

LATIN AMERICAN
REFERENCE BOOKS:
An Underappreciated Genre

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- A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF LATIN AMERICAN BIBLIOGRAPHIES, 1980–1984: SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES.* By LIONEL V. LOROÑA. (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1987. Pp. 239. \$25.00.)
- ESCRITORES DE LA DIASPORA CUBANA—CUBAN EXILE WRITERS: MANUAL BIBLIOGRAFICO—A BIBLIOGRAPHIC HANDBOOK.* By DANIEL C. MARATOS and MARNESBA D. HILL. (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1986. Pp. 391. \$35.00.)
- A HANDBOOK OF LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURE.* Compiled by DAVID WILLIAM FOSTER. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1987. Pp. 300. \$50.00.)
- HANDBOOK OF LATIN AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE.* Edited by HAROLD E. HINDS, JR., and CHARLES M. TATUM. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985. Pp. 259. \$49.95.)
- HOFFMAN'S INDEX TO POETRY: EUROPEAN AND LATIN AMERICAN POETRY IN ANTHOLOGIES.* By HERBERT H. HOFFMAN. (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1985. Pp. 686. \$47.50.)
- INDEX TO PUERTO RICAN COLLECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY.* Compiled by FAY FOWLIE-FLORES. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1987. Pp. 265. \$39.95.)
- INDEX TO SPANISH AMERICAN COLLECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY: VOLUME 4, THE RIVER PLATE COUNTRIES.* By SARA DE MUNDO LO. (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1985. Pp. 388. \$85.00.)
- PABLO NERUDA: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL STUDIES.* By HENSLEY C. WOODBRIDGE and DAVID S. ZUBATSKY. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1988. Pp. 400. \$50.00.)
- WOMEN WRITERS OF SPANISH AMERICA: AN ANNOTATED BIO-BIBLIOGRAPHICAL GUIDE.* Edited by DIANE E. MARTING. (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 1987. Pp. 468. \$49.95.)

The nine works reviewed here make up only a small part of the output of Latin American reference books in the 1980s. A total of ninety-five reference books were located in the *American Reference Book Annual (ARBA)*, which focuses on English-language reference books published in the United States and Canada. The ninety-five titles surveyed, including some of the works under review here, provide a context for the evaluated titles as well as the general profile of this type of publication. With few exceptions, the works found in *ARBA* between 1980 and 1988 suggest the recent trends in the field of Latin American reference books: subject categories, formats, geographical regions, and publishers. Broad subject categories can be broken down into reference works on social sciences (38 percent), humanities (24 percent), social sciences combined with humanities (25 percent), and other fields that include law, travel, business, and science (13 percent). The most burgeoning field within the social sciences is political science, with seven recent reference titles, but most social science reference books involve a mixture of various disciplines focusing on the region. Within the humanities, literature leads with eleven titles, history is second with seven, while art ranks a poor third with two titles. The absence of titles on music, philosophy, and religion is characteristic of disciplines that have always been studied less within the Latin American humanities.

Reference books are good indicators of what new fields or disciplines are attracting scholarly attention. The ninety-five works surveyed highlight three areas of study that were previously neglected: cinema, women writers, and popular culture. Although these fields were studied earlier, only by the 1980s did they seemingly accumulate enough titles to warrant focus in separate reference books. The traditional disciplines have also produced several titles on topics that were almost unheard of in earlier decades: a guide to illustrations as well as indexes to collective biography, plays, and poetry. Business in Latin America is also generating more reference titles.

Bibliography is the most easily identifiable format with twenty-nine titles; guides, handbooks, directories, and yearbooks, because of their ill-defined boundaries and similar natures, total forty-five titles. Dictionaries, encyclopedias, and indices fall far behind these numbers.

In the 1980s, 81 percent of the reference books published address Latin America in general, regions are the focus in 10 percent, and a single country in 8 percent of the works. Five commercial presses—Scarecrow, Garland, ABC-Clío, Greenwood, and G. K. Hall—have published 44 percent of the recent reference books on Latin America. Only 12 percent of these books were published by university presses, and the remaining 44 percent by a variety of other presses that rarely issued more than a single title.

