



# Vernacular architecture in urban and rural dwellings in Manabí, Ecuador: A journey through its historical evolution

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## Abstract

Throughout history, both specialists in the construction branch and others who do not have specific technical knowledge, have participated in the designs of vernacular constructions. They have built buildings in villages, tribes, or communities, which have left their mark all over the world. Particularly in Ecuador, the Ecuadorian population that treasures this architectural typology has been influenced by the aboriginal culture, in addition to the trends brought by the Spanish conquerors and other later migrations. In this nation, the province of Manabí treasures vernacular architectural values in urban and rural homes that are part of the cultural heritage of Ecuador.

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## Introduction

Within current architectural trends is the preservation of cultural, social, and economic values in buildings, both ancient and modern. Vernacular architecture is found in this area, a reflection of the historical society, and constructive development of a nation, providing great information on the materials, styles, influences, and characteristics of the areas in which they are located.

The meaning of vernacular represents the domestic or the indigenous, so referring to something vernacular refers to the native things of the place, which have the identity characteristics of their culture. When talking

about vernacular architecture, traditional buildings that are made with endemic materials are reviewed, with designs that arise in an autochthonous way and inherent forms of construction (De Lapuerta et al., 2020). Currently the use of contemporary materials such as concrete, iron or steel is included.

The application of the historical-logical method allowed us to delve deeper into the internal logic of the development of vernacular housing in the world and specifically in the region of study, revealing the socio-historical conditions, the values shared over time from generation to generation, as well as the variations and solutions that families made in each era to satisfy their basic needs associated with their rural habitat.

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The application of this method also allowed this research to provide a historical synthesis of the emergence and development of Manabí vernacular housing, characterize its behavior throughout history, and contrast its presence in the rural communities of Ecuador.

Vernacular architecture responds to the social needs of the individual and the locality by reflecting in the built environment the cultural traditions and construction practices with endogenous materials available in the region.

Customarily, the study of vernacular architecture excluded qualified architects, focusing instead on the different designs, skills and construction traditions of local workers, who did not receive recognition for their work. At present, both designers and the construction industry are exploring vernacular architecture in search of new, more contemporary options for sustainable designs that allow greater energy use. (Pure Architecture, 2021).

In the context of this research, thirty-eight concepts on vernacular architecture, vernacular housing, sustainable housing, traditional housing, contemporary rural housing, subsidized housing, sustainable social housing have been analyzed. Of the 23 authors consulted about the aforementioned concepts, it is determined that there is a great diversity of terminology and conceptualizations about the vernacular. Multiple definitions have been generated about this type of architecture, making it a current topic. The most recurrent aspects found in these definitions include the terms of traditional architecture that respect the identity of the place where they are located, that treasure the use of materials from the environment, and that among its intangible characteristics are hand techniques of work as a tradition transmitted orally and from generation to generation.

A summary of the analysis of the published bibliography on the subject (Camino-Solórzano, 1999; De Lapuerta et al, 2020; Pure Architecture, 2021) generally characterizes vernacular architecture as follows:

1. It is a testimony of popular culture where the use of materials and construction systems are the product of a good adaptation to the environment, seeking the creation of micro-climates to cause comfortable places, influence temperature, lighting, humidity levels, etc.

2. It is presented from the beginning as an architecture that is based on empirical knowledge that evolved from generation to generation, resulting in a constructive tradition, reproduced and kept alive by new generations.

3. Its aesthetic and structural particularities differ from one place to another, from one culture to another; however, its essential characteristics stem from the same root.

4. It responds to protection according to the local climate and contains materials according to the existing resources in the environment.

5. In cold climate regions, they are characterized by:

- The proximity between buildings;
- Medium slope roofs;
- elevated floor structures;
- Use of low thermal emissivity materials;
- thick walls;
- Facades with wide openings only on the faces receiving more sunlight.

