

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES IN CANADA

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LATIN AMERICA HAS SUDDENLY BECOME IMPORTANT TO AN INCREASING NUMBER of Canada's universities and colleges. Only three years ago the situation was not at all promising as D. B. L. Hamlin and Gilles Lalande showed in their reports to the Canadian Universities Foundation,¹ but a more favorable climate for developing programs in this area has emerged as the federal government, the Canada Council, university administrators, and individual faculty members have taken an interest in Latin America.

That this interest has been slow in growing is due, in part, to the fact that Canada's historical development has militated against the country's involvement in studies of the Western hemisphere. Its traditional intellectual ties with Great Britain, the Empire-Commonwealth, and Europe have meant that heavy emphasis has been placed on British and European studies; it has been only within the last decade that the larger provincial universities have hired specialists on Canada's border neighbor, the United States.

The expansion of Canadian university offerings to include the study of "esoteric" communities outside Canada, the Commonwealth, and Europe has been recognized as essential for Canadian development. Norman A. M. Mackenzie, the distinguished former president of the University of British Columbia, stated in the foreword to the Hamlin-Lalande reports that international studies on a broad basis would contribute to the Canadians' understanding of other countries and peoples. This would be important because it would enable Canadians to understand more fully the needs of their own country and to participate more effectively in the democratic process. At the same time, Canada, which in the past has relied on the work of specialists outside the country for its knowledge, could begin to make its contributions in the field of international studies.² Canada needs her own specialists who could use their training in the universities, in government, in parliament, in the news media, and in the expansion of her industry and trade.

James C. McKegney of the University of Waterloo blamed members of these institutions for inhibiting Canadian interest in Latin America. In June 1964, the year that becomes the take-off point for Latin American studies in Canada, McKegney wrote a blistering attack on the failure of Canadian opinion leadership to attempt to understand Canada's Latin American neighbors in *Maclean's*, *Canada's National Magazine*. In that article he pointed out that not one Canadian newspaper has a permanent correspondent in Latin America. Nor

had the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation a correspondent anywhere south of Washington, D.C. In fact, as McKegney pointed out, Canadians until recently have had to depend upon the United States wire services or television reports for any information on that area. He is for the most part correct in his assessment, although opinion journals and the C.B.C. have occasionally had informed comments by John Harbron, editor of *Executive* magazine, and John Sokol, a Toronto businessman, who study and comment on Latin American affairs in their spare time. McKegney, however, reserved his sharpest comments for the government and the universities.³

The Canadian government was undoubtedly slow to take a lead in expanding Canadian interest in Latin America. A place at the Council of the Pan American Union waited expectantly for a Canada that did not join and Canada is by choice not a member of the Organization of American States. Beyond the hemispheric organizations it is interesting to note that not until 1960 did Canada's Department of External Affairs establish a Latin American division. Under Howard Green, the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the Conservative government of John Diefenbaker (1957–63), Latin America increased in importance. In February of that year, Green declared that it was his government's "intention to pay special attention to Latin America . . . an area in which . . . a good deal more can be done than has been done by Canada in the past." And he spoke at a time when his political leader questioned the wisdom of this expansion in the face of Canada's commitment to the Commonwealth and NATO.⁴ But Green's department went ahead and began setting up its Latin American Division in the following summer. By July 1961, Canada had representation with 18 of the 20 republics.⁵

The Latin American governments undoubtedly approve of the Canadian government's action for although Canadians are on first sight taken for what they are—*norteamericanos*—they are *norteamericanos* with a difference. Canadians do not have the same outlook as their neighbors in the United States. They have that certain detachment that little involvement in Latin America has occasioned and Canadians often bring this detachment to meetings in which they participate. But this should not prevent Canadians from becoming more learned about Latin America and in this the universities could contribute greatly. University officials recognized their responsibility at a meeting of the National Conference of Canadian Universities and Colleges (NCCUC) held in April 1964 to discuss the implications of the Hamlin-Lalande reports. The discussion group on Latin American studies, chaired by Richard Pattee of Laval and whose secretary was McKegney, recommended to the meeting that Latin American studies be encouraged, library holdings be expanded, and research funds be made available because "the rapid and fundamental development occurring both in Canada and Latin America makes it imperative that there exist an un-

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understanding of one another's problems."⁶ It is apparent that representatives returned from that meeting on international studies determined to expand into studies of Latin America.

The Hamlin report showed the state of Latin American studies in 1963. At that time it stated:⁷

Spanish is taught at thirty universities, some attention is given to Latin America in approximately fifteen of these institutions, most often to Spanish-American literature. Some Spanish departments give a course variously called Civilization of Spanish America, Introduction to Hispanic Culture, etc. In other departments, there does not seem to be the same trend towards the introduction of courses on Latin America as there is on Africa. Approximately six departments of history provide a course on Latin America and a few others offer a course usually called History of the Americas, which gives some attention to Latin America.