In brief, the ninety-five titles surveyed reveal several general

trends. Although the humanities and social sciences are often combined within a single work, the broad field of social science leads in titles. Literature, history, and political science are the three leading disciplines, and works in these fields are usually published as bibliographies or guides. The preferred approach is to focus broadly on Latin America as a whole, and five major commercial presses dominate the market for reference books.

The nine works under review here can be arranged in three categories: totally original materials, established fields being covered by new tools of access, and bibliographies on rather traditional topics. Of the nine, one of the most original contributions is Harold Hinds's and Charles Tatum's *Handbook of Latin American Popular Culture*. The elusive term *popular culture* relates to folk culture but defines itself more clearly in terms of twentieth-century urbanization and technology. The manifestations of this new field outlined in the *Handbook's* ten chapter titles, however, are more indicative of the editors' selection than any effort at definition: popular music, popular religion, comics, television, sport, photo-novels, film, festivals and carnivals, and single-panel cartoons and newspapers. In their capacity as editors of the journal *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Hinds and Tatum contacted experts in each field and prescribed very specific guidelines for developing each article: a definition of the area under focus, a historical outline, reference works, centers and research collections, future research, and a bibliography listing articles and monographic studies published to date.

With these guidelines, the editors have succeeded in reviewing the scholarship in almost totally new fields. Although folklore has long been an accepted component of Latin American studies, its more recent urbanized derivations have never had the status of established disciplines like history, political science, and literature, fields that are covered in the *Handbook of Latin American Studies* every other year. The field of folklore, in contrast, is covered only every four years, either because of low productivity or lack of status. Herein lies the originality of the *Handbook of Popular Culture*—its alerting the reader to types of cultural production that may indeed reveal more about human beings collectively than any of the established disciplines. For although all Latin Americanists like to mention authors such as Carlos Fuentes, Gabriel García Márquez, and José Lezama Lima, they are ultimately read by only an elite minority throughout the hemisphere. By contrast, the media broached in *Handbook of Latin American Popular Culture* reach the masses, and this type of middle-to-low-brow cultural consumption may express more about Latin America in the twentieth century than the analysis of experts in the more traditional (and accepted) disciplines.

Despite the contribution made by the present work, Hinds and Tatum are cognizant of the far greater number of topics developed in

the work of their mentor, M. Thomas Inge. His three-volume *Handbook of American Popular Culture* lists a total of forty-eight topics, including science, physical fitness, pornography, almanacs, circus, photography, and women.¹ It is to be hoped that Tatum and Hinds will undertake future volumes so that Latin American popular culture will receive coverage similar to that provided by Inge for the United States.

Women Writers of Spanish America, edited by Diane Marting, is the most ambitious project on this subject to date, listing almost eleven hundred alphabetized authors with sporadic annotations regarding bi-bibliographical information. The publication of this work indicates considerable development in reference books in women's studies, at least for Latin America.² Having begun this work in 1976, Marting eventually involved more than 150 researchers to locate women writers in twenty-one countries in the years since native Spanish-speaking women began to write in the Western Hemisphere. Her goal was to create a work that would serve all publics: new readers at all levels who are interested in women's writings from Spanish America as well as scholars, librarians, sociologists, and teachers of literature. To satisfy this clientele, guidelines were kept general: "Only those authors who were either born in Spanish America or lived most of their lives in the United States were included. Second, authors must have written principally in Spanish. . . . Third, they must have produced a published book of creative literature" (p. xi). Marting qualified the last restriction, however, by noting the trend in contemporary literature toward fiction blended with non-fiction and kept her standards flexible by allowing "works that need to be discussed in terms of literature today as well as in terms of the realities they discuss" (p. xi). Hence the inclusion of Mexican writer Elena Poniatowska, whose *La noche de Tlatelolco* qualifies for admission.

