TULIO HALPERÍN DONGHI (1926-2014),
IN MEMORIAM

Ten years ago, as the editor of *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe* (EIAL), I asked my colleagues at the editorial board to suggest names of leading Latin Americanists for our international advisory board. The first name brought up by all participants in the meeting was that of Tulio Halperin Donghi. For all of us present in the meeting held at our Institute of Latin American History and Culture, he symbolized the image of a distinguished historian, whose biography and scholarly work bridged the Spanish speaking and English speaking academic communities of Latin Americanists, a nexus between Europe and the Americas. Indeed, this was, after all, one of the missions that we undertook when we first decided to start this journal back in the late 1980s. By then, his textbook on the history of modern Latin America, originally published in Spanish in 1967, was considered a classic and used by all of us in the introductory courses to Modern Latin American History.

Tulio accepted the invitation without any hesitation; his willingness to support such a scholarly initiative was characteristic of his intellectual generosity. At the same time it probably accorded with his own family background as well. Born in Buenos Aires in 1926, Halperin Donghi was the son of a Jewish father and a Catholic mother, and, as he described in his autobiographical book *Son Memorias*, his life story began with the arrival of two ships into the port of Buenos Aires - the one that brought his grandmother, Sofía Gerchunoff, from Bremen in 1889 and the one that brought his mother, Renata Donghi, from Genoa in 1910.

Tulio struggled with his Jewish identity, as could be seen in the conversations we had during his visit to Tel Aviv University in the mid-1990s. He delivered a brilliant lecture entitled "En busca de la especificidad del pensamiento político hispanoamericano", which was published the following year in EIAL. Supporting a journal of Latin American studies edited in Israel was clearly an idea that he very much favored. We often used to consult with him on the evaluation of articles and the review of books.

In an interview he gave to *La Nación* in September 2008, when asked about anti-Semitism in Argentina, he replied "Yo diría que ser 'contrera', más tarde, con el peronismo, me traería más problemas que ser judío, porque este problema se había disipado." Indeed, Halperín was certainly very critical of the Peronist movement, but the scholarship he displayed in dealing with this populist movement and its authoritarian traits, as seen in books like *La lenta agonía de la Argentina peronista* (1994), has been exemplary, a model that has influenced the research of many of us.
The best proof of his impact on Argentine historiography could be seen in the articles appearing in the media upon the publication of his death. It is a rare occasion when daily newspapers, which identify with the current government, actually join forces with those newspapers that oppose it, united in their praise of a leading intellectual. In November 2014 they actually managed to accomplish this, mentioning his long list of books, from his early *El pensamieto de Echeverría* (1951) to his *La Argentina y la tormenta del mundo: ideas e ideologías entre 1930 y 1945* (2003). Special emphasis was given to his *Revolución y guerra: formación de una elite dirigente en la Argentina criolla* (1972), considered by many as his most influential work. Therefore, at least two generations of Argentine historians and very many Argentinistas around the world owe much to Tulio Halperin Donghi for their interpretations of the tumultuous history of Argentina during the 19th and 20th centuries.