

Indexing Specialties: HISTORY

EDITED BY MARGIE TOWERY



ISBN 1-57387-055-2

Copyright© 1998 by the American Society of Indexers, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without express written permission from the society except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages for a review.

Published by
Information Today, Inc.
143 Old Marlton Pike
Medford, NJ 08055

in association with

The American Society of Indexers, Inc.
PO Box 48267
Seattle, WA 98148-0267

INDEXING BOOKS ON LATIN AMERICAN HISTORY

Francine Cronshaw

The majority of books written about Latin America and published in the United States are written by academic types, whether teachers at colleges and universities or independent scholars. A smaller number of Latin American titles are released by trade or independent presses. Whether scholarly or general interest press, the publisher is likely to provide some guidelines (more rarely, a style sheet for your particular project) for formatting your index. A good part of the following discussion will, I hope, help indexers make better use of publisher guidelines by illuminating some of the issues unique to the field. Before embarking on the finer points, however, it may be useful to look at the historical context of Latin American studies, with an emphasis on second-language (Spanish and Portuguese) issues.

For those new to Latin American studies, the term, as it is used in academic circles, refers to research conducted in the fields of history, sociology, economics, urban planning, political science, literary criticism, anthropology, and so forth. Spanish (and Portuguese) language and literature can also be included under the rubric of Latin American studies but will not be considered in this essay.

Latin America is one of several major regions of the world considered worthy of "area study." Other regions routinely studied under the area study convention are the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe. Academic interest in the so-called Third World increased dramatically after World War II. According to cold war thinking, information about other regions of the world was vital to the U.S. "national interest." The world was viewed as divided into two major ideological blocs—either of which would prove irresistible as a role model to the rest of the countries of the world, according to the cold war worldview. Thus, knowledge about other cultures, especially those of the Third World, was a necessary preemptive measure to head off the perceived threat of Soviet influence. The other reason was economic: the twentieth century was the "American century," and economic intelligence was vital to the penetration of smaller nations by multinational corporations. (And yes, even a decade after the fall of the Berlin Wall, economic intelligence gathering remains a major justification for the CIA's continued existence.)

The academic field of Latin American studies had a major boost during John F. Kennedy's administration, when the perceived threat of the Cuban Revolution (and its purported demonstration effect on the rest of Latin America) prompted the creation of the Alliance for Progress. Whatever the merits of the Alliance as a typical trickle-down foreign aid program, its domestic effects, especially in education, were substantial. The Alliance for Progress created Title VI, a program to fund area studies in U.S. universities. A number of Latin American centers were created, and scholars received funding to conduct a wide variety of field research, such as assessing the revolutionary potential of Bolivian peasants.

The overall effect of Title VI was to attract a greater number of better-qualified students and scholars to the study of other nations. It also had the effect of improving foreign language skills in the scholarly community. In history, for example, previous generations of historians writing about Latin America usually had reading skills only in Spanish or Portuguese, library-centered skills used in researching their books on military, diplomatic, and political themes. The 1960s generation and subsequent generations of Latin Americanists, however, expected to speak and even write Spanish or Portuguese, in addition to their language research skills. Often some degree of *compromiso* (political commitment) to the region influenced their attitudes toward language and culture acquisition. A pronounced New Left orientation, reflected in historical materialist assumptions, continues to inform scholarship on Latin America.

Higher standards for foreign-language use in academic circles have had a commensurate effect in scholarly publishing, as those trained in recent generations move into leadership positions within their respective presses. It is still very common, however, to find that many presses do not have a single bilingual copyeditor or native Spanish speaker on staff. A skilled freelance indexer can thus offer much-needed abilities and assist with quality control in the production of books on Latin American topics.

The increasing level of mastery of Spanish (and Portuguese) among authors and academics has had a direct impact on manuscripts in English. Though written in the English language, books are likely to follow Spanish-language conventions in three major ways: (1) use of appropriate accent marks, (2) use of Spanish terms and concepts that are not easily translatable, and (3) use of Spanish citation style in bibliographic entries in that language. All three of the above may raise consistency questions for the indexer, because they are presented in more than one fashion in the text.