The scale of *Women Writers of Spanish America* is so enormous that one must commend Marting for her perseverance in an overwhelming undertaking that often time must have seemed futile. To compile such a reference work for one country, as was done by Carolyn Galerstein in *Women Writers of Spain* in 1986, seems an accomplishment, but to cover twenty-one countries seems an impossibility. The strain of the endeavor is suggested by the different styles and varying information or lack of information in many entries. An optimum entry contains the following data: full name, nationality, life date(s), biographical information on social class, preferred subjects, genres, themes, and a note regarding the writer's feminist stance. An example of the last category is the entry on Mercedes Cabello de Carbonera, which notes: "Her misfortune and that of her other friend Clorinda Matto de Turner was that they lived in a time when outspoken, educated women were not easily accepted by society" (p. 68). Following all this information is an alphabetical listing of titles with descriptive annotations. Minimal entries (some 75 percent

of the total) include complete name, country, and a mere listing of titles.

This description points to *Women Writers's* most severe weakness—a disproportion of information. Giants in the field like Gabriela Mistral, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, and Juana de Ibarbourou receive from six to eight pages each. Although no one can dispute their importance, even a mediocre library should have an abundance of material on these writers. More time, space, and energies should have been devoted to women who at this time occupy an inferior status when compared with the towering women writers, who are ubiquitous in anthologies.

A cognate problem derives from the allocation of space, a crucial consideration in a work of this nature. Careful guidelines should have been provided for contributors specifying the number of works, and more important, the nature of the desired contents of brief biographies. The themes and genres might have been noted in a few words along with several critical comments to sum up each writer's work. This information could have been followed by two bibliographies, primary sources and selected secondary sources, the format employed in the exemplary *Diccionario de escritores mexicanos*.³ Poor use of space is also indicated in the separate listing of various editions of the same work. The usual procedure is to list the latest edition and then note changes from previous editions.

Also, too many authors have only minimal data listed. A perusal of the four-volume set *Index to Spanish American Collective Biography* indicates that much more information is available on many of these "undiscovered" writers. Editor Marting refers to this problem in her introductory comments: "*Women Writers of Spanish America* represents in a certain brute form the state of our knowledge of Spanish-American women authors in the United States in the 1980s, but there is much research to be done" (p. xvi).

Yet in this first tentative effort, Marting has given direction to the development of reference books for feminist studies on Spanish American literature. The more fruitful countries for women writers—Argentina, Chile, and Mexico—should be accorded separate status in individual reference books on their writers, with careful descriptive and prescriptive annotation following the format of the above-mentioned *Diccionario de escritores mexicanos*. The smaller countries could be grouped by region—Central America, the Caribbean, and the Andean countries. Perhaps Marting has already embarked on this project.

Four new reference works make traditional materials far more accessible. Although these works do not open up new fields like women's studies or popular culture, they are welcome in calling new resources to the attention of scholars and students.

Anyone who has studied Latin America until very recently has experienced the frustration of locating even minimal biographical data on a specific person. More vexing was knowing that such facts existed but were impossible to locate because of the lack of bibliographical control over the many collective biographies extant. By contrast, in the United States (at least since 1947), researchers have been able to rely on the excellent *Biography Index*, a quarterly that notes biographical materials appearing in over five hundred periodicals, current books, and non-biographical works. Fortunately, five guides to Latin American collective biography have been published since 1980 and are facilitating research on the region. The two most recent such works, *The River Plate Countries* by Sara de Mundo Lo and the *Index to Puerto Rican Collective Biography*, are under review here.

The entire problem of control over Latin American collective biography was first broached in 1938, when Josefina del Toro published *A Bibliography of the Collective Biography of Spanish America*, which listed 488 items of this nature. For unexplained reasons, nothing more was done on a monographic scale on this topic until 1981, when Sara de Mundo Lo published the first in the G. K. Hall series *Index to Spanish American Collective Biography*. Volume I, the *Andean Countries*, was followed by *Mexico* (1982), *Central America and the Caribbean* (1984), and *The River Plate Countries* (1985). Mundo Lo informs me that she has one volume to go to finish the set of collective biographies of Spanish America. Although *The River Plate Countries* is the volume under review, my comments on it relate to the entire series because of the similar nature of their purpose and format. The work's major component is the arrangement of the various collective biographies by subject under country. Thus Argentine biographies are placed under one of forty-three categories ranging from aeronautics to women. Each entry has the following data: bibliographical information, a note as to the general contents, a listing of the biographies, and a code indicating holding libraries. Because of the similar nature, the same arrangement covers Paraguay, Uruguay, and the River Plate region. Most important, the 145 biographies are indexed in the final pages, giving the citation number of the volume in which each life appears. The last two pages, a geographical index by each of the three countries, forms the third and weakest point of access. The volume also includes an author index.

