The American Library Association in Latin America: American Librarianship as a "Modern" Model during the Good Neighbor Policy Era

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Through ALA projects in Latin America, American librarianship progressed, step by step, from conceptualization to implementation as the model to be followed by the Latin American countries in modernizing not only their library practices but their societies in general. The development of library practices was fundamental to the pursuit of a "modern" society. In fighting fascist propaganda, the United States has portrayed itself at least since World War II as a "modern" model whose prosperity and economic growth were important achievements but achievable only in a democratic society.

The idea of modernizing Latin American countries using American culture as a model was promoted as part of the Good Neighbor policy by the U.S. government and American nongovernmental organizations. U.S. ideological and political efforts to stop fascist propaganda were the foundation of this model. The U.S. government was involved in ideological propaganda as a democratic country, and it used many approaches to combat fascism in the name of freedom. The American Library Association (ALA) and the U.S. government shared a common interest in promoting democratic ideals as part of an ideological battle in Latin America during the 1940s.

In the early 1940s, the Good Neighbor policy remained the most influential of the U.S. initiatives in Latin America. From 1933 to 1945, the "benefactor motive" was part of the relationship between the United States and Latin America; however, this motive did not completely eclipse the "imperial-paternalistic motive." The Great Depression and World War II changed the political, economic, social, and cultural dynamics between the United States and Latin America. After World War II, the cold war began, and the Good Neighbor policy slowly died.

During the difficult war years of the 1940s, the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, as part of the Department of State,
promoted a great number of projects that intensified cultural relations between the United States and Latin America. The ALA established its leadership among the organizations that dealt with inter-American librarianship by supporting many projects.

Events that transpired during the 1940s were fundamental in shaping inter-American library relations. The development of American librarianship as a "modern" model from conceptualization to implementation during the 1940s had an important impact on inter-American relations. This essay is guided by the following questions: Why did the U.S. government use American librarianship as a modern model during the Good Neighbor policy era? Why did the ALA adopt these projects in Latin America during the Good Neighbor policy era? What was the role of the ALA in shaping American librarianship as a modern model during those years? What was the relationship between the ALA and the U.S. government in the implementation of these projects? What was the importance of their interrelationship?

The essay begins with an overview of U.S. foreign policy toward Latin America during the 1930s and the 1940s, analyzing how the Great Depression, World War II, and the cold war shaped U.S. foreign policy in the Latin American region. I also discuss the American libraries established by the ALA in Latin America as part of U.S. foreign policy to the region; provide an interpretation of the Books for Latin America Program, which represented ALA and U.S. involvement in cultural imperialism during World War I and after; detail a study about technical cooperation and assistance to Latin America as part of inter-American library relations, using the American librarianship experience; and end with a general analysis of the historical impact of the ALA's programs established in Latin America.

U.S. Foreign Policy toward Latin America

World War II in Europe and the penetration of fascism into Latin America created a sense of urgency in the U.S. government to establish better relations in the hemisphere. Because of the Great Depression and World War II, U.S. feelings of superiority over Latin Americans began to diminish. After the depression and the war, American society looked for explanations for its economic and social problems.

As J. W. Park explains, it is in this historical context that the Good Neighbor policy needs to be understood. In the 1940s, U.S. leaders developed a positive attitude toward Latin American countries largely because of the depression, combined with the need to establish better relations and fight the fascist influence in Latin America. The
U.S. elite expected to learn from other cultures, including Latin America: “Changes in U.S. foreign policy in Latin America between the early 1920s and the 1940s flowed in part from a shift from underlying Anglo-Saxon racism in the late nineteenth century to a more expansive but still virulently ethnocentric civilizing project underpinned by an emerging Pan-Americanism” (Berger, 46).

The Good Neighbor policy was part of the Pan-Americanism that started during the first decades of the twentieth century. As Park explains, even under the Good Neighbor policy, the United States portrayed itself as the model by which the whole hemisphere could find new paths to prosperity. During the 1930s and early 1940s, the Good Neighbor policy was a hemispheric continuation of New Deal policies that the Roosevelt administration implemented in order to overcome the economic and social crises the United States had experienced during the Great Depression. The portrayal of the United States as the modern model to follow was reinforced: “One key goal of the Good Neighbor policy was to encourage respect for Latin American cultures. In practice, however, the U.S. government’s appreciation for hemispheric cultures was limited to the use of cultural ties to bolster U.S. influence” (Berger, 48).