Accent marks inconsistently used by the author and not attended to by the line editor turn into a thorny area for an indexer whose grasp of Spanish is not strong. If the publisher provides a style sheet, the indexer has at least a good start on many of the inconsistent spellings that may be present. A good Spanish dictionary will help (*Simon and Schuster's International Dictionary English/Spanish-Spanish/English*, for example, is excellent). Remember, however, that the Spanish language has approximately five times as many words as English. Thus, any dictionary consulted may or may not contain the arcane or recent usages you seek to verify. In addition, many regional usages exist throughout Latin America and even within the same country. For example, the recently released *Diccionario del español usual en México* (1996) does not show regional usages from states such as Zacatecas or Chiapas. Place-names can be checked for spelling accuracy in *Webster's New Geographical Dictionary*. Given that the text's language is English, it would be more appropriate to use "Peru," rather than "Perú" to refer to the Andean nation. One also finds the country of El Salvador listed under the article (El) in the "E" section. (Article use tends to be especially thorny, and reference works can provide ready—if not always consistent—answers.)

When all else fails and the indexer is not sure if a particular name or term carries an accent mark or not, partly because the author has used them inconsistently, she can always cite them in the index as they appear in the text, for example, "Bolívar, Simon, 36"; "Bolívar, Simón, 87, 245." With a note from the indexer that spelling

Inconsistencies have been flagged in the index, the editor can then easily find inconsistent usages where they occurred in both text and index.

Many concepts and terms that describe another culture cannot be translated adequately into English. The current protocol is that the first time such concepts or terms are introduced, they appear in italics. Subsequent mentions of the same concept or term generally appear in roman. In the index, italicized terms or concepts usually follow the author's initial usage (italicized), although the indexer should be aware of many foreign words that have crept into daily English and do not require italicization (e.g., *coup de grace*, *caudillo*). Novices might note that individual publishers generally have their own rules in this regard. As is the case generally, to check whether a term you suspect might be considered to be in common usage, look it up in *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (most recent edition). Any accent marks that appear in the term or concept in the text should be replicated exactly in the index entry.

Occasionally the indexer will encounter citations of books or articles in the body of the work. Depending on the approach adopted, many times those citations do not find their way into the index. If they do, the indexer should be aware that the correct form for a book title in Spanish is capitalizing the first word (whether noun, article, or verb) and leaving all other words, except proper nouns, in lower case. Examples are *Cien años de soledad* (Gabriel García Márquez) or *Colonización y conflicto: Las lecciones de Sumapaz* (Elsy Marulanda).

Naming in Spanish

Citing names in the index in Spanish and Portuguese offers special challenges. Because the two languages have radically different approaches and the majority of books published in the U.S. context contain Spanish rather than Portuguese references, emphasis here will be on Spanish naming protocols. Despite the similarities between the two languages and the large number of cognates (words that look alike) that they share, their naming systems bear no relationship to one another.

Only recently have newspapers and other sectors of the mass media started to cite Spanish surnames correctly. Previously, confusion between the father's last name (patronymic) and the mother's last name (matronymic) was rife. In Spanish, a person often has a compound (or double) first name, such as José Luis or Luz Marina, but he may choose to use only one given name (Constanza). Usually, however, people use two last names: the father's surname or family name, followed by the mother's family name. Thus, the Nobel laureate in literature is Gabriel García Márquez. His father's family name, García, is as common as Smith in U.S. culture. Márquez is his mother's family name. García Márquez (or Gabo, as he is known in Colombia) probably has two given names but chooses to use only Gabriel. The index citation would read:

García Márquez, Gabriel, 81, 103, 116-43

While the above is the general protocol for naming in Spanish and covers most of the cases the indexer is likely to encounter, a few exceptions need to be noted. Leading historical figures are often known by a single surname, such as Diego Rivera (the artist) or Emiliano Zapata and José Martí (the revolutionaries). A single surname is also preferred

by persons who would affect a more modern usage and by others whose mother's family name has less luster in a class-conscious context.

The authoritative name reference for Latin American studies is the *HAPI Thesaurus and Name Authority, 1970-1989* (Valk 1989) from UCLA's Latin American Center. The *Name Authority* is 300 pages of personal names that include the name of anyone who has written about Latin America in recent decades in addition to leading historical figures. Thus, we find the sixteenth-century priest who denounced Spanish abuse of the indigenous population of Santo Domingo listed as, "Casas, Bartolomé de las." The former dictator of Cuba appears as "Batista y Zaldivar, Fulgencio" (often one sees "Batista, Fulgencio"). Many Latin American authors are included in the list.