The biographical information in this four volume set is overwhelming: 4,500 entries, 100,000 biographies, and 220,000 individual citations. These citations refer only to monographs, not articles, and a book must contain at least three biographies but no more than three hundred. How difficult research must have been before the advent of Sara de Mundo Lo, who accessed all these individuals dispersed in

numerous collective biographies held by various library collections throughout the United States and Canada.

Fay Fowlie-Flores, the compiler of *Index to Puerto Rican Collective Biography*, shares some of the same sources as Mundo Lo's *Central America and the Caribbean*. Yet her work differs from that of Mundo Lo. The work on Puerto Rico indexes more English-language sources and gives the precise page numbers for each biography; but access is possible only by the alphabetized name, unlike the three indexes provided by Mundo Lo. Fowlie-Flores has nevertheless rescued some five thousand Puerto Ricans from the previous limbo of collective biography by providing the following information on each one: complete name, life date(s), profession(s), and an abbreviation of the source(s) that include the biographee.

Like biography, poetry too has had poor bibliographical control, at least for attempts to locate a certain poet or poem. The difficulty of finding an individual poem almost consigns it to the category of ephemera. One can come up with the name of the author, the title, or even the first line and still be frustrated in efforts to locate a copy of the poem in either the original language or in English translation. Prior to the appearance of *Hoffman's Index to Poetry: European and Latin American Poetry in Anthologies*, one had recourse to three reference books: Claude Hulet's *Latin American Poetry in English Translation: A Bibliography* (1965), *Granger's Index to Poetry* (1986), or Bradley Shaw's *Latin American Literature in English Translation: An Annotated Bibliography* (1976).⁴ The Hulet work lists translations for almost eight hundred poets; but the Granger index, although the standard reference in English, notes none of the English-language anthologies employed in Hoffman. In other words, Latin American poetry has been covered only cursorily, mainly in English translation, and the only Latin American poets included have been those with enough stature to be covered in collections of world literature. A superficial trip through the Granger index yields an average of eight titles each for Rubén Darío, José Martí, Gabriela Mistral, Pablo Neruda, Octavio Paz, and César Vallejo. In other words, until the publication of Hoffman's *Index to Poetry*, Latin American poets had been neglected.

Indexing the poetry of nine languages including Spanish and Portuguese, Herbert Hoffman has done justice to the Iberian world with the following number of anthologies for each language: Portugal and Brazil, 4; Spain and Spanish America, 28; and Latin America, 3. Another measure of the importance of Iberian culture is the number of poets anthologized: 122 in Portuguese and 582 in Spanish. These poets were abstracted from 114 anthologies. These collections were published from 1917 to 1982, with the peak decades occurring in the 1960s and

1970s and a deacceleration in the last eight years.

Having completed his fifth index of works that include plays, short stories, and recorded poetry, veteran compiler Hoffman knows how to display his wares.⁵ The components of *Hoffman's Index to Poetry* allow multiple points of access by author, title, and first line indices as well as a list of poets by languages and a register of anthologies analyzed. Hoffman has thus made one of the prime genres of Iberian culture readily accessible to scholars.

While Hoffman has provided access to the poetry of Iberian culture, David William Foster has updated all genres of Latin American literature, at least for English-speaking audiences. *The Handbook of Latin American Literature*, Foster's fifteenth reference book, demonstrates that he understands the needs of scholars and students in this field. Before the appearance of his latest book, one would have guessed that Latin American literature was well covered in English in such traditional works as Alfred Coester's *Literary History of Spanish America*, John Englekirk's *An Outline of Spanish American Literature*, Arturo Torres Rioseco's *New World Literature*, and, of course, Enrique Anderson Imbert's *Spanish American Literature: A History*. Yet besides having become dated since their publication (between 1921 and 1963), Foster's predecessors either periodized Spanish American literature by approaching it from the colonial years to the vanguard movements of the mid-twentieth century, or viewed this literature as a collection of outstanding personalities like Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Rubén Darío, or focused on a regional manifestation like the gaucho.