In 1939, the State Department developed policies to promote inter-American (and, in some ways, international) cooperation in education, libraries, the arts, music, and publications to counterbalance fascism (Kraske, 30). The Office of the Coordination of Inter-American Affairs (CIAA), whose focus was to concentrate the department’s efforts to quickly improve relations in the inter-American hemisphere, was established by the State Department in 1940. The CIAA also worked with agencies that dealt with cultural matters such as the Division of Cultural Relations and the Interdepartmental Committee. The CIAA, established by executive order, was one of the first wartime agencies and was subordinated to the Council of National Defense. It is important to note that Nelson A. Rockefeller directed the CIAA.

The Roosevelt administration wanted to establish an institution that coordinated Latin American affairs more specifically and not only as part of the broad responsibility of the Division of Cultural Relations and the Department of State. The CIAA was a big step in the promotion of inter-American cultural relations by the United States. Not only did the CIAA deal specifically with Latin America, but Nelson A. Rockefeller was able to provide Latin American issues access to the White House because of his connections with the president. The Latin American region and inter-American cultural relations became presidential priorities, and with Rockefeller’s good contacts on Capitol Hill,
the CIAA received a large sum of money from Congress. The Roosevelt administration had created an agency that could coordinate efforts to foster inter-American cultural relations.

When the United States entered World War II in 1942, the Roosevelt administration established the Office of War Information (OWI), which consolidated four federal agencies dealing with information. Originally, its principal mission was to coordinate war-related information for the American people, but, as Kraske explains, this agency quickly placed more emphasis on information abroad as opposed to information on the home front (138–39). During World War II, the OWI established a number of institutions and information systems to counter enemy information. The Roosevelt administration and the U.S. government did not have to worry about the use of propaganda to justify their efforts. World War II was being fought to defend democracy and freedom, and the OWI was establishing many libraries all around the world as part of a vast information apparatus. Beginning in the 1940s, then, the United States used libraries and books as part of the information apparatus abroad to promote its propaganda in support of the “American” position.

In 1944 the Department of State used the same rhetoric to abolish the Division of Cultural Relations and establish the Office of Public Information. Inter-American cultural relations for the Department of State thus became part of information propaganda produced by a variety of information systems such as mass media, art, and educational projects (Kraske, 57). The Department of State’s mixed feelings about the use of propaganda by a democratic government were resolved because of World War II, and since that time, this agency has been engaging in the use of propaganda to promote U.S. interests all over the world.

The ALA also changed its structure to accommodate international cooperation during the war years. As Kraske explains, Carl Milam, the ALA’s executive secretary, promoted combining the organizations dealing with international cooperation for economic and coordination reasons (46). The ALA consolidated its international cooperation activities under the International Relations Board in 1942 and established four subcommittees: Aid to Libraries in War Areas, Library Cooperation with Latin America (formerly a full committee called the Committee on Library Cooperation with Latin America), Library Cooperation with Europe and Africa, and Library Cooperation with the Orient and South Pacific. The only region of the world that was dealt with in a specific way in those subcommittees was Latin America. The importance of this region for the U.S. government and, specifically, for the Roosevelt administration was illustrated by the creation
of the CIAA in 1940. Since then, the ALA has worked with the CIAA in important library and book projects. During the 1940s the ALA underwent structural changes to accommodate its institutions to U.S. government initiatives, thus becoming the government’s main collaborator in inter-American library relations.

American Libraries in Latin America

During the 1940s, three American libraries were established by the ALA and CIAA in Latin America to promote better understanding among the hemispheric nations in the context of the Good Neighbor policy. The first of these American libraries, the so-called Biblioteca Benjamin Franklin, was established in Mexico City. The Benjamin Franklin Library (BFL) officially opened on 13 April 1942 with the complete support of the Mexican government. Mexican president Luís Ávila Camacho was present at the library’s inauguration.