Brazilian Portuguese names are relatively simple. The final surname guides the alphabetization (such as Sérgio da Costa Franco, which becomes "Franco, Sérgio da Costa"). Exceptions, using a double surname, reflect well-known figures from the nineteenth century or earlier eras. The author's usage in the body of the text should help the indexer in most cases.

Access to a name authority or similarly authoritative source can prove a challenge. Research libraries at universities, especially those dozen or so universities with Latin American centers, are sure to keep a print copy in their reference section (meaning you can't check it out and will have to use it on site). The most recent edition of HAPI's *Thesaurus and Name Authority* came out in 1989. Currently, it is moving to an electronic format. According to Barbara Valk, the number of names in the name authority has increased by at least 50 percent since 1989, and a subsequent edition has been held up by printing costs. The 1989 version is still available for approximately \$45.00 (call UCLA's distribution center at 310/825-6634 or contact Ms. Valk at her e-mail address: bvalk@ucla.edu).

Another source is the five-volume *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture* (1996). Its index, located in the final volume, is over a hundred pages long and has many of the historical figures and events that an indexer of Latin American history topics might seek to verify. It also seems to be more intuitive in the sense that it is guided by reader usages rather than by library cataloging rules (such as Las Casas, Bartolomé de). Other resources perhaps more readily available but less complete in terms of the present discussion are *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Latin America and the Caribbean* (2d ed., 1992) and Ernest E. Rossi and Jack C. Plano, *Latin America: A Political Dictionary* (1992). The Cambridge encyclopedia covers a range of social science and art history as well as history topics, and the index (like the book itself) is relatively brief.

Indexing Content

Like any other type of indexing, one's skill in indexing Latin American history ultimately depends on knowledge of the academic field as well as an adequate command of Spanish and/or Portuguese. There really are no shortcuts to the type of quality control that an indexer with a good background in the subject area can provide (for those readers who think they might be sensing an implicit argument in favor of specialization, they are).

Indexing textbooks does not require a specialized knowledge of the area because of the structure of textbooks and how they are used to communicate information. Academic monographs, on the other hand, often contain more tortured phrasing and convoluted arguments. The indexer's knowledge of which names and events are significant and which epochs and approaches are implicit rather than specified in the text (and making the implicit explicit with cross-references) helps create a stronger index.

Whatever the extent of their backgrounds, indexers wishing to keep their clients content will pay close attention to editorial guidelines. While guidelines most often indicate the preferred format for indexes, they may also stipulate general approaches for selecting content. For example, editors at one scholarly press feel that an index should not be a substitute for reading the book. Thus, if a chapter deals with a specific topic, such as machismo, it would not be appropriate to break it down into its subtopics. The subtopics and major related concepts, however, may be suitably cited. Emphasis is merited here: Indexers who want to keep their clients contented with indexes they produce will pay close attention to client guidelines and try to understand the thinking behind them. As experienced indexers well know, publisher guidelines can be a trial and occasionally seem to interfere with the indexer's sense of what is appropriate and correct. Thus at times the fit between a competent representation of a book's content and the limitations imposed by the publisher on a particular project is somewhat uneasy. Finding that fit sometimes makes indexing feel more like an art than a science.

Works Cited

- Bethell, Leslie, ed. 1984-95. *Cambridge History of Latin America*. 11 vols. New York: Cambridge University Press [though the indexes in each volume contain occasional flaws, the series of eleven paperbacks is an excellent in-depth reference work].
- The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Latin America and the Caribbean*. 1992. 2d ed. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Diccionario del español usual en México*. 1996. Mexico, DF: Colegio de México.
- Rossi, Ernest E., and Jack C. Plano, eds. 1992. *Latin America: A Political Dictionary*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO.
- Simon and Schuster's International Dictionary English/Spanish-Spanish/English*. 1997. Roger J. Steiner, editor in chief. New York: Macmillan.
- Tenenbaum, Barbara A., ed. 1996. *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Valk, Barbara, ed. 1989. *HAPI Thesaurus and Name Authority, 1970-1989*. Los Angeles: University of California, Latin American Center.
- Webster's New Geographical Dictionary*. 1988. Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster.