado and Liberal parties did not develop strong organizations in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, however. Lewis (1993, 124) argues that the "parties in 1922 were not much different than they had been in 1887," remaining loose alliances of political chiefs and local notables. The parties' links to the electorate also took time to develop. During the early twentieth century, most voters had ties to individual leaders rather than to a party per se. Nor were the parties particularly cohesive. To the contrary, both parties frequently split into factions, although these ruptures generally proved temporary.

[31] Over the course of the twentieth century, the vast majority of Paraguayans came to identify strongly with one party or the other, and people rarely switched parties since the parties represented a social identity and an economic resource as well as a political attachment. Family members typically all belonged to the same party and party affiliations were passed down from generation to generation (Nichols 1970, 47–48). Parties also became the source of jobs, credit, medical and legal aid, and a variety of other services – they even served a social function, sponsoring community activities (Nichols 1970, 32, 100; Hicks 1967, 276).

[32] According to Nichols (1970, 30), the influence of these original founders persisted into the late twentieth century – the areas of Colorado and Liberal strength in the 1960s corresponded to the redoubts of the nineteenth-century regional leaders who supported each party.

The absence of strong party organizations made it difficult for the opposition to compete in elections, which took place on an uneven playing field. The government generally permitted opposition parties and newspapers to function, but it engaged in a variety of authoritarian tactics to ensure its preferred candidates won (Warren 1985, 54, 65–66).[33] According to Warren (1985, 36), during the late nineteenth century: "The entire electoral process, from registration of voters to recording the voice votes was permeated by fraud … Troops and police armed with pistols, rifles, and swords; thugs armed with machetes and knives; and election officials blind to the planned terror around them, made voting an act of heroism for members of the opposition." During the era of Colorado Party dominance, the opposition Liberals abstained from presidential elections because they knew they had little chance of winning. At times, the Liberals nominated candidates, but they typically withdrew once it became apparent that they could not win. In 1890, Liberals sought to negotiate a consensus slate with the Colorado Party in the presidential election, but when this failed, they boycotted the election (Lewis 1993, 69–70; Warren 1985, 75–78). In 1894 and 1898, the Liberals were too divided to agree on a presidential candidate, and in 1902 a military coup prompted them to again abstain from the presidential elections (Lewis 1993, 75–79, 84–87; Warren 1985, 90–92, 99–105).

By contrast, the Liberals usually participated in legislative elections, and they often won seats in their strongholds. For example, in their electoral debut in 1887, the Liberals won eleven out of the twenty-six seats in the legislature (Warren 1985, 72). Subsequently, however, the Colorado government clamped down on the Liberals and their share of the legislature declined to less than 20 percent of the seats. In the December 1888 legislative elections, Minister of Interior Juan A. Meza dispatched mounted police to all polling places in Asunción to prevent Liberals from registering to vote, leaving a toll of four dead, thirty-seven wounded, and sixty-eight people arrested (Lewis 1993, 69; Warren 1985, 75).[34] In 1891, the Liberals managed to elect two senators and three deputies in spite of government repression and the theft of ballot boxes, but the Colorado-dominated Congress refused to seat them (Warren 1985, 81; Lewis 1993, 71). Given the relative weakness of the Liberal Party, however, there was little it could do to resist these abuses.

To have a chance at winning seats, the Liberals at times sought to ally with moderate Colorados.[35] Indeed, a moderate faction of the Liberals known as the Civic Liberals so often allied with moderate Colorados during the 1890s that

[33] The opposition committed electoral abuses as well, but these tended to be less widespread because the opposition had fewer resources at its disposal. See Warren (1985, 72).

[34] Similarly, in 1890, the mayor of Asunción sent soldiers and employees with machetes to block Liberals from registering (Warren 1985, 76).

[35] Within the Colorado Party, the military leaders tended to take a harder line on the opposition and commit more electoral abuses than did the civilian leaders.

they became a virtual third party (Warren 1985, 84). Presidents Juan Bautista Egusquiza (1894–1898) and Eduardo Aceval (1898–1902) cooperated with the moderate Liberals, even bringing some of them into their cabinets and allowing them to gain control of the Supreme Court (Lewis 1993, 80–83, 87–89; Warren 1985, 95, 102, 109). In 1895, Egusquiza presided over legislative elections that were reputed to be relatively free and fair, leading to the election of two Liberal senators and four Liberal deputies (Warren 1985, 95). Nevertheless, at times, such as in 1901, the Colorados reneged on their commitments to support Liberal candidates (Lewis 1993, 89). Moreover, the cooperation between the governing Colorados and the Liberals did not last long since the hardline wing of the Colorado Party gained control of the government in a 1902 military coup.