In contrast, Foster's geographical focus offers an abbreviated history of each of the twenty-one Latin American literatures prepared by an expert in the field, either a Latin American or a U.S. scholar. Foster's guidelines of brevity and thoroughness were apparently met within the context of the independent treatment accorded each country, which is to say that the coverage is neither formulaic nor traditional. Each contributor has perceived his or her area of expertise with its own idiosyncrasies, and the result is a collection of varied essays ranging from Steven Bell's seventy-four pages on Mexico to Matías Montes Huidobro's forty-two pages on his native Cuba to Rima de Vallbona's eleven pages on Costa Rica. In other words, the essays and their annotated bibliographies are proportioned to each country's size and prominence as a source of contributions to Latin American literature. Individual countries are thus covered by chronological and descriptive surveys that are handled with varied, but positive, approaches.

In addition to its praiseworthy up-to-dateness, national bibliographies, and general references, Foster's *Handbook of Latin American Literature* is to be commended for providing a national survey in English of each country. Because the Area Handbook Series sponsored by the

American University in Washington, D.C., are now omitting sections on artistic and intellectual expression, Foster's *Handbook* will be an essential reference.⁶ This access to literature in English will continue, although on a diminished basis, in the Scarecrow Press's series of historical dictionaries. Under the editorship of Laurence Hallewell, each revised edition will have an overview of the focused country's literature. This approach is evident in Salvatore Bizarro's new *Historical Dictionary of Chile*. Without Foster's most recent reference book, however, a lacuna would remain in the study of Latin American literature from the perspective of the English-speaking world.

More traditional, but no less valuable than the above works are three bibliographies assembled by Lionel Loroña, coauthors Daniel Maratos and Marnesba Hill, and coauthors Hensley Woodbridge and David Zubatsky. The first is general in coverage and in discipline, the second more specific in focusing on a single country and its literature, and the third treats a single author in depth.

Editor Lionel Loroña's *A Bibliography of Latin American Bibliographies, 1980–1984: The Social Sciences and Humanities* is the fourth volume in a series of supplements begun in 1971 to accompany Arthur Grop's two basic works on Latin American bibliography in monographs and in periodicals.⁷ Sponsored by SALALM (Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials), the Loroña bibliography resembles its predecessors in its intention to "include bibliographies that appear as articles in periodicals or as monographs. Bibliographies appended to articles or monographs are generally excluded. . . . In the majority of cases, bibliographies listed are new works" (pp. vii–viii). Although the objective may seem modest, realizing a work of this nature entailed having fifteen SALALM members peruse more than 430 serials in Spanish, English, and Portuguese in search of new bibliographies. The results of these efforts are the 1,630 unannotated entries arranged into thirty-four categories and further subdivided geographically. Some of the nomenclature indicates the breadth of the contents: anthropology, art and architecture, biography, folklore, history, mass media, minority groups, music, urbanization, and so on. The overwhelming scope of this bibliography makes obvious the necessity of a five-year update. The classification of materials provides the prime means of access, but subject and author indexes provide supplemental access points.

Indeed, it is difficult to criticize a work of this nature because its absence would mean a lack of bibliographical control over much of the serial output on Latin America and a concomitant loss of currency of subject matter that is invariably reflected first in periodicals.

The entire problem of bibliographical control and the creation of reference books on Latin America in the United States indicates two foci of intense activity. The most obvious is that of the Hispanic Division of

the Library of Congress and the annual compilation (since 1937) of the invaluable *Handbook of Latin American Studies*, which devotes alternate years to the humanities and the social sciences. Under the supervision of Dolores Moyano Martin, selected scholars assess their respective fields and contribute current titles.

