
I. INTRODUCTION

Canada and Spain are among the world's ten largest economies, with gross domestic products (GDP) in the \$600 billion^a range. Even so, they rank only 29th. and 19th. respectively as each other's trading partner.

Historical and cultural links between countries naturally contribute to trade relations. Common language and culture, geographic proximity, or a large immigrant population, are factors which tend to stimulate international commerce. Lacking the benefit of these factors, Spanish-Canadian trade relations have not developed to their full potential.

As early as 1774, four years earlier than Captain Cook and 18 years earlier than Captain Vancouver, Spaniards explored the West Coast of North America. Spanish navigators established settlements and mapped the area. Hence the abundance of names like Juan de Fuca, Galiano, Quadra Island, Valdes, Texada, etc.

In more recent times, we are reminded of another Spaniard, Leonardo Torres Quevedo, an engineer and inventor of the first electro-mechanical chess player, and the first automatic computational machine. In 1916, Leonardo Torres Quevedo constructed the *Spanish Aerocar* which today conveys Americans and Canadians across the Niagara River at Niagara Falls, Ontario, making an important contribution to tourism between the USA and Canada.

The Canadian physician Dr. Norman Bethune will always be linked to Spain's 1936 Civil War, not only for his idealistic collaboration with the Republican side, but also for his introduction of the first mobile blood transfusion unit to be used in Madrid.

The historical and cultural links between Spain and Canada have not been overly abundant. The number of Spanish immigrants in Canada is relatively insignificant at 0.1 % of the Canadian population in 1986¹. This is a small figure compared to immigration from other European countries, even those with much smaller populations than Spain.

Another factor which has detracted from trade activity between Spain and Canada has been each countries' tendency to focus on their respective powerful neighbours, the other members of the European Community and the U.S.A. In 1990, 68% of Spanish exports went to the European Community, and the USA received 75% of Canada's exports.

^a The dollar currency unit used in this report refers to the United States dollar, unless otherwise noted; for example, the Canadian dollar is written Cdn. \$.