

RECENT BIBLIOGRAPHIES ON
LATIN
AMERICAN LITERATURE

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- DISSERTATIONS IN HISPANIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES: AN INDEX OF DISSERTATIONS COMPLETED IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.* By JAMES R. CHATHAM and CARMEN C. MCCLENDON, with the collaboration of ENRIQUE RUIZ-FORNELLS and SARA MATHEWS SCALES. (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1981. Pp. 162. \$20.00.)
- GABRIEL GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY, 1947-1979.* Compiled by MARGARET EUSTELLA FAU. (Westport, Conn., and London: Greenwood Press, 1980. Pp. 198. \$27.50.)
- MEXICAN LITERATURE: A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SECONDARY SOURCES.* By DAVID WILLIAM FOSTER. (Metuchen, N.J., and London: Scarecrow Press, 1981. Pp. 386. \$22.50.)
- PERUVIAN LITERATURE: A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SECONDARY SOURCES.* By DAVID WILLIAM FOSTER. (Westport, Conn., and London: Greenwood Press, 1981. Pp. 324. \$37.50.)
- A DICTIONARY OF CONTEMPORARY BRAZILIAN AUTHORS.* By DAVID WILLIAM FOSTER and ROBERTO REIS. (Tempe: Arizona State University, Center for Latin American Studies, 1981. Pp. 152. \$18.95 hardcover, \$11.95 paperback.)

The selection of Gabriel García Márquez as the recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982 was in many ways a kind of official recognition of the so-called Boom in Latin American fiction of the last two decades. Among other prominent Latin Americans rumored as possible final candidates for the Nobel Prize were novelists Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru) and Carlos Fuentes (Mexico), and poet-essayist Octavio Paz (Mexico). The decision by the Swedish Academy came as somewhat of a surprise to most Americans, although *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (*Cien años de soledad*, 1967) has enjoyed considerable commercial and critical success in the American book trade. A recent resurgence of Latin American literature (primarily novels and short stories) in English translation is probably an indication of heightened interest in contemporary Hispanic

American and Brazilian authors within the American reading public, or at least that American publishers are increasingly willing to risk a bit more in search of another best seller. But to Latin Americanists everywhere, and particularly the literary critics among them, the Nobel Prize selection hardly seemed controversial. For years they have claimed that Latin American fiction was outstanding according to any criterion, and since the *modernistas* of the turn of the century, the region has produced significant and influential poets.

So why has the word not been spread about contemporary Latin American writers? For one reason, most of the serious criticism on Latin American literature appears in journals published in Spanish that are directed exclusively to the specialist in Hispanic letters. There is nothing wrong with this selection of an appropriate audience, but it does tend to exclude the non-Hispanist from access to and an appreciation of Latin American literature. Another traditional problem in the dissemination of knowledge about Latin American literature is that journals, which form the basic nucleus of criticism, are often short-lived and of limited circulation. Add to this the lack of adequate indexes and bibliographies, and it becomes apparent that even the experienced scholar must know the ropes well to complete his or her research.

Fortunately, in recent years a number of American journals have appeared that give complete, or at least significant, attention to Latin American literature. Two of these are published exclusively in English, thus providing immediate access to the American scholars and students of literature who have yet to learn Spanish or Portuguese. Perhaps the most important journal of all is *Review*, established in 1968 as an annual survey of book reviews, but revised significantly first in the early seventies by editor Ronald Christ, then in the eighties by his successor, Luis Harss. Published by the Center for Inter-American Relations, *Review* has become a fundamental source for the discussion of Latin American literature and culture.¹ *Latin American Literary Review* (University of Pittsburgh) is the other major journal in English to deal exclusively with this topic since the early seventies.

The scholar also must stay abreast of the greater range of articles and books (published here and abroad) treating specific authors, literary movements, and critical theories as applied to Latin American literature. Research is impossible without journal indexes, publishers' lists, and other bibliographical sources because not even the best American libraries maintain all of the pertinent journals and books in their collections, and even if they could, it would be impossible for the researcher to keep track of them all. The task is even more difficult for those who have to rely on interlibrary loan services to do their work.

