

For historical reasons, many Canadians tend to look at Europe only from British or French perspectives. This has eclipsed a deeper Canadian understanding of the cultures and commerce of other European countries. Europe is not a homogeneous economic, political, and cultural entity. References to European culture or to European business styles are restrictive and misleading. Even between the Latin European countries, these characteristics vary considerably.

Similar misconceptions prevail among Spaniards, who often perceive North America as simply the USA. Sheer habit and inertia induce Spaniards to view Canadian culture, business practises and laws as USA off-shoots. In fact, Canadian business styles are noticeably different from those considered typically American, being in some respects closer to the Europeans.

In spite of the above obstacles, recent statistics (Figure 1) do indicate a steady growth in Spanish-Canadian trade activity since 1985. This increase in business ventures between both countries has two additional major reasons to experience an expansion in the near future.

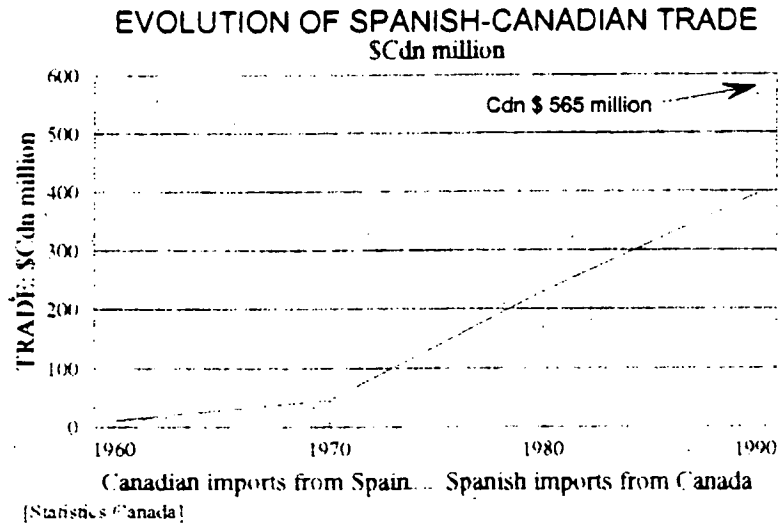


Figure 1

Canada's integration in the North American Free Trade Zone and Spain's membership in the European Community, facilitate the access to US and European markets, R&D funding, and investment institutions. The eventual incorporation of Mexico to the North American Free Trade Zone, and the enormous possibilities for Spanish-Canadian firms in the Hispanic American market with more than 350 million consumers, are real arguments to give major strategic importance to business ventures between both countries.

Few technological endeavours can provide the exciting business prospects associated with recent developments in biotechnology. Biotechnology's