According to Kraske, the BFL was first proposed by a group of Mexican librarians led by Joaquin Díaz Mercado (the librarian at the Iberian-American Library) to William Haygood, executive secretary of the Committee on Library Cooperation with Latin America (64). Mr. Haygood visited Mexico City in the summer of 1939, and the Mexican librarians proposed to him the necessity of a library that would serve the English-speaking population in that city. But the “Report on Biblioteca Benjamin Franklin” of 7 April 1943 explained that the library had been first proposed by Carl Milam to the American Embassy in Mexico in October 1940. The report stated that through the BFL, librarians could extend their services to a community and a country that needed that kind of institution.

Serving the English-speaking community in Mexico was not the BFL’s only purpose, although serving this community was one of its practical aspects. The BFL also meant a great deal to inter-American relations and, specifically, to the Good Neighbor policy:

Both the State Department and the CIAA hoped that the library would become the most important U.S. cultural center in Mexico and serve as a notable example to all Latin America of the Good Neighbor policy. . . .

The overriding purpose would be to “promote cultural relations between the United States and Mexico” by providing scholars, students, and others with a collection of American books and periodicals similar to the American Library in Paris, but on a smaller scale. Milam suggested that the director be American-trained and experienced, so that the qualities of American librarianship could
be demonstrated, and that the institution be governed by a board of trustees, as in Paris. (Kraske, 67, 64)

The CIAA and the Department of State both saw the BFL as a symbol of the Roosevelt administration and the U.S. relationship with Latin America. This library was created so that all the countries could get to know each other better. With it, the U.S. government hoped to counteract the fascist propaganda that promoted a negative vision of the United States's relationship with Latin America. However, the U.S. government was very careful not to impose its vision of its own country and culture through a governmental agency, because it did not want to be accused of promoting propaganda. It was in this role that the ALA, as a nongovernmental organization (NGO), was able to establish a library that promoted a better vision of the United States without being accused of governmental propaganda. With the BFL, the ALA also pursued its goal to be the leader in inter-American library relations and to promote American librarianship as the modern model to be followed by Latin American librarians and libraries. More importantly, the BFL was intended to be a model of the American public library and its structure, including a board of trustees, in which the government would have a minimum amount of intervention.

The ALA's interest in being the inter-American library leader in the region coincided with the U.S. government and its Good Neighbor policy in the early 1940s. This is a good example of how, although the benefactor motive historically did not presuppose a cultural imposition of the United States over Latin America, American agencies portrayed their way of doing things as the modern model. Librarianship was an important component of this philosophy.

Kraske explains that Mexican reactions to the establishment of the BFL were generally favorable (71). The Mexican press expressed the hope that the library would help erase any prejudice against American culture in Mexico, thanks to the wonderful collection the institution housed. Also, the establishment of the BFL did not seem like a cultural imposition because it was done by the ALA, an NGO, its only purpose being to promote cultural relations. The BFL promoted American librarianship as a modern model first to the urban middle sector and then to the rest of the population. This helps explain the reaction to the library, because historically the urban centers in Latin America were the receptors of modern ideas, first from Europe and then from the United States. The library maintained the internal divisions (sometimes called internal colonialism) in Latin American countries between the urban center and the rural periphery.6
Just as the modernization of a developing country comes about through the diffusion of capital and ideas from developed nations, so the modernization of the lagging rural areas of the developing country comes about through the penetration of capital and ideas from its own dynamic urban centers (often referred to as "growth poles"). Thus agents and agencies of development from the modern capitalist countries, working closely with the growing "middle class" in the receiving society, incrementally facilitate a closing of the gap not only between developed and developing countries but also between modern and lagging sectors of the developing nation itself. (Joseph, 10)

These Mexican reactions were not random; the establishment of the BFL was planned by the ALA and the U.S. government, as was shown in Carl M. Milam and Marion A. Milczewski’s confidential memorandum written during their trip to Mexico in 1941, the year before the BFL’s founding:

Books and other publications of the United States are not now adequately represented in the libraries of Mexico. This does not appear to be because of lack of interest, but because of the high cost of American books and methods of distribution different from those prevailing in Latin America. . . .

To maintain and extend the friendly relations which have prevailed for many years among the librarians of Mexico and the United States and to facilitate the exchange of information about library practices [should be the purpose of the BFL].