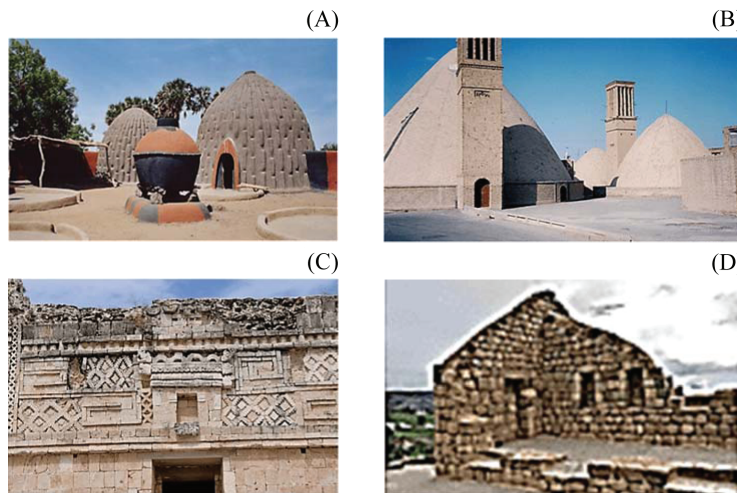
6. Specific features in hot and dry climate regions are characterized by:

- The proximity between buildings;
- flat roofs;
- Structures built directly on the ground;
- Use of heavy materials;
- thick walls;
- External facades painted in light colors and with small openings;
- Internal courtyards with fountains or water mirrors.

7. Specific features in humid climate regions are characterized by:

- Buildings separated from each other;
- sloping roof;
- Presence of balconies;
- elevated floor structures;
- Use of light materials;
- thin walls;
- Facades with openings that allow cross ventilation.

The evidences of vernacular architecture are exhibited in various ways in the world being its emblematic presence, a historical legacy of the peoples. For example, in the Arctic, “igloos” are the most used vernacular building, hemispherical in shape and made entirely of ice; in Turkey there are beehive-type adobe houses; the yurts of Central Asia; in Africa the traditional dwellings of the Gurunsi, the musgum in Cameroon; in the Middle East the Ab-anbar house, the Ma’dan cane house, etc., in Malaysia and Singapore the Malay Houses, in Central America the stone houses of the Mayan and Aztec cultures, as well as in South America with the houses of the Inca culture (Figure 1).



**Figure 1** Images of significant vernacular dwellings from different regions of the planet. (A) Mud huts Musgum, Cameroon, (B) Ab-anbar, Irán, (C) The Mayan house, México, (D) Inca construction of Ingapirca, Ecuador  
**Source:** García et al. (2018)

There are many lessons that vernacular housing has left over time (Correia et al., 2014) and its conceptualization has motivated numerous studies, for example, it is considered that the models are the result of generational collaboration and empathy between the craftsman who builds and the demanding user; (Vela Cossío, 1995).

Galindo (2006) and, Tillería González (2010), stated in addition, vernacular architecture has left traces in homes around the world, but in some regions its existence is more evident, as in Latin America for example, in Central America the stone houses of the Mayan and Aztec cultures, in the Caribbean and the rest of America the use of the Bohío (González, 2006) is characteristic of this area, as in South America the houses of the Inca culture (Favier Dubois et al, 2019).

Besides, in South America, vernacular architecture is influenced by indigenous cultures in the first place, and by the construction and customs brought to the American continent by the European conquerors, in addition to other cultural influences brought from the African continent. As in other regions of the planet, it has been undergoing transformations that are increasingly adjusted to the housing needs of its inhabitants.

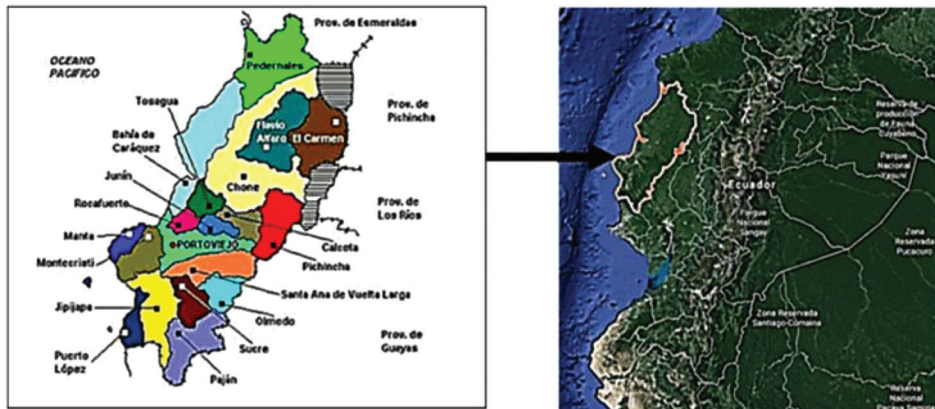
Particularly in Ecuador, the Ecuadorian population that treasures this architectural typology has been influenced by the culture of Quechua and Inca aborigines, which according to national statistics comprise around 50 percent of the population (National Institute of Statistics and Censuses of Ecuador [INEC], 2019). In Ecuador, the province of Manabí is considered the third in the country due to the population and the amount of income it contributes, only surpassed by Pichincha and Guayas.

