

Editorial: Looking Back, Looking Ahead

It is only appropriate as we come to the end of one millennium and embark upon another that the *Journal* should recognize the significance of the occasion by instituting some innovations of its own in looking ahead, and preparing for, the future. The first, and most obvious, such change is marked by the advent of a new Editor of the *Journal*, Enrique Baloyra, who took up his duties at the first of this year and whose name appears on the masthead, for the first time, with this issue. In so doing, he succeeds Jaime Suchlicki, who capably guided the *Journal* for 13 years, during which time it became one of the preëminent publications concerned with illuminating and explaining the contemporary Latin American scene. The Spring 1997 issue, the last under Jaime's aegis, undertook to take stock of the present relationship between the United States and Latin America as the Clinton administration was poised to enter upon its second term in office. Now, with this present issue, I too am retiring from my post as Managing Editor of the *Journal* and wish to take this opportunity to thank not only the readers of, but especially the contributors to, the *Journal* (often one and the same) for all their support over the past 14 years, which has not only lightened my load, making it that much more enjoyable, but has helped to ensure and maintain the high quality of our editorial content.

At the same time, it also affords an opportunity to look back over the years and assess how, and in what ways, the *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* has changed since its inception, and how far it has come in its 39 years of publication. The first issue of the *Journal of Inter-American Studies*, always a quarterly publication, appeared in January 1959 under the editorship of Robert E. McNicoll, at the School of Inter-American Studies on the campus of the University of Florida at Gainesville. Funded under a grant from the Pan American Foundation, the *Journal* originally published articles in Spanish, French, and Portuguese, as well as in English. From the very first, its editorial coverage was broad, extending from articles on literature and the arts to the humanities and social sciences in general, with an occasional article on the relations of Latin America to regions outside the Western Hemisphere.

In the Fall of 1964, both the editorial and publishing functions transferred to the campus of the University of Miami in Coral Gables, where the editorial office remains to this day. In Miami, Ione Stuessy Wright became the new Editor, a position she was to hold until her retirement in May 1972. During this first decade of its existence, the *Journal* continued to publish in all the languages of the Western Hemisphere, while the subject matter continued to be distributed fairly evenly between articles that ranged from Latin American culture and thought on the one hand to the region's society, economics and politics on the other.

When the *Journal's* affiliation with the Pan American Foundation came to an end, in July 1967, the University of Miami took over the full responsibility for its publication through its Institute of Interamerican Studies, then part of the Center for Advanced International Studies (and now the Graduate School of International Studies). For a brief period from 1970-1972, the *Journal* experimented with opening its pages to articles that dealt with regions beyond Latin America, though the emphasis remained heavily upon the latter; it was at that time that the phrase "*and World Affairs*" became appended to its original title.

The year of 1972 was a watershed year in many ways. Ione Wright retired and was succeeded by John P. Harrison. The University of Miami Press, our publisher, disbanded and the publishing function was turned over to Sage Publications in California, though the editorial office remained in Miami. Under the direction of Jack Harrison, the *Journal* increasingly focused upon articles related to the social sciences, primarily history, economics, and political science. For reasons of space and economics, it no longer published in any language other than English and also began to publish review essays, by a noted scholar, usually of a cluster of books centered around a particular subject, rather than separate reviews of individual books. The *Journal* also began the practice, still carried on today, of occasionally devoting an entire issue to a single subject organized around a particular theme or country. For example, in 1979 the *Journal* was one of the first to devote an entire issue to the subject of liberation theology (later re-issued by Sage as a book); more recent special issues have focused upon the drug trade, Panama, or the rise of poverty in Latin America.

In 1982, when Jack Harrison retired, events in Latin America were beginning to be front page news throughout the Hemisphere, as the civil strife in Central America mounted, the debt crisis threw regional economies into turmoil, and the first reports of the *Sendero Luminoso*

began to trickle out of Peru. Jaime Suchlicki assumed his post as Editor of the *Journal* just as public interest in the region was becoming increasingly engaged. To meet this mounting interest and provide as much information and analysis as possible about breaking events, he chose to focus the editorial content of the *Journal* more and more upon contemporary developments, particularly those with an impact on international relations within the Hemisphere. Through a fortuitous, and informal, collaboration with scholars at the Chilean think-tank of PROSPER, the *Journal* also arranged to publish, in English translation, articles by Latin American scholars about the foreign policies and international relations of their own countries in an effort to bring their thinking to a wider audience. This was an exciting time to be publishing about Latin America.

But time, and the *Journal*, must move on. Another exciting time is upon us. The Cold War has become history. All but one country in the Hemisphere is under the administration of a democratically elected government. The spread of neoliberal economic policies is bringing economic growth to Latin America on the one hand, but is also contributing to the rise of poverty and social dislocation on the other. New problems are calling for new solutions on every hand. Once again, the *Journal* is welcoming a new Editor who assumes his duties at a time when the need for communication between, and among, the peoples of the Americas is growing every day. The *Journal* intends to remain in the forefront of this communications effort. Stay tuned for the next exciting issue.

Jane G. Marchi
Managing Editor
May 1997