Existing bibliographical sources on Latin American literature are sadly inadequate. There is a constant need for new or newly revised

bibliographies in order to gain access to the vastly expanded body of criticism that exists today. Such a need has many causes, but principal among them is the fact that many inaccuracies exist in traditional sources (where an erroneous citation is often repeated again and again in periodicals and bibliographies, as anyone who has done extensive bibliographical investigation can attest), as well as steady growth in the number and variety of publications dealing with Latin American literature over the years. It is therefore encouraging to note the publication of recent bibliographies that will be fundamental sources of information for the serious scholar as well as the novice to Latin American literature.

James Chatham's and Carmen McClendon's *Dissertations in Hispanic Languages and Literatures: An Index of Dissertations Completed in the United States and Canada, Volume Two: 1967–1977*, expands the format and coverage of the first volume (for the period of 1876–1966),² and, when used in tandem with its predecessor, allows a quick check of dissertation themes and authors. New features in Volume Two include computer-generated subject indexes on Catalán and Luzo-Brazilian language and literatures (pp. 87–88 and 89–94, respectively). The third and largest index is that on Spanish and Spanish-American language and literature (pp. 95–162). No attempt has been made to split this section into divisions for Spain and Spanish America, although items in the index do refer to specifically peninsular and Spanish American topics.

A look at the most popular themes allows one to make some rather broad generalizations about trends during the ten-year period under consideration. First of all, the number of dissertations from 1967 to 1977 is almost twice the number listed for 1876 to 1966. Granted that the coverage for Volume Two has been expanded, these figures still indicate a healthy increase in dissertations from previous years. Favorite Brazilian authors include Machado de Assis and Jorge Amado, while Spanish-American writers receiving the most attention are all popular Boom writers: Jorge Luis Borges, Alejo Carpentier, Julio Cortázar, Fuentes, García Márquez, Juan Rulfo, Ernesto Sábato, and Vargas Llosa. Well-studied poets include Rubén Darío and Pablo Neruda, clearly the two most influential Latin American poets of the twentieth century.³ Although there is the expected emphasis on traditional themes (death, alienation, social conditions, the Indian, nature, love, the hero, and "themes" themselves), the dissertation listing shows a decided interest in literary theory and criticism. A particular emphasis on archetypes and myth analysis emerges as a major area of scholarly effort. Reflecting trends of the late sixties and seventies is the growing number of Cuban themes (José Martí et al.) and the interest in women's issues and themes. Although the bibliography does not make the point, it is apparent that many women are represented as authors and new Ph.D.s. *Dissertations* is a must for every research library. When used in conjunction with annual or periodic

lists found in journals such as *Modern Language Journal*, *Hispania*, *American Doctoral Dissertations*, and *Research Studies in Education*, it is a most valuable research tool.

Those who are pleased to find the special section on Luso-Brazilian language and literature in *Dissertations* will appreciate *A Dictionary of Contemporary Brazilian Authors*, by David William Foster and Roberto Reis. (Although published in 1981, the *Dictionary's* introduction is dated 1977.⁴) The authors note in their introductory remarks that Brazilian literature is virtually unknown in the United States, due in part to a relatively small, but stable, university enrollment in Portuguese (around five thousand nationally). When one considers the political and economic importance and cultural richness of Brazil, it seems incredible that it has yet to assume a more prominent place within American academia. But the fact remains that until recently, only the most prominent Brazilian authors (Machado de Assis, Erico Veríssimo, and Jorge Amado) were known in the United States. Foster and Reis's *Dictionary* was compiled to give American students and scholars an entry into the world of Brazilian letters. Many of the 192 writers included in the dictionary are young, developing talents who have proved to possess fine potential. The *Dictionary* includes major writers too, even a handful who are no longer living (João Guimarães Rosa, Manuel Bandeira, and Clarice Lispector, for example). The entries, which were contributed by thirty-four American and Brazilian academics, are concise commentaries that highlight critical (rather than biographical) information about the authors. Because of apparent cost limits for the book, references to the writers' works include only title and date. All entries are in English, although book titles are given in the original Portuguese and are not translated. The annotations, usually two to four paragraphs in length, underline structure, themes, and the use of language in the works. *A Dictionary of Brazilian Authors* is a good first source to identify promising young writers as well as literary celebrities. In their introduction, the editors state that it was difficult to evaluate the potential of many of the young writers considered for inclusion in the dictionary. If the resurgence of American interest in Brazilian literature in English translation is any indication, the editors' choices are sound. Within the last two years, novels by Lêdo Ivo, Márcio Souza, Ivan Angelo, Waldomiro Autran Dourado, and Roberto Drummond have been published or placed under contract by American publishers.⁵ Only Souza and Angelo are not listed in the *Dictionary*. While it is encouraging to note that talented Brazilian writers are being introduced to the American public, the *Dictionary of Contemporary Brazilian Authors* makes it obvious that we have seen only the tip of the iceberg in contemporary Brazilian letters.

