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Places to Stand: The Practices and Politics of Writing Histories

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This article situates itself within recent calls for rhetorical studies to expand its regional and cultural scope, offering an analysis of rhetorical constitution in republican Ecuador. Identifying the unavoidable ethical problems that arise when rhetoricians travel, the article argues for a flexible, learning-focused approach to rhetorical historiography that neither abandons existing rhetorical concepts nor rests easily in the face of their limitations. In light of the new insights that emerge when Burke's constitutional theories encounter Ecuador's complicated constitutional scene, the article suggests that our understandings of how rhetoric works can be tempered—both bent and strengthened—by displacement.

Or to put it in Archimedean terms, the place where one stands will have a great influence on what the historian's lever can move.

—James J. Murphy et al., 1988, "Octalog:
The Politics of Historiography"

One should seek to select, as representative anecdote, something sufficiently demarcated in character to make analysis possible, yet sufficiently complex in character to prevent the use of too few terms in one's description.

—Kenneth Burke, 1969, *A Grammar of Motives*

Let's begin by replacing Burke's representative anecdote.

Depending on how you count, Ecuador has had somewhere in the realm of twenty Constitutions since its foundation in 1830. Successive

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charters have shifted access to citizenship, renegotiated the sacred or secular foundation of the nation-state, and adjusted the national balance of power. Despite their differences, though, every Ecuadorian Constitution has had at base the same project: to sustain a vision of the nation and constitute the national body politic. It is, in fact, that shared motive of actualizing the nation-state in both practical and visionary terms that makes those Constitutions *constitutional* and gives them rhetorical, not simply legal, force. Constitutions are both the quintessential *act* of the republican nation-state and its most basic *scene*. That feature led Burke to suggest the U.S. Constitution as the ideal representative anecdote for human strategies in situations.

This article uses a discussion of Ecuadorian Constitutions—as representative anecdotes, as “enactment[s] arising in history” (Burke 1969, 365), and as hortatory, agonistic elements of a larger constitutional scene—to direct attention to a similarly hortatory and agonistic practice: the doing of rhetorical history. Building on research initially done for my dissertation (now book manuscript), it points out that Burke, though largely right about the aptness of Constitutions for understanding the larger scope of human “*strateg[ies] for encompassing . . . situation[s]*” (1973, 109, emphasis in original), failed in his own choice of representative anecdote to select something “sufficiently complex in character to prevent the use of too few terms in [his] description” (Burke 1969, 324). Taking the U.S. Constitution—unusual in its stability and in the power of the nation-state it convenes—as representative, Burke missed an opportunity to treat the breadth and mobility of motive and the deep yet contingent rhetorical force of constitution.

This article highlights the new complexity required of Burkean constitutive rhetoric when we expand its constitutional scene beyond the territory of the United States, and it positions that theoretical-methodological shift as a representative anecdote for the possibilities and pitfalls of writing rhetorical histories. It begins by laying out a problem of method and ethics and then turns to explore the conceptual richness that arises when we place our methods, our objects of study, and ourselves in unfamiliar positions and allow those positions to shift our stances.

SHIFTING SANDS AND ETHICAL IMPOSSIBILITIES

I “grew up” in a scholarly sense in the age of identity politics, post-modernism, and critical ethnography. Since my first postsecondary forays into research and writing, I have repeatedly faced the ethical questions of representation, access, and authority that both trouble and invigorate contemporary scholarship. I have learned to simultaneously acknowledge and circumvent the ethical implications that accrue when we presume to analyze acts, agents, agencies, purposes, scenes, and attitudes as *history*. I have

become adept at explaining my choices of topic and method, whether they are close to home or far afield. Graduate study and a dissertation focused on indigeneity, rhetorical history, and visual culture in Ecuador have, most of all, taught me to acknowledge that acts of analysis are always fraught with problems of power that arise from our always-partial ability to grasp the range of experiences and perspectives that constitute lifeworlds.¹ We inevitably tell our histories with a point of view. We assume the right to narrate moments we didn't experience, and we remember only some portion of the moments we did experience. Where we choose (or are able) to stand profoundly affects "what [our] historian's lever can move" (Murphy et al. 1988, 5). Those problems are inescapable. As others before me have suggested, they haunt our scholarship (see Canagarajah 2002; Cintron 1997; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Lyons 2000; Said 1994; Taylor 2003). They should. Still, unless we are willing to stop being scholars, we have to find satisfactory means of research and writing that account for rather than attempt to escape scholarship's ethical complexities.

Such problems are in no way unique to those of us who work with histories and locations other than our own. Every act of research and writing, after all, is an act of interpretation and representation. Whatever methodologies we pursue and whatever verbs we use to describe our scholarship (*making, doing, practicing, writing, etc.*), our language betrays. All historiography is invention. At the same time, the ethics of telling histories do present themselves more forcefully when (for example) a white, U.S. American rhetorician inserts herself into questions of indigeneity and nationalism in the rhetorical history of a small Andean republic three thousand miles from her home. Such relatively dramatic shifts of terrain necessitate particular preparation for difference, highlight researchers' social and cultural displacement, and dramatically reposition scholars as novices vis-à-vis their subjects (especially when they come with an attendant language change). As LuMing Mao notes, those of us approaching rhetorical practices well beyond our own "must reflect regularly on our methodologies, including their intrinsic connections to our objects of study, to our understanding of the Other, and to our understanding of ourselves" (2007, 216). When we enter new territories carrying conceptual tools developed for another place, time, or people, we necessarily encounter the limits of what we can claim to understand, let alone analyze. That fact, perhaps, gives traveling rhetoricians a particularly forceful place to stand when the time comes to position the lever and move historiography itself.

Statements of the limits of rhetorical history can run from the flippantly obvious (are we truly surprised that the Nahuatl of Tenochtitlan did not guide their discursive practice via categories titled *deliberative, epideictic, and forensic*?) to the functionally thorny (is the idea of "rhetoric" itself irredeemably place-bound?). Most of us recognize as problematic those early efforts in comparative rhetoric that took Greco-Roman traditions as their

standard and then unfavorably assessed other persuasive traditions as missing that Western norm. Beyond that, however, we struggle to achieve even the “(limited) effort to engage the Other’s context and the Other’s terms” that Mao encourages (2007, 221). Swearingen and Mao point out, for example, that even U.S. rhetoricians who note the problem of assessing “other” rhetorics in light of Greco-Roman traditions frequently fall back into the habit of “applying the Aristotelian paradigm,” lacking other means of interpretation (2009, W33). Similarly, Mao notes that it is easy for scholars to blur the distinctions between histories in their own contexts and our uses of those histories for our own theoretical and methodological purposes (2007, 221). It is commensurately difficult for us to keep our own goals, experiences, and understandings in check (and impossible to set them entirely aside). And yet there are means of proceeding responsibly in the writing of history that do not depend on our ability to supersede the inevitable complexities of our scholarly positions and may, instead, allow us to take advantage of those apparent problems. By keeping an eye toward the limits of our abilities and our conceptual tools, we open the possibility for changing them, allowing new questions and orientations to press against our accustomed methods.

