

Fifty Years of Research in Latin American Studies in the UK

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Britain enjoyed close financial links with Latin America in the nineteenth and early twentieth century (thanks to which the major libraries are well stocked: the Public Records Office is a rich source for research on that period), and produced a distinguished list of English and Scottish travel writers in the nineteenth century and even earlier. Yet by the mid-twentieth century the UK had precious little academic expertise on the region, especially when compared with the Middle East and the former colonies. A handful of historians, ill-recognized in the profession as a whole, wrote general books on the region, and even social anthropology had scarcely woken up to its existence. One of the founding figures of British social anthropology, Bronislaw Malinowski, spent a short period in Mexico working in Oaxaca with Julio de la Fuente (Malinowski, Drucker-Brown et al. 1982). In economics the odd book on Argentina (Ferns 1960; Joslin 1963) – with whom Britain's financial links had been closest and most controversial – did not make up for our lack of expertise, and comparative politics was hardly a subject yet in the UK. Latin American literature was scarcely recognized in Departments of Spanish – and Rubén Darío was taught as if he was a Spanish poet who just happened to be born in Nicaragua.

Yet within a couple of generations the subject has become the focus of a flourishing community: the Society of Latin American Studies (SLAS) attracts well over 100 people to its annual conferences, sometimes over 200, and has a larger membership than either of the corresponding African or South Asian associations. After an initial boost in the social sciences, which focused strongly on development issues, the combination of the opening up of the study of literature to the very broadly defined field of Cultural Studies, and the extension of Spanish teaching to include Latin America, has brought much enthusiasm for Latin America among undergraduates and post-graduates, while Latin American literature is now a favourite for scholars wanting to make literary studies a branch of social theory. The centres of Latin American studies (at the Universities of Cambridge, Essex, Glasgow, Liverpool, London, Oxford, St. Andrews) sowed the seeds and operate graduate programmes, but now the subject has spread well beyond them. Portsmouth offers an undergraduate degree in Latin American Studies, the University of Liverpool has followed Warwick in offering a Comparative American Studies degree and the University of Essex has a new BA in American Studies (both North

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and Latin America), and Manchester and Newcastle both offer post-graduate courses in Latin American Studies. While some of the ‘purpose-built’ Centres created in the 1960s played the part of catalysts for the subject’s development elsewhere in their universities, others, like the Institute of Latin American Studies (ILAS) in London, have prospered more or less independently. One important development has been the creation in 1997 of the Centre for Brazilian Studies at Oxford, the result of the dedication and entrepreneurship of Leslie Bethell. The fact that this centre is being largely funded by Brazilian corporations and the Brazilian government says something about either British lack of interest or the Brazilian income distribution. In addition, the UK Latin Americanist community has built up two major journals, the *Journal of Latin American Studies (JLAS)* and the *Bulletin of Latin American Research (BLAR)*.

Disciplinary Shifts

Since 1969 the Institute of Latin American Studies at London University (London ILAS) has produced regular booklets with systematic information on Latin American Studies in the UK. These allow us to track, broadly, the changes in numbers and disciplinary composition of Latin Americanists employed as Lecturers and Professors in UK universities, but excluding staff on research grants or temporary staff (of which there are increasing numbers). The overall numbers registered by ILAS have of course, grown: in 1969, 75 names were listed, and this grew to 151 in 1981 (‘first period’) and 380 in 1997 (‘second period’), as illustrated in the Tables 1 and 2. (The Institute is currently undertaking a similar exercise, but unfortunately the results will not be ready in time for this survey.) The growth has

Table 1: Regional and country specialization of Latin Americanist staff in UK universities

	1968-9		1981		1997	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Chile	6	8.0	10	6.6	21	5.5
Andean (Bolivia, Peru & Ecuador)	11	26.7	31	20.5	48	12.6
Argentina	7	9.3	10	6.6	16	4.2
Brazil	9	12.0	18	11.9	39	10.3
Central America	2	2.7	6	4.0	15	3.9
Mexico	7	9.3	13	8.6	41	10.8
Other	13	17.3	36	23.8	83	21.8
Non-specific	22	29.4	27	17.9	116*	30.5
Total	75		151		379	

Source: *Handbook of Latin American Studies in the UK and Caribbean*, London: Institute of Latin American Studies.

*Of which 47 in literature

been particularly strong in literature and cultural studies, which went from 18 to 30 to 110 in the years under consideration, increasing 3.6 times in the second period compared with an overall growth of Latin Americanists of 2.6. Politics also grew disproportionately in the second period – by a factor of 4 from 12 to 48 – while history grew less than the overall rate and growth in sociology and anthropology was the same as the general average. The growth in literature reflects the shift to-

wards Latin America and cultural studies in Spanish departments identified above. Economics increased its representation, multiplying by 3.5 in the second period, but it is a discipline notoriously and increasingly hostile to regional specialization, and numbers remain at a very low level. It should however be noted that Latin America remains desperately underrepresented in archaeology (two people in each of the years in question!).

