

## FOREWORD

by

Michael T. Hamerly  
John Carter Brown Library  
Brown University

Although the production of the inaugural issue of *Ecuadorian Studies / Estudios ecuatorianos* has taken longer than originally envisaged, let us hope that this and future issues “vivirán a flor del tiempo, amores y desengaños.” Inasmuch as the United States and its allies, with the moral support of Ecuador, and many other countries are presently engaged in a major war against terrorism and its sympathizers, this might not seem to be the proper occasion to launch a new journal. But because the wars on ignorance and poverty are ongoing, scholarly ventures are always in order. There may not be much that as academicians we can do to alleviate poverty, but there is something, hopefully much, that we can do to dispel ignorance and in the process help equip others with one of the weapons needed to combat poverty—in and of itself, a major cause of violence-- knowledge.

It is not just our students and colleagues whom we must enlighten and inform but also government leaders and officials, the so-called intelligence community, and the media. Else we will continue to read and what is far worse, continue to allow others to depend upon such misleading and patronizing statements as appeared in the Jan. 27, 2000 issue of *The New York Times* regarding the coup d'état of that year “. . . in recent years, with financial support and advice from groups in Western Europe and North America, indigenous peoples have coalesced around demands for what they call ‘a plurinational and multiethnic state’ here.”

In 1970 when the North American editor of *Ecuadorian Studies / Estudios ecuatorianos* produced the first doctoral dissertation in the United States on demographic, economic, and social history of Ecuador--“A Social and Economic History of the City and District of Guayaquil during the Late Colonial and Independence Periods”-- there were only a handful or two of scholars in the United States and Europe with any interest in or knowledge of Ecuador. Furthermore, there were absolutely as well as relatively few scholars in Ecuador with professional training. By the late twentieth century *ecuadorianistas* had come to number in the hundreds and professionally trained Ecuadorian in the thousands. Not all Ecuadorian scholars study their own country of course, but several hundred do.

*Ecuadorian Studies* boomed in the 1990s, and show every indication of continuing productivity.

There were two special issues of *Latin American Perspectives* devoted to Ecuador in 1997, the May and July issues (vol. 24, nos. 3 and 4). According to *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 32 doctoral theses relating to Ecuador in the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences appeared in 1999, and 26 in 2000. And this year saw a first in Ecuadorian Studies that a scant decade ago would and probably could not have occurred, the appearance in every issue of *Latin American Research Review* of an article devoted in whole or substantial part to Ecuador. *Ecuadorian Studies / Estudios ecuatorianos* therefore was not only overdue, but is viable.

Because *Ecuadorian Studies / Estudios ecuatorianos* is an interdisciplinary as well as a multidisciplinary journal, it is appropriate that the first article in this, the inaugural, issue was coauthored by a sociologist, Scott H. Beck, and a political scientist, Kenneth J. Mijeski, that the second and third articles were written by a specialist in language and literature, Michael Handelsman, and a geographer, James R. Keese, respectively, and that the present editor is a historian and a bibliographer. It is also appropriate that the lead article, "Barricades and Ballots: Ecuador's Indians and the Pachakutik Political Movement," should delineate and discuss the origins and ongoing participation of the indigenous nations of Ecuador in the national political processes.

The emergence of a new political movement, the Movimiento de Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik-Nuevo País, in 1995 was a startling as well as surprising development for those "whites" and mestizos brought up on the image of Indians as brutes and degenerates in the novels and short stories of Jorge Icaza (1906-1978) and other "social realistic" authors, peoples whose redemption could come about only through their gradual incorporation into the nation state through acculturation and education as advocated by the dean of "Indianists" in Ecuador, Pío Alvarado Jaramillo (1889-1968), and his followers. Pachakutik has radically altered the nature of politics at the national and local levels in ways that are still being worked out. But one thing is certain. The "blancos" and "mestizos" of Ecuador will never again be able to leave "indios" out of the political equation. Unfortunately, as Beck and Mijeski conclude, this does not necessarily signify that "Pachakutik will have a significant impact on the political structure, and therefore advance the interests of indigenous peoples and more broadly the poorer citizens of Ecuador," at least, not in the near future.

Beck and Mijeski have been studying indigenous movements in Ecuador since the mid 1990s. See also their "*Indígena Self-Identity in Ecuador and the Rejection of Mestizaje*," *Latin American Research Review* 35: no. 1 (2000): 119–138, in which they make the exceptionally important point "The question of what it means to be a mestizo or a blanco in Ecuador . . . has not been systematically addressed by scholars . . ." Hopefully a future issue of *Ecuadorian Studies / Estudios ecuatorianos* will address this question.