In his confidential notes on this trip, Milam explained that

[. . .] the American Library in Mexico is to have the attributes of a cultural institution. . . . We should stress cultural equality, because Mexico and other Latin American countries are afraid of cultural domination. . . . Believes Mexicans should be generously represented on Board of Control. . . . We are warned not tie up with any Mexican political group or individual in any way with politics. . . .

It was mentioned by Mr. Milam that the American Colony and the Board of Trustees in particular, might be apprehensive of any Embassy interference. . . . I said we wanted official blessing but we were not asking for government participation in operation. . . .

Vasconcelos warned us that we should have non-sectarian direction; that we should pick out the assistants with care and that we should act with religious toleration. It has been too often the case
that in the cultural relations program of the United States, there has been an attempt to superimpose Protestantism.\(^8\)

The plan for this library included the restriction that it not be used as a government propaganda effort that would impose cultural values on other nations. The ALA solicited the opinions of the American community in Mexico City and the Mexican elite. Following the historical conceptualization of American public libraries as neutral institutions, the ALA wanted to portray this library as an apolitical institution that did not promote government propaganda and responded to its community as represented by the board of trustees. Milam’s notes also said that the first idea was to name the library the “American Library,” but he then recommended a change of name because the word “American” represented the United States and created resentment among the Latin American people. For that reason, the name of a person related to libraries whom Mexicans admired was selected.

It was very important for the ALA to show its neutrality and apolitical character in presenting American librarianship as a modern model to be followed by Latin American countries. However, it was not ever possible to maintain nongovernmental influences in the BFL or in the other two “American libraries” that were transferred to ALA administration in 1943. The Biblioteca Americana de Nicaragua (BAN) in Managua, Nicaragua, opened on 26 November 1942 under the administration of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) and was funded by the CIAA.\(^9\) The Biblioteca Artigas-Washington (BAW) in Montevideo, Uruguay, opened in June 1943, also under the administration of the ACLS and funded by the CIAA.\(^10\) In 1943, the ACLS transferred its administrative responsibility to the ALA.

Although the three libraries followed the General Principles and the Manual for American Libraries, differences between them and the local governments existed.\(^11\) Here is a passage from the General Principles: “[T]he relation of the Ambassador to the Library should be clearly defined and it should be understood of course that the librarian and board would attempt to work in harmony with him, but he should not have authority to make policy decisions or decisions as to administrative details.” There should not be enough government participation, U.S. or local, to dominate the board, and no government participation at all was the ideal. However, the BAW remained under the influence of the American embassy in Montevideo, and as Kraske explains, the BAN represented the intention of the U.S. government to counter Germany’s influence through the large German colony in Nicaragua and to erase the negative image made by U.S. Marines in several interventions during the first three decades of the twentieth century.
Nicaragua’s nondemocratic government enthusiastically supported the establishment of the BAN. However, more difficult for the ALA was that members selected by this dictatorial regime were on the library’s board of trustees. This situation undermined the ALA’s and the U.S. government’s intention to foster democratic institutions by using American librarianship as a modern model.

In 1944, Carl M. Milam and Harry Lydenberg, head of the ALA’s International Relations Office in Washington, took a two-month trip to Latin America sponsored by the Department of State and the Rockefeller Foundation. Although the trip had various purposes that will be discussed later, the most important was to see how the three American libraries in Latin America were running.

The three American Libraries, in Mexico, Managua and Montevideo, are doing a cultural relations job which we believe to be surpassed in present and long-time significance only by the interchange of people. Again and again, in all three cities, it was said: “The Library is the best thing ever done in this country by the United States.” . . .

All are important information centers about the United States, about bibliography and library economy. Though small and understaffed they are good demonstrations of what a modern library can be, for they are well classified and cataloged; the books are arranged by subject on open shelves, periodicals are out on the tables; books may be taken home without deposit; hours of opening are suited to the convenience of readers; competent assistants give bibliographical, reference and readers’ advisory service when requested; books needed by students and not available are obtained if possible; there are pamphlets, documents and pictures as well as books and periodicals; special books and services are provided for children; there are attractive displays, book lists from readers and other publicity.12