Table 2: Disciplinary specialization of Latin Americanist staff in UK universities

	1968-9		1881		1997	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Politics	4	6.0	48	8.4	12	13.0
Literature	18	26.9	110	21.0	30	29.8
History	19	28.3	58	29.4	42	15.7
Geography	12	17.9	49	13.3	19	13.3
Sociology & Anthropology	6	9.0	74	21.0	30	20.0
Archaeology	2	3.0	2	1.4	2	0.1
Economics	6	9.0	28	5.6	8	7.6
Total	67		369		143	

Source: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London.

These data, as always, can be read in many ways, but the increase in numbers is too great to be merely an illusion. The subject has grown along with the academic profession as a whole, but its growth has been especially disproportionate when compared with the relative stagnation in the areas of Britain's old empire.

History

Economic historians flock to read consular reports in the Public Record Office, and so it is not surprising that early contributions were in that field, related particularly to Argentina (Ford 1962), and to the field of business history also of Argentina. Oxford attracted a whole generation of Argentine economic historians (Gallo 1976; Cornblit 1995), but that was a slightly bitter inheritance: Tulio Halperin held the Chair of Latin American History in succession to Raymond Carr, its brilliantly eccentric first holder, but left in dismay in 1971 after a couple of years, to be succeeded by the less cosmopolitan figure of Christopher Platt. Platt, a disciple of Joslin (who died very young) conducted and encouraged research in the field of business history and contributed to the 'great debates' about the British Empire and the timeworn comparison with Australia; his main claim to fame was the defence of the view that Britain made very little money out of investments in Argentina, which may have been true but was not important to many people save a handful of polemicists here and in Argentina itself. This field of business history was also exemplified by the early work of David Brading, and by that of Christopher Abel, Henry Finch, Colin Lewis and Rory Miller. The more properly economic work of Victor Bulmer-Thomas on the economic history of the whole region provides a very useful, and more modern, general contribution.

Another vein was, broadly speaking, colonial and early post-colonial history, initiated by John Lynch, who himself had come out of Spanish history, and continued by David Brading, John Fisher and – in Brazil – Leslie Bethell. Fisher has con-

tinued throughout a long career to explain the ins and outs of Bourbon reforms, while Brading – in tune with broader trends in the subject – gradually shifted from economic history to agrarian themes and later to the history of ideas and to culture. Brading is the most widely quoted of the British Latin Americanists in any subject, but in many ways is a prophet without followers in his own country; his interlocutors are in the United States and in Mexico. He is a unique figure not only in the scope of his learning and the range of his interpretations, but also in the tension between his evident love for Mexico and fascination with every facet of that country's culture and history, and his reverential respect for the grand tradition of English historiography. It is no accident that the first proper name in the Prologue to *The First America* is that of Lord Macaulay. The other current major figure, Alan Knight, who also specializes in Mexico and has kept to one period and one set of themes, can also not be said to have grouped a school around himself. Knight's name is associated with a particular view of the Mexican revolution as a popular revolution, championing Tannenbaum's classic thesis against revisionist Mexican historians such as Enrique Krauze. The distinctiveness of the UK contribution to the history of Latin America, like UK historiography in general, is its strong inclination towards well grounded documentary research and a resistance to grand schemata and 'theory'. On Latin America the comparison with France illustrates a similar pattern, as for example in the painstaking demolition of François Chevalier's grandiose edifice (the *grands domaines* in Mexico), pebble by pebble, by Brading's pupil Simon Miller. The much admired economic history of Potosí by Enrique Tandeter (who lived in England for much of the 1970s and early 1980s) is an exemplary exercise in the marriage of detailed data with the classic categories of political economy – very much the British approach.

It is striking to note – in accordance with the pervasive tribalism of academia – that there is a gulf between those historians who describe themselves as Latin Americanists and others – such as John Elliott and Anthony Pagden – who, by writing about Latin America as members of the community of European historians, have achieved much wider recognition in British academia. Charles Boxer, the pioneer of the history of the Portuguese and Dutch seaborne empires, and author of *The Golden Age of Brazil*, has also been much admired though he too did not leave disciples and Brazil remains underrepresented in UK Latin American Studies. In the next age group there is a variety of figures in cultural history (Fernando Cervantes) and political history (Rebecca Earle, Anthony McFarlane, Guy Thomson and Will Fowler). The real problem, in this as much else, is that to embark on a PhD in Latin American history requires much courage, because for every twenty doctorates in Latin American history there might, with luck, be one tenured university opening. In fact, to our knowledge in the last year there have been only openings for historians of Latin America in Spanish departments, not in history departments, and not all vacancies left by retiring Latin American historians have been filled.

