



SOCIÉTÉ SUISSE DES AMÉRICANISTES
SCHWEIZERISCHE AMERIKANISTEN – GESELLSCHAFT
SOCIEDAD SUIZA DE AMERICANISTAS
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**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**

FACULTÉ DES LETTRES
Département d'histoire générale



Call for Papers :

Latin America and « International Geneva » during the Interwar Period: The Beginning of Regional and International Integration

A Conference organized by the Swiss Society of Americanists (SSA) and the University of Geneva, with the support of the ILO Century Project

Date: 28-29 October 2011
Place: University of Geneva (Switzerland)

Organizers : Yannick Wehrli (SSA)
Prof. Aline Helg (University of Geneva)

Languages of the conference: English, French, Spanish

General Presentation:

All Latin American states actively participated in the League of Nations (LON) and the International Labor Organization (ILO). Latin American states comprised over one-third of the members in both international institutions. Until recently, historians have neglected the study of international organizations during the interwar period, mostly due to the LON's political failure to prevent World War II. With the new growth of transnational studies, however, several scholars have begun to do research on the technical, economic, social, and humanitarian activities of these two institutions, leading to the publication of many articles and books and to various meetings and conferences. Unfortunately, very few have recognized the role played by Latin America in the LON and the ILO.

For the first time, this international conference will bring together young and established scholars specialized in the study of Latin American participation in the two major interwar international institutions whose headquarters were located in Geneva: the LON and the ILO. The organizers hope that such a conference will promote new research on this largely unexplored, yet crucial domain.

Interested scholars are invited to address preferably the following issues:

- The LON and the ILO as spaces of experimentation and integration for multilateral diplomacy. For the first time, Latin American states joined international

organizations with a universal vocation. How did they learn to participate in multilateral diplomacy? Did they develop a new Latin American solidarity far away from U.S. influence, or on the contrary, did they replicate old antagonisms?

- **The LON as a political organization able to guarantee national sovereignty and international peace.** For weak states in search of international recognition, the LON could offer a space for the exercise and affirmation of sovereignty. Moreover, as LON's primary goal was to prevent war, was it mobilized to solve inter-American conflicts? If so, how and why did LON's mobilization occur?

- **The LON and the ILO as producers of norms.** Technical, economic, financial, legal, social, health, humanitarian activities as well as intellectual cooperation produced an important corpus of norms, such as conventions and resolutions. How were these norms transferred to national spaces, through which channels, and how successfully? Did the agents of normative production (international and national officials, delegates, intellectuals, journalists, experts) create specific networks?

- **Latin America's participation as a proof of the universality of the LON and the ILO.** The participation of Latin American states allowed both organizations to claim their universal vocation, despite the fact that they were mostly concerned with European issues. How did the officials of LON's and ILO's Secretariats promote their activities abroad and keep Latin American public opinions and governments interested in these institutions? Did they prompt reactions in Latin America?

The organizers will welcome any original proposal focusing on some aspects of the relations between Latin America and Geneva's international organizations during the interwar period. Although the interwar years are at the center of this conference, they will also take into consideration proposals on Latin America's role in the transition from the LON and the system of the United Nations.

Deadline for proposals' submission: 15 April 2011

Proposals should include a provisional title, a 500-word abstract and a one-page CV, to be sent to:

Yannick Wehrli: wehrli.histoire@bluewin.ch

The institutions funding the conference will pay for the transportation and lodging of the scholars whose proposals are selected.

Residents in Switzerland will be requested to subscribe to the Swiss Society of Americanists (CHF 80.-/year, CHF 40.- for students : <http://ssa-sag.ch/adhesion>).