A story: My friend Martha recently reminded me of an event from my first visit to Ecuador—when I was an undergraduate and she was my professor. Our class traveled to the town of Guamote where the majority indigenous population had recently elected their first indigenous mayor, Mariano Curicama. We met with Mayor Curicama, learned about his goals for the community, and heard about the processes of community organizing that led to his election. Twelve years after that visit, I had lost the specifics of Curicama’s speech. Martha, however, was struck by the mayor’s words to our gang of twenty-year-old *gringos* and remembers them clearly today. Mayor Curicama told us that he was happy to meet with us. We were welcome in Guamote, he said, because this time we were coming not to teach or to help but to learn. That different approach did not erase histories of exploitation, nor did it suggest that we were free of imperialist tendencies. It did, however, alter the terrain of our interactions. Mayor Curicama convened a new subject position for his *gringo* guests, challenging us to rethink Western notions of governance and authority, reposition ourselves vis-à-vis the people of Guamote, and reimagine ourselves as having something to learn.

The altered stance that Mayor Curicama made available to that young group in Guamote might also help us (U.S. rhetorical historians) resituate the writing of histories. We cannot ignore the problems of power and representation that inevitably arise when we do history. At the same time, we do better service to the histories we present when we position them and ourselves as pursuing understanding—fully acknowledging that we will sometimes, maybe often, be wrong—than when we focus on emptying or evading the

ethical morass our studies inevitably roil. To take that former path, we must begin by seeing our research and writing in terms of *learning* rather than *teaching*. That basic yet far from simple choice of starting places, not our always-imperfect ability to see from a perspective that is not (yet) our own, may indeed give us a place to stand as historians.

My argument here attempts to both honor and revise the lessons that LuMing Mao has offered historians of rhetoric in recent years (2007, 2011; Swearingen and Mao 2009). Mao advocates a lively, careful, robust practice of history in which we move away from comparative and contrastive urges and, instead, do research that takes seriously the contexts in which we place ourselves—learning from and altering our understandings in light of those histories, not framing them in terms of our own histories or always justifying their study via how we might use them.² This seems to me exactly the right direction for rhetorical history to take as it expands beyond both its dominant, resolutely Euro-American focus and its occasional dalliance with cultural comparison. At the same time, I worry Mao's insistence that we study other histories on their own terms will too easily slip into the assumption that achieving that other point of view would absolve us of the ethical problems of research and allow us to write *true* histories. I would add to Mao's lessons, then, a reminder that the purpose of our forays into other times and places is an educational one. We travel, academically speaking, to see new things, challenge old assumptions, and make our visions of rhetoric and the world more complex and more interesting. We go to have our knowledge unsettled and, in turn, to unsettle the knowledge of our readers. We go to learn, not to teach. That basic stance is too easy to forget or to forget to value.

ON CERTAINTY AND SLIPPAGE

It is worth noting that I do not consider my work “comparative rhetoric,” what Kennedy defined as “the cross-cultural study of rhetorical traditions as they have existed in different societies around the world” (1998, 1). That approach to comparative rhetoric relies too heavily on an otherwise largely abandoned interpretation of “rhetoric” as a proper noun. A “Rhetoric,” in that sense, is an established body of theories or traditions for discourse, a rule-bound system for understanding persuasion, identification, and civic life whose quintessential, if much-maligned, model is a singular Greco-Roman Classical Rhetoric.³ That proper-noun Rhetoric finds its roots in the idea of the “Rhetorical Tradition” even as it attempts to undermine such singularity. It orients scholarship primarily toward histories of explicit, formal education in speaking and writing or the cultural patterns underlying those traditions. When proper-noun Rhetoric travels, it leads us immediately to the terministic problem that “Rhetoric” requires Greek linguistic roots, and it orients our investigation toward articulated traditions as the primary starting

places for rhetorical research. Privileging proper-noun Rhetoric risks positioning “Chinese Rhetorics,” “Ecuadorian Rhetorics,” or “Greek Rhetorics” primarily in terms of established traditions that *belong* to particular contexts. That risk haunts us even when we acknowledge those traditions as evolving, unevenly available, and externally influenced. Though our scholarship works consciously to undermine assumptions about singular national traditions or essential cultural differences, the subtle allure of Rhetoric still sends us looking, again and again, for ethical and methodological bedrock, for certainty and stability rather than ambiguity and flux (see Gries 2010; Kirsch and Rohan 2008; Mattingly 2002; Murphy et al. 1988, for texts that attempt to balance this tension between stability and revision). The lingering idea that Rhetoric is a thing rather than what Cara Finnegan terms a “project of inquiry” (2004, 235) suggests if we work hard enough we can find a firm foundation that allows us to climb out of ethical and conceptual messiness.

The problem with such a nagging search for certainty is that it is futile. Pursuing it risks distracting us from the good, rigorous, critical work that can be and is being done in rhetorical history. We cannot fully set aside the assumptions of our own time and place nor escape the ethical messiness of doing scholarship. Pretending otherwise leads to disingenuous writing. I hope, however, that acknowledging the inevitable moral problems of research and writing will neither give us license to approach other histories in terms of their pragmatic use value (setting aside questions of truth and accuracy)⁴ nor lead us into endless equivocations and wishy-washy historical writing. Instead we should continue to research and write, following rich archival and secondary sources, drawing our best conclusions from what we encounter, teasing out patterns and continuities as well as distortions and ruptures in common-noun rhetorics, assuming that we may well be wrong but aiming for understanding, and allowing others to change our minds. In other words, in our scholarship we can seek to learn, not teach, about the rhetorical histories we describe. With the same effort, patience, and revision that we hope for from our students, we might then countervail the classic biblical trope: build our histories on shifting sand yet find ways for them to stand.⁵