A less-centralized endeavor continues under the auspices of the aforementioned SALALM and the efforts of its individual members. This thirty-two-year-old organization has set a record in fostering and creating reference books. First, the title at hand, Loroña's *Bibliography of Latin American Bibliographies*, is the product of one of SALALM's most successful ventures—the search and recording of bibliographies extant in Latin American periodicals. Second, under the initiative of Barbara Valk of the University of California at Los Angeles, SALALM has overseen publication of twelve volumes (1970–1983) of *HAPI*, the *Hispanic American Periodicals Index*. Valk also served as the editor of the massive *Borderlands: A Bibliography of the United States–Mexico Borderlands*.⁸ Third, minutes are published annually of the international meetings in which topics relevant to the acquisition of information are developed. Fourth, the SALALM Editorial Board sponsors the publication of carefully monitored reference manuscripts submitted by members and nonmembers. Fifth, each year SALALM's three hundred members create, edit, or compile some fifteen reference books in all formats on all topics relating to Latin America. Finally, SALALM annually presents the José Toribio Medina Award for outstanding and original work done in reference by one of its own members.⁹

Cuban Americans generally have not been prolific in generating reference books relating to their own culture. *Escritores de la diáspora cubana—Cuban Exile Writers: Manual biobibliográfico—A Bibliographic Handbook* is therefore a welcome resource on the creative writings resulting from the Castro-inspired exodus from Cuba. The compilers have chosen to cover books published outside Cuba since around 1959 by authors who left as well as writers physically on the island but exiled in spirit. Within these guidelines, Daniel Maratos and Marnesba Hill assembled their information through questionnaires and the more traditional tools of bibliographers plus the resources of the Library of Congress, the New York City Public Library, and the Otto G. Richter Library at the University of Miami. The resulting handbook contains over 420 authors and 1,400 titles, with biobibliographic data that include birth, profession, type of writing, education (often grade school through university), a primary bibliography of books, and less frequently, secondary sources of criticism.

These bilingual paragraphs average about 100 words but range from 50 to 250 words, depending on the importance of the author and the amount of information available. The primarily descriptive text is

generally free of critical comments about the quality of the biographee's publications. A collective reading of the entries impresses the user with not only the literary production of a segment of Cuban Americans but also their educational attainments before and after the exodus. They have also held a variety of professional positions in both countries.

Because monographic-length references on Cuban exile literature are few, the compilers would have done well to note two antecedents in their introduction: Matías Montes Huidobro's and Yara González's *Bibliografía crítica de la poesía cubana (exilio 1959–1971)* (1972), and José and Roberto Fernández's *Índices bibliográficos de autores cubanos (diáspora 1959–1979)* (1983).¹⁰ Brief mention of these works would have established the lineage of the present work and informed the reader of complementary references. Yet these comments are not meant to detract from the value of *Escritores de la diáspora cubana*. The compilers are to be commended for creating an excellent reference work on material that had not been previously brought under bibliographical control and for profiling the lives of a talented generation of immigrants.

A reference book can be defined as one "compiled to supply definite pieces of information of varying extent, and intended to be referred to rather than read through."¹¹ Yet Hensley Woodbridge's and David Zubatsky's *Pablo Neruda: An Annotated Bibliography of Biographical and Critical Studies* violates this major premise. Although the book has all of the characteristics of a reference work, it is so well annotated that one is tempted to read it from beginning to end by using the more than two thousand annotations as a substitute for the documents to which they refer.

The quality and thoroughness of this bibliography is unsurprising, given the stature of its coauthors. Woodbridge, a professor of Spanish, is one of the doyens in the field after publishing at least nine monographic bibliographies on a variety of subjects from the study of language and literature to Rubén Darío to linguistics. In 1987 the Modern Language Association published his *Guide to Reference Works for the Study of the Spanish Language and Literature and Spanish American Literature*. Zubatsky too has mined the culture of Spain and Latin America in his seven bibliographies, including his penultimate, *Latin American Literary Authors: An Annotated Guide to Bibliographies*.

Thus the bibliography on Pablo Neruda is the product of two professionals and shows the marks of their expertise. Its numerous citations are arranged by subject matter: biographical studies with forty-five subdivisions, Neruda and his contemporaries, general studies, special topics, poetry, prose, and drama. The final materials, as indicated in the detailed ten-page table of contents, are manuscripts, Neruda in literature (as subject of fiction and poetry), and recordings. In addition to the table of contents, there are useful indexes of titles and authors.