It is well to point out that David William Foster, a highly regarded critic and editor in Hispanic literature, has become the leader in the area

of Latin American literary bibliography. His coedited *Manual of Hispanic Bibliography* (1970, revised 1977), *Research Guide to Argentine Literature* (1970), *Dictionary of Contemporary Latin American Authors* (1975), and *20th-Century Spanish American Novel: A Bibliographical Guide* (1975) were all major contributions to the field. Foster's stature as a first-rate literary critic enables him to evaluate the relative significance and scope of items to be included in a published bibliography.

Evidently Foster's awareness of the state of bibliographical studies on Latin American literature led him to produce two very useful reference works that one hopes will become prototypes for more national bibliographies to come. These works are *Mexican Literature: A Bibliography of Secondary Sources* and *Peruvian Literature: A Bibliography of Secondary Sources*. Both resemble Foster's *Chilean Literature: A Working Bibliography of Secondary Sources* (1978) in that they are designed specifically for the scholar. For writers about whom relatively little has been published, entries are not selective, but for well-established authors, the listings of articles and books were chosen after careful evaluation of their significance. As in *Chilean Literature*, the works are subdivided into three parts: general reference, authors, and an index of critics. These are subdivided into clearly defined sections by period and genre (general works) and as bibliographies, monographs and dissertations, and critical essays (authors). Foster excludes book reviews, but does include review articles that as "a rough form of specialized research" provide some detail on important aspects of the work under consideration. In both the Mexican and Peruvian bibliographies, as well as their Chilean predecessor, Foster has utilized national bibliographies, critical monographs, and the standard bibliographies such as the *MLA International Bibliography*, the *Handbook of Latin American Studies*, and the *Hispanic American Periodicals Index (HAPI)*.⁶ In general, the Foster bibliographies are extremely useful in that they provide verification for incomplete listings in other bibliographical sources, and they organize literary criticism into general themes and periods as well as individual authors.

Mexican Literature contains seventy-seven pages of citations concerning general reference works on Mexican literature and 277 pages devoted to fifty authors. Half of the writers are living, with notable exceptions ranging from Sor Juana and Fernández de Lizardi to Rosario Castellanos, Xavier Villaurrutia, Jaime Torres Bodet, and Rodolfo Usigli. The value of *Mexican Literature* lies in Foster's able selection of the most important Mexican authors and also the depth and breadth of the selected bibliographical entries. Sections on internationally recognized writers, particularly Fuentes, Paz, Rulfo, and Agustín Yáñez are strong, as one might expect, but this work is also a good resource for locating materials about younger talents such as José Agustín, Gustavo Sainz, and Salvador Elizondo, and versatile, accomplished women such as

Elena Garro, Rosario Castellanos, and Elena Poniatowska. Specialists on any of the individual writers may well find an article or two missing from a given listing, but in general they are well researched and meticulously prepared. *Mexican Literature* is a must for initiating any serious study of Mexican literature.

