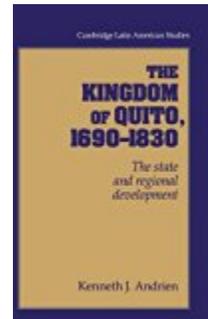


H-Net Reviews

in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Kenneth J. Andrien. *The Kingdom of Quito, 1690-1830: The State and Regional Development*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995. xi + 255 pp. \$59.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-521-48125-0.

Reviewed by John F. Schwaller (University of Montana)
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This work is largely an extension of Andrien's earlier study, *Crisis and Decline: The Viceroyalty of Peru in the Seventeenth Century*. While the previous work focused on the Viceroyalty of Peru in the seventeenth century, this current book traces the theories of crisis and decline through the "long" eighteenth century in the more isolated kingdom of Quito, roughly equivalent to modern Ecuador.

Andrien begins his study with a short introductory essay which considers the recent debates over dependency theory and what might be called world system economics. He rejects these approaches as providing "not a theory to be proven but a paradigm, which cannot be verified through empirical research" (p. 6). In rejecting dependency, Andrien is careful to note that the theory can, however, provide broad socioeconomic perspectives. But he also draws on other works for "the theoretical and empirical work dealing with the role of the state as an economic actor" (p. 7). It is this latter system which guides Andrien in his study of Ecuador. Rather than drawing from theorists and ideologues, Andrien prefers to delve deeply into archival materials, given the relative absence of other empirical works on the Ecuadorian economy of the period.

In analyzing the Ecuadorian economy, Andrien identifies three major regions identified with the following cities: Quito, Guayaquil, and Cuenca. Quito in many ways dominated the central and northern regions of the colony. Cuenca served as the market city for the south central region, maintaining close overland ties with Peru. Guayaquil was the major port city, home of an important ship-building industry, and also the heart of tropical agriculture.

The book is divided into two large parts with a total of nine chapters. The first part consists of six chapters which systematically consider various topics dealing with "The State and Socioeconomic Development." The first chapter traces the various epidemics, natural disasters, and shifts in Spanish policy which impacted the traditional economic sectors of the region. The second chapter describes the decline of the agro-industrial complex around Quito. This, in turn, prompted native out-migration to the south and to the coast. The third chapter continues this discussion and considers the forces behind the decline of Quito, and the rise of Cuenca and Guayaquil. Specifically Andrien explores the relationship between the state and the local manufacturing industry. Saddled with complex regulations, the textile mills were unable to reduce costs and thus compete with cheaper imports. In the fourth chapter, Andrien looks at the role which imperial trade policies and international markets played in the decline of Quito and the rise of the other regions. The fifth chapter considers the internal migrations of the Amerindian population from the north-central region initially to the south and eventually to the coast. Last, in the sixth chapter, Andrien integrates his vision of external and internal forces as they contributed to the major shifts and changes he has documented.

The second part of the book focuses on the relationship between reforms and the political conflict from which they emerged and which they engendered. The first chapter of the second part, seventh overall, considers the failure of the Quito elite to continue to control the Ecuadorian state in the early eighteenth century, which led to the Insurrection of 1765. In the eighth chapter, Andrien then studies how the divisions left by the Insurrection allowed the crown to centralize the bureaucracy and

gain further control over the economy, bringing it into subordination to imperial goals. With the onset of Independence, national governments were unable to undo much of what had been done, and thereby failed to liberate the economy from yet another archaic economic structure. The last chapter offers general conclusions drawn from the research, especially focusing on the role state policies took in inhibiting economic development in the region.

Andrien has concluded that by the end of the seventeenth century what was a relatively successful political and economic system in Ecuador had begun to decline. The region was governed by the *audiencia* in Quito, a judicial institution which exercised rather broad administrative powers in the region. Economically, the north-central region was dominant, having successfully developed a mixed agricultural and industrial complex based on the production of textiles, principally for export to the Peruvian mines. By the end of the seventeenth century, epidemics had seriously eroded the local native population, yet sufficient labor was acquired as a result of native migration into the highlands. This, however, was accompanied by increasing labor costs, as the central government levied relatively high tribute payments from the natives. In the eighteenth century, the demand for textiles declined as contraband began to increase and the Peruvians also began to rely on closer production. The textile mills could not compete since they were regulated by a system of wages and restrictions which had been developed in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. These factors all contributed to the decline of the north-central region.

As the Quito area declined, the south began to prosper. The textile industry there was based on cottage production, overland routes to Peru, and a generally lower quality product. This was augmented by the exploitation of *cascarilla*, a tree bark rich in quinine. This prosperity attracted some of the population of the north-central region. Yet the port of Guayaquil with its shipyards was also a powerful attraction. As imperial trade was liber-

alized, Guayaquil emerged as an important region due to the production of cacao and other tropical products. This in turn greatly stimulated the economy of the region.

A combination of state policy and local conditions caused the decline of economic power of the Quito region. Reforms in the political bureaucracy further eroded the power of the regional elites. A broad popular movement prompted the Insurrection of 1765 which threatened to destroy the Spanish rule. Yet when the Insurrection eventually failed the Spanish response was to tightly centralize control and eventually overhaul all the region's political and administrative structures.

The final period, then, was one of continual state intervention, seeking to maximize government revenues and maintain close central control. This had the effect of seriously hindering further economic development and of imposing as rigorous a tax system as could be found. The long-term result of this was a prolonged period of stagnation, which even independence was unable to break, insofar as the new republican governments were loathe to destroy the system of taxation which they had inherited.

Andrien provides a detailed case study of the economic development of one region. Its movement from decline to prosperity to crisis, reform and stagnation. It is well researched, drawing on both Ecuadorian and Spanish archives. The one minor drawback is that while we see the broad sweep of economic policy, and its social repercussions, we do not see too much of the individuals whose lives were effected by these policies. Nevertheless, the book is very well written, the arguments easy to follow, and major points are clearly and emphatically made. It is an important contribution to our growing knowledge of the colonial economies of the eighteenth century.

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