Twentieth century history has tended to merge, intellectually speaking, with politics or economics, as in the example of Nicola Miller's work on intellectuals or Peter Flynn's on Brazil, or Rory Miller's work on business history, as historians are drawn into the fire of contemporary debate.

An undoubted enduring national monument to the British contribution is the

Cambridge History of Latin America in 10 volumes, edited by Leslie Bethell. Of the 143 contributions 53 were written by Britons, although not all these Britons were UK-based. The list of distinguished figures who have made their careers in the United States is very long: John Russell-Wood, the Brazilian historian, historians of Argentina such as David Rock and Daniel James, and many more besides – to the point where there are almost certainly more active UK-trained historians of the region in the US than in UK universities.

Sociology, Social Anthropology and Development Studies

In the social sciences the impact of Latin American Studies on other regions and disciplines has been much greater and more distinctive. Latin American ideas were the source of inspiration for Development Studies when that subject was growing up in the 1960s; Latin America was the paradigmatic example of dependent development, when the whole Third World was thought to be caught in that trap and dependency theory was a serious project. Latin America then led the world into the debt crisis, into structural adjustment and market reforms, and into democratisation. Whatever one may think about the success or otherwise of these experiments and the ideas that underlay them, analyzed by Cristóbal Kay in some detail, their influence is not in doubt. In this atmosphere UK sociologists, anthropologists, and practitioners of political economy played a leading role in applying the theories of unequal development, and doing so with their own trademark of detailed empirical research. Bryan Roberts was a leading figure in the analysis of urban and regional growth, first in Peru and later in Mexico, as it related to unequal development, as was his colleague Norman Long, and their work in Peru in the 1970s is of enduring value. Almost every social science dissertation on Latin America was examined by one or the other of this highly influential pair until Roberts left for Texas and Long for Wageningen. Their influence can be seen in the work of people who have since become prominent scholars in their own right, such as Fiona Wilson (an emigré to Denmark, as this volume testifies), the Mexican anthropologists Guillermo de la Peña, Mercedes González de la Rocha, and Agustín Escobar. British Marxism, after all, in its heyday, tended towards the E. P. Thompson variety and not the Georg Lukacs, let alone Louis Althusser (despite the efforts of the *New Left Review*) approach, and the painstaking, sometimes agonizing, marriage of fieldwork and Marxist concepts such as class consciousness and the mode of production was a quite distinctive feature of the UK social science contribution to Latin American Studies in the period 1965 to 1982.

The contribution of Roberts, after an early and important book on Protestants in Guatemala, has been in the combination of regional and sociological analysis, as in his widely quoted work *Cities of Peasants*. With Long he directed a project that married a grounded Marxist approach with a regional perspective in Peru in the 1970s. This fits in with the prominence of regional and urban research, and of geography (in a quirkish sort of way) in UK-based Latin American Studies.

The Long and Roberts work in Peru was part of a major involvement in the Andean countries during the 1970-1990 period. Fiona Wilson undertook a significant long-term study of the region of Tarma, and Olivia Harris and Tristan Platt undertook searching dissections of kinship, gender and communal economies.

Apart from Marxist interest in peasant economy, the main stimulus for this Andean work came from the remarkable personality and scholarly work of the Cornell anthropologist John Murra, whose idea of ‘verticality’, bringing environmental and economic variables together, was compelling for supporters and critics alike (Lehmann 1982). UK-based anthropologists and ethnohistorians figured prominently in the path-breaking 1978 issue of the French history review *Annales* devoted to Andean societies – later published as a book in English (Murra, Wachtel et al. 1986). Some of these themes have since been buried by post-modern concerns with identity, but the enduring achievement of that generation was to draw anthropologists to the use of historical and archaeological sources. In a sense, they invented the discipline of ethnohistory.

The Andean tradition continues in the work of Penny Harvey, Rosaleen Howard and Andrew Canessa, who have brought to the fore the themes of kinship and gender, language, and ethnic identity. The study of Mexican communities, which was earlier more concerned with development-related issues, has given rise to a political anthropology, particularly in John Gledhill’s work on politics in the hinterlands of Jalisco and Michoacán, and in the work of students of his such as Rob Aitken.

While the anthropological study of lowland Amazonian society tends to have more in common with the anthropology of other parts of the world than with other parts of Latin America, the theme of race and ethnicity should be a central issue for them in the Americas. But in fact the UK has only one significant scholar in this field, namely Peter Wade, who is distinguished from many others by his readiness to use the word ‘race’ where others have taken refuge in the less challenging term ‘ethnicity’. His accounts are marked by an understanding of the multiplicities of racial symbolisms and signals that permeate everyday life, and an unwillingness to label race as either an invariably reinforcing or an invariably undermining element in systems of domination. Like David Lehmann in his work on religion, Wade also combines sociological and anthropological methods and theories.