Of late, rhetorical scholarship has focused on how communities and individuals imagine themselves, communicate values, structure political life, and respond to crises or opportunities. In that work, rhetoricians have pushed rhetorical historiography beyond a proper-noun focus, not denying its utility so much as pointing out that it elides vast terrains of rhetorical practice. If we turn that same interest beyond our own times and places, we might indeed use the English-language term *rhetoric* and its associated methodological or theoretical tools to describe what we are looking at because our subject will be practices, events, people, and interactions, not an externally existing object called Rhetoric. This scholarly endeavor is rhetorical studies or rhetorical history rather than rhetoric studies or rhetoric

history. Rhetoric, in this sense, is an adjective (maybe even a verb), not a noun: a question of *how* not *what*. My historical project, then, is neither to place Ecuadorian rhetorical practices alongside other nations' nor to elaborate as complete as possible a description of something that could be called an Ecuadorian rhetorical tradition. It, instead, pursues rhetorical history and theory as projects of inquiry—tracing Ecuadorian practices and processes of making the nation in order to better understand them and the ways they might expand our conceptions of how rhetorics work.

There are many ways to pursue the methodological and theoretical project of building our histories on shifting sand. In some sense, every recent rhetorical scholar who has written across difference or distance has found some strategy to allow claims and negotiate unstable ethical conditions. I offer this article not to displace our field's rich practice of doing history but rather to propose a parallel to one emerging trend within that practice: the move to discard traditional rhetorical terms in favor of more autochthonous concepts (see Baca 2009; Gries 2010). Such efforts do important work. They question the intellectual hegemony of Western rhetorical theories and usefully make strange our accustomed language. They take seriously the wide range of persuasive, communicative practices that have emerged and circulated in human history and refuse to allow false equivalencies among those practices. At the same time, were that approach to become the sole mechanism for writing histories of other times and places, I worry that we would too quickly conflate a choice to avoid more traditional rhetorical terms with the capacity to avoid conceptual bias. In the process, we might make scholarly travel simultaneously too easy and too difficult. In some instances, struggling with the misfit between existing terms and new contexts can help make clear both the difficulty and the pedagogical worth of moving our research into new times and territories.

It is essential to call attention to the array of potential problems caused by importing concepts drawn from Greco-Roman or U.S. rhetorical theories into contexts minimally or problematically touched by those conceptual traditions. When we use such rhetorical terms to evaluate or discipline a new context, we risk missing what that context has to teach. However, that approach (using existing concepts as measuring sticks or battering rams) is, at base, bad scholarship: formulaic, pedantic, and intellectually stagnant. It would be mediocre scholarship, after all, that merely reproduced Aristotelian categories while analyzing a rhetorical fragment from ancient Greece. Instead, the point of continuing to engage concepts that have long traditions is to see simultaneously what those terms can teach us about a new context and what a new context can teach us about those terms. Recent work by Cintron (2010), Enoch (2008), and Morris (2007), among others, demonstrates some of the intellectual richness that comes from reconsidering old terms in new contexts. When Cintron reimagines the use of *topos*, Enoch expands applications of "rhetorical education," or Morris "queers"

public address, they not only offer productive readings of their subjects but also show how those subjects twist into the coiling history of rhetorical studies. In that same, looping vein, I remain recalcitrantly interested in the utility of any term intended to describe the force of symbolic communication, whether it comes from ancient Greece, the mid-twentieth-century United States, or pre-Colombian Kitu.

It will not always be appropriate to carry our conceptual and methodological baggage into new places, but we will most certainly end up carrying some of it anyway. What matters, then, is that we expect our equipment to change—fade, adapt, fall out of use, take on new implications, even break—as we travel and learn. In this sense, for example, Susan Romano's (2009) investigation into how Spanish colonial authorities adapted preaching manuals to the rhetorical circumstances of priests working in Nahua communities in New Spain both enacts and examines rhetorical attention to shifting terrain. Similarly, Bo Wang's contribution to this issue of *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* shows how Chinese authors invented, reimagined, and appropriated Western feminism in order to underwrite their own critical rhetorical purposes. And René De los Santos, in his study of mid-twentieth-century Mexico (2007), provides new insight into received theories of nationalism by reexamining them in light of Mexican political institutions and rhetorical ecologies.

Of course, my interest in the productive possibilities of carrying old concepts into new places has its roots in how useful that approach has been in my own work. As I've asked rhetorical historians to pay attention to visual culture in Latin America, I've bridged the knowledge gap, in part, by means of familiar language: framing new insight via revision of rhetorical concepts like *topos*, rhetorical situation, and identification. What I've learned is that it helps to work with those concepts available within my own tradition that already have a history of stubbornly resisting straightforward definition. Unstable or recycled concepts seem more adaptable to new landscapes. They are more available to contestation and more amenable to building histories on shifting sand. Theories of the commonplace exemplify that sort of flexible resource: their simultaneous association with rigid, formulaic argument and the wild, slippery nature of invention has long puzzled and attracted rhetoricians. Kenneth Burke's rhetorical theories—with their change over time, their messy self-referentiality, and their always-failed effort to fully encompass the world—provide another. I have been particularly drawn to Burke's musings on constitutive rhetoric because they demand greater attention than they have received to date and provide a point where the rhetorical histories of Ecuador rub uncomfortably but productively against Burke's U.S.-centrism.

Working closely with those two conceptual resources (*topoi* and constitutive rhetoric) while writing my dissertation and revising it into a book manuscript, I realized the particular flexibility and range that I appreciated

in them might also come from an additional shared source: their “scenic” or “place-filled” nature. Both concepts push rhetoricians to be aware of context and adapt to the exigencies of a particular place. They encourage us to review the territories of our identifications. Since the majority of rhetorical historians locate our work in places where the rhetorical theories that originated in classical Greece and Rome overlap with, appropriate, or are washed away by other practices of persuasion, careful attention to terrain, to common and uncommon places, and to shifting constitutional scenes is essential for all of us.

Of course, even place-aware rhetorical theories can stumble in new terrain. That scenic problem came jarringly to the fore for me when I tried to use Burke’s discussion of constitutions in *A Grammar of Motives* as if it were a map for understanding rhetorical practice in general. It is not. Burke’s theories are imperfect tools for inquiry, not omniscient guides to every landscape.⁶ That reorientation lays the basis for the sort of learning stance I suggest ought to more explicitly underlie our historiography. Ecuadorian terrain forced both Burke and me to give up the historical stability we had earlier imagined. That shift and its implications provide a usefully sandy fulcrum point for the work of moving rhetorical historiography.