This region has had historical importance in its conditions and resources since it has been a confederation of pre-Columbian cultures, a place of access in the conquest and settlement of the first Spanish foundations in the country, an exporter of products and cradle of the Alfarista revolution at the time Republican; agricultural, livestock, shrimp and industrial products for both export and local consumption in modern times. This constant and sustained development has also allowed the development of all cultural manifestations; poetry, literature, theater, painting, and architecture. (Camino-Solórzano, 1999)

The province of Manabí is in the center of the Ecuadorian coast; bordered to the north by the province of Esmeraldas, to the south by Guayas, to the east by Pichincha and Guayas, and to the west by the Pacific Ocean. It has an area of 18,831 km<sup>2</sup>

(INEC, 2019) (Figure 2). Its capital is Portoviejo. The main activities of the province are commerce, livestock, industry, and fishing since it has the second most important port in the country and the largest Tuna factory in Manta, the agricultural sector in rural life; and, tourism, mainly on its extensive beaches.

The southern part of Manabí was the seat of the Cancebí lordship, while the central and northern part was first an indigenous kingdom made up of confederations of tribes, and these at the same time by hamlets, although the Pechance hamlets existed in addition to the main lordship, which according to Quito historian Juan de Velasco, it was the motor center of the eastern part (that is, Chone, Flavio Alfaro, and El Carmen) of what was known as the Kingdom of Los Caras, a legal entity that had its headquarters and capital in the current Bay of Caráquez.



**Figure 2** Location of the province of Manabí, Ecuador.

Source: INEC (2019)

The Manta culture (Capital: Jocay) spread from the center to the south of the territory, formed by the tribes: Los Cancebías, Apechiniques, Pichotas, Japotoes, Picozaes, Jarahuas, Machalillas, Pichuncis, and Xipaxapas. (Camino-Solórzano, 1999). Currently, a mixture of races predominates, although traits of these indigenous tribes still persist (Figure 3).

In the case of the *manteña* vernacular house (a term used to refer to the culture and habits of Manabí), like other regions of Ecuador, its constructive characteristics are determined by the following parameters (Camino-Solórzano, 1999):

- Due to its location: In cities or areas of regional importance at the time they were built; for having constituted productive or development poles, commercial points, routes, or road terminals (maritime, railway, land, or air).
- For the representativeness of the user: According to each era: cacique, colonizer, mestizo, indigenous, merchant, official, fisherman, farmer, upper class, upper middle or popular middle class.

- By variants of the program: The insertion of the user in the different productive activities, determined different architectural programs and needs to be satisfied.

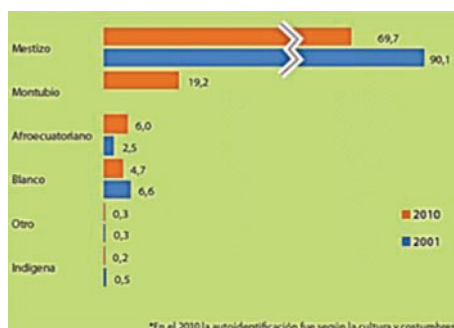
- Due to its architectural conception: Due to its inclusion in the architectural conception or trends of the moment; Autochthonous, Colonial, Renaissance, Neoclassical, Art Nouveau, Rationalist, Functionalist, Modern International, Critical Regionalist.

- Due to its constructive conception: Due to its technological contribution, or its correct adaptation to the available resources, whether local or imported.

- Due to its insertion or transformation of the context: Due to the occupation and use of consolidated land or in the process of consolidation.

The last population and housing census carried out in the country in 2010, records a total of 400,879 homes in Manabí, most of them owned by their inhabitants, predominantly houses located in different villages.

In the case of vernacular *manteña* housing, according to Camino-Solórzano (1999), its construction characteristics are determined by the following parameters:



**Figure 3** Racial composition of the province of Manabí in Ecuador.

Source: INEC (2019)

- Due to its location: In cities or areas of regional importance at the time they were built; for having constituted productive or development poles, commercial points, routes or road terminals (maritime, railway, land or air).