In the study of what used to be called agrarian structures, there was a proliferation of fieldwork-based studies among the urban and rural poor rooted in various forms of Marxism, such as Joe Foweraker’s structuralist account of the badlands of Paraná, Long’s use of the notion of modes of production, Cristóbal Kay’s more historicist version inspired by comparativists such as Barrington Moore and Kuczinski (written before he migrated to the Netherlands, though he continues to enjoy what might be called ‘dual’ or even ‘triple’ nationality in this regard), Lehmann’s work on the Chilean Land Reform, and Goodman and Redclift’s highly influential comparative study. That work was heavily influenced by the advocacy and experience of Agrarian Reform and the high profile of rural social movements, so eventually, when the possibilities of Reform had run their course, the agenda moved on, with a growing emphasis on sustainability, on the role of NGOs and on institution-building in the context of a market economy. Yet there was also a concern with violence and eventually the emerging themes of citizenship and ethnicity (evident in other disciplinary fields discussed below). Lewis Taylor’s political sociology of Northern Peru prepared him for a series of important articles on Sendero Luminoso, and Anthony Bebbington pioneered an innovative path in the integration of policy-related work on NGOs with an analytical approach to institutional change.

There have been notable contributions to the study of the urban-industrial working class, by Ian Roxborough on Mexico, John Humphrey on Brazil, Ronaldo Munck's standard works on Argentina and Phil O'Brien's work on Chile. In the late eighties already, study of the grass roots began to centre more on themes of gender and identity in the work of Barrientos *et al* and Alison MacEwen Scott.

Geography, Interdisciplinarity and Gender Studies

In area studies, like, for example, development studies and gender studies, the bias towards inter-disciplinarity makes it difficult for practitioners to find or keep a communal affiliation in the very tribal world of academia. Departments of Geography, however, have provided a space from which to explore Latin American from a variety of perspectives. Peter Ward, for example, began as a geographer writing about housing and has become a major figure in urban studies especially of Mexico; he moved to Texas after a period of fruitful collaboration with Alan Gilbert, and in the process was rebranded as a sociologist. Below we highlight the work done in geography departments by feminist scholars who also cross-disciplinary boundaries. These cases illustrate how geography has come to resemble a protective crucible in which all kinds of work that others might call inter-disciplinary could find a disciplinary home – and thus a tribal identity – and thrive. Mexico has received particular attention from geographers: alongside Gilbert and Ward, there are their students, Sylvia Chant, Gareth Jones and Ann Varley; Colin Clark and, Katie Willis also work on Oaxaca, and although none of them focuses exclusively on that country.

Another clear example of interdisciplinarity is that of gender studies, an area in which the UK-based Latin Americanists have made one of their major contributions from a number of disciplinary homes. Yet, here, in contrast to history, we find an unusual degree of coherence and common endeavour. Geographers Sylvia Chant, Ann Varley and Sarah Radcliffe's work on gender has led them to cross the boundaries of legal issues, development and health studies, anthropology and sociology; Radcliffe has also made important contributions to the study of identity. Their methodology relies heavily, although not exclusively, on ethnography bringing a richness to the work which uncovers previously marginalised voices. Feminist themes first figured very prominently in social anthropology; Olivia Harris and Kate Young did pioneering work both in denouncing the condition of women in rural areas (in Mexico and Bolivia) and also, perhaps more importantly, in deconstructing ready-made concepts of the household in the 1970s and early 1980s. Another prominent pioneer of feminist Development Studies, Caroline Moser, had done similar work in an urban context in Guayaquil. Young, with others, edited the path-breaking *Of Marriage and the Market*, invented 'gender and development' and refashioned the international agenda of development studies. The reconstruction of our notions of family, household and gender has become something of a British speciality, exhibited in the work of Sylvia Chant, Sarah Bradshaw, Ann Varley and Katie Willis. In common with broader trends in development studies, the theme of gender has also been brought into areas such as poverty, post-disaster reconstruction and emergency social programmes, as in the contributions of Nina Laurie, Cathy McIlwaine and Bradshaw. The examination of violence and post-

conflict societies from a gender perspective is growing quickly, as in a recent book by Caroline Moser and Fiona Clark, Jenny Pearce's work on Colombia and Central America, Moser and McIlwaine's work on Central America, and Penny Harvey's essay on domestic violence, and among a new generation of graduate students studying these issues. Another growing field is the study of masculinity, sometimes as part of this examination of violence, but also in relation to 'Gender and Development' where Chant and Ruth Pearson have made timely interventions. These, plus other research on, for example, women agricultural workers in Chile by Barrientos *et al*, all illustrate the strong grassroots commitment of work on gender, which has reinforced rather than weakened theoretical and comparative approaches.