The second article "Entre el bolero y el Internet" discourses on the dilemma Ecuador continues to face as it endeavors to integrate more fully and meaningfully with the rest of the world yet at the same time come to terms with and maintain its own unique identity or identities. As Michael Handelsman reminds us through his analysis of one of the short stories, "Sólo cenizas hallará" and a novel, *Acoso textual*, of two contemporary literati, Raúl Pérez Torres (1941-) and Raúl Vallejo (1959-) respectively, little has changed since Leopoldo Benites Vinuesa (1905-1995) stressed in

his seminal, long since classic 1950 *Ecuador, drama y paradoja* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica), “El Ecuador es un pueblo que ... anda en busca de su destino” (p. 307). Except nowadays some of us would write “El Ecuador es un conjunto de pueblos ...”

Handelsman has been studying Ecuador for more than a quarter of a century. His *Culture and Customs of Ecuador* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2000) provides an introduction to the peoples and their cultures (in the broad sense) of contemporary Ecuador, something social scientists have eschewed except for Lilyan Benitez and Alicia Garcés. See their *Culturas ecuatorianas: ayer y hoy*, the latest edition of which appears to be the eighth (Quito: Abya-Yala, 1995).

The third and final contribution is a case study by James R. Keese, based on field work, of two international NGOs working in Ecuador, specifically Plan International in Sunicorral and Care International in the Parish of General Morales. Sunicorral is in *jatun* or Upper Cañar, and General Morales (also known as Socarte) in *uru llacta* or Lower Cañar. Keese is a relative newcomer to Ecuadorian Studies. But there is ample room in the pages of *Ecuadorian Studies / Estudios ecuatorianos* for newcomers as well as established scholars. All we ask is that each contribution tell us something new, be carefully crafted, and based on original research, whether archival, field, library, or museum. Professor Keese’s article meets each of these three criteria as do also those of Professors Beck, Scott, and Handelsman. As for the rest of you, *manos a la obra*.

For more information on the indigenous movements in Ecuador and on the role of NGOs in the country see: (1) Chad T. Black’s *Making of an Indigenous Movement: Culture, Ethnicity, and Post-Marxist Social Praxis in Ecuador* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, Latin American Institute, 1999); (2) Alison Brysk’s *From Tribal Village to Global Village: Indian Rights and International Relations in Latin America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld’s “‘Dirty Indians,’ Radical Indígenas, and the Political Economy of Social Difference in Modern Ecuador,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 17, no. 2 (May 1998): 185–205; (4) Tanya Korovkin’s “Reinventing the Communal Tradition: Indigenous Peoples, Civil Society, and Democratization in Andean Ecuador,” *Latin American Research Review* 36, no. 3 (2001): 37-67, her third or fourth article on recent and ongoing economic, political, and social developments and events in Otavalo communities; and (5) Melina H. Selverston-Scher’s *Ethnopolitics in Ecuador: Indigenous Rights and the Strengthening of Democracy* (Coral Gables: North-South Center Press, University of Miami, 2001).

There also at least four recent doctoral dissertations that examine the participation of the indigenous in national and local political processes and/or the role of NGOs in their “development”--excluding Selverston’s 1999 “Contemporary Indigenous Politics in Ecuador” (Columbia University), which, in revision, just appeared as the above mentioned book: (1) Robert James Andolina’s 1999 “Colonial Legacies and Plurinational Imaginaries: Indigenous Movement Politics in Ecuador and Bolivia” (University of Minnesota); (2) Pamela Lyn Burke’s 1999 “The Globalization of Contentious Politics: The Amazonian Indigenous Rights Movement (Ecuador, Transnational, Nongovernmental Organizations, Social Movements, Multilateral Development Banks, Collective Action)” (University of Maryland College Park); (3) Thomas Albert Perreault’s 2000 “Shifting Ground: Agrarian Change, Political Mobilization, and Identity Construction

among Quichua of the Alto Napo, Ecuadorian Amazonia (Ecuador)” (University of Colorado at Boulder); and (4) Charlotte Anne Voight’s 2000 “Uneasy Alliances: Household and Community Partnerships in Rural Ecuador” (University of Minnesota).