Woodbridge and Zubatsky indicate the genealogy of their work by annotating fifty earlier bibliographies. Without considering the quality of the works cited, Neruda fans can form a sense of the trajectory of interest in the poet by scanning bibliography titles and decades of production. From 1930 to 1959, interest in this Nobel Prize winner was apparently minimal, as indicated by the publication of only three bibliographies, or one per decade. In the 1960s, however, the poet's career gathered momentum with a total of fifteen bibliographies; the decade of the 1970s, which included his death, marked the period of greatest interest with twenty-three bibliographies, while the 1980s have registered a total of eleven bibliographies to date.

Bibliography has a secondary use—it indirectly notes lacunae. In the case of Neruda, the only reference books to date are bibliographies and chronologies. With ten years' perspective on his death and the assurance that all his works have been duly recorded, other reference books—two types in particular—should soon appear. Where are the dictionaries that would provide immediate access to names and themes in the creative works and significant biographical data? And where is the concordance, at least to the poetry, that would reveal at a glance the usage of a key word in its multiple contexts?

Having surveyed the field of Latin American reference books since 1980, I now wish to elaborate on this essay's negative subtitle. The label "underappreciated genre" reflects my impressions after almost fifteen years of working with reference books.

First of all, this type of publication is not the first choice of university presses. Most Latin Americanists in search of a publisher would probably prefer a prestigious university press, possibly Ivy League or (more realistically) one of the university presses of the South or Southwest, from Tulane to UCLA. As the earlier statistics indicate, however, these presses rarely publish reference books and have relegated them to aggressive commercial presses. Those few titles selected by university presses seem to be assured of success by their stature, such as *The Handbook of Latin American Studies* (University of Texas Press) or the index to *Hispanic American Historical Review (HAHR)* (Duke University).¹²

In the field of reviewing, the bias is not as clear-cut. For example, a perusal of *HAHR*'s list of books received in four issues from August 1987 to May 1988 indicates the following: 4 percent of all books received were reference works, yet only one-third of them were reviewed. *Hispania*, the major organ for the American Association for the Teaching of Spanish and Portuguese, has compiled a better record. Four issues for a comparable span of time show that 8 percent of all books received are reference and nearly three-quarters of them are reviewed. How many journals in the broad field of Latin American studies could match *Hispania*'s record? Although it is impossible to set a desirable standard,

it would seem that reference books, especially those covering a rather broad field within the focus of a journal, would be privileged for review. Yet this is rarely the case.¹³

Almost all the regional organizations of the Latin American Studies Association give annual prizes for achievement in publication. But to my knowledge, none of them have ever given an award to a reference book, a problematical situation. Perhaps the LASA committee for the recently established Bryce Wood Book Award will subvert my argument with their first selection. To date, however, the only Latin American organization that specifically recognizes reference books is the already mentioned SALALM, which has given its José Toribio Medina Award since 1981 to seven authors of reference books.¹⁴

In the bid for tenure, if publications are one of the requirements for clearing this hurdle, reference books do not enjoy the same status as nonreference books. A bibliography will count only if it is accompanied by a monographic study in one of the standard disciplines. In other words, a book of literary criticism, regardless of quality, on an author overresearched in Latin American literature, is generally regarded more highly than an annotated or unannotated bibliography on any topic. One academic institution, at least, will not consider contributions to a reference book (like a dictionary or encyclopedia) in the candidate's bid for tenure. The resulting message is that even though reference books are basic to all research, they are not a serious endeavor. One could almost apply the passive voice of the world of science to this genre of scholarly books: "The bibliographies were compiled and annotated," or "articles were commissioned, collected, and edited for the encyclopedia." In short, these essential tools are supposed to somehow come into being without human effort and therefore deserve no credit.

Finally, in terms of grants, what foundations other than the National Endowment for the Humanities recognize reference books and accord their authors the support and prestige of funding?¹⁵ I wrote fifteen such organizations regarding their financial support of reference books. Of the nine that responded, only the Tinker Foundation has a history of actively encouraging works of this kind.¹⁶

In conclusion, the titles reviewed here demonstrate that Latin American reference books are of high quality indeed. Their usefulness and even indispensability cannot be argued. Yet the treatment of their authors throughout the field is one of neglect and even disdain in the bid for tenure, the granting of awards, and general standing within a discipline. Research, whether for classroom purposes or publication, is a symbiotic effort involving the scholar with his or her theories and informational needs and the compiler-creator of reference books who has established a base revealing what has been done and pointing to lacunae. That is to say, the scholar's ends become achievable because

some librarians or researchers have made their expertise tangible by creating a bibliography, encyclopedia, or guide. As the creator of this reference book, the author of a reference work merits a reward greater than mention in a footnote or bibliography. Until this truth is realized, Latin American reference books will remain an underappreciated genre.