- For the representativeness of the user: According to each era: cacique, colonizer, mestizo, indigenous, merchant, official, fisherman, farmer, upper class, upper middle or popular middle class.

- By variants of the program: The insertion of the user in the different productive activities, determined different architectural programs and needs to be satisfied.

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In terms of architecture, the development of Manabí's vernacular housing has gone through different historical moments from pre-Hispanic times through the colony and the Republican era, to contemporary housing; persisting over time a habitational practice that has been transmitted from generation to generation, which started from empirical knowledge, to become a permanent continuity of tradition and good work. This evolution has generated traditional values that are elucidated in the development of Manabí's vernacular housing throughout its historical journey.

### *Vernacular Architecture of Houses in the Pre-Columbian Stage*

The evolution of pre-Hispanic vernacular architecture can be seen in the timeline of Ecuadorian prehistory:

- The Preceramic (9,000 – 3,500 BC), when manual arts and ceramics were not handled.

- The Formative (3,500 – 500 BC), in which the beginning of the development of agricultural, craft, and socioeconomic activities is marked.

- The Regional Development (500 BC – 500 AD) is cataloged in this way because it concentrates the regional differences in the political and social organization of the groups that in turn began to specialize in the management of the incipient technology;

- That of Integration (500 – 1,500 AD), in which agriculture is intensified and modernized, with the appearance of marketing, in which agricultural and artisanal products served for commercial exchange or barter, generating in turn, the first relations between one region and another, and later originated transoceanic voyages.

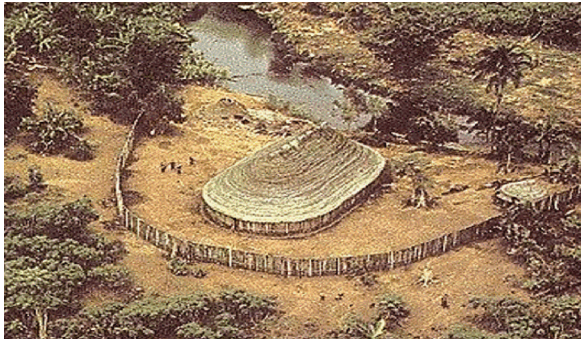
In the Preceramic Period, there is evidence of circular beehive-shaped single-family dwellings in the coastal area (Las Vegas Culture) known as the St. Helena Peninsula, dating from 9,000 to 9,400 years old. They were wooden rooms buried in the floor with a ceiling of guadúa cane (a kind of bamboo, native to South and Central America) and cadi. The floor plan of these houses would have a diameter of 1.70 – 2.00 meters and the height must have been related to the small stature of 1.50 to 1.60 meters that characterize the aboriginal man of this period (Figure 4). The shape of these pre-Columbian houses of reduced size, present in their structure, walls, and ceilings, elements that are still used by the population, especially rural, today.



**Figure 4** Reconstruction of a house in Las Vegas, pre-Columbian times.

**Source:** Salvat Edit (1981, p. 62, as cited in Camino-Solórzano, 1999)

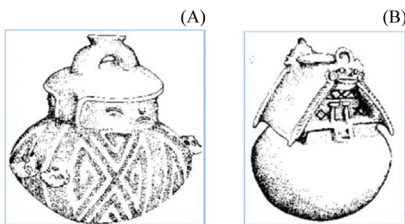
In the Formative Period, community dwellings with an Ovoid geometric shape (Valdivia culture) of about 8 × 12 meters predominate. Today there are testimonies from academics at the University of Illinois, who, in 1974, studied the town of Real Alto. Built at a time of splendor of the formative period, the town of Real Alto revealed that it could have had 80 to 100 houses distributed in an almost rectangular plan with a square clear in the middle of two rows of houses. The walls of these houses were made of wooden posts joined in a compact row and then plastered. In the center, there is a post hole, which would be the support of the roof. They had two doors, one at each end, with an opening of almost a meter, and interior division. The roof would have been made of straw or palm leaves, as is still customary in the hot regions of Manabí, Ecuador (Camino-Solórzano, 1999) (Figure 5).



**Figure 5** Current dwelling of the Shuar indigenous community in the Ecuadorian Amazon with characteristics similar to those built in the formative period.