The Liberals sometimes resorted to revolts to protest electoral abuses and seek to capture power. In 1891, for example, Liberals carried out a major rebellion in response to the government's electoral abuses that year. This revolt failed, but there were constant rumors of Liberal plots against the government in the years that followed (Warren 1985, 98–99). Nevertheless, it was not until 1904 that the Liberals carried out a major revolt again. The 1904 Liberal rebellion was successful in part because of the weakness of the military, but also because it received support, including weapons, from the Argentine government and financing from many businessmen and landowners who had turned against the regime because of its corruption and incompetence (Lewis 1993, 95; Warren 1980, 375; 1985, 125).[36] The revolt, which was led by the Liberal former general Benigno Ferreira, began with an invasion of a few hundred rebels from Argentina, but it quickly attracted numerous volunteers, uniting Radical and Civic Liberals as well as some disaffected Colorados (Lewis 1993, 95–96).[37] In the wake of the rebel victory, Juan B. Gaona, one of the rebels' main financial backers, became president and General Ferreira became the new minister of war. The army was dissolved and reorganized under Liberal command and the rebel troops were integrated into its ranks (Lewis 1993, 97–98; Warren 1980, 381; 1985, 132–133).

The triumph of the Liberals in 1904 did not bring democracy to Paraguay, however. Nor did it end the rebellions that had plagued the country since 1870. In the years that followed, the Liberals intervened extensively in elections, just as the Colorados had when they were in power. The Colorado Party, like the Liberal Party, was too weak to overcome government electoral intervention and responded by boycotting elections.[38] Colorados, for example, abstained from legislative elections in 1904 and 1906, and they did not field a candidate

[36] Juan B. Gaono, the president of the Banco Mercantil, raised $30,000 from wealthy merchants and landowners to support the revolt (Warren 1980, 380).

[37] By the end, the rebel armies numbered 6,000 people (Warren 1980, 382).

[38] Some moderate Colorados joined the Civic Liberals in the wake of the 1904 revolution (Lewis 1993, 98).

in the presidential elections until 1928 (Lewis 1993, 97–98, 101; Warren 1980, 381; 1985, 132–133). Instead, the Colorados frequently plotted against the government and carried out occasional revolts, often in collaboration with disgruntled Liberals. In 1909, for example, Colorados and Civic Liberals invaded from Argentina, but the government quickly defeated the revolt (Lewis 1993, 108–109). Colorados briefly overthrew the Liberal government in 1912, but this was the only time they managed to come to power during the lengthy Liberal era (1904–1936).

The biggest threat to Liberal governments came from within the party. Throughout most of this era, the Liberal Party was divided between the moderate Civic Liberals and the Radical Liberals, both of which sought power via coups and rebellions as well as elections. The Civic Liberals initially held the upper hand, controlling the presidency as well as a majority of the cabinet, the party directorate, and both houses of Congress, but they lacked a popular base and none of their leaders enjoyed a large following (Lewis 1993, 98, 103).[39] In 1908, the Radical Liberal faction led by Major Albino Jara overthrew Ferreira in a violent coup. The years that followed saw numerous rebellions, including major civil wars in 1911–1912 and 1922–1923, as Radical Liberals, Civic Liberals, and Colorados vied for power. Radical Liberals managed to hang on to power for most of the two decades that followed, but no Liberal president completed his presidential term until 1916 and only two did during the entire period of Liberal rule.

