

body of easel paintings, many in tempera, which include portraits and imaginary landscapes with surreal qualities.

O'Gorman's mural style was strongly influenced by Diego Rivera but was even more complex and layered, though carefully organized for legibility. He frequently used textual references, reproducing lines from manuscripts, or injecting his own commentaries. His imaginary landscapes, however, are freer and more flowing in design, though painted with the same minute attention to detail as the murals.

See also **Architecture: Modern Architecture; Art: The Twentieth Century; Kahlo, Frida; Rivera, Diego; Velasco, José María.**

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**O'HIGGINS, AMBROSIO** (1720–1801). Ambrosio O'Higgins (b. 1720; d. 18 March 1801), viceroy of Peru (1796–1801). Although best known as the father of Bernardo O'Higgins, Chile's first president, Ambrosio was an important figure in his

own right, particularly as captain-general of Chile from 1789 until his promotion to Peru.

The details of O'Higgins's early career are obscure. Born in Ireland, he was taken to Spain as a child and initially pursued a commercial career—in Cádiz, Lima, Buenos Aires, and Santiago—before making a name for himself in the 1760s as an officer leading campaigns against the Araucanians on Chile's southern frontier. He secured rapid promotion, becoming intendant of Concepción in 1786 and field marshal in 1789. His term as viceroy of Peru was complicated by the financial and commercial difficulties arising from Spain's declaration of war against Britain in 1796, but he was able to undertake a number of major public works, including the improvement of the Callao–Lima road, before dying in office.

See also **Chile: Foundations Through Independence; O'Higgins, Bernardo; Peru: From the Conquest Through Independence.**

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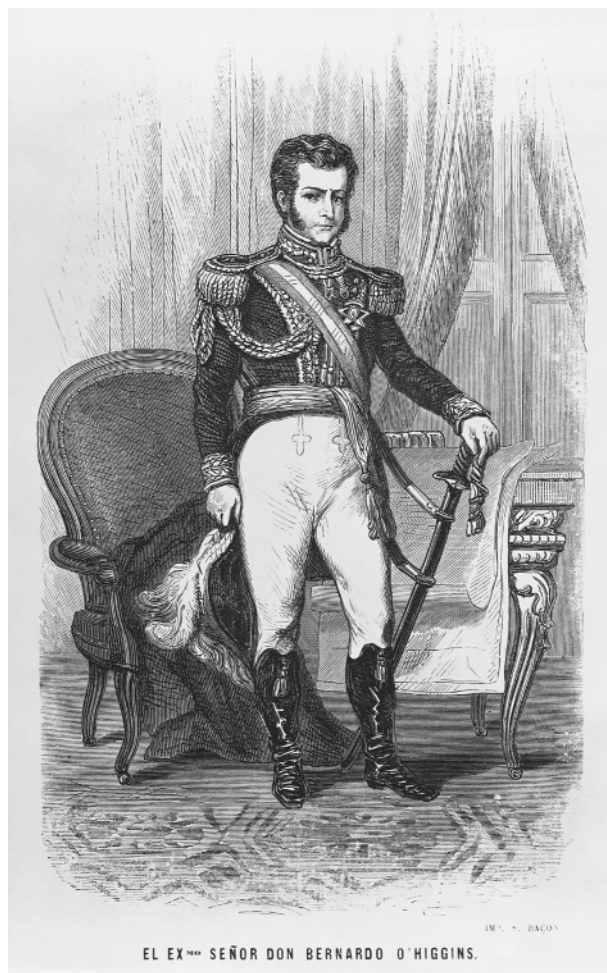
**O'HIGGINS, BERNARDO** (1778–1842). Bernardo O'Higgins (b. 20 August 1778; d. 24 October 1842), liberator and national hero of Chile. Born at Chillán, he was the natural son of a Chilean mother, Isabel Riquelme, and an Irish father, Ambrosio Higgins (later O'Higgins, 1720–1801), a colonial official who later rose to be governor of Chile and viceroy of Peru. It is doubtful if Bernardo saw his father more than once, and he was separated from his mother at ten, when he was taken to Lima to start his education. In 1795 he was sent to England, where he continued his studies under tutors at Richmond-

on-Thames. A decisive influence on the young creole's life was his meeting, in London, with Francisco de Miranda (1750–1816), from whom he eagerly imbibed subversive ideas of independence. In 1802 he returned to Chile and inherited Las Canteras, his father's large estate near the Araucanian frontier. He also petitioned to be allowed to assume his father's surname and titles of nobility; the surname was allowed, the titles were not.