In the theoretical sphere, the political sociologist Maxine Molyneux and the historian Elizabeth Dore have pioneered gendered readings and re-readings in history. The extension of the gender theme seems to know no bounds; in politics, a field notorious for its resistance to such interventions, Nikki Craske, Fiona Macaulay, Ann Matear and Georgina Waylen have pursued feminist issues, shifting 'upwards' from work on social movements to the relationship between top-down and bottom-up pressures for 'engendering the state'. Maxine Molyneux has developed an international reputation in theorising the relationship between the state and citizenship from a gender perspective in transition and socialist countries, including Cuba and Nicaragua. Increasingly questions of gender and political economy have emerged, much of it influenced by Diane Elson's and Ruth Pearson's work, both of whom have had great impact on feminist economics in Latin America and elsewhere. Alison McEwen Scott has also examined gender and labour with the eye of a sociologist. Feminist perspectives on political economy and the state are found in Waylen and Jasmine Gideon.

In the humanities also, gender issues have established themselves as central concerns. Jean Franco, a pioneer in cultural studies, has been at the forefront, having left for the United States early in her career, and the prominence of gender themes in cultural studies is also found in the UK in the work, for example, of Catherine Davies and Annie Brooksbank-Jones. Across the disciplines, gender studies has been a growth area. In the 1980s, only seven SLAS conference papers were clearly in the field, but the 1990s that had risen to 84; although this is not mirrored in the number of BLAR articles on the subject.

Politics and Political Economy

Despite characteristic emphasis on case studies and fieldwork, the study of politics and state-society relations also exhibits a growing trend towards more comparative analysis, in line with international trends in political science. A strong tradition of ethnographic research among students of politics, including interviewing grassroots activists and participants, is reflected in the exemplary work of Foweraker on unions in Mexico, and in that of Neil Harvey (now in New Mexico), whose work on Chiapas has become a standard text, and of Nikki Craske on women's political role. Angell's long-term documentation of Chilean politics, frequently in collaboration with Benny Pollack, and George Philip's work on the political institutions of Mexico and on oil and politics in other countries, exemplify the Brit-

ish style of political analysis, while Dunkerley's more individual approach is less constrained but equal in erudition. Paul Cammack has maintained his solidly Marxist international political economy perspective, but without generating a new wave of scholars.

The area of democratisation and the quality of contemporary democracy in Latin America has, unsurprisingly, dominated recent output. This is evident in the writings of all the above and in particular has given rise a focus on rights and citizenship. Laurence Whitehead is perhaps the most widely known practitioner of the *ensayista* comparative approach to Latin American politics, including his co-edited series on democratisation, while in recent years Foweraker has adopted more quantitative methods. Foweraker has also made major contributions in the field of social movements, as have David Lehmann and Lucy Taylor, and this feeds into unceasing discussions about the quality of contemporary democracy in Latin America. Here the UK is making a distinctive contribution through research on legal institutions, in which political science meets legal anthropology, as in work being done by Rachel Sieder, Pilar Domingo and Fiona Macaulay, all of whom represent a new generation and a fresh approach, once again distinguished by the use of ethnography and case studies to inquire into 'big' issues. The health of the discipline is evidenced in the growth of SLAS conference papers in both politics and political economy (combined they represent 26 per cent of papers in the 1990s) and their strong showing in BLAR articles.

The contribution of Latin American Studies to Economics has been to provide a space and an audience for a structuralist approach which has for some time received very little attention from the professional mainstream. The work of Victor Bulmer-Thomas and Rosemary Thorp exhibits an abiding concern for income distribution and a commitment to a historical perspective, and that of Rhys Jenkins is clearly structuralist. In tune with the trend toward institutionalism in economics Thorp recently collaborated with the political scientist Alan Angell in a large-scale comparative study of decentralization. The voice of David Hojman is perhaps different in that he is able to combine a political economy-cum-structuralist approach in some of his writings, with a more technical or mainstream approach when working on micro-issues.

