

Professor Jens R Hentschke

Report on the Banco Santander-sponsored field work in Latin America, 20.8.-26.9.2011

First of all, I would like to thank Banco Santander for funding this last research trip before the start of my AHRC Fellowship on 1 October 2011. I have not only fulfilled the programme, but achieved much more than planned.

I spent two weeks in Santiago de Chile and one each in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, and Ciudad de La Plata. During this time, I was able to a) buy recently published monographs on my topic (these titles are not available online); b) see significant new primary sources I need for my project; and c) speak to some of the leaders in the research field in the respective countries.

1) Santiago de Chile, 20.8.-4.9.

The first part of my AHRC project focuses on the antecedents of the Reforma Vareliana, and one chapter specifically on Chile (exiles of the Argentinean 'Generation of 1837'; Sarmiento's role in the foundation of Latin America's first normal school; and the direct and indirect impact of the Chilean 'Generation of 1842', especially of José V. Lastarria, on state formation, nation building, and school reform in Argentina and Uruguay during the late 19th century). I had not been able to do field work in Chile before, therefore this stay was vital for the implementation of my project.

I was received by Chile's leading historian of the nineteenth century and the world's foremost expert on Andrés Bello, Professor Iván Jaksic, director of the Stanford University Centre in Santiago. He invited me, together with five experts in the history of education at the Pontificia Universidad Católica (including Professor Sol Serrano), to his home. These colleagues helped me trace sources, including dissertations. We are still in contact. It would be great, if we could invite Professor Jaksic to Newcastle, when he will be in London or Oxbridge next time (NIASSH?).

I carried out field work in the following institutions:

- a) Archivo Nacional de Chile: fondos normal schooling, ministries of education and foreign affairs, diplomatic missions (Lastarria as envoy to Montevideo), miscellanea
- b) Biblioteca Nacional de Chile: Sala Medina, Archivo del Escritor, general collections and theses. Lastarria's correspondence in the Sala Medina was especially relevant.
- c) Archivo Central 'Andrés Bello' at the University of Chile. Only few of the university's *Anales* and none of the *memorias* of the Faculty of Philosophy are available online. Therefore, I was pleased to find them here. In addition, I could see all of the early biographies of Lastarria, which cannot be ordered by interlibrary loan. They are needed for revisions of an accepted article in *Intellectual History Review*.
- d) Archivo Histórico General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was the only archive not closed during a two-day strike, and its director was extremely helpful.

2) Buenos Aires, 4.-11.9.

I had been in Buenos Aires in 2008 and 2009 but, due to construction work and the swine flu epidemic, I never had the chance to work in the Sala Americana of the Biblioteca Nacional de

Maestros, the best educational library in the country. The Sala Americana is open only to researchers and houses a fantastic collection of rare books.

In addition, I worked in the Instituto de Historia Argentina y Americana 'Emilio Ravignani' at the University of Buenos Aires which I had not been able to visit last time. The library is well known among historians. Its core is the donation by Emilio Ravignani. This collection contains material which is not even available in the National Library. It is here where I found the first issues of the famous *Revista de Filosofía* and an extremely rare publication by the first Argentinean Comtist, Pedro Scalabrini. I was received by the Institute's director, Professor José Carlos Chiaramonte who also guided me regarding my stay in La Plata.

Apart from this, I returned briefly to the Congress Library which opens until midnight.

3) Montevideo, 12.-18.9.

I had completed most of my field work in Uruguay in 2009. However, I was unable to work in the archive of the University of the Republic, the Archivo del Cabildo de Montevideo, and the excellent Centro Municipal de Fotografía. While I found little material in the first two archives, I acquired the rights to publish some illuminating photographs from the Intendencia's collection. In addition, I returned to the Biblioteca Pedagógica Central's school text collection and found excellent and little-known titles on the history of historiography in the library of the Catholic University of Uruguay. The latter are important for placing my book in a broader context.

During my stay, I bought important secondary literature which will enrich my analysis.

I also talked to some of Uruguay's top scholars. At the Catholic University, I spoke to Professor Susana Monreal, a renowned expert on Krausismo in her country and beyond, who is Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and director of the university library. We had not been able to meet last time but then corresponded for two years. Professor Monreal also met Paul Younger during his 2009 visit, just three weeks after my stay at Catholic University. I think that there would be interest in maintaining the contact between our universities. Professor Monreal is in Europe regularly, and we might want to invite her to Newcastle during a future trip.

During this week, I also had the chance to speak to Professor Luís Delio Machado, a historian of ideas and education at the Law and Social Science Faculties of the University of the Republic, and was invited by Agapo Palomeque, one of the two leading historians of education and editor of a four-volume history on the subject, and Emilio Marenales, an expert in *normalismo*. I corresponded with Gerardo Caetano, a historian, social scientist, and member of the executive committee of FLACSO (Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences), but a planned meeting failed due to personal problems.

4) Ciudad de La Plata, 18.-24.9.

The National University of La Plata in the capital of the province of Rio de Janeiro, federalised in 1906, was at this time Argentina's most modern university, guided by positivist ideas. It was, and still

is, a crossroad of ideas between Argentina, Uruguay, and even Chile. La Plata's Sección Pedagógica, later Facultad de Ciencias de Educación, was an extension of the famous Escuela Normal de Paraná and of paradigmatic importance for the country's leading *pensadores*. Therefore, I hoped to find material that allows me to reconstruct how ideas travelled in the River Plate area. I was received by Professor Fernando Barba, until recently director of the Archivo General de la Provincia de Buenos Aires and currently First Vice-President of Argentina's National Academy of History.

I worked in three institutions:

- a) library of the Faculty of Humanities, with a fine collection of historical journals, including the *Archivo Pedagógico y de Ciencias Afines* and *Humanidades* from the foundational period of the university;
- b) Biblioteca Pública de la Universidad Nacional de La Plata. This is a fantastic institution, with an excellent section Salas Museo (archives/donations of professors) and Hemeroteca. For me, the archive of the first national rector, Joaquín González; the first issues of the *Archivo de la Sociedad Científica Argentina* and *El Positivismo*, the organ of the Comité Positivista Argentino; and publications of Alberto Posada, a Spanish Krauso-Positivist and visiting professor, who contributed to a shift of paradigms in the region, were especially important.
- c) Archivo General de la Provincia de Buenos Aires. This institution houses the personal archive of Francisco Berra, an Argentinean positivist who was the closest collaborator of the Varelas in their school reform in Uruguay but then returned to Argentina. The archive is totally unorganised and it was by accident that I found a jewel under piles of dusty letters. There is one doctoral thesis on Berra's positivism, and I am now in contact with its author, Marcelo Coll Cárdenas. Due to family problems, he could not see me there.

I have also received valuable advice by Professor Emeritus Hugo Biagini, together with Arturo Roig Argentina's, and one could argue Latin America's, leading historian of ideas. He recently founded the research network "Corridor of Ideas" which looks at interactions between intellectuals from Santiago de Chile to Porto Alegre. When I planned my AHRC project more than two years ago, I developed the same idea, and I will try to join this South American network.

To sum up: I had intended to carry out targeted research to complement my research base. This objective has certainly been met. I focused very much on the little pieces in the puzzle that were missing and eventually found them. I did not always find exactly what I wanted or expected, but made new and surprising discoveries. I returned with ca. 30 books and 4,200 photocopies (mostly double pages). In many ways, this does not make writing up easier, but I hope to live from these sources for some time and derive a number of new articles. Equally important are the many contacts to colleagues working on related topics. They should lead to closer collaboration in the future, both individually and institutionally.

Again, thanks to Banco Santander for enabling me to do this trip.

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