An active and enterprising *hacendado* (landowner), O'Higgins became friendly with the tiny handful of separatists in the south of Chile. The crisis of the Spanish Empire and the installation of a patriot government in Santiago (September 1810) gave him a chance to further his ideas. As a representative of the radical minority, he was elected to the first national congress (1811), but José Miguel Carrera's (1785–1821) seizure of power (November 1811) soon compelled him to return to Las Canteras.

The outbreak of the Wars of Independence in 1813 drew O'Higgins into action at the head of militia forces he himself organized. He distinguished himself in a number of battles, including that at El Roble on 17 October 1813, in which he was wounded. When Carrera was dismissed as commander in chief early in 1814, O'Higgins assumed his role. Faced with another royalist offensive, he signed a peace treaty with the royalist commander, General Gabino Gaínza, at Lircay (May 1814), but this treaty was repudiated by the viceroy of Peru. Meanwhile, Carrera had seized power in Chile once again (23 July 1814), but O'Higgins refused to recognize the new regime. Civil war would have broken out had not a new royalist expedition launched a strong offensive. O'Higgins chose to make his stand at the town of Rancagua (1–2 October 1814), where his forces were totally overwhelmed. Patriot Chile collapsed.

O'Higgins himself escaped from the carnage and took refuge across the Andes in Argentina. There he became a close associate of José de San Martín (1771–1850), who selected him for a key role in the liberation of Chile. When San Martín's Army of the Andes undertook its epic crossing of the Cordillera, O'Higgins was a divisional commander. His audacious cavalry charge secured victory at Chacabuco on 12 February 1817. In Santiago, four days later, he was appointed supreme director of Chile.



**Portrait of Bernardo O'Higgins.** The sword in O'Higgins's hand hints at the daring military role he played in achieving Chile's independence from Spain. © CORBIS

O'Higgins's first three years in power were dominated by the need to prosecute the war of independence. Only after the decisive battle of Maipú (5 April 1818) was Chile finally secure from the royalists. However, the struggle for independence was not over yet. Great efforts had to be made to create a navy and to mount the expedition San Martín was to lead to the Viceroyalty of Peru. With Argentina descending into chaos, most of the burden of organizing and financing the expedition fell on O'Higgins's government. The expedition's departure in August 1820 was probably his supreme personal moment. From then on, he was obliged to give full attention to domestic issues.

O'Higgins's government was commendably vigorous. It restored those patriot institutions abolished

during the Spanish reconquest, such as the Instituto Nacional and the National Library. It abolished titles of nobility and the public display of coats of arms. It completed the San Carlos Canal, a public works project dating from colonial times and designed to irrigate the land to the south of Santiago. It made plans to convert a sheep track running down one side of the city into a tree-lined avenue—today the Avenida Bernardo O'Higgins. O'Higgins also launched a number of diplomatic missions, though his envoy in London failed to secure British recognition of Chile's independence. (The United States extended recognition in 1822.)

While O'Higgins retained much of his personal prestige, his government provoked increasing antipathy. In some quarters, the supreme director was suspected of being under excessive Argentine influence. His support for the execution of the three Carrera brothers alienated a powerful faction. Some of his ecclesiastical measures (prohibition of burial in church, temporary banishment of the bishop of Santiago, approval of a Protestant cemetery) aroused clerical hostility. His appointment of José Antonio Rodríguez Aldea (1779–1841) as finance minister in 1820 also incurred disapproval from those who distrusted this slippery ex-royalist.

More serious, perhaps, was the personal and somewhat cliquish nature of the regime, which seemed to discourage the bulk of the creole elite from taking an active part in public life. O'Higgins's first constitution (1818) was minimal, and allowed no element of popular election, although its nominated senate was by no means a subservient body. Pressure for political reform eventually compelled O'Higgins to summon a constituent convention. This body produced his second constitution (October 1822), which provided for elections, a congress, and similar liberal desiderata. It also included a clause that would have enabled O'Higgins to remain in office for another ten years, a prospect most creoles found unacceptable. The final blow to the regime came from the war-ravaged south, where a desperate economic situation breeding frustration and resentment toward the capital prompted General Ramón Freire (1787–1851), intendant of Concepción, to launch a rebellion against O'Higgins. The northern province of Coquimbo followed suit. In Santiago, leading creoles conspired against the dictator. On 28 January 1823, in a scene of compelling drama, he was persuaded to

abdicate. Six months later he was finally permitted to leave the country, never to return.

