
NEWS

FROM THE EDITOR

REMISSION OF INTELLECTUAL PROFITS

To those of us whose work involves field research the relationship of the scholar to the host country and its institutional resources is a familiar concern. This relationship has not, for the most part, been satisfactorily defined, at least insofar as the Latin American resource suppliers are concerned. In fact, the fund of bitterness on the part of Latin American hosts against "intellectual parasitism and imperialism" has been rising. American scholars use the resources of the country chosen for research purposes, extract or create data, and carry off with them the fruits of their labor on Latin American materials. That the results of studies are occasionally made public is little consolation. There is a significant number of Latin American supported materials which is not made accessible to the public. Furthermore, in the case of material which is subject to a wider distribution in the United States, there are still two major complaints: First, only a small part of this material reaches Latin America; and second, the type of data collected and written up, sometimes of questionable relevance and usefulness even to the American-sponsored discipline, is more frequently of marginal significance to the area from which it is extracted.

The degree of ill feeling generated by such complaints has produced a move to examine this situation with the purpose of improving scholarly relationships. The recent unpublicized activities of the Ford Foundation in this respect are illustrative of such an attitude. Needless to say, the visiting scholar must be held responsible for some part of the quality of the research relationship. He or she can recognize the debt of gratitude owed the host institutions by demonstrating a sensitivity to the dignity and needs of the country and its institutions. More specifically, the researcher can exercise greater self-scrutiny in order to act like a visiting scholar whose sojourn has positive consequences, rather than as a pillager of intellectual *richesse*.

This statement is not made in ignorance of the feelings of frustration and

chagrin so often experienced by researchers in the field. With striking frequency one hears complaints not only of the unavailability of data, but also of the difficulty of extracting information from libraries, government agencies, and private sector institutions as well. These complaints are well-founded, in fact. Field work in Latin America is laborious; sometimes exasperating. One plausible reason might be that cooperation is related to involvement and interest. Researchers are discovering increasingly that affiliation with a local institution can be of considerable assistance in their work. This brings us full circle to Latin American institutions and the kind of initiative they may take to exercise greater control over the national research environment for the benefit of both sides.

The Centro Interdisciplinario de Desarrollo Urbano y Regional of the Universidad Católica de Chile has addressed itself to a particular group of researchers: Ph.D. candidates, on the subject of mutual advantages to be obtained from a formal relationship. CIDU supplies doctoral candidates developing a thesis in the area of urban and regional development research with the following facilities: 1) Information on current studies and programs in Chilean institutions; 2) Access to informational sources of CIDU and assistance in contracting other centers in Chile and Latin America through CLACSO (Latin American Council for Social Sciences, 3) Office space, equipment, secretarial services, and printing work; and 4) Access to professors and researchers at CIDU for consultation and advice. The candidate must have a good knowledge of Spanish, his own financial support, and be willing to pay a monthly fee of U.S. \$60.00.

In return for the advantages he enjoys as a result of this affiliation, the visiting scholar is bound by the following commitments: 1) Before returning to his country of origin he must leave behind at CIDU's library copies or outlines of the information and materials obtained during his research; 2) He is expected to write a paper for publication in the CIDU journal on his work and/or conduct a course or seminar at CIDU related to his special field; 3) He would participate in the internal seminars of professors and researchers at CIDU; and 4) He would acknowledge in his thesis and publications written during his stay at the center the aid granted him by CIDU and its members.*

CIDU is an example—and there are additional ones in Latin America—of the willingness of a Latin American research institution to shoulder its part of the responsibility in promoting mutually beneficial relationships between U.S. scholars and host countries. We can only applaud the fairness of such

* For further information please write to Miss Ximena Garri, CIDU Casilla 16002, Santiago, Chile.

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measures. Perhaps particularly in the case of social sciences, which derive their moral aim from the concept of improving social circumstance in the world we inhabit, it is meaningless to speak in terms of ethics and “progress” unless we abandon ethno-egocentric short sightedness, for cooperation and willingness to pay heed to another people’s priorities. CIDU and other centers like it must be praised for the steps taken to redefine research relationships and establish more positive and advantageous circumstances for all concerned.

TO THE READER

The Reader of LARR will note that a number of changes have been made in the News Section of the *Review*. The aim of these changes is to rationalize the organization of the contents of this section and to facilitate consultation for the reader. As part of our efforts to improve the quality and structure of the News Section, we wish to make a special appeal to our readers to inform this editor of activities and events, either special, or which should be routinely covered by the *Latin American Research Review* but have escaped the attention of the editor. Such information, apart from improving the quality of this section of LARR, would be of service to all concerned with Latin America.

Marta Cehelsky, News Editor