Ottawa offered a half-course in political science, Dalhousie two in economics, and the Alberta university campuses at Edmonton and Calgary had a course in anthropology. Of the English language universities, only the University of Toronto possessed a library sufficient for graduate work in Spanish-American literature. Only Laval, Toronto, and British Columbia offered Portuguese, and only Laval and Toronto had strong programs in Hispanic civilizations.

In the three years since Hamlin and Lalande wrote their reports, there has been a significant expansion of Latin American studies and there are indications that this is only the beginning as Canada's 40 leading colleges and universities continue to grow. Thirty-five now offer Spanish, ten have history, five anthropology, eight geography, and two political science. Economics and sociology have yet to find a permanent place in any curriculum, but several universities expressed their desire to expand in this direction within two years. There follows a description of how the universities and colleges now stand in their programs.

Memorial University in Newfoundland has a survey of Latin American history in its catalogue, but it has not been taught for several years because none of the staff have had an interest in the field. In Nova Scotia, which has had historical links with the Caribbean, Saint Francis Xavier University has affiliations with the Coady Institute which is interested in Caribbean, particularly British West Indian affairs, but no courses on Latin America. Dalhousie University at Halifax previously offered a course in economics, but its undergraduate course now deals with both North and South America. Its history department has begun to offer a survey course. The other Maritime universities (Acadia, Mount Allison, and New Brunswick) have yet to introduce any course on Latin America.

The Province of Quebec with its predominantly French-speaking and Ro-

man Catholic population has had great interest in Latin America. Canadian missionaries from Quebec have been very active in South America and Haiti, and among certain intellectuals there has existed a real sympathy for *Latin America*. The *Université de Laval* in Quebec City has been the leader in Hispanic studies in Canada. But this leadership has been tempered by the fact that Laval's staff has concentrated as much on the Iberian peninsula as on Latin America. With a strong emphasis on the teaching of Spanish and Portuguese language and literature the *Faculté des Lettres* also offers courses in Latin American history and literature. The *Faculté des Sciences Sociales* has courses on geography, ethnography, and political science. But this division within the faculties has apparently prevented students with a primary interest in Latin America from taking relevant courses in the other faculty. Laval's library resources are growing, but have had to be supplemented from the libraries of members of its staff.⁸ Richard Patte alone has around 2000 volumes in Portuguese which was almost as much as the university's complete holdings on Latin America in 1963.⁹

The *Université de Montreal* has had courses in Spanish and recently decided to expand its offerings in the *Faculté des Lettres* to include courses in history and geography. M. Jean-Marie Loncol of the Department of History reported that his department had been collaborating with the departments of geography, anthropology, political science, and economics to expand the resources of the library which he feels are now sufficient to begin an undergraduate program in Latin American studies. However, such studies will only be a part of Montreal's proposed *Centre d'Etudes Regionales*.

Sir George Williams University in Montreal is in the process of organizing a program of Latin American studies. The proposal for such a program has not yet been accepted by the Arts Council of the University and only a course in Latin American history is currently offered. But the University also has a specialist in Latin American literature and an anthropologist of pre-Hispanic Mexico on its staff. Its library holdings are limited.

McGill University has a Centre for Developing Area Studies but for the present specialists on Latin America are not included among its staff. Dr. Frances Henry, a member of the Department of Sociology-Anthropology, is a specialist in the British Caribbean and she reports that her department is interested in adding other scholars of the Caribbean area. Her department, however, is the only one that appears desirous of expanding its staff to include Caribbean or Latin American scholars.

Other Quebec institutions (Sherbrooke, Loyola, Bishop's) offer Spanish language courses, but only Loyola College in Montreal is planning to add specific courses outside the language. Loyola had proposed such expansion in 1963–64 but in 1966 was still anticipating adding courses in history and political science in 1966–67. Whether it does so depends upon its acquiring quali-

fied staff. Bishop's University at Lennoxville proposes to introduce a senior course on Spanish-American literature.

Ontario's universities led by Toronto and Western Ontario are taking a great interest in Latin America. The University of Toronto's Department of Italian and Hispanic Studies has offered courses on Latin American literature for many years. It has been the only Ontario department to include Portuguese in its curriculum. And its members have been urging other departments to introduce courses on Latin America. The University has now decided to begin a Latin American Studies program leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree. It will emphasize training in the Spanish language and literature, but by 1968–69 will include courses in history, geography, economics, anthropology, and political science. The university plans to add specialists in these areas. The department of history has already begun to expand its library holdings so that it can develop a general and honours program in Latin American history.

