

Maria Sticco, Publicist
e-mail: mes5@pitt.edu
tel: (412) 383-2493 fax: (412) 383-2466

3400 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15260
tel: (412) 383-2456 fax: (412) 383-2466
www.upress.pitt.edu

For immediate release August 22, 2011

New book makes major contribution to historiography of modern Ecuador

PITTSBURGH—In the seventeenth century, local Jesuits and Franciscans imagined Quito, the Andean capital of Ecuador, as the “new Rome.” It was the site of miracles and home of saintly inhabitants, the origin of crusades into the surrounding wilderness, and the purveyor of civilization to the entire region. By the early twentieth century, elites envisioned the city as the heart of a modern, advanced society—poised at the physical and metaphysical centers of the world.

In *City at the Center of the World: Space, History, and Modernity in Quito*, Ernesto Capello analyzes the formation of modernity, memory, and myth through the eyes of Quito’s diverse populations. He views the configuration of time and space in narratives that defined Quito’s identity and its place in the world. Capello explores the proliferation of these imaginings in architecture, museums, monuments, tourism, art, urban planning, literature, religion, indigenous rights, and politics.

“*City at the Center of the World* explores the emergence of Quito, Ecuador, as a modern national capital,” said Mark Overmyer-Velázquez of the University of Connecticut. “Capello’s elegantly written and well-organized study examines strategic moments in the city’s history in relation to their colonial past and regional contexts as city elites and indigenous communities worked to reshape ‘traditional’ historical discourses and city spaces to craft a modern capital to their respective advantage.”

“In this highly original book, Capello marshals an astonishing array of written, visual, and architectonic sources,” praised Kris Lane of Tulane University. “It will no doubt inspire new approaches to urban studies in the Americas and beyond.”

Capello is assistant professor of Latin American history at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota. Born in California, Capello was raised in Quito. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Texas and previously served on the faculty of the University of Vermont.

#

City at the Center of the World: Space, History, and Modernity in Quito by Ernesto Capello is published by the University of Pittsburgh Press
304 pp • 6 x 9-1/4 • ISBN 978-0-8229-6166-6 • Paper \$27.95