**Source:** Salvat Edit (1981, p. 67, as cited in Camino-Solórzano, 1999)

In this period other types of square or rectangular dwellings were also developed using the same materials, also introducing mud and stone. Formally, these homes respond to the need for a larger space. Although the wall and the ceiling are different pieces, they are sewn together with vegetable ropes. Such a house could last around 25 years and the new one would be built on the same site (Figure 6).



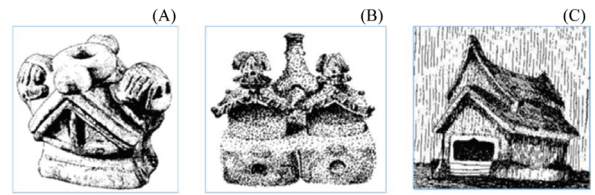
**Figure 6** (A) Machalilla vessel, stirrup handle, suggesting a roundhouse with two doors, on a mound. (B) Whistle bottle in the shape of a square house on a platform. (Central Bank of Ecuador, Guayaquil).

**Source:** Nurnberg et al (1982, as cited in Camino-Solórzano, 1999)

The shape of these pre-Columbian houses of reduced size, present in their structure, walls, and ceilings, elements that are still used today by the population, especially rural, of this area of Manabí due to their easy handling and low costs.

The houses in the Period of Regional Development show an evolution, according to studies carried out by Nurnberg et al (1982, as cited in Camino-Solórzano, 1999), fragments of fire-hardened bahareque have been found, which could indicate that the houses were made of sticks interwoven with vines and covered with clay. Small ceramic models, which are preserved in the collections of the Museum of the Central Bank

of Ecuador, give an idea of what was a house of the predominant cultures in this stage: Guangala culture, Bahia culture, and Jama - Coaque culture. (Figure 7)

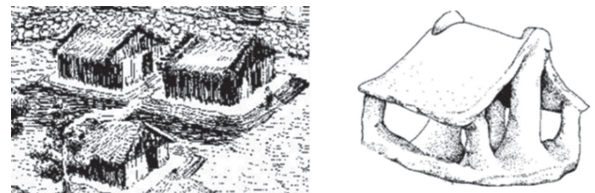


**Figure 7** A) Ceramic vessels, revealing the vernacular architecture of the dwellings of the Guangala, B) Bahia, C) Jama-Coaque culture.

**Source:** Nurnberg et al. (1982, as cited in Camino-Solórzano, 1999)

During the Integration Period, vernacular dwellings suffer transformations again due to the influence in this period of the arrival of the Spanish conquerors in the area. In this period, the Manteña Culture extends from the border between the provinces of Manabí and Esmeraldas in the north to Oro in the south; places where the Spaniards found two different groups upon their arrival: the Manteños to the north, and the Huancavilcas to the south.

Within the analysis of the Integration period, two typologies are found with the arrival of the Spaniards: the quadrangular single-family dwelling on a basement (Manteña culture), and quadrangular single-family dwelling “on stilts” (Jama-Coaque, Chirije; Atacames culture reference) (Figure 8). Based on the research cited, we can point out that in this typology, the constructions were generally based on rectangular bases, and that the majority of the buildings were oriented from north to south, except for the stairs, located to the east, with no traces of steps in this driveway. Many of them presented various overlaps (Camino-Solórzano, 1999).



**Figure 8** Reconstruction of houses in the basement, Manta culture.

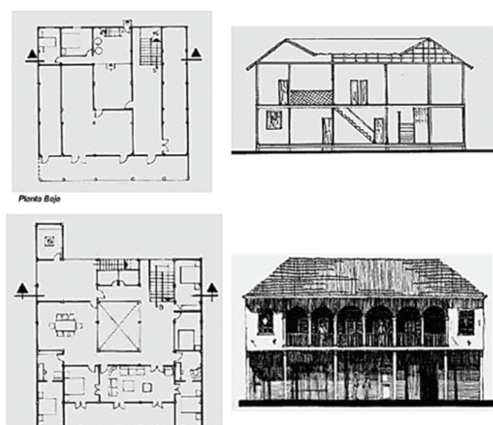
**Source:** Nurnberg et al (1982, as cited in Camino-Solórzano, 1999)

### *Vernacular Architecture of Houses in Manabí Colonial Stage*

The type of population occupation developed by the Spanish conquerors in the territory of present-day Ecuador was conditioned by the timely use of duly settled indigenous peoples for production that had a productive structure, and social and political organization that could be effectively used for ends of the conquerors. Thus, Puerto Viejo (current capital of the province of Manabí) was founded as Villa, on March 12, 1535; around the same time, another city was founded: the current Bahía de Caráquez in 1562, and San Pablo de Manta in 1565.