DISPLACING CONSTITUTIVE RHETORIC

In the 1960s and 1970s, Kenneth Burke seized upon the Constitution as the ideal representative anecdote for understanding language as symbolic action (1969; 1978, 334). His musings, most notably in the chapter “The Dialectic of Constitutions,” examined the U.S. Constitution as playing both deliberative and epideictic roles in bringing the nation into being (1969, 358). After several decades of relative neglect, Burke’s version of constitutive rhetoric has recently come back into circulation as rhetoricians once again examine how symbolic action makes and maintains publics. That attention is long overdue and well deserved. It also makes this an apt time to nudge Burke’s constitutional project beyond its original scenic scope. Burke’s constitutive rhetoric treats a single, stable (if revisable) Constitution. Ecuador has had twenty Constitutions.⁷ On the sand of that simple, place-bound assumption in Burke’s theorizing, it is possible to build a more complex, more nuanced, and more generative treatment of constitutionality—one that gives Burke’s ideas new and more robust life for our current scholarly moment.

Burke describes the U.S. Constitution as an “ought” that brings into being an “is” and has designs on the full spread of the hexed pentad: act, agent, scene, agency, purpose, and attitude. Ecuador’s multiple Constitutions have similarly served both as stances against the perceived errors of previous Charters and idealistic urges toward new national futures. In that sense, they fit neatly with Burke’s insight that Constitutions are both agonistic and

hortatory (1969, 358). However, Burke's choice of a singular Constitution as representative places any change in either conflict or vision as happening within the landscape of that Constitution. Such focus on the nonrepresentative U.S. context hampers his constitutive rhetoric, narrowing it to a single-point act that, becoming a permanent scene for future actions, can only truly be contested or amended within its own scene. Taking a more conflicted constitutional scene, like Ecuador's, as representative expands Burke's original treatment of constitutionality so that it is able to address a panoply of constitutive scenes, acts, and attitudes. It highlights the importance of contingency for understanding constitution. Displacing constitutive rhetoric from its native U.S. territory pushes us to consider how national Constitutions both sustain and respond to what Burke terms "Constitutions-Behind-the-Constitution" and allows us to more closely track the often-contradictory force of nation making. In this way, the commonplaces of rhetorical practice in republican Ecuador can shift our stance toward the U.S.-based theories we've inherited from Burke and make them more able to approach rhetorical processes broadly written. Such a shift, in turn, alters our methods—pushing us to ask new questions and try new approaches based on new conceptual orientations.

Constitutive rhetoric has two overlapped but distinct traditions within rhetorical studies. They are distinguished, essentially, by the conceptual sources for their "constitutional" orientations. The first tradition, using Burke's own constitutional theories, began with *A Grammar of Motives*, appeared again in a brief *College Composition and Communication* article in 1978, essentially disappeared between 1978 and 1991 when it was the subject of a special issue of *Pre/Text*, and then disappeared again until the 2000s, when work by both Gregory Clark (2004) and Dana Anderson (2007) revitalized interest. The second approach is related to but disconnected from Burke's own musings on constitutions. Relying instead on Althusser's theories of interpellation to invoke constitution, that version began with Maurice Charland, recurred regularly in rhetorical scholarship during the 1990s, and has, by now, become a commonplace of rhetorical theory.

Charland's "Constitutive Rhetoric" relies on *A Rhetoric of Motives* rather than *A Grammar of Motives* to make its point about the convening power of rhetoric. Linking Althusser's concept of interpellation with Burke's "identification," Charland demonstrates how the claim to nationhood is always based on assertions about the existence of a certain kind of subject and therefore "calls [that] audience into being" (1987, 134). Though Charland's constitutive rhetoric brings important complexity to our understandings of rhetorical audiences, his focus on Burke's theories of identification, not constitution, means that Charland's "people" are primarily constituted through explicit acts of identity-forming discourse rather than viewed in terms of a broader constitutional scene. Scholars following Charland's use of constitutive rhetoric have, for the most part, maintained that focus (see Drzewiecka

2002; Leff and Utley 2004; Stein 2002; Sweet and McCue-Enser 2010; Tate 2005; Thieme 2010; Zagacki 2007).

In their recent work in constitutive rhetoric, both Anderson and Clark directly invoke “The Dialectic of Constitutions,” offering a robust application of Burke’s own take on rhetoric’s constitutive power. However, both continue Charland’s rather metaphorical approach to constitution. Their studies use the idea of “constitution” in its sense of “convening” to pursue questions of identity and identification. Combined with their U.S. focus, the fact that neither Anderson nor Clark directly addresses the question of Constitutions (capital C) allows them to avoid directly confronting the limitations of Burke’s too-narrow representative anecdote. Going beyond the U.S. scene and into the Ecuadorian does not simply expand the scope of rhetorical studies by introducing new histories and practices, then; it also forces us to broaden our sense of how rhetoric works, to alter our representative anecdotes.

What has intermittently intrigued rhetorical scholars about Burke’s “Dialectic of Constitutions” is precisely the utility that Burke himself ascribes to the chapter. Considering rhetorical constitutions provides a “generative model for the study of language as symbolic action” (1978, 334). In addition, Burke notes, the “scope (circumference) [of the Constitution] as an *act* [is] so comprehensive that it set[s] up and define[s] the overall motivational *scene*, in terms of which countless personal acts of its citizens [will] be both performed and judged” (1978, 334, emphasis in original). Burke’s choice of the U.S. Constitution, however, makes the scene-setting power of the constitutional act *too* comprehensive. As a representative anecdote for motive and strategy, that stable, singular text endows constitutive acts with excessive force and misses the opportunity to explore the conditional nature of all rhetorical efforts.