The Liberals enacted some electoral reforms in an effort to persuade the opposition to desist from revolts and participate in elections, but none of these reforms brought an end to government electoral intervention (Del Valle 1951, 90–91; Bordon 1962, 75–78). As the Liberal president Eusebio Ayala remarked in 1922: "No law is capable of assuring the purity of suffrage when politicians seek to falsify it" (Bordon 1962, 84). Perhaps the most important changes took place under President Manuel Franco, who governed from 1916 to 1919 and demonstrated a greater commitment to democracy than his predecessors. During his administration, the government first overhauled the voter registration system, which led to an increase in the number of registered voters from 77,715 in 1913 to 95,259 in 1917 (Franco 1917, 9). Subsequently, it passed Law 323 of 1918, which established the secret ballot, prohibited the stationing of troops and crowds near the voting tables, and created an incomplete-list electoral system that guaranteed representation for minority parties. During the Franco administration, the opposition competed in some elections and fared reasonably well. In 1917, for example, the opposition Colorados won 46 percent of the vote in Asunción in an election in which allegations of fraud were limited (Abente 1989, 534). In 1919, the Colorados won a total of 26 percent of the vote in the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, and

[39] According to Lewis (1993, 102), the Civic Liberals were a party of notables.

6th districts, and in 1921, they captured 31 percent of the vote in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd districts (Chartrain 2013, 230–231; Gondra 1921, 10–11; Franco 1919, 8–9).[40] President Franco died of a heart attack in 1919, however, and relations between the government and the opposition deteriorated in the years that followed. The low point came with the bloody civil war of 1922–1923, in which disaffected Liberals and Colorados sought unsuccessfully to overthrow the Radical Liberal government.

In the wake of the 1922–1923 civil war, the Liberals patched up their differences somewhat, but the opposition Colorados remained divided about whether to participate in elections or not. In 1923 and 1924, the Colorados voted to abstain from the elections in part because they thought existing laws did not offer them sufficient guarantees (Chartrain 2013, 235–237). In 1927, however, the collaborationist wing of the Colorados helped negotiate an electoral reform and it then participated in the legislative elections of 1927 to test the government's goodwill (Bordon 1962, 78). The Colorados won 25 percent of the legislative seats that year, which helped persuade them to participate for the first time in the presidential elections the following year. According to various sources, the 1928 presidential elections, which took place without violence, were relatively free and fair (Abente 1989, 534; Caballero Aquino and Livieres Banks 1993, 24; Cardozo 1956, 12; Chartrain 2013, 237–238; Lewis 1993, 143). As to be expected, José P. Guggiari, the candidate of the governing Liberal Party, was declared the winner, with 68 percent of the valid vote, but the defeated Colorado Party candidate accepted the outcome.

The rapprochement did not last long, however. Once in office, the Guggiari administration violently repressed student protests and harassed the opposition, arresting and exiling the Colorado leaders who refused to collaborate with his regime. The Colorados were too weak and divided to respond, and instead returned to their traditional policy of abstaining from elections. The opposition, which included both Colorados and disaffected Liberals, sought military support for a coup in 1930, but the plot was stymied (Lewis 1993, 150). As a result, the Liberal regime persisted, albeit shakily, until 1936 when discontented military officers overthrew the government in the wake of the country's victory in the Chaco War (1932–1935).

Thus, Paraguay struggled with political instability throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Although Paraguay's two main parties began to develop strong ties to the electorate in the early twentieth century, opposition parties did not have the strength or organization to resist the government's efforts to manipulate elections. The government was slow to strengthen the military, however, which encouraged the opposition to seek power, at times successfully, via armed revolts during the early twentieth century.

[40] Electoral returns for the other districts are missing.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay constituted unstable authoritarian regimes, enduring frequent opposition rebellions and military coups. Some of these revolts succeeded, thus subverting constitutional rule, but even when they failed, they typically led to authoritarian clampdowns that undermined the prospects of democratization. The weakness of the armed forces in the three countries encouraged frequent revolts since the militaries could not easily suppress uprisings. Although Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay took steps to professionalize their armed forces in the early twentieth century, their professionalization efforts were relatively modest and slow to take effect in part because the countries lacked the funds to make major military investments. As a result, their militaries did not achieve a monopoly on force until the mid-twentieth century.

The weakness of political parties also contributed to authoritarian rule and political instability in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Although parties in Paraguay developed stronger partisan ties than they did in Bolivia and Ecuador in the early twentieth century, even in Paraguay parties were weakly organized and highly factionalized. Weak parties could not prevent executives from concentrating authority and extending their hold on power. Nor could they compete in elections, resist government electoral manipulation, or enact democratic reforms. Instead, the opposition often chose to boycott national elections and at times sought to overthrow the government by force. As a result, these countries continued to be plagued by instability and authoritarian rule well into the twentieth century.