Foster's *Peruvian Literature: A Bibliography of Secondary Sources* deserves similar accolades. It uses the same basic format as his compilation of Chilean and Mexican sources. In this work, Foster utilizes studies by Luis Alberto Sánchez and Alberto Tauro,⁷ but supercedes their work with a much more workable and comprehensive study. He selected thirty-eight authors, but only ten who are living authors. In the Peruvian volume, one finds exhaustive coverage of José María Arguedas, Garcilaso de la Vega, el Inca, César Vallejo, and Vargas Llosa through 1980. Foster also includes writers such as novelists Alfredo Bryce Echenique, Julio Ramón Riberyo, and Manuel Scorza, and poets Antonio Cisneros, Carlos Germán Belli, and Wáshington Delgado. The relative absence of contemporary theatre is reflected in just three entries for Alonso Alegría, Peru's leading contemporary dramatist, and seven for Enrique Solari Swayne.

Research on this volume is sound, although a few mistakes may be found. In the section on Arguedas, for example, Sara Castro Klarén's *El mundo mágico de José María Arguedas* (1973) is incorrectly described as the translation of her English-language dissertation (1969). Arguedas is said to have died in 1970, when actually he committed suicide in late 1969. These are trifles, however, when compared to the overall quality and depth of the Arguedas section, the listings for Vargas Llosa, or for that matter, the entire volume. Because of solid selection criteria, clear format, and fundamental accuracy, Foster's bibliographies on Mexican and Peruvian literature are excellent reference tools for classroom use and personal research.

It is appropriate that Gabriel García Márquez, the novelist who has caused so much recent focus on Latin American literature, should be the subject of a fine bibliography. Margaret Eustella Fau's *Gabriel García Márquez: An Annotated Bibliography, 1947–1979*, will serve well the many students and researchers who face what is rapidly becoming an unwieldy number of critical articles and monographs on the man and his works. The bibliography is divided into primary and secondary sources, then organized into several sections. Of particular interest are divisions listing books and dissertations, chapters and sections in books (a very useful feature that is also provided by Foster in his studies), critical articles, interviews, and general articles about García Márquez (his ideas and personality as a citizen, journalist, and fiction writer).

Most of the entries in *Gabriel García Márquez* refer to studies published after *Cien años de soledad* (1967), but the compiler made great efforts

to gather materials going back to the time of his first stories, some of which he might prefer to forget. Annotations are not critical in nature, but descriptive of the contents of each item. It is very helpful indeed to read the summaries translated from Russian, Hungarian, German, and other of the many languages in which articles about García Márquez have appeared. Fau briefly annotates all of the books and dissertations (52 entries), chapters and sections in books (81), and critical articles (376). She includes comments about many of the interviews (49), but only a few remarks about articles that deal more with biographical or ideological aspects of the novelist's career (299). The volume is completed by an index of authors. Fau's bibliography is exhaustive, unlike those by Foster, which are necessarily selective. Now that so many books and articles have been written about García Márquez, none but the most diligent researcher would be interested in reading all of the many book reviews about *Cien años de soledad* and his other novels. Fortunately, the compiler's annotations suggest the depth and value of each different entry, even though they are meant to be more descriptive than critical. The number of entries in this bibliography is impressive, but in the post-Nobel Prize days, we will see even more García Márquez "hype." Even *Playboy* has published a significant interview with the popular novelist-turned-publisher.⁸

The value of a good literary bibliography is often not readily apparent. It must take into account the interests and needs of scholars, teachers, and students. Despite the objective of being comprehensive, it must inevitably be selective, and therefore the bibliographer must make critical decisions regarding the scope and breadth of his or her study. Chatham and McClendon had to define carefully the parameters of their bibliography in order to make it a useful resource, rather than an incoherent and seemingly unending list of titles. Foster and Reis also had to evaluate critically the relative merit first of writers, and then of bibliographical items to be included. Bibliographer Fau similarly chose to annotate her entries on García Márquez so that the user would have some way to distinguish between the potential value of one book or article as compared with another.

A survey of these reference works suggests certain trends in contemporary Hispanic literary criticism. Noticeable growth has occurred in the number of journals about Hispanic literature (often with emphasis on Latin America), many of these being published in the United States.⁹ Another development is that more women have established themselves as insightful, influential scholars. Women writers have also received more critical attention, a trend that will most likely continue, given the increased popularity of women's studies in American universities. Graciela Corvalán's *Latin American Women Writers in English Translation: A Bibliography* (1980)¹⁰ should make these authors accessible for university

study in programs of comparative literature and Hispanic or women's studies.