At the beginning of the colony, the incipient cities founded by the Spaniards were built with two-storey houses based on Arab-Spanish architecture, which popularized the use of galleries and the central inner courtyard, marking the style that would define life in urban centers inhabited mostly by Spaniards and their descendants. In the rural area, the tradition maintained the use of endogenous materials for the construction of the houses of the native peoples (Figure 9).

In this period the influence of Spanish constructions is undoubted in rural areas where houses begin to rise on stilts and the interior space is reorganized in a similar way to Spanish houses. The grooves are integrated in the upper areas of the walls and roof as lighting and ventilation elements as they allow the circulation of a large amount of air and give the house an intimate character that is still used today. Despite taking the Hispanic elements, the builders of the rural houses maintain, for the structure of the house, the use of materials from the nearby environment such as guadua cane, wood from different trees and cadi or straw, which allows to generate a design with better aeration to face the humid and warm Manabí climate, ecological design that lasts in rural areas (Figure 10).



**Figure 9** Representation of a Manabí urban house characteristics of the Colonial period

Source: Camino-Solórzano (1999)

The structure and design of the vernacular house have become a cultural tradition of rural areas of Manabí maintaining their presence until today, since they have proven to be efficient in avoiding affectations in the home and in the people who inhabit it during periods of rains and river floods that affect all the low areas of the Ecuadorian coast. There are also dwellings built by the mestizo population in the rural area settled on the ground in one, two, and three spaces. In a larger volume are the living and resting areas and in the second volume of smaller dimensions the kitchen is housed, leaving between these two, a third space, in the form of an open corridor, which serves as a transit between both modules and separates for protecting from an eventual fire (Figure 10) (Camino-Solórzano, 1999).

In this context, Spanish cities are founded around a central square in which both roads and government institutions converge. This urban centrality strengthens the mission of consolidating Spanish dominance in addition to generating a hierarchical distribution of lots and housing spaces, institutions such as the Church, the Cabildo and the Government are at the center of the city next to the houses of the Spaniards and their descendants that are built very close; on the outskirts are located the houses of the natives with more spaced implantations. The integration in the context of the houses allowed the formation of the colonial city of the coast of Manabí, whose main function is to guarantee the process of colonization and domination with respect to the metropolis (Figure 11).



**Figure 10** Reconstruction of houses in rural areas developed in colonial times by the aboriginal population influenced by the architecture of the Spanish conquerors. (A) and (B): single space dwelling and three spaces on the ground. (C): House on piles from the end of the integration period.

Source: Camino-Solórzano (1999)



**Figure 11** Reconstruction of the context that the Spaniards founded and developed in this stage, the religious and public institutions, in addition to the colonizers' homes around the central square, on its periphery, were the houses of the indigenous people

Source: Camino-Solórzano (1999)

### *Vernacular Architecture of Houses in Manabí. Republican Stage*

In the period that goes from the beginning of the 19th century to the founding of the Republic, two stages are distinguished: the first covers the independence process, and the latter the years of the life of the country within the Republic of the Great Colombia. For this last stage, we begin to see the influence of the industrial revolutions in England and France, which needed the Latin American market to export their products; a moment in which the indigenous population lives in the most appalling misery, illiteracy, and servitude. On May 13, 1830, the citizens of Quito declared the separation of the Department of the South from Gran Colombia. In this way Ecuador was born, an independent and sovereign State.

