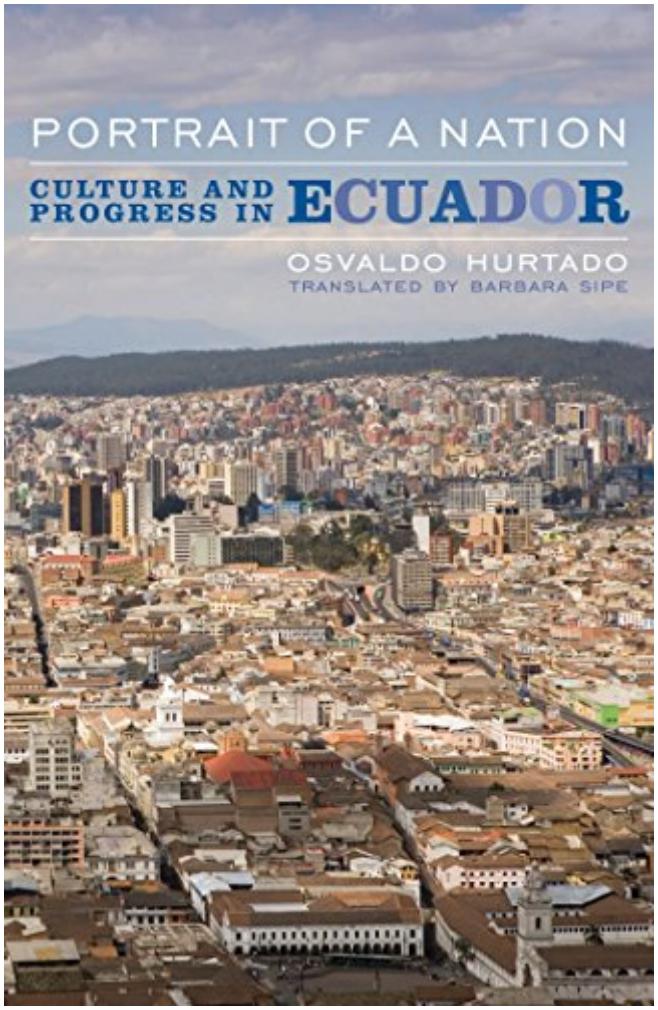
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Portrait Of A Nation: Culture And Progress In Ecuador



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Synopsis

A case study of why Third World countries are still poor, the premise of this book is that while some progress has been made in transforming the political economy of Ecuador, certain behaviors, beliefs and attitudes have kept the country from developing in ways that otherwise would have been possible. As the author asserts, for almost five centuries the cultural habits of Ecuadorian citizens have constituted a stumbling block for individual economic success. Still, he concludes, people's cultural values are not immutable: inconvenient customs can be changed or influenced by the economic success of immigrants. This is the challenge that Ecuador faces in the twenty-first century.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you are considering moving to Ecuador or even if you are just a history buff, this book is a "Must Read"....The author painstakingly analyzes political, geographical, religious, cultural and other dynamics that have combined over a thousand years to make Ecuadorian culture and life what it is today. It paints a discouraging picture which we blew off as we were deciding to move here. Now

that we live here, hardly a day passes that we don't look at each other and acknowledge, "Yup, Hurtado got it right again!" On balance, I'm glad we did not let the book discourage us from making the move, but just as the friend that absolutely insisted that we read it before moving, I would do the same to anyone I know that is thinking about it because all the manifestations he concludes exist, appear to, in fact, be alive and well even today in Ecuadorian life and culture.

Hurtado's historical and sociological review excoriates the church, the hacienda system, and the isolation of Ecuador's early "settlement" in his sometimes heavy handed but sweeping work. But he certainly makes his case. I found his more recent sections which are supported by sociological studies more interesting, however. His Pan-American survey statistics on how such obscure, but relevant things, as thievery is viewed in Ecuador vs. the rest of the continent are revealing. His work is also comforting in his strong acknowledgement of North American technical innovations that moved Ecuador into the present. It was comforting to see the US's involvement in such a positive light for once. He also gives some surprising nods to different groups, such as Ecuador's small, but important, post war Jewish community. His work is courageous given his historic vilification of the Church and it's continuing presence in Ecuador. One last, very annoying electronic challenge is the apparent inability to increase the font size electronically on my e-book of his forward and bibliography and notes. His work is revealing and well worth purchasing.

This is the 2nd "must read" if thinking about moving to Ecuador. Sr. Hurtado is a former president of Ecuador and he pulls no punches with an explanation of the cultural aspects of Ecuador and the historical explanations behind them. I kept saying to myself, "NOW I get it!" as I read through the book.

Hmmmm could be a useful book but in the e-version it is impossible to read the index or bibliography. should not sell academic books where you cannot read the bib. It is not very useful. In addition the footnotes are not linked and there is no Table of Contents. This makes it impossible to navigate through the book or maintain a sense of order. Don't bother with e-books like this.

Anyone going to Ecuador, or wanting to know about the country's history, will find this book fascinating. I recommend it highly.

This is a "Must Read" for all gringos in Ecuador, and those considering a visit or moving there. I

know the author personally, and his friends and family were concerned for his safety, due some portions of this book being very critical of the political corruption that he has reported in this book.I do not know about pure Kimdle readers, but I have Kindle for PC, and only the introduction is in tiny print, and is much like a digital photo; the font size cannot be changed. However, if you simply bypass the introduction, the entire book is in large, easy to read font size. I am a gringo and live in Ecuador. I have learned so very much about my adopted country, from reading this book.

I picked up this book because I had an interest in learning more about latin america, particularly Ecuador, since so little is known about this country at large. I didn't expect to find such a gem. Even though Ecuador has made great advancements in recent years it continues to be a country that is still far behind much of the world. The author speaks honestly about his country, as a true patriot, he shows a true picture of the past, while at the same time inspiring his countrymen to move forward to a new future. He attempts what no other author has done--the fine strokes of a brush; and what he paints is not unequivocally beautiful.

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