Burke opens his otherwise too-unique anecdote to broader use by making space for the metaphorical move adopted by scholars such as Clark and Anderson. His discussion of “the Constitution” turns quickly to the idea of “constitution” as a key term for the study of substance and motive in general: “[T]o deal with problems of motive is to deal with problems of substance. And a thing’s substance is that whereof it is constituted. Hence, a concern with substance is a concern with the problems of constitutionality” (1969, 337–338). Offering a sense of constant interaction among acts, scenes, and agents, this approach to constitution allows rhetoricians to approach all acts of public-creation as constitutive “strateg[ies] in situation[s]” (1978, 333). Treated in light of Burke’s representative anecdote, however, small-c constitutions, particularly when addressed in terms of national identifications, still operate within the larger motivational scene provided by a singular, originary Constitution. Clark, in his study of how landscape and tourism constituted national identity in the United States, can thus use Burkean constitutive rhetoric without needing to address the U.S. Constitution because,

in Burke's formulation, the political charter had already set the scene within which Clark's study travels.

In a context like Ecuador's, however, where Constitutions are multiple and the constitutional scene is repeatedly reset, we cannot approach constitution as a determinate act nor cite the constitutional scene as given. Using constitutive rhetoric to understand the force of nationalism there requires rhetorical scholars to move among Constitutions and between Constitutions what Burke called "constitutions-behind-the-Constitution," between publics and contexts, and between texts and other artifacts, seeing them as contingent sources of identification that are mutually constitutive. That emphasis on strategies and on the ratios established among Constitutions and constitutions-behind-the-Constitution builds elasticity and complexity into an otherwise over-determined scene. It reminds us that identification is a matter of conditional prompt and conditional response and is motivated by and situated within a shifting field of scenes and agents. It pushes as well for a methodological orientation that privileges uncertainty in order to make space for those shifting concepts and contingent acts.

Burke writes, in his justification for the choice of "Constitution" as his representative anecdote, that "the Constitution is in itself a verbal enactment. But in defining a realm of motives for the citizens' acts with regard to the nation's material resources, it constitutes a socio-political *scene* for those acts. Yet all such resources in themselves constitute a non-verbal kind of Constitution-Behind-the-Constitution" (1978, 334, emphasis in original). Burke locates his Constitutions-behind-the-Constitution primarily in the realm of nonsymbolic motion, but his discussion of "material resources" and his elaborations on constitutionality also leave the door open to a broader interpretation, one that is essential when we move toward a more plural sense of constitution. Constitutions-behind-the-Constitution can be seen as a range of symbolic acts and agencies (e.g., paintings, prints, poems, treatises, social movements) that set the scene for successive Constitutions and build contingent stability into an always-interrupted process of national constitution. Methodologically speaking, moving among Constitutions and constitutions-behind-the-Constitutions helps build place-awareness and uncertainty into our practices of rhetorical history. Rather than privileging individual acts or agents as the subjects of rhetorical analysis, it asks rhetorical historians to learn the ratios among scenes and agents, acts and attitudes. It places different, even apparently contradictory, artifacts alongside one another. Widely construed constitutions-behind-the-Constitutions help authorize Constitutions, making space, for example, for different Ecuadorian Charters to imagine citizenship and national identity as simultaneously evolving, natural, and authorizing. Interacting with and underlying constitutional processes, constitutions-behind-the-Constitutions help foster a resilient common sense about the national body, one whose circulation and repetition helps legitimize the contingent national public that

each Constitution convenes within its own moment and scene. The next several pages sketch what it might look like to enact a rhetorical historiography that applies and revises a received concept like Burke's, in the process seeking to learn about rhetorical practice by standing in a new place.

EXEMPLA GRATIA: ECUADORIAN CONSTITUTIONAL
SCENES, 1861–1946

The political history behind the nine Constitutions and eleven constitutional assemblies promulgated in Ecuador during the tumultuous period between 1861 and 1946 has been characterized as an “agitated progress” of state formation (Borja y Borja 1951, *LXIV*). Throughout those eighty-five years, ideas of popular sovereignty and republicanism were hortatory, admonitory, and, often, manipulative tropes belied both by the years’ persistent political instability and by the self-evident exclusion of the great mass of the population from active civic participation.

In light of the complexities and contours of those years, the multiple Constitutions and constitutional assemblies that struggled against one another to define the national body politic must be recognized as distinct historical events, invested in divergent concerns, and responding to different rhetorical situations. That reality of changing circumstances, however, also makes the ways that successive Constitutions balanced consistency and change of particular interest for the study of constitutive rhetoric. It highlights the “motivational fixity” that constitutions provide as always grounded both in and beyond the constitutional document. Those consistencies also point toward a submerged, affective rhetorical process by which a widely shared common sense about the body of the nation emerged and was sustained through acts of contestation. Understanding that balance between contingency and permanence via the lens of constitutive rhetoric requires bringing to bear the full range of complexity implicit in Burke’s concept: making constitutions plural and attending to both Constitutions and constitutions-behind-Constitutions.

One of the most powerful pieces of that sustained common sense within shifting constitutions was a notion of Ecuadorian-ness that strategically defined a wide national public. The nine Constitutions enacted between 1861 and 1946 consistently define anyone born within Ecuadorian territory as “Ecuadorian.” That broad scope implicitly included all of the country’s diverse populations, assigned them civic responsibilities based on their belonging to the nation, and housed national sovereignty within that expansive public body. The delegation of sovereignty from nation to government happened not actively, through a process of suffrage and election, but passively, by virtue of membership in the body of the nation.

Such urges toward universal participation in the nation can be productively understood via a revised version of what Burke calls the “Constitutional Wish” (1969, 323). In Burke’s formulation, constitutions proclaim the existence of realities that are patently not yet real in order to bring them into existence. Constitutions use an *ought* to reimagine reality; they “base a statement as to *what should be* upon a statement as to *what is*” (1969, 358, emphasis in original). Ecuadorian Constitutions beginning in 1861 represent repeated instances of such hortatory assertion. In their inclusive definitions of Ecuadorian-ness, they invoke a political state that is, in practice, not yet. Throughout the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth, national identity was inchoate, even among the small population of Creole elite. It would be a stretch to suggest that those elites saw *mestizo* artisans and traders, let alone indigenous peasants, as equal partners in the nation. At the same time, they were ideologically invested in notions of republican virtue and popular sovereignty. It is that sort of hortatory, idealistic constitutional imagination Burke references when he describes rhetorical constitutions as including a “volitional element” where introducing a principle “into a Constitution is to utter a hope that men may [attain it]” (1969, 373).