NOTES

1. M. Thomas Inge, *Handbook of American Popular Culture* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1970–1980).
2. Several other reference books preceded Marting's *Women Writers: Meri Knaster's Women in Spanish America: An Annotated Bibliography from Pre-Conquest to Contemporary Times* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1977); and Lynn Ellen Rice Cortina's *Spanish American Women Writers: A Bibliographical Checklist* (New York: Garland, 1983).
3. Aurora M. Ocampo de Gómez and Ernest Prado, *Diccionario de escritores mexicanos* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1967). This volume gives basic biographical data, but more important, it synthesizes in a few lines the authors' themes and achievements.
4. Claude Hulet, *Latin American Poetry in English Translation: A Bibliography* (Washington, D.C.: Pan American Union, 1965); *Granger's Index to Poetry*, edited by William F. Bernhardt (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986); and Bradley Shaw, *Latin American Literature in English Translation: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: New York University Press, 1976).
5. Two other works by Herbert H. Hoffman are *Cuento Mexicano Index* (Newport Beach, Calif.: Headway Publications, 1978) and *Latin American Play Index* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1983).
6. It appears that since 1980 the Area Handbook Series has changed in both name and content. Three handbooks on Latin American countries illustrate this point in that none of them cover literature (unlike the earlier editions): *Cuba: A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: American University, 1987), *Guatemala: A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: American University, 1984), and *Mexico: A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: American University, 1985).
7. Arthur E. Gropp, *A Bibliography of Latin American Bibliographies* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1968); and Gropp, *A Bibliography of Latin American Bibliographies Published in Periodicals* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1976).
8. This title was published by UCLA in 1988.
9. The following individuals have received SALALM's José Toribio Medina Awards: for 1981–82, Barbara Valk for *HAPI*; for 1982–83, Sara de Mundo Lo for *Index to Spanish-American Collective Biography*; for 1983–84, Robin Price for *Medical Americana in the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine*; for 1984–85, Werner Guttentag for *Bibliografía boliviana* and Paula Covington for *Indexed Journals: A Guide to Latin American Serials*; for 1985–86, Alma Jordan and Barbara Comissiong for *The English-Speaking Caribbean: A Bibliography of Bibliographies*; for 1986–87, Nelly González and Margaret Fau for *Bibliographic Guide to Gabriel García Márquez, 1979–1985*; and for 1987–88, George Elmendorf for *Bibliografía nacional nicaragüense*.
10. Matías Montes Huidobro and Yara González, *Bibliografía crítica de la poesía cubana (exilio 1959–1971)* (New York: Plaza Mayor, 1972); and José and Roberto Fernández, *Índices bibliográficos de autores cubanos (diáspora 1959–1979)* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1983).
11. Leonard Montague Harrod, *The Librarians' Glossary of Terms Used in Librarianship* (London: Andres Deutsch, 1971), 538.
12. The UCLA Latin American Center publishes *The Hispanic American Periodical Index*. For some reason, this important reference work is not mentioned in the ARBA annual, despite its being in a class similar to the *Handbook* and the *HAHR* index.
13. At times a journal will mention only books reviewed and tell nothing about books

received but not reviewed. Hence it is not possible to determine what proportion of reference titles received are actually being reviewed. This is the case of the *Inter-american Review of Bibliography*, which in 1987 reviewed fifty-eight titles, six of which were reference.

14. See note 9.
15. Between 1980 and 1987, NEH has funded twenty-three reference books in the Latin American humanities. For a complete list, see *Hispania* 71, no. 2 (May 1988):331.
16. The Tinker Foundation, like NEH, has an excellent record for funding reference books. Since 1969 Tinker has funded twenty-one such titles.