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## EDITOR'S FOREWORD

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As an interdisciplinary endeavor, the field of Latin American studies lies at the intersection of theoretical and methodological trends emerging from a variety of disciplines. As an enterprise focused on one of the most rapidly changing areas of the world, Latin American studies must also confront the complex issues posed by the trajectories of the developing countries. Although this field has achieved its greatest academic acceptance in the United States, it is enriched by intellectual currents from throughout the world.

It is therefore not surprising that Latin American studies has been characterized by a diversity of theoretical perspectives, often serving as the gateway through which new approaches enter the major academic disciplines. The field has no orthodoxy, nor should any be expected. Its practitioners shape the field through their research and teaching, the papers and panels they offer at professional meetings, and the manuscripts they submit to journals such as *LARR*. Latin Americanists with long memories will remember the waxing and waning of influential approaches such as Marxism, dependency theory, structuralism, bureaucratic authoritarianism, and deconstructionism, while those newer to the field are likely to be concerned with advocacy of or opposition to such current approaches as cultural studies or rational-choice theory.

The international transmigration of ideas is exemplified by the case of subaltern studies, one of the newer approaches to be adopted by Latin Americanists. The first published references to applications of subaltern studies to Latin America appeared in *LARR* in an article by Gilbert Joseph on Latin American bandits published in 1990<sup>1</sup> and the following year in a review essay by Patricia Seed on colonial and post-colonial

1. Gilbert M. Joseph, "On the Trail of Latin American Bandits: A Reexamination of Peasant Resistance," *LARR* 25, no. 3 (1990):7–35, esp. 20–25.

discourse.<sup>2</sup> In 1993 the journal *boundary 2* published a special issue on the postmodern debate in Latin America, which included the “Founding Statement” of the Latin American Subaltern Studies Group, largely composed of literature faculty but including some historians like Seed. In 1994 Florencia Mallon published an essay in the *American Historical Review* entitled “The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: Perspectives from Latin American History,” in which she reviewed the subject in detail.<sup>3</sup>

Subaltern studies originated in and was inspired by the work of Antonio Gramsci, as were so many other neo-Marxist approaches (specifically in Gramsci’s “Notes on Italian History” from the *Prison Notebooks*).<sup>4</sup> Gramsci’s observations suggest that the notion of domination and subordination is a more fundamental or unifying category than the traditional Marxist concept of class derived from the relations of production. These observations were used as a starting point by Ranajit Guha and his Indian colleagues in their effort to analyze the contributions of subordinate castes and groups to Indian history. The first issue of their journal, *Subaltern Studies*, appeared in 1982, published by Oxford University Press in Delhi. Guha’s nuanced and perceptive studies of peasant revolts as the breakdown of “the firm if tacit agreement between the rulers and the ruled on a mutually acceptable code of dominance and subordination” soon acquired an international following.

Although the vocabulary of subaltern studies may be new, the subject is not new to Latin American studies. Florencia Mallon has observed, “As [Rolena] Adorno has pointed out for the colonial Andes, issues of complicity, adaptation, collaboration, and resistance [of subaltern groups] have been systematically articulated in complex ways by historians since the early to mid-1980s. Even in the early 1970s, with Karen Spalding’s groundbreaking articles . . . , “oppositional identity” could no longer be seen as “untouched, authentic, and unproblematically created.”<sup>5</sup>

Thus subaltern studies has its origins in Italian neo-Marxism, was developed in South Asian intellectual circles, found receptive practitioners in Latin American studies, and from there has entered the discourse of the mainstream academic disciplines in the United States. Once again we find that what is new (in this case subaltern studies) is not entirely new, and what is old (research on peasant resistance in Latin America) is not entirely out of date. One can say with certainty, however, that Latin

2. Patricia Seed, “Colonial and Post-Colonial Discourse,” *LARR* 26, no. 3 (1991):181–200, esp. 192–93.

3. Florencia Mallon, “The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: Perspectives from Latin American History,” *American Historical Review* 99, no. 5 (Dec. 1994):1491–1515.

4. Antonio Gramsci, “Notes on Italian History,” in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International, 1971), 44–120.

5. Mallon, “Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies.”

America remains a venue for new approaches and for the reconsideration of old issues.

For *LARR*, intellectual change arrives in the form of manuscripts. Submissions to *LARR* during the year running from June 1996 through May 1997 dropped slightly to 128, as compared with 146 the previous year. This decline probably reflects the fact that no LASA Congress was held during 1996.

Twenty of these submissions were book review essays. The remaining 105 manuscripts entered the review process. By the end of May 1996, 11 of these manuscripts had been accepted for publication or accepted pending revisions, 63 had been rejected, 3 were withdrawn, and the remaining 28 were still under original review or a second review following revisions. An additional 7 manuscripts from the previous report period were also accepted after having been revised and resubmitted. The publication rate for articles and research notes that completed the review process (those accepted or rejected) was thus about 1 of 6 original submissions, with the proportion rising to about 1 of every 4 if resubmitted manuscripts are included in the overall totals.

The percentage of political science manuscripts dropped somewhat to 27 percent of all submissions, due in part to a sharp recovery in history submissions, which constituted 25 percent of submissions. Economics manuscripts fell to third place with 16 percent of submissions. Sociology submissions remained fourth with 11 percent of the total, followed by anthropology with 9 percent and language and literature with 5 percent. Other fields—including agriculture, art, education, environmental studies, geography, health, and psychology—accounted for the remaining 8 percent of submissions.

Discipline	June 1996– May 1997	June 1995– May 1996	June 1994– May 1995
Political Science	27%	36%	27%
History	25	17	27
Economics	16	19	9
Sociology	11	11	11
Anthropology	9	5	7
Language and Literature	5	6	9
Other fields	8	6	9
Totals	101%	100%	99%

Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian authors or coauthors, including those living in Europe and North America, submitted 33 percent of all submissions, as compared with 39 percent the previous year and 27 percent the year before that. Women authored or coauthored 29 percent of submis-

sions, up from 27 percent in last year's manuscript report. Twenty-three percent of the manuscripts came from outside the United States, as compared with 28 percent the previous year. Sixty percent of these non-U.S. manuscripts came from Latin America and the Caribbean, as compared with 49 percent in the preceding report period. Latin American and Caribbean countries represented were Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, and Venezuela. Other countries included Austria, Canada, England, Germany, and Israel.

The diversity of *LARR* authors in terms of discipline, ethnicity, gender, and country of origin is echoed in the diversity of the Editorial Board and the unpaid and wonderfully conscientious anonymous referees. This diversity is the best guarantee that the manuscripts published in *LARR* will continue to reflect new trends and perspectives in research on Latin America.

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