At the same time, Ecuador’s Constitutions demonstrate the inevitable omissions that undergird the constitutional wish. Burke suggests that such failures are endemic to a “partial world” where the “total act cannot be attained.” His emphasis on the “constitutional wish” allows him to understand the Constitution as containing contradictory urges that must be negotiated within the framing of a circumference for the constitutional act. Implicit but untreated in Burke’s formulation is the possibility that a Constitution’s declarations might be idealistic but insincere attempts to cover over the uncomfortable inconsistencies of the *is* with the palliative breadth of the constitutive *ought*. That possibility, visible also in the U.S. Constitution, underlies much of Ecuadorian constitutional history. There, the representative republic of successive Constitutions was far more often a manipulative fiction than a functional reality.

The central piece of that fiction is that, though the constitutional wish defining “Ecuadorian” in nineteenth and early-twentieth-century Charters included the majority indigenous population, access to the rights and responsibilities of *citizenship* was much more exclusive.⁸ In a twist on what Feehan notes about Burke’s description of the U.S. Constitution, Ecuadorian Constitutions between 1861 and 1946 created “simultaneously both the kinds of citizens [wished] for and the kinds of instruments necessary for sustaining those citizens” (1991, 42). Neither Feehan nor Burke means those two clauses to suggest contrary movement. In Ecuador, however, they did. Constitutions invoked universal citizenship and the *topos* of the “people” as an ambivalent, elite “Constitutional Wish” (Burke 1969, 323) that covered the actually existing oligarchy with a simulacrum of republican authenticity.

Those same constitutions provided the necessary mechanisms for limiting the republican fantasy of the Constitutional wish in a way that sustained the citizenship of a particular portion of the population but excluded the majority that had, in theory, been invoked by the broad definition of “Ecuadorian” and by declarations of universal suffrage.

Ecuadorian Constitutions from 1861 to 1946 made the ability to read and write in Spanish a requirement for citizenship. That literacy barrier, in effect through 1979, retained suffrage and citizenship as a privilege of the light-skinned and economically powerful. The common declaration that the government was “popular, representative, elected, alternating, and responsible” (Constitution of 1878) and that all Ecuadorians had the right to “equality before the law and the ability to elect and be elected to public office” (Constitution of 1861) was thus circumscribed by the simple phrase “always providing that they have the appropriate legal aptitudes” (Constitution of 1861). Considering that voter participation changed from .02% of the population in 1848 (Maignashca 1996, 92) to 3.3% in 1894 (93) and 9.5% in 1948 (de la Torre and Salgado 2008, 20), it should be clear that for the entire period under consideration here most Ecuadorians’ access to constitutional citizenship was highly curtailed.

Indigenous people, in particular, struggled to escape the “shadows of citizenship” through much of the twentieth century (Guerrero 2003, 273).⁹ Even those indigenous people who did access citizenship were not widely seen as equal citizens. For elites, as Guerrero writes, “It was unthought and unthinkable that Indians . . . could be free and equal Ecuadorian citizens” (1994, 214). In Constitution after Constitution, then, the image of the nation might be popular and indigenous, but the ability to define that nation through active participation was firmly reserved for relatively privileged white-*mestizos*. Every citizen might be an Ecuadorian, but not every Ecuadorian could be a citizen.

Here we encounter the idea that Constitutions are formed, in part, by the presence of their constitutive exterior. Burke suggests that Constitutions “proclaim . . . equality *within* the Constitution as a way of counteracting some kind of inequality outside the Constitution (or within the wider circumference of the Constitution-beneath-the-Constitution)” (1969, 373). Constitutions necessarily do their hortatory, nation-creating work in the context of an outside or an other. For Burke, that constitutional exterior falls most often beyond a circumference located at the borders of the nation. The more contested scene of Ecuadorian Constitutions reminds us that circumference drawing can as easily be a tool of internal management as exterior defense. In order for white-*mestizos* to recognize themselves in successive Constitutions, those documents could not fully incorporate a “naturally inferior” indigenous population. At the same time, the nation without its indigenous population would be unrecognizable. Indigenous people may have been, for these Constitutions, fundamentally exterior to citizenship, but

such exclusion could not easily be sustained within the idea of the popular republic without significant rhetorical input to salve the contradiction.

The Constitutions enacted between 1861 and 1946 existed in a constant state of internal tension, resting uneasily between a republican urge and the maintenance of aristocratic authority for a white-*mestizo* minority. Though there was significant change in Ecuador between 1861 and 1946, the fundamental guarantees of citizenship and national identity were more or less consistent as Constitution after Constitution put forward its impermanent act of nation making. Over time, those contradictory ideas of nationality and citizenship became, as Burke says of the U.S. Constitution, “binding’ upon the future.” They “[encouraged] men to evaluate their public acts in the chosen terms,” many of which divided national identity from active citizenship. That established difference, nurtured across changing scenes, built up commonsense understandings of both ideas among elites that “[served] in varying degrees to keep them from evaluating such acts in other terms” (1969, 368) each time they approached a new constitutional revision. In this way, to again appropriate Burke’s language, “constitutions [became] of primary importance in suggesting what coordinates [Ecuadorian elites would] think by” (367).

Political Constitutions, however, could not do that scene-setting, circumference-drawing work on their own. Because they were always contingent and potentially temporary, their power to determine rhetorical scenes was less complete than Burke’s original formulation allows. To understand how Constitutions establish motivational fixity, then, we might look not only at their own repeated constitutive work but also beyond them to constitutions-behind-the-Constitutions, in this case artifacts of visual culture, which shore up, challenge, or mitigate the nation-convening work of Constitutions.

Visual Constitutions-Behind-the-Constitution, 1861–1946

From 1861 to 1946, indigenous people were frequently depicted in literature, in scientific texts, and especially in artifacts of visual culture as the quintessential image of Ecuador. That visibility helped naturalize and give context for Constitutions that defined Ecuadorians broadly but retained the rights of citizenship for a select few. Images of indigenous people were important constitutions-behind-the-Constitution that challenged a certain blindness about the status of indigenous communities that recurred in Constitutions but simultaneously helped legitimize white-*mestizo* authority by naturalizing the political distinction between the national public as a whole and a limited sphere of active citizens.