Abandoning a plan to visit Ireland, the land of his forebears, O'Higgins settled in Peru. In 1824 he accompanied Simón Bolívar (1783–1830) during part of the final patriot campaign in the highlands, but soon afterward doffed his uniform forever. The Peruvian government had awarded O'Higgins a couple of haciendas in the fertile Cañete Valley, to the south of Lima. Here and in Lima the exiled liberator lived out his final years in tranquillity, enjoying the company of his mother (until she died in April 1840), his half-sister Rosa, and his own natural son Pedro Demetrio, the fruit of a brief love affair that took place during the patriot campaigns of 1817.

O'Higgins was an amiable man with a simple, straightforward, unsubtle character. His many friends were devoted to him, and his followers very loyal. O'Higgins himself probably entertained few hopes of restoration to power. In 1826 he gave halfhearted support to a military insurrection in Chiloé, an ill-advised gesture that led the Chilean congress to strip him of his rank. In 1830 the successful Conservative rebellion led by his old protégé Joaquín Prieto (1786–1854) may have briefly revived his aspirations. He was touched by the attentions of Chilean soldiers occupying Lima during the war between Chile and the Peru-Bolivia Confederation. In 1842 the Manuel Bulnes government (1841–1851) restored his rank and emoluments, news of which reached O'Higgins shortly before his death. He was buried in Lima, and in January 1869 his remains were repatriated to Chile. Just over three years later, in May 1872, an equestrian statue of the hero was inaugurated in Santiago. Appropriately, it shows him in desperate action at the battle of Rancagua.

*See also* Carrera, José Miguel; Chile: Foundations Through Independence; Chile: The Nineteenth Century; Miranda, Francisco de; O'Higgins, Ambrosio; Peru: From the Conquest Through Independence; San Martín, José Francisco de; Wars of Independence, South America.

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**O'HIGGINS, PABLO** (1904–1983). Pablo O'Higgins (*b.* 1904; *d.* 1983), American artist who worked primarily in Mexico. Born Paul O'Higgins in Salt Lake City, Utah, he was raised and educated in the United States. In 1924 O'Higgins traveled to Mexico, where he was attracted to the muralist movement, then in its early years. He became a studio assistant of Diego Rivera, and from 1925 to 1927 participated in the creation of Rivera's murals at Chapingo and Mexico City. In 1927 he joined the Communist Party, and from 1931 to 1932 he studied at the Moscow Academy of Arts. Upon returning to Mexico, he began to create his own murals, the first in 1933. His major public work, *La explotación del campesino y del obrero*, was executed at the Mercado Abelardo Rodríguez, Mexico City, in 1934–1936. He also produced murals in the United States, including one for the Ship Scalers' Union Hall, Seattle, in 1945. O'Higgins was a founding member in 1933 of the leftist artists' group Liga de Escritores y Artistas Revolucionarios, and in 1937 of the graphics collaborative Taller de Gráfica Popular. He died in Mexico City.

*See also Art: The Twentieth Century; Rivera, Diego.*

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**OIDOR.** Oidor, a judge of an *audiencia*. *Oidores* were the judges of the *audiencias* in the New World. After the appointment of *alcaldes del crimen* (judges whose responsibilities were limited to criminal cases), to the courts in Lima and Mexico City in 1568, the *oidores* on those tribunals were limited to civil cases. Prior to this date and in the other *audiencias*, they heard both civil and criminal cases.

While their judicial duties are best known, *oidores* also had legislative and executive responsibilities. They formed the core of the *Acuerdo* and thus participated in making political decisions. Regularly they were appointed by the region's chief executive to serve on commissions making inspection tours of the region or to serve as the judge of a corporate body.

By virtue of their high office, *oidores* were part of the elite in the capital where they served and, consequently, became attractive marital partners. Many obtained dispensations from restrictive legislation in order to marry local women of prestigious and well-to-do families and became directly involved in the local economy. When the crown sold *audiencia* appointments from 1687 to 1750, numerous Americans purchased appointments as *oidores* along with dispensations allowing them to marry and invest locally.