The University of Western Ontario was the first Canadian university to add a course outside its Spanish department. In 1942 history was first taught at the university as an honours course and then in 1956 as a general course. It has, however, depended upon the individual desire and availability of J. J. Talman, a specialist in Canadian history, who thought that Canadians ought to have some exposure to Latin America and did his best to ensure that some of his students did. In 1966–67 both the honours and general courses will be offered. Western's geography department already has both undergraduate and graduate courses on Latin America; history, geography, and literature will be greatly aided by a 1966 Canada Council grant to expand existing library holdings. It is hoped that graduate courses will also soon be offered in literature and history.

Carleton University at Ottawa has three undergraduate courses in Spanish-American literature and graduate courses will be offered in 1967. Gordon Merrill, a specialist on the Caribbean, expects to introduce a graduate geography course in 1966–67. There has as yet been no attempt to introduce Latin American subjects in other departments, although Richard Jackson of the Spanish Department reports that several colleagues are interested in such a possibility. Ottawa University, on the other hand, has apparently lost interest in Latin America. In 1949 it had an Inter-American Institute, but this failed to expand and in 1956 ceased to function. At present no courses are being offered even though the university is Canada's repository of Pan American Union-O.A.S. documents.

York University of Toronto, one of Canada's newer institutions, is growing rapidly, but has not yet expanded its offerings in Latin America beyond the undergraduate course in Spanish-American literature. McMaster University in Hamilton also has a literature course and continues to offer one in the geog-

raphy of Latin America, something that it has been doing since 1947. The University of Windsor has both a graduate and an undergraduate course in Spanish-American literature and its history department offers a survey course. Queen's University at Kingston has several members of its Spanish department active in the study of Mexican literature and its library contains a continuing collection of Latin American newspapers. There has been, however, no introduction of the field in other departments.

The University of Waterloo has been active in trying to promote an interest in Latin America. It has held an annual symposium on Brazil in recent years, but it is only beginning to expand its course offerings beyond the Department of Spanish and Italian where McKegney, a student of Mexican literature, offers several courses. The history department has been looking for a scholar to teach the Latin American survey that they include in their calendar. The Lakehead University (Fort Williams-Port Arthur) and Laurentian University (Sudbury) both are new and both offer Spanish.

The universities of the Prairie Provinces have only recently evinced an interest in Latin America. In Manitoba, its university at Winnipeg has just begun to teach Spanish long after an interested group of Winnipeg's citizens had organized their own very active Latin American Institute in order to receive instruction in Spanish from Mrs. E. B. Bollert, so that closer business and cultural contacts could be made with Latin American countries. The University is also adding a geography course in 1966-67.

The University of Saskatchewan, like Manitoba, has just introduced Spanish and it expects to expand from this beginning. Its Regina campus has no Spanish, but last year had a history course taught by a specialist in Anglo-America. A former British diplomat in Colombia has been hired to continue the course.

The University of Calgary has been a leader in trying to develop a Latin American Institute that would offer university training within Canada. As soon as it expanded to university status in 1961 it began to discuss the possibility of such an institute and in 1964 invited Charles Gibson to deliver its first history course during that summer. The department then hired James Penton, a specialist on Mexico, to teach courses in the colonial and national periods. History joined anthropology and archaeology in providing a base for Calgary's proposed Latin American Studies program which may be underway in 1966-67. Already archaeology has ten graduate students and offers three courses. However, the Modern Languages Department has yet to introduce courses in literature and the university's library holdings are growing but are not yet adequate for any major expansion.

The University of Alberta, Edmonton, has not pushed Latin America, but it has a fourth year geography course, it continues to offer one in anthropology,

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and its history department has hired a specialist in United States-Guatemala relations who will teach the survey included in the university calendar. Spanish is offered and a course on Spanish-American literature will soon be included in the curriculum.

The three British Columbia universities all have some courses on Latin America. The University of British Columbia's Department of Romance Languages has both Spanish and Portuguese and Harold Livermore has graduate students working in Brazilian and Spanish-American literature. A Department of Hispanic Studies is being contemplated and it would offer a wider range of subjects. The brand new Simon Fraser University, which began operations in 1965-66, hired specialists in Latin American history and political science and intends to add a sociologist. As it moves into the third and fourth years of instruction, Latin American courses will be part of the university program in these fields and in Spanish. At the University of Victoria, where a course on history has been offered since 1962 and on literature since 1964, Latin America is not yet a permanent part of the curriculum. Whether these courses will continue to be offered will depend on the university's replacement of the two departing specialists.