Two artistic genres in particular serve as useful examples of that conflict-assuaging constitutive work. One (*costumbrismo*) circulated during the second half of the nineteenth century, and the other (*indigenismo*)

was prominent from the mid-1930s through the 1950s. Both emerged from aesthetic movements that valued realism, attention to the local, and social commentary. Each is regularly discussed as a definitive artistic inclination of its era, in large part because each directly engages questions of national identity. Though it is easy to distinguish *costumbrismo*'s romantic tendencies from the harsher expressive realism of *indigenismo*, the two forms coincide in their efforts to envision the nation as indigenous. Through that shared fascination, both genres circulated images of national identity that matched the more expansive sense of the nation sponsored in successive Constitutions while also providing, first in images of simplicity and then in images of degradation, justification for the assumption of indigenous marginality from citizenship. Attending closely to the rhetorical work of those genres makes clear that constituting a shared national public in Ecuador involved repeatedly *seeing* that public and its indigenous semi-Others just as much as it depended on the scenic acts of textual Constitutions that defined the nation and its citizenship laws. Placing formal Charters in tension with other non-textual artifacts allows the complexities and contradictions of Ecuadorian nation making to come to the fore. That orientation toward complexity in turn highlights the contingency of doing research, as different artifacts placed alongside one another reveal different lessons about the rhetorical history under consideration.

Costumbrismo and the Romantic Nation

Mid-nineteenth-century romanticism in both Europe and the Americas initiated a rising aesthetic interest in local traditions, clothing, and scenes. Similarly, the influence of "bourgeois positivism" in Ecuador meant that artists believed in the "importance of approaching nature, or having direct contact with [their] subject or theme and being conscious of the world that presented itself" before their eyes (Kennedy Troya 1998, 230). *Costumbrismo*, with its fascination for popular figures and social types, was a perfect genre for negotiating those aesthetic trends. Its circulation in Ecuador also points to an emerging political culture that defined republican national identity as distinct from access to citizenship. The foreign travelers and local white-*mestizo* artists who produced *costumbrista* images participated in normalizing that division, providing a vision of the nation that incorporated popular figures and social types into national identity without implying practices of political citizenship.

Costumbrismo usually emphasizes the external and omnipotent gaze of the viewer and imagines its subjects in terms that descend directly from the previous century's fascination with the Noble Savage (Catlin 1989; Pérez 2005, 100). It presents generic social types in isolated scenes without much contextual setting. *Costumbrista* images circulated widely as illustrations of the nation. They fill travelers' accounts and the edges of illustrated

maps. They were commissioned by affluent residents and echoed in contemporary photography. The circulation of these images, both to foreign visitors and local elites, helped create a vision of the Ecuadorian people that stood in marked (and functional) contrast to the whitewashed discourse of Ecuadorian citizenship in policy documents, including Constitutions. *Costumbrismo*, with its emphasis on the viewer's superiority and external oversight, established a role for white-*mestizo* viewers vis-à-vis the popular classes that smoothed the disjuncture between an inclusive national public and an exclusive republic of citizens. Implicitly carried in *costumbrismo* was an analogous argument that the body of the nation was to its governance as the indigenous figure was to its Creole viewer, the latter actively gazing and the former passively granting authority.

Though *costumbrista* artists explicitly valued realism and scientific vision, their images relied so heavily on serially transmitted versions of the types they depicted that they should be read as ideologically inflected semi-fabrications rather than as fully realistic depictions of the customs and habits of Ecuador's popular classes. However, the fictional realism of these images emphasizes the force they exerted toward a vision of the nation that served the needs of white-*mestizo* elites. To return to our revised terms of constitutive rhetoric, *costumbrismo* underlined the hortatory vision of the national *we* established in successive Constitutions. Just as Constitutions are scenic, so also do they emerge within a particular scene such that "a complete statement about motivation will require a wider circumference, as with reference to the social, natural, or supernatural environment" (Burke 1969, 362). The nineteenth-century Ecuadorian constitutional wish for a true republic functioned within and in light of visual constitutions-behind-the-Constitution that mitigated the meaning and application of that republic. Shifting the stance of constitutional analysis toward such plurality allows access to the ways that political document and painted image together helped authorize the constitutional "enactment arising in history" (Burke 1969, 365) that was the quasirepublican nation-state.

Indigenismo and the Indian Problem

Shaped by the same scenic complexities that prompted multiple contemporary constitutional assemblies, Ecuadorian visual culture made a dramatic aesthetic shift in the second quarter of the twentieth century. The new artistic genre that emerged continued to focus on Indians as national subjects but newly emphasized the oppressive conditions that dominated indigenous lives. By that time, visions of indigenous people as both central to national identity and exterior to the republic functioned as a pervasive common sense. It continued to operate persuasively even in the work of *indigenista* artists who sought to destabilize the political dominance of the traditional white-*mestizo* elite. Working parallel to constitutional debates that

struggled to incorporate indigenous Ecuadorians into a white-*mestizo* nation, *indigenista* artists imagined a new scene for national identity that remained based on established visions of the civic body.

Indigenista images depicting distorted and suffering Indians invoked traditions of solidarity and paternalism. They located national identity in indigenous bodies but largely defined that nation in terms of its degradation. Such paintings were stark reminders of a nation-state that built itself on the exploitation of its people. They were also powerful visual evidence of a fundamental problem of civilization and education that dramatized the state of the nation and called citizen-viewers to a new but still largely paternalistic relationship with the nation-as-Indian. *Indigenista* images asked white-*mestizo* viewers to identify with their indigenous subjects as compatriots but also called those viewers into a social stance focused on indigenous uplift and improvement toward an assumed white-*mestizo* norm.

Indigenista images, then, paralleled a move in constitutional debates to foreground the “Indian problem” and move the nation-state toward new, though still exclusive, visions of citizenship and national identity. Acts of visual culture and of successive Constitutions worked side by side such that the latter moved, as Burke suggests, “*pari passu* with changes in the quality of the scene in which the Constitution is placed” (1969, 365). But such change was not simply a question of a unitary constitutional act responding to a shifting scene. There was instead a constant negotiation between scene and act, one in which the visual scene helped make sense of changing constitutional enactments just as much as constitutional scenes responded to changing visual acts. It is in this sense that, in a larger application of constitutive rhetoric, Constitutions and constitutions-behind-the-Constitution can be seen as being in a fundamentally dialectical relation to one another, providing imperfect motives and conditional persuasion.