Lydenberg and Milam observed that the libraries were doing their job in promoting a positive vision of the United States and establishing closer cultural relations with Latin American countries. These libraries were doing their assigned part to counteract fascist propaganda against the United States. The libraries showed that it was possible for professional, modern, managed cultural institutions to promote good foreign relations for a democratic government. Lydenberg and Milam saw a great success in the fact that the ALA could satisfy U.S. foreign policy objectives with its activities in Latin America.
More important, in the ALA's intention to be the inter-American library leader, these libraries could promote American librarianship and perform as showcases of the American public library as democratic and modern institutions that promoted sociocultural development. Also, these institutions were great promoters of the English language, because one of their most popular activities was teaching English courses. During these courses, concepts, such as a better understanding among nations if people knew the same languages, were promoted. If more Latin Americans learned English, they could be more easily influenced by the United States and Anglo-American culture.

In the same travel report, Lydenberg and Milam described some disturbing situations regarding the interference of American embassies in American libraries. They noted of the BFL in Mexico:

Several members of the Board of Directors of the Benjamin Franklin are much disturbed about what they consider to be the unwarranted interference of the Embassy in decisions which they believe to be their responsibility under their charter, the State Department–American Library Association contract, and their agreement with the American Library Association. We believe they are right legally.

Supervision of these three libraries by the American Library Association under its contract with the Department is still considered, by us and presumably by the Department, as an experiment. It may or may not be the best permanent arrangement for the existing libraries and for others which may be established or taken over by the Department in the future.13

According to these two ALA executives, the Department of State and its embassies were violating the arrangement with the ALA in the administration of these American libraries. In the contracts, as in the General Principles that governed the arrangement between ALA and the Department of State, the former was to be in charge of managing the American libraries with its professional capabilities, and the latter would only help in the foreign policy issues that might arise. The embassies' interference not only violated the arrangement but destroyed the ALA's intention to run the institution according to its conceptualization of the American public libraries' modern model, in which governmental influence was avoided by professional management. After the ALA began its joint projects with the U.S. government, it wanted some kind of isolation from governmental interference to avoid the impression that it served as a conduit for government propaganda. The ALA did not wish to be so associated, because such practices were not deemed professional. However, this
attitude against government propaganda did not stop the ALA from promoting the ideas, theories, and ideologies that helped to improve the U.S. image in Latin America.

At the end of World War II, U.S. priorities with respect to cultural relations changed, and cultural institutions abroad were reorganized. The new U.S. president, Harry S. Truman, brought new ideas to the area of foreign policy. Also, the cold war confrontation had begun even before World War II ended, a fact that greatly changed the American focus in the international scene, forcing the United States to reprioritize. As the role of cultural relations gained importance, the new conditions required cultural institutions and information systems to be structured in a different way. As Kraske explains, after Truman took office at the end of World War II and after the beginning of the cold war in 1945, a new organizational structure in the Department of State emerged in the area of foreign cultural relations (225). The CIAA and OWI were merged into the Interim International Information Service. In the final days of 1946, the merger of all the information and cultural institutions in the Department of State into the new Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs took place. The Department of State then initiated its post-war information and cultural system. Also in 1946, the Division of Libraries and Institutes was founded as part of the Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs with the purpose of managing overseas libraries and cultural institutes.

The new State Department structure, in which the overseas libraries were included, created a lot of pressure to transfer the American libraries in Latin America from ALA administration to the department's system. The ALA's dissatisfaction with the embassies' interference in American libraries created the circumstances for the final transfer of the institutions to the Department of State. The process of transferring these libraries resulted in an intense discussion about the role of libraries and cultural institutions in U.S. foreign policy. This discussion reached its maximum momentum when an article appeared in the New York Times in 1946 about the real purpose of the Department of State in taking over the American libraries in Latin America:

In Dr. Bentley's [the director of the Benjamin Franklin Library in 1946] opinion, one main reason for the library's unqualified success is the habit of keeping all evidence of "gringo" influence and power so submerged that even the most chauvinistic Mexicans haven't been able to complain. Dr. Bentley believes that the minute the State Department actively takes over—it has always provided funds—Mexicans, and particularly the intellectual leaders, will feel
that the cultural program is a one-sided imposition with too little consideration given to what people of this country really want.