Literature and Cultural Studies

As we have already noted, this is the field that, in terms of student and staff numbers, has grown fastest within Latin American Studies and its rise is evident in the rapid increase in SLAS conference papers reaching 18 per cent of papers given in the 1990s. The tradition of pure literary criticism continues, but the higher profile now belongs to those who write about feminism, identity and the media (print, music, film and art, embracing also photography) in a social context heavily influenced by the dependency theories which social scientists invented and have since all but abandoned. The landmark books in this area, all published by Verso, are William Rowe and Vivian Schelling's *Memory and Modernity* (1991) which brought all these themes together with a judicious combination also of regional authors and subject matter, John King's *Magical Reels* (1990) on film and Gerald Martin's *Journeys through the Labyrinth* (1989) on fiction. A distinctive feature of

this area is that its UK practitioners do engage more with Latin American scholars than in other disciplines, notably with Nestor García Canclini, Jesús Martín-Barbero and Beatriz Sarlo. Cuban literature has figured at least as much as Brazilian, which is striking given the respective size of the two countries. The Centre for Brazilian Studies at King's College London, in which David Treece is the leading figure, is principally devoted to cultural studies, including music. Interestingly, music has recently been the subject of a book by the social anthropologist Peter Wade, who has combined it with the theme of race, exhibiting an unusual degree of technical competence in both areas.

Art History

Although practised by a small number of people, the UK contribution in this area is one of the most widely noted internationally, largely on account of the work of Dawn Ades, who has had a dual career as an academic and as an exhibition organizer, and as author of the catalogues of several major exhibitions on European and Latin American art. Ades is a major authority on Surrealism and European art of the first half of the twentieth century, and it is in no small part thanks to her initiative that London hosted the major exhibition of Latin American Art at the Hayward Gallery in 1989, of the art of Francisco Toledo in 2000, and of the prints of Rafael Orozco in 1999, both at the Whitechapel Gallery. Ades is also a rare example of someone who has straddled Spanish-speaking countries and Brazil, having written extensively on themes ranging from the Mexican muralists to the contemporary Brazilian artist Siron Franco. She has also gathered (exclusively from donations) a wide-ranging and growing collection of Latin American art at the University of Essex – which will be a major international attraction once it is suitably housed. Ades' pupils Valerie Fraser and Oriana Baddeley have also published a general book on Latin American twentieth century art, *Drawing the Line*, and Fraser, remarkably, has written about both colonial and modern architecture.

Regional Specialization

The ILAS data show a fairly stable pattern of regional and country specialization. Perhaps this is not surprising, since each generation's particular interests will be broadly reflected in those of their students. It just so happens that the generation who were in place in the 1960s had an opportunity to put their stamp on their successors. Chile is a tiny country in demographic terms, but it attracted the strong identification of the Latin Americanist community, and indeed (some of) the British public, with the reform projects of the governments of the 1960s and early 1970s, and the victims of the Pinochet regime. Thus it accounted for 6 out of 55 names listed in the Institute of Latin American Studies *Handbook of Latin American Studies and Caribbean Studies in the UK* in 1969, rising to 10 in 1981 and 21 in 1997, though its share declined from 10.9 per cent to 5.5 per cent. This is also reflected in its representation among papers given at the annual conference of the Society of Latin American Studies. 11.5 per cent of papers were on Chile in the 1970s – this declined to 7.2 per cent (17/236) in 1989 but rose again in 1990s to 41/405 (10.1 per cent) – with 1993 being a 'bumper' year. Its representation in

BLAR articles has remained healthy registering 15 per cent of articles in the 1990s.

Chile was then a major theme in the late sixties and early seventies. One of the founders of Latin American Studies, Harold Blakemore, has done research on British interests in nitrate, hoping to prove their non-responsibility for the fall of President Balmaceda in 1890. The Chilean case in the 1970s raised issues about democracy and its collapse, about modes of production and peasant economies, about class struggle, economic policy and more besides. That country's fate was to be a laboratory for three very different experiments in a short time, so all sorts of debates used Chile as a case. In addition, after the Labour government came to power in 1974, a scholarship programme and other initiatives brought many Chilean academics to our universities, including Benny Pollack, Cristóbal Kay, and Julio Faúndez. The UK contribution to these debates was through the detailed political insight of Alan Angell, who has devoted most of his life to Chilean politics, to studies of the Agrarian Reform by Cristóbal Kay (now in the Netherlands) and David Lehmann, and to the finances of socialism by Stephany Griffith-Jones. The Pinochet period may have produced a certain reluctance to do new research, despite continued interest in the issues, but the democratization that followed has brought a resurgence. The historian Simon Collier, who had made important contributions to the country's early republican history, wrote a general history of Chile together with an American colleague William Sater.

Argentina, which had been so prominent in the late sixties on account of its earlier UK business links (7 out of 55 scholars or 12.7 per cent) declined to 4.2 per cent, or 16 in 1997. UK-based scholars made important contributions to the understanding of Peronism (Walter Little, Daniel James, Ronaldo Munck, but above all David Rock, who by 1980 had left for the US). Rock and Little's interpretations were political rather than economic and remained detached from the internal debates in Argentina, while James showed sympathy for Argentina's quasi-Peronist brand of Trotskyism. After Tulio Halperin's departure from Oxford, and despite his successor's Argentine expertise, little more was heard of Argentina in Latin American Studies, which is unfortunate in the light of the country's present appalling plight. In the 1970s, it was one of the best-represented countries at SLAS conferences (18/131 papers or 13.7 per cent), a proportion that declined in the 1980s (15/256 or 5.9 per cent) but recovered slightly in the 1990s (33/310 or 8.1 per cent). This pattern is also reflected in BLAR articles: in the 1970s Argentina accounted for 11 per cent of the total number of articles but less than 7 per cent during the 1990s.