As the foregoing indicates, considerable strides have been taken in expanding Latin American studies in Canada. But it is more important to recognize that the universities that are seriously desirous of developing an interest in this area are not willing to stop with the addition of a specialist in one discipline other than language and literature. They hope, in fact, to attract scholars in various fields.

One fact that stands out, from the response to the enquiries and through discussions with individuals concerned, is that in almost every case the scholars already at work in Canada are involved with Mexico and the Caribbean. In the universities considering expansion in the future the trend is also toward obtaining specialists in these areas. There is some justification for this in that Canadians most frequently come in contact with Mexico and the Caribbean countries. Mexico, of course, has a particular fascination because it, too, borders on the United States, and Canadians can fruitfully study how the Mexicans respond to their common neighbor. Both the Canadian Institute of International Affairs and the Canadian Institute of Public Affairs have had active study groups on Mexico in the past year, and significant contact has been made with similar groups in that country. The Caribbean, particularly the British Caribbean, has historical links with Canada, although Canadian banking houses and businessmen have been involved with the island republics.

Concentration on Mexico and the Caribbean is not a bad development, but some universities that are just beginning expansion in this area might seriously consider seeking specialists on Central and South America. It is not inconceiv-

able that a British Columbia university should consider concentrating on the Pacific Coast area of Latin America. Chile and British Columbia, for example, have much in common geographically and a fruitful exchange of personnel involved in forestry and mining might be beneficial to both. The Rio de la Plata republics would be worthy of concentration by a university on the Prairies where wheat and cattle are so important.

As Latin American studies in Canada grow it would seem possible for scholars in this field to make closer contact with one another. Canada's size militates against constant personal meetings, but if specialists on Africa can create an active African Studies Association, there seems to be little reason why the already existing Caribbean Studies Seminar could not become more active on a national basis. The Canadian Association of Hispanicists, which already participates in the annual Learned Societies of Canada meeting, also could become more widely known among scholars outside the fields of language and literature. It could keep its members informed of developments within the academic community in Hispanic and Latin American studies.

While it is true that library holdings in all the Canadian universities are minimal, those universities expanding their programs are receiving substantial funds from their administrations to develop at least at the undergraduate level and, as has been pointed out, several universities, notably Toronto, Western Ontario, and Calgary, intend to enlarge their holdings for graduate work. But it will be a number of years before any Canadian university library has sufficient holdings to permit graduate research and Canadian students and scholars can expect, not unfortunately, to do their research in Spain, Portugal, or Latin America.

Funds for research have increased and individuals have received grants-in-aid of research from the Canada Council and their own universities. This has been in keeping with the recommendations of the Hamlin-Lalande reports and the NCCUC meeting in 1964.¹⁰ It appears that this happy state of affairs will continue.

The future for Latin American studies in Canada is bright. Contrary to the statement made several years ago by one university administrator that "there is very little student interest in going deeply into Latin American Studies,"¹¹ there has been increased student interest in the subject. At least two recent graduates have gone to the United States to pursue doctoral degrees in history, even in the face of the fear that they might not be able to find appointments in Canadian universities, which as this report shows may not continue to be the case. Several professors (outside language departments) across the country have also indicated that they have a number of students about to take the intensive honours courses in Latin American fields. And it is assumed that the language departments will continue to graduate students with advanced degrees

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in Spanish and Portuguese as they have done in the past. It is a belated beginning, but it is a good beginning for a country with a small population whose contributions to international understanding have gained it respect throughout the world.

NOTES

1. D. L. B. Hamlin, *International Studies in Canadian Universities*, and Gilles Lalonde, *L'étude des relations internationales et de certaines civilisations étrangères au Canada* (published as one volume, Ottawa, 1964). This article has been based upon information provided by the above reports as well as questionnaires sent to all the universities and colleges in Canada. Not everyone contacted, however, responded, and therefore the author has had to depend upon information contained in the current (1965–66) calendars of these institutions. The author would like to thank all those who did respond for their courtesy in providing much needed information on the current state of Latin American studies in their departments and in their institutions. Current research projects being carried out by scholars in Canadian universities have been and will be published in "Current Research Inventory" (See LARR, I: 2, p. 146).
2. Hamlin-Lalonde, viii.
3. James C. McKegney, "Why We Know Next to Nothing About 200 Million Fellow Americans," *Mclean's*, 76: 11: 48–49.
4. *External Affairs*, 12:3:545.
5. *Ibid.*, 12:8:746, 13:8:294.
6. Christopher Gill ed., *Proceedings of the Special Meeting of the National Conference of Canadian Universities and Colleges on International Studies in Canada*, 35, (Ottawa, 1964).
7. Hamlin, 60.
8. *Ibid.*, 59.
9. Lalonde, 69.
10. Gill, 35–36.
11. Lalonde, 74.