On the other hand according to one attaché here [in Mexico City], the State Department merely wants to bring under its jurisdiction the last three libraries that remain outside it—those in Mexico, Nicaragua, and Uruguay—largely for the purpose of unifying its world-wide library system. (Warren, 15)

Flora B. Ludington, chairwoman of the ALA’s International Relations Board, stated in a letter dated 2 November 1946 to the editor of the New York Times that

[t]he American Library Association was chosen by the Coordination of Inter-American Affairs as the instrument to lay the foundation for the Benjamin Franklin library in Mexico in 1941 and by the Department of State to continue to administer it during the period when the Department itself had no organization to administer the three libraries in Latin America of which the Benjamin Franklin is one. The Department now has a Division of Libraries and Institutes in the Office of Information and Cultural Affairs which has successfully taken over the running of the sixty odd information libraries from the now defunct Office of War Information. We were in close contact with the Department about library matters before the formation of the Division and have been in closer touch with the officers in charge of Libraries and Institutes.

For some time we have been aware of the probable change of administration. As recently as October 3 [1946] the Association wrote to the Secretary of State offering to withdraw in favor of the Department’s absorbing the three libraries in general scheme of administration of information libraries now under its control.14

However, in the official response by the ALA to the New York Times article, the director of the International Relations Office, Marion A. Milczewski, wrote a letter to a colleague, Leon Carnovsky, on 4 November 1946 in which she portrayed the transfer of the libraries to the Department of State to be the result of the conflicts between this government agency and the ALA. Like Lydenberg and Milam in their confidential travel report in 1944, Milczewski complained about the American embassy in Mexico’s interference as one of the problems that triggered the decision of the ALA to accept the transfer: “It was in the minds of those who framed the charter that the Ambassador should be nothing but an honorary president [of the BFL’s board
of directors], that the Board of Directors should control the library without embassy interference."\(^{15}\)

Kraske summarizes the reasons for the Department of State’s takeover of the three American libraries:

The most important weakness, however, was the inability of the ALA leadership to win grass-roots recognition for the international contribution already made as well as support for a continuing effort. The absence of a broad-based mandate from the rank and file, as well as the inherent isolationism of many American librarians, hindered the ALA from continuing its large-scale international program and relegated its important contribution to a transitional one between the prewar private enterprise centered activity and a postwar government domination of cultural relations.

Thus, once the war ended, the driving force behind the ALA’s international program was lost and other factors came to the fore that led to its demise: the unwillingness of the Rockefeller Foundation to fund perpetually library projects; and the changing motivations and priorities of the U.S. Government, which by then had its own institutionalized apparatus to pursue cultural relations. (9–10)

At the end of 1946, the Department of State took over the three American libraries (the ALA continued as an advisor). The U.S. government, under the new circumstances of the cold war, needed a more coherent foreign policy. The cold war against Communism represented more than an ideological battle to portray the capitalist-democratic system as a better socioeconomic, political, and cultural system than the Marxist-Communist one. In that ideological battle, cultural relations were fundamental in the promotion of ideas, and for this reason the Department of State created its Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs. This included the Division of Libraries, which took over the overseas libraries, and the Office of Information and Cultural Affairs, which coordinated cultural relations.

It is important to understand the Department of State’s motives for taking over the American libraries in Latin America. The issue is complex: the ALA was looking for professional long-term influence in Latin American librarianship and libraries, while the U.S. government was looking for short-term ways to counteract fascist propaganda. The underlying motive of both the ALA and the U.S. government was to promote cultural projects in the Latin American region that would support their interests. The ALA projects in Latin America during the 1940s that were very significant later for inter-American library
relations included school libraries, short-term training for Latin American library workers, the provision of books, and technical assistance and cooperation to aid in the development of specific projects in the region. Two of these projects—the American libraries project and the Books for Latin America Program—had related purposes: to promote American librarianship as a modern model, to provide libraries as places where Latin Americans could learn firsthand about American institutions, and to provide books that promote an ideology that presents the United States as a model for the region’s development.