In the 1970s Peru accounted for more conference sessions at the annual meetings of the Society for Latin American Studies than any other country. It attracted much attention after the reformist generals took power in Peru in 1968, and also for the intellectual reasons already described. The Institute of Latin American Studies at Liverpool, under Director John Fisher (1982-1990), who was a major authority on Colonial Peru, stimulated the work of Fiona Wilson, of Lewis Taylor, and of Rory Miller. Put off by Sendero Luminoso, research interests shifted, and the 'boom' in Andean research can be seen to have petered out by 1997. By the 1990s Peru's share of SLAS papers had declined to 25/405 (or 6.1 per cent) – substantially behind that of Mexico (100), Brazil (63), Chile (41) even Argentina (33). The impact is also noticeable in the number of BLAR articles published: in the 1970s it

was the most written about country with 24 per cent of the articles dedicated to it, a proportion which had declined to less than 10 per cent by the 1990s.

Mexico and Brazil have increased and had equal representation among Latin Americanist academics in 1997, but this needs to be qualified – for it is quite evident, however regrettable, that the UK has contributed in a much more significant way to the global understanding of Mexico than to that of Brazil. Mexico has become the best represented country at SLAS conferences from 14/131 (10.7 per cent), to 46/256 (18 per cent) to 100/405 (24.7 per cent) and its representation in BLAR grew with *The Bulletin* between the 1970s and 1980s (from 12 to 28; but staying stable at 22 per cent), and rose to 31 per cent in the 1990s. Although Mexico is the most studied country – and certainly the one attracting the UK's most distinguished historians – it would be hard to find a set of debates or issues that have focused discussion in the UK. Knight has had his debates with revisionist historians in Mexico, and Brading has tended to avoid polemic, as have the anthropologists and sociologists. Even the Chiapas 'rebellion', which has generated so much heat in the US, has been received with a degree of cool detachment in Britain. Since 1988, there has been a tendency towards the study of the country's slow democratisation, evidenced by a number of sessions at SLAS conferences in the early and mid-1990s.

British scholarship on Brazil has been somewhat fragmented, at least until the foundation of the Oxford Centre in 1997. Individuals working on the environment (Cleary, until his departure for the US and later for Brazil), on politics (Flynn), on cultural themes (Schelling, Treece) on human rights (Macaulay) and on religion (Lehmann) have ploughed their own furrows. However, they do engage actively with Brazilian scholars, so the fragmentation may be less than a local perspective would indicate. The Oxford Centre is notable for its wide coverage in terms of themes and of the personalities it invites, thanks to the open-minded approach of its Director, and it is to be hoped that it will encourage more cross-fertilization within UK-based Brazilian scholarship. The greater fragmentation when compared with studies on Mexico is evident in the lower numbers of SLAS conference papers and BLAR articles on Brazil, despite the size and importance of the country. In the 1970s Brazil accounted for 12 per cent of SLAS papers and 13 per cent of BLAR articles. This rose to 18 and 17 per cent respectively in the 1980s, but this was not sustained and dropped back to 15 and 14 per cent in the 1990s.

After the 1970s the 'action' moved North to Central America, as the Sandinistas took power. The London Institute of Latin American Studies has become something of a world centre for the study of Central America, having been directed by two major experts on the region, Victor Bulmer-Thomas, the political historian James Dunkerley. Sylvia Chant and others in gender studies have also researched in some Central American countries, notably Costa Rica and Honduras. As might be expected Cuba and Nicaragua are popular countries for SLAS papers and BLAR articles; in the 1990s they accounted for 40 and 13 SLAS papers respectively.

Finally, there are the 'generalists' – a category covering people not working on particular countries. This was proportionately high at first (40 per cent) and then declined with specialization and the concomitant emphasis on fieldwork and first hand experience. Subsequently, this category rose sharply, but largely due to the rise in Literature and Cultural Studies, in which country specializa-

tion is less consistent with the subject's vocation. Thus, although 116 of the individuals registered in 1997 were generalists, 40 per cent of these were in those disciplines.