At the end of the 19th century and entering the 20th, the production and commercialization of some agricultural products took place extensively, due to state policies that promoted exchange between the different regions of the country. At this stage the cities continue to grow, receiving foreign influences in architecture. In addition, Portoviejo's "new takeoff" can be related to the general economic and demographic dynamics of Manabí. The intense agro-export commercial activity was the main basis for the development of cities such as Manta and Bahía; which, due to their status as a port, host a large number of commercial establishments that operated on days of fairs or shipments (Figure 12). In addition, Portoviejo's "new takeoff" can be related to the general economic and demographic dynamics of Manabí. The intense agro-export commercial activity was the main basis for the development of cities such as

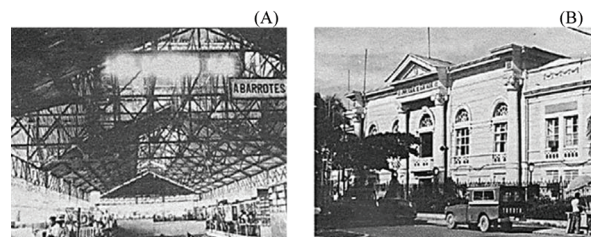
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During the colonial period and the beginning of the republican stage, the construction of houses with front porches and columns made of mud bricks, stone, and wooden posts as a support for the structure, in addition to the use of lime as a binding element, boomed. These elements were changing with the introduction of the new architectural trends in Europe and North America, known as an "anti-colonial" reaction, externalized through new urban and architectural structures that will be concentrated in the main cities, introducing concrete and steel as building material (Figure 13).

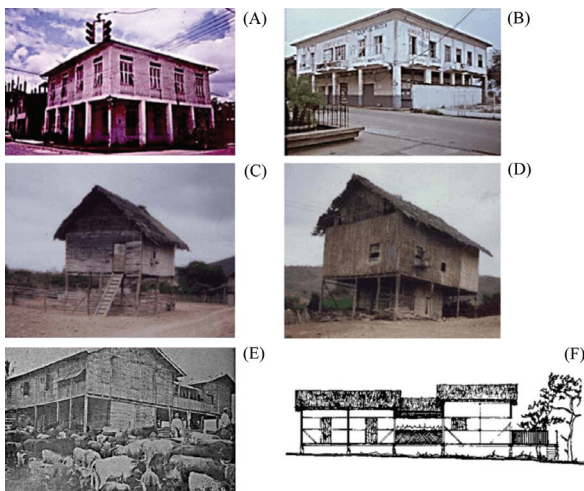
This influence on the use of "new materials" also affected the construction of Manabí's vernacular houses in rural areas, since families with greater economic resources considered it more appropriate to build their three-space houses with masonry. It is important to understand that the house does not alter its structure, only the wood, bamboo and other natural materials of the environment are replaced by concrete and masonry. In the same way, the architectural elements are managed considering the status of urban well-being and the construction on stilts is maintained, taking advantage of the lower space for commercial activities (Figure 14).



**Figure 12** Central Park in the city of Portoviejo around which were the main entities of the city and the province  
**Source:** Ceriola, (1913, as cited in Camino-Solórzano, 1999)



**Figure 13** (A) View of the metal structure on the upper floor of the South Market of Guayaquil (B) House of the University of Guayaquil, made of a concrete mixture  
**Source:** Camino-Solórzano (1999)



**Figure 14** Representation and images of vernacular dwellings developed in peripheral areas of Manta cities and rural areas during the Republican era (A) Cedeo house - 1910. Portoviejo, (B) Azua house (Hotel Aragones) - 1920- Manta, (C) Rural house on stilts with free ground floor, (D) Rural house on stilts with semi free ground floor., (E) Cattle rancher's house on piles of three volumes and corridor - 1911, (F) Three-volume stilt dwelling scheme with the dining room in the middle volume.

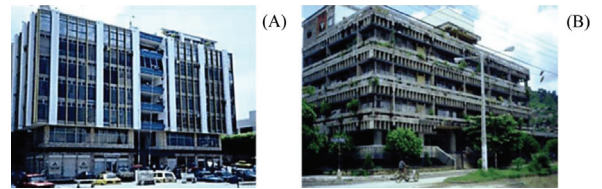
**Source:** Camino-Solórzano (1999)

#### *Vernacular Architecture of Houses in Manabí. Modern Stage*

The modernization of architecture in Ibero-America took place from 1925 to 1945. In just twenty years, the neoclassical architectural practice was drastically modified, its influence reaching Ecuador and consequently the architecture of Manabí buildings. Then currents such as art nouveau and other styles emerged that seek a nationalist identity that motivates a reunion with the pre-Columbian and colonial legacy, through neoindigenist or neocolonial constructions. Then, reinforced concrete began to be used as a construction material. These modernist currents were quickly surpassed by rationalism, a functional, rational, economically, and socially useful architecture, very different from the various previous styles that were produced until the 1950s, becoming an avant-garde movement that transformed the practice of architecture and affirmed reinforced concrete as a widely used construction material to this day. In this style, the new image of modernity is legitimized, with proposals that opened the new "regional" stage of urban planning and modern architecture in Latin America, highlighting the great Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer as one of the greatest exponents at the international level. Elements committed to geographical realities were added to this architectural trend.