The Books for Latin America Program

The American government had to confront fascist-Nazi propaganda in Europe and Latin America with a project that had a broader impact on American libraries. Their influence had been limited and could only be expanded with good public relations. Projects that spread books all around the world could create a better vision of the United States and improve cultural relations. These were the ideas behind the book projects in which the ALA participated as early as the late 1930s but especially during the 1940s. As Kraske notes,

Along with the establishment of American-style libraries there was another important category of overseas program on the international cultural agenda, the export of American publications. From 1939 through 1947, the American Library Association, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and the U.S. Government, carried out six major book and journal gift projects, beginning in Europe and then extending to Latin America, the Far East, the Middle East, and Africa. The programs had the same broad purpose, to provide foreign readers the literacy products of American scholarship and culture, thereby attempting to improve their understanding of the United States and further international cooperation. (151)

During the 1930s, Latin American librarians asked for more books about the United States; these requests increased after the 1933 enactment of the Good Neighbor policy. The ALA had known for some time the ideological and political implications of these book projects. In a letter of 10 July 1940, William C. Haygood, executive assistant of the ALA’s Committee on Library Cooperation with Latin America, explained: “As part of its research program, the Committee on Library Cooperation with Latin America is conducting a study of the distribution of scholarly journals of the United States in Latin America. No previous study we know of has been able to do more
than estimate very roughly the extent to which these highly important instruments of our scholarship have penetrated the rest of this hemisphere.”\(^\text{16}\) In “Books for Latin America,” Carl M. Milam wrote to Rodolfo Rivera, who was planning the first phase of the Books for Latin America Program, about the selection of titles: “Selection of Titles should be by the receiving institutions, as in the Books for Europe Project; except that in special cases selection would be by specialists in this country. And thus avoid even the appearance of what Hanke [director of the Library of Congress’s Hispanic Foundation] calls ‘cultural imperialism.’”\(^\text{17}\)

Although the ALA, even before it started the Books for Latin America Program, did not wish to be accused of cultural imperialism, it knew the ideological impact of its program to disseminate books throughout the world. The ALA started this project with a real contradiction: the shadow of propaganda and cultural imperialism hung over its actions, but the ALA called its activities “cultural cooperation” and tried to adopt a professional posture with reference to them. This contradiction is fundamental in understanding why the Department of State in 1947 decided not to continue to use the ALA for the Books for Latin American Program promoted by the Department of State.

In 1941, before the Books for Latin America Program was instituted, Rodolfo Rivera conceptualized the role of libraries and books in hemispheric cooperation:

[Latin American] personnel is not trained in modern methods and the prevailing idea has been that libraries are places to keep books away from the prying eyes of the public instead of a place where books and the people are brought together in friendly camaraderie through the efforts and guidance of the librarians. We have also come to the realization that democracy to survive must cultivate friends[,] and friendship can only survive on a basis of equality. . .

The nations of the Western Hemisphere, regardless of their language or the origin of their inhabitants, have in common their form of government and their belief that the will of the majority of the people as expressed through their representatives should be the law of the land. This democratic idea presupposes an interested and well-informed citizen capable of helping to carry on the government and of voting conscientiously for his representatives. No other institution is better prepared than the library to keep him informed. (“Cooperation,” 113–14)

Rivera also understood the relationship between the ALA’s projects for Latin America and U.S. cultural relations as part of U.S. foreign
policy: “Recently the U.S. Government has created the Division of Cultural Relations in the Department of State whose mission is to encourage and coordinate such efforts as the A.L.A. has been sponsoring all these years. The officers of this Division have turned time and again to the A.L.A. for information, guidance, and advice in dealing with library matters. They have received our hearty support, and our files and facilities have been thrown open for their use” (“Cooperation,” 113).

The role of libraries and books in the promotion of democracy in the hemisphere was fundamental for this ALA officer, writing in 1941. In its international cultural relations, the ALA fostered one of the principal tenets of American librarianship: the library as a democratic agent that brings books and materials to citizens in order to inform them. One of the main problems that this vision of the library as an educational agency for citizens faced in an area like Latin America was that the theory implied a strong middle sector, the very social sector that American librarianship had in mind when it established this concept. The situation in Latin America in the 1940s was far from ideal. Most Latin American societies were composed of two sectors, high and low, with a weak middle sector at best. How could the American concept of a library be applied? Without taking into account these differences in social composition, Rivera preimposed a homogenization of the political and sociocultural structure of the hemisphere’s nations.