Non-academic Contributions

Public awareness of Latin America is stimulated in the UK mostly by non-academics. We have already alluded to the exhibitions organized by Dawn Ades – of which the major show at the Hayward Gallery was particularly successful. The raising of public awareness depends on the treatment of a subject in the various mass media, and in the UK, as elsewhere, probably the most widespread vehicles of mass awareness of Latin America are music, dance and the proliferating salsa clubs all over the world. Latin America gets much more space and much more analytical treatment in the Spanish and Italian print media than in the UK. Here Richard Gott was the great pioneer, with his account of guerrilla movements and his editorship of the Penguin Latin American series that lasted until the late 1970s. Even Gott, though, could not use his senior position at the *Guardian* newspaper to raise the amount of Latin American reporting. Recently Verso (which has published the most widely quoted works on literature and culture by King, Martin, Rowe and Schelling, Fraser and Baddeley) published his historical travelogue (*Land without evil*) and a book about Hugo Chavez of Venezuela that confirms his standing as one of the country's most unflinching political contrarians.

Documentary film has produced some wonderful television programmes on environmental and archaeological subjects. London now has an annual Latin American Film Festival, directed by Eva Tarr Kirkhope. Amanda Hopkinson has translated and edited contemporary poetry, especially by women, as well as producing a(nother) book of photographs by the ever-popular Martin Chambi, and Nick Caistor is a prolific translator, writer of travel books, and broadcaster.

It is the work of the Latin American Bureau that stands out in the field of *haute vulgarisation*. Against all the odds, as some might think, LAB has continued to produce accessible, high quality literature, some of which is listed at the end of this paper (Dunkerley 1980; Pearce 1981; O'Brien and Roddick 1983; Pearce 1986; Gatehouse, Reyes et al. 1987; Fisher 1993; Pérez Sarduy, Stubbs et al 1993; Branford and Kucinski 1995; Rocha 1999). LAB has remained faithful to its *engagé* origins, but without sacrificing quality, recruiting the services of both journalists and some academics of distinction.

The Society of Latin American Studies

The Society for Latin American Studies (SLAS) has its origins in 1962 when a group of university lecturers interested in the study of Latin American affairs decided to form *The Latin American Group*. Among the Group's early objectives was the desire to maintain a network of contacts between university lecturers as well as to provide a permanent source of information on Latin American affairs in the UK. As part of this, *The Latin American Group* produced four issues of an *Information Bulletin* between 1962 and 1964.

In 1964 The Latin American Group became the Society for Latin American Studies and hence the *Bulletin* was thereafter entitled *The Society for Latin American Studies Information Bulletin* which ran until 1967 (Nos. 1-7) when the Society, in a move designed to insert its publication in a more serious academic format, dropped the word *Information* from the title of its publication, renaming it the *Bulletin of the Society for Latin American Studies*. This ran on until number 33, produced in 1981, when it was then succeeded by the *Bulletin of Latin American Research* (BLAR) that continues to be published to this day. BLAR is now an established professional journal, which since 1999 has been published four times a year.

Alongside the formal academic *Bulletin*, the Society also disseminates information about forthcoming conferences, seminar series, members' news, new publications etc through the *SLAS Newsletter* that comes out four times a year. The *Newsletter* has been published since the 1970s and continues to be a major source of information for the Latin Americanist community in the UK. Since its birth SLAS has become an important forum for both cooperation among academics and other interested parties, as well as resource allocation. It continues to expand its membership and provides through BLAR and three-day annual conferences an important platform for the discussion of prominent Latin American issues. The *SLAS Newsletter* has become an important academic source for consultation and information for graduate and undergraduate university students, and SLAS also supports post-graduate students with travel grants and a dedicated conference organised by its sister organisation PILAS (Post-graduates in Latin American Studies).

Conclusion

The generation of UK Latin Americanist social scientists (not the historians) who did their graduate work in the 1970s has, as a whole, moved away from militant research towards a more academicist outlook; perhaps partly because they have advanced through the domestic cycle of marriage, property ownership, parenthood, divorce, but perhaps also because some causes, such as feminism and social movements, which were once conflictive have become or been adopted by the establishment of grant-awarding bodies and promotions committees. In parallel, the baton of cause-oriented writing has been taken up by the literary and cultural studies community.

UK academics tend to write in response to themes and authors emerging internationally as much as nationally. Thus to look for a 'distinctively British' contribution is perhaps a false trail, since we all publish for and respond to an international audience. Even so, some might think it a matter of regret that, in history in particular, we have not more energetically developed and deepened the work of the undoubtedly major figures we have produced.

On the other hand, the initiative of establishing the centres of Latin American studies in the 1960s has led after thirty-five years to the presence of scholars specializing in Latin America in many disciplinary institutions, and if the centres do not loom as large as they once did, that too may be considered a success, because they fulfilled an 'infant industry' function while the subject became established. If the centres were still as dominant today as they once were, that would be a sign that the subject had remained in a ghetto.

* * *

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