The romantic subject of Creole paternalism visible in nineteenth-century *costumbrismo* looked significantly different from the beleaguered and swollen Indians of *indigenismo*. They had in common, however, a strong implication that though these figures represented the true body of the nation, they required benevolent white-*mestizo* authority in order to secure their future. In this sense, Ecuadorian constitutive rhetoric had become “‘binding’ upon the future” (Burke 1969, 368) not *despite* but *because of* the contingent imperfection of each individual constitutional act. The gap between citizens and nationals, often coded indigenous, became commonplace through its uptake and reinscription across modes and moments. In their interaction, political Constitutions, visual constitutions-behind-the-Constitution, and other rhetorical acts and artifacts, “centered attention upon one calculus of motivation rather than some other; and by thus encouraging men to evaluate their public acts in the chosen terms, [served] in varying degrees to keep them from evaluating such acts in other terms” (Burke 1969, 368). Though individually partial, the sum of Ecuadorian constitutions

(in the larger sense) informed, sustained, and reproduced a constrained public of citizens and an expansive public of national identity. The interaction among and accumulation of scenes and acts both authorizes and naturalizes. It feeds a rhetorical milieu in which ideological discourse can “[present] itself as always only pointing to the given, the natural, the already agreed upon” (Charland 1987, 133), and it demands a methodological orientation that keeps artifacts and interpretations in tension. In Ecuador, the concatenation of constitutions convened a nation with a popular, indigenous body while simultaneously making sense of that body’s structural divisions. The instability and contingency of individual Constitutions (and small-c constitutions) aided rather than undermined that creation of common sense, creating a sense of stability within change.

PERMANENCE AND CHANGE

The revised notion of constitutive rhetoric imagined through this essay’s repositioning of rhetorical historiography can help historians of rhetoric take better account of the inevitable give-and-take between fixity and contingency in the varied moments of identification and persuasion that we examine. Taking such a flexible approach to our objects of study can, in turn, make our histories more ethically viable and, at their best, more interesting. So if, as Dana Anderson notes, “the power of a constitution . . . lies in its power to define substance, and to define it in such a way that those who share this substance then also share in the motives that bear it up” (2007, 42), acknowledging constitutional multiplicity helps us perceive both the impermanent nature of our existing terms and definitions and the ways that successive rhetorical acts build toward a sense of persistent substance. Drawn in the face of changing circumstances and negotiating competing ideological stances, successive, layered constitutions of rhetorical historiography, like the Ecuadorian constitutions analyzed here, may be able to better capture the shifting yet durable identities that have lasting influence on human motivation.

The foregoing analysis, then, demonstrates just one instance of the shifting-sand approach to doing rhetorical history proposed in the first sections of this article. It takes Burke’s constitutive rhetoric—a theory designed to explain how rhetoric works, at least from a U.S. perspective—and displaces it. In the process, it suggests both the richness of Burke’s original terms and the further growth in understanding that is possible if we take those terms as unstable starting points, not bedrock. Theoretical points of origin become part of the method. Encouraging theories to slip and choosing conceptual frames that call tensions to the foreground allow ways of doing research to become similarly contingent. Methods learn by enacting juxtaposition. They place different artifacts and conceptual

structures alongside one another to see where alignments and mismatches occur. They move the rhetorical historian into new territories. By planting the lever of rhetorical historiography in unfamiliar terrain, we not only learn about a particular place but also expand our sense of how rhetoric works. Rhetorical historians have much to gain by approaching our practice in terms of such contingent learning, turning from a quest for established knowledge or ethical solidity and toward a project of inquiry and education that privileges the interconnections between permanence and change.

Arguing in favor of this shifted stance via a displaced representative anecdote (a revised constitutive rhetoric), I have sketched both the theoretical value of approaching rhetorical history from other times and places and the conceptual utility of attending to contingency in our studies and our concepts. This critical look at Burke's "Dialectic of Constitutions," coming at a moment when that chapter is gaining renewed interest among rhetorical scholars, reminds us that we must account for constitution as a complex of means and motives (acts, scenes, agents, agencies, purposes, and attitudes). It points us, again, to the idea that rhetoric is a project of inquiry and a form of practice, not a proper noun. Orienting constitutional theories and methods around plural constitutions and constitutions-behind-Constitutions can shift the practice of rhetorical history further from proper-noun, stone foundations to shakier, sandier, common-noun ones. That move might just make our histories more able to respond to new scenes and, in turn, help us learn from places and times not our own.

NOTES

1. Based on data drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reports that in 2008 only 1.3% of the U.S. population held a nonprofessional doctorate. Alone, that rarified position occupied (or pursued) by most readers of this journal should remind us of the particularity of the lifeworlds from which we advance the history of rhetoric ("Educational" 2009).

2. Justifications based on our (U.S. American rhetoric scholars') use of rhetorical histories can take many forms with varying consequences. This article itself strays in that direction to the extent that it asks U.S. rhetoricians to reconsider "our" rhetorical theories in light of "other" histories. My caution, however, is more directed toward the imperative to ask questions such as, "How does this idea connect to U.S. university pedagogy?" or "How might this concept also be applied to U.S. contexts?" which not only privilege the perspective of a U.S.-based author and audience but also reduce the complexities of context in order to prioritize pragmatic application.

3. I am, of course, not the first person to raise this issue. It has been a long-term source of debate, engaged both directly and indirectly in published accounts and in conference halls (perhaps most notably in the Rhetoric Society of America's 12th biennial conference, in 2006, on "Sizing Up" rhetoric).

4. This is the subject of a recent exchange between Scott Stroud and LuMing Mao in the pages of *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* (Mao 2011; Stroud 2009, 2011).

5. "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matthew 7:24-27).

6. Burke himself acknowledges this point when he expresses his discomfort with William F. Irmischer's textbook, *The Holt Guide to English*, which uses Burke's pentad as a guide for invention. Burke notes, "Irmischer makes one mistake in comparing the pentad with Aristotle's topics. In the *Rhetoric*, for instance, Aristotle's list is telling the writer what to *say*, but the pentad in effect is telling the writer what to *ask*" (1978, 332).

7. Ecuador is not the only republic with a history of multiple constitutions. Georgetown University's Political Database of the Americas, for example, links to at least two separate Constitutions for each of the republics of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Paraguay, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela.

8. One does occasionally see "citizen" used in this era as a more general term for a petitioner, regardless of his or her actual citizenship status. When I refer to citizenship here, I'm invoking the constitutional meaning, not that more colloquial use, because "Indian" and "citizen" were often mutually exclusive terms for referencing petitioners.

9. The history of Afro-Ecuadorian political oppression is beyond the scope of this project, but it should be noted that Afro-Ecuadorians have also been regularly excluded from participation and have been less visible than indigenous people thanks, in part, to the narratives examined here.

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