Also evident in surveying the recent bibliographies is the increased sophistication of criticism, which is reflected by the larger number of theoretical monographs and critical articles. Although regarded by some in the early seventies as a kind of fad, the language of structuralism and semiotics is fast becoming a lingua franca. Of particular interest in recent scholarship is the self-conscious quality of many literary works, which are referred to as metafiction, metatheatre, and the like. Prior to the Boom, or at least the fifties, most Latin American writers tried to reveal through their literature a mosaic of social and geographical conditions that would characterize their country or region. More recently, novels have turned inward to convey a message as much about the novelists and the nature of literature as about social and political realities. One needs only to think of García Márquez, Vargas Llosa, Cortázar, and Manuel Puig to recognize this trend, one that is ably treated in more recent scholarship.

A further development that will contribute mightily to the sophistication of Hispanic literary bibliography is the greater ease and cost-effectiveness of computer-assisted and -generated compilations. The most striking advantage of the computer is the facility with which it can sort information into many different categories. The index of *Doctoral Dissertations in Hispanic Languages and Literatures* is an excellent example of the effective use of the computer. The format revision in the 1981 *MLA International Bibliography* also suggests that we will soon be dependent on the computer in our bibliographical research. It is possible as well that computer language requirements may lead to a standardization of bibliographical entries. This problem is not as difficult as it once was but still has not been adequately resolved, despite the progress that is being made.

The fact remains, however, that a great need exists for more and better bibliographies of Latin American literature on a variety of topics. The most frustrating aspect of compiling a bibliography, of course, is that it is "out-of-date" from the moment of publication. But as more journals are brought into the scope of annual bibliographies such as the *MLA* and the *HAPI*, publication will be encouraged of works like those produced by David William Foster. Then those of us who teach and study Latin American literature may find that at long last, the problem of the "bibliographical gap" may not unduly handicap our profession.

NOTES

1. Since 1968 the Center for Inter-American Relations has sponsored in one way or another the publication of dozens of studies, bibliographies, and translations of Latin American literature.
2. James R. Chatham and Enrique Ruiz-Fornells, *Dissertations in Hispanic Languages and Literatures*, Vol. 1 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1970).
3. Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca, Pérez Galdós, and Unamuno head the list of Spanish authors being studied.
4. The authors consider this volume to be a supplement to Foster's *Dictionary of Contemporary Latin American Authors* (Tempe: Arizona State University, Center for Latin American Studies, 1975).
5. See Edwin McDowell, "U.S. is Discovering Latin America's Literature," *New York Times*, Late City Ed., 16 February 1982, Section C., p. 7. cols. 1–6.
6. Foster found *HAPI* to be much more useful than the discontinued *Index to Latin American Periodical Literature*.
7. Luis Alberto Sánchez et al., *Contribución a la bibliografía de la literatura peruana* (Lima: Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 1969); Alberto Tauro, "Bibliografía peruana de literatura 1931–1958," *Boletín de la Biblioteca Nacional* (Lima), nos. 19–20 (1956–57): 190–298.
8. Claudia Dreifus interviews him in the January 1983 issue. The Spanish-language original appears in *Signore* of the same month.
9. In addition to *Review* and *Latin American Literary Review*, other significant journals of the seventies and early eighties include: *The American Hispanist*, *The Bilingual Review/La Revista Bilingüe*, *Chasqui*, *Explicación de Textos Hispánicos*, *Hispanamérica*, *Hispanic Journal*, *Inti*, *Journal of Spanish Studies: Twentieth Century*, *Latin American Theatre Review*, *Letras Femeninas*, *The Linden Lane Magazine* (begun in 1982), *Nueva Narrativa Hispanoamericana*, *Plural*, *Point of Contact/Punto de Contacto*, *Revista Chicano-Riqueña*, *Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana*, *Revista/Review Interamericana*, *Texto Crítico*, and *Vuelta*, among others. *Journal of Spanish Studies: Twentieth Century* and *Nueva Narrativa Hispanoamericana* are no longer published.
10. Graciela N. V. Corvalán, *Latin American Women Writers in English Translation: A Bibliography* (Los Angeles: California State University, Latin American Studies Center, 1980).