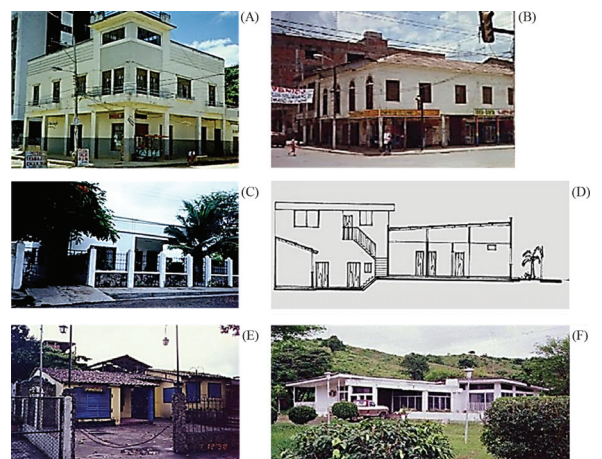
In Ecuador, the rise of modern architecture was fundamentally due to the economic possibilities generated by the banana cycles and the national boom in the oil industry. Particularly in Manabí, it is observed in some public buildings, a more accentuated adoption of modern models, while housing is also not immune to vertical growth, and when reaching the fifties, buildings with more than two floors increase, in that the reinforced concrete structure, the use of brick and glass, rapidly begin to gain ground within the cities stripping them of the traditional use of wood and cane, covered with thatch (Camino-Solórzano, 1999) (Figure 15).

In the case of Manabí houses from this stage, they are particularly developed by combining the modern style with the incorporation of vernacular elements that evolve over the years, such as the use of 2 and 3 volumes and the pillars or supports on the ground floor (Figure 16), although in many cases the foreign influence breaks with these schemes.



**Figure 15** (A) Delgado Travel Building, in the city of Manta (1973), responds to international modernity with glass facades inappropriate for a tropical climate, (B) Building of the Delegation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock in Portoviejo (1978), incorporates climatic aspects of the coastal region, protecting the windows with sunshades. Note the difference from the previous example

**Source:** Camino-Solórzano (1999)



**Figure 16** (A) Ordoñez house, in Bahía (1942), (B) Gutierrez house, in Chone (1940), (C) Cisneros house, in Manta (1942), (D) front and side view, (E) Hidrovo house, in Portoviejo (1973), (F) Vicente Santos House, in Portoviejo (1972)

**Source:** Camino-Solórzano (1999)

## Vernacular Architecture of Houses in Manabí. Contemporary Age

The contemporary stage includes the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 80s of the 20th century to the present. The influence of vernacular architecture in Ecuador is losing its influence in the housing systems governed by tall buildings with more than 3 floors; however, it presents a rescue in the popular housing programs drawn up fundamentally by the Governments in the 21st century after the increase in budgets in public investment (Ministry of Urban Development and Housing [MDUV], 2020), which apparently will continue to be a trend due to its proven effectiveness against the ravages of natural phenomena such as floods and earthquakes that have affected the country in this century, in addition to its environmental and spatial benefits by the culture of the average Ecuadorian citizen, mostly mestizo.

## Conclusion

Vernacular housing in the province of Manabí has constructive characteristics determined by its location in cities or areas of regional importance at the time they were built, by the representativeness of the user (according to the time: cacique, colonizer, mestizo, indigenous, merchant, civil servant, fisherman, farmer, upper class, upper middle or popular middle class), for the insertion of the user in the different productive activities, for its architectural conception according to the currents of the moment and for the constructive conception in the designs influenced by the culture of the aboriginal peoples and tribes settled in the Andean zone of South America, leaving traces to the constructions of contemporary times.

Apparently, at present, due to the increase in public investment budgets in Ecuador and the province of Manabí, and the need to build houses resistant to the ravages of natural phenomena such as floods and earthquakes that have affected the country in the 21st century, a recovery of the elements of vernacular architecture is observed in the popular housing programs drawn up by the Governments.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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