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Ecuador inaugurates a stiff president



Sources: Amauta Magazine

Daniel Noboa, the candidate, in the aftermath of the second round of elections, he disseminated his image on cardboard. life-size. Thus, arriving in a "face-to-face" way through multiple spaces public and even homes in the country, also achieved a massive echo in the social media. With this type of media action, the 35-year-old consolidated his position He proclaimed himself a "social democrat" in the electorate. This political Nobel laureate, practically unknown to the majority of the population, surprised on the first lap, when literally overnight He made it to the runoff. His triumph, in short, could be seen as the well-worn result of *the Out candidacy against all odds*, appealing to the anti-politics (a clever way of doing politics, it should be noted).

Without minimizing that reading, so of mass psychology and political marketing in these times of liquid politics, it is well worth dwelling on a couple more questions General. On Sunday, August 15, an unusual election campaign came to an end. Herself It dealt with early general elections, resulting from the dissolution of the National Assembly by President Guillermo Lasso. It was an election to appoint a new ruler and new members of the National Assembly, that they will remain in their positions for the time that remained to be served in the current one president and the dismissed legislature, that is, until May 2025.

This constitutional construction, created to process deep crises, more typical of legislative systems that exposed the profound weakness of the institutional framework Ecuador's politics. The largest party, lacking democratic practices He appointed his candidacies from on high: the caudillo with the last word. A traditional party opted to hire a real mercenary, those who charge to kill in other people's wars. Some popular leader, disembarked of the party with which he had run quite successfully, he was forced to Get a rental match. And so on. By the way, none of the During the campaign, these political forces proposed long-term solutions to the serious existing problems, either because of their mediocrity or because of their organizational weakness or for having fallen into the nets of media immediatism.

This electoral process will be history not only because of its superficiality, but above all because of the murder presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio. The subsequent images of The candidates were surrounded by dozens of members of the security forces, bulletproof vests and even helmets illustrate the reality of a country drowning in insecurity and the dominance of organized crime.

This process will be remembered Also because of a positive message, tremendously powerful. 60% of the electorate He was in favor of leaving the oil in the subsoil, in the ITT block of the Yasuni and to prohibit metal mining in the District with 70% of the votes Metropolitan of Quito. As a result of citizens' initiatives, the door to a post-extractivist process that, without a doubt, will demand many more struggles, but which, by strengthening the processes of democratic action from below, would mark a before and after in the life of this country-product: country-cocoa-grower, banana-country, flower-growing country, shrimp-farmer country, oil-country...

Let's get into the results of the second round.

The winning candidacy, that of the young Daniel, personifies the traditional oligarchic pretension to control directly political power. Apparently, they succeeded with the banker Lasso, but with unfortunate results. This president-elect comes from one of the richest families in the country. His father, one of the world's largest exporters of banana and owner of dozens of companies, tried five times to reach the Presidency. His son's public life is recent: he was an assemblyman in the last legislature in which the young candidate of Correísmo did not have any outstanding performance. To run for office, he turned to political forces of curiously, also to what was Rafael Correa's party until in 2017, which was later co-opted by his former vice president and successor Lenín Moreno.

There are many unknowns about what his government will be like. There are no clear signals from the campaign as to how it will address crucial issues such as security. In other fields there are some clues. It would seem obvious that it should not follow in the economic footsteps of the failed government of President Lasso. However, in a meeting with the outgoing president to process the transition, Noboa junior had at his right Alberto Dahik, a sort of father of Creole neoliberalism, who was vice president of the Republic and who fled the country in 1995 after resigning due to serious corruption charges; many years later, this fugitive from justice would return thanks to the amnesty promoted by President Correa, who, in addition, brought him up to his stage to discuss economic issues.

In this environment, the dispute within the economic power bloc. However, as we have seen Throughout our history, the different fractions of capital can reach inter-class agreements with relative ease.

What could happen is that the young Daniel, in a pragmatic exercise -if Dahik does not have anything else-, Opt for less orthodox economic management. Naturally, this evolution will be within the narrow margins of action imposed by the IMF and the agreements with creditors of the foreign debt. And, by the way, evolution will also depend on how security and security issues are addressed. also if it is possible to alleviate the massive and growing poverty, which gravitates in the political and, of course, economic life in Ecuador.

Internationally, everything indicates that the young Daniel will be closer to Washington than in favor of regional integration. However, considering the scant information available, that is, until proven otherwise, he would not be a militant of the ultra-right currents represented by a Bolsonaro or a Milei (not his vice president).

In an extractivist key, while Correísmo supported the continuation of ITT's oil exploitation in Yasuni, the young Daniel, on the campaign trail, spoke out in favor of not exploiting it. He did it He understood that it was not a good business for him. the country. Their position is not ecologically motivated, nor is it one of defense of the rights of indigenous peoples. What's more, he said you could get more income by expanding mega-mining (imposed by the Correista government), which is another source of environmental and social destruction.

Against this background, In addition, without even having a solid parliamentary force, the Noboa's chances of being able to push for long-term solutions are Minimum. An issue that is complicated by the fact that the new ruler already has in mind the next elections in 2025. This anticipates an immediatist and also clientelist of someone who will be more concerned with building their deck to respond to serious national problems.

Let's take a quick look at the field loser. Correa, the largest party, for the second time in a row, did not he rose to the Presidency. Correa, its supreme leader, who resides in Belgium, in order to avoid facing justice in Ecuador, did not achieve its goal: pave the way for his return to the country and to power through an intermediary, the young candidate for the nominate: Luisa González. The conditions were Given. She reached a comfortable first place on the first lap. Correísmo It had achieved a remarkable result in the sectional elections in February controlling many powerful prefectures and mayors' offices. Without being in In reality, Correísmo had positioned itself as the opposition to Lasso. selling the narrative that with Noboa the continuity of the misrule of the banker, who in turn was presented as the heir of the Lenín Moreno... who came to the Presidency thanks to Correa himself, who He became his party's candidate in 2017. On the campaign trail, contrasting With the terrible situation that the Ecuadorian people are going through, they were magnified the achievements of the Correista government, tirelessly repeating that "this has already been we did."

What is important is to recognize that This "progressive" movement depends on its leader. For the time being, there is no signs of democratizing change. After the elections, Correa returned to their wanderings. Far from acknowledging his mistakes in government, his abuses at the social movements and indigenous and popular leaders, demonstrating their inability to think about the country and the country, as soon as the results are known of his defeat, he devoted himself to finding culprits outside his own sphere of responsibility. Responsibilities.

From the result of the second round of the elections, other interpretations emerge. Apparently, the obtuse fracture between Correismo and anti-Correismo remains, which cannot be seen simply, as a confrontation between the left and the right. Let's just remember that Correa's government barely synthesized a progressive attempt to modernize capitalism. It would also be necessary to analyze the regional fracture of the vote: almost all of the Coast supported González; while the Sierra as a whole and almost all of the Amazon, regions where the indigenous movement is strong, voted for Noboa. At this point, the defeat of Correismo in the two largest cities, in which it had won the municipalities in April, is striking: Guayaquil and Quito.

As a balance we can conclude that, In these circumstances, there is no room for the illusion of substantive change. The problems are so acute and the inability of the dominant elites – so well represented in the two finalist candidacies – predict a worsening of the crisis.

In the end, the popular sectors will have to continue building alternatives from below, resisting the neoliberal, extractivist and patriarchal policies that, surely, beyond some clientelistic nuances, will be maintained by the young Daniel who came to the Presidency personified in a cardboard figure.

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