For Rivera, the ALA’s international cooperation was in accordance with U.S. foreign policy; indeed, it was a part of the policy itself. In a confidential document entitled “Library Participation in International Cultural Relations,” written on 21 December 1941, Carl M. Milam expressed a clear understanding of the necessity to work with the U.S. government in the areas of cultural relations and thus to stop the fascist penetration of the Western Hemisphere. He said that the Committee on Library Cooperation with Latin America was an important instrument in the service of this goal.18

On 26 June 1942, Marion A. Milczewski, executive assistant for the Books for Latin America Program, proposed to Malcolm Davis of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace a study of the use of books and other printed materials in cultural propaganda. Milczewski argued: “Foreign governments, particularly France, Germany and Great Britain have used books, periodicals and other printed matter with good effect as an important part of their cultural relations and propaganda programs in other countries. How extensive the use of such material has been and how effective is now a matter of conjecture. It would be important in the furtherance of cultural objectives of this country both in the war and post-war
periods to know what other governments have done in this respect.19 The Department of State showed great interest in this proposal, because it could establish the use of books and other printed materials in the cultural propaganda effort. In a memorandum dated 29 July 1942, William L. Schurz, acting chief of the State Department’s Division of Cultural Relations, wrote:

The sources of materials should be one of the most important aspects of the study. For example, have the various governments promoted books for distribution abroad? In this respect also, relations between governmental and private agencies will be important. Have the books been distributed solely on the basis of commercial sales or has their distribution been facilitated by subsidized sales and outright gifts? It might be profitable to attempt a general classification of types of material distributed; that is, whether they were in fields of information, purely entertainment value, or proposals for action in the realm of ideological principle and programs.20

The ALA was moving into a gray area; although it rejected the idea of participating in cultural propaganda, some of its directors wanted to know how other people did their jobs when they participated in propaganda activities. It was very difficult for the ALA to eliminate completely the idea that in book promotion projects (such as the American libraries in Latin America) it was not involved in cultural propaganda that promoted ideas that increased support for U.S. ideology. Although the Department of State was not in charge of government projects of this kind until 1943, it used books and printed materials to gain support for the United States in Latin America. In 1942 the ALA started the Books for Latin America Program with the “official” position that this activity had the purpose of bringing printed material to help people of the region gain a better understanding of the United States.

Kraske explains that the Books for Latin America Program was planned by Rodolfo Rivera and presented to the Rockefeller Foundation in 1940 (157–58). The foundation at that moment was most interested in Europe and refused to fund the project. However, two years later, the CIAA agreed to fund the first phase of the Books for Latin America Program.

In Rodolfo Rivera’s plan, entitled “Books for Latin America,” he explained the program in these terms:

It is the purpose of this plan to make U.S. books easily accessible to the average reader; to satisfy known requests for specific publications...
and attend to similar ones in the future, to repay in a way the many gifts made to libraries and individuals of this country by the institutions of learning and authors of Latin America, which consistently have been sending their publications without losing faith that at some time something would come in return. . . .

Types of Books: Fiction, non-fiction, children's books, reference books including many English-Spanish, Spanish-English and English-Portuguese, Portuguese-English dictionaries; periodicals, including learned periodicals. New books and old books both may have a place in the plan. . . .

Selection of Books: Within certain limits the selection should be left primarily to the receiving institution except in cases where we are requested to select books for special purpose or on special subjects. This feature would avoid even the appearance of cultural imperialism. . . .

It may be found desirable to prepare a long list of books representative of the American spirit, culture and governmental traditions (including biography, of course) out of which selection could be made. . . .

It is expected that the receiving library or agency will readily give assurance that it will not reduce its normal purchases of U.S. books. The normal flow of books from this country to Latin America may then be increased instead of disrupted thus benefiting the regular commercial channels. 21

In Rivera's plan, the purpose of the Books for Latin America Program was to bring these materials to regional readers and improve the image of the United States. It was important that the books' original target would be the entire Latin American population, that adults, children, scholars, and nonscholars could be influenced by these materials. Also interesting is the fact that at first the program required that all books be in English because translations were too expensive. It is difficult to judge the impact of these materials when only the Latin American elite and the English-speaking community in that region could use them. The intention to promote the use of these books by the majority of the population was defeated in the first phase of the program because only English books were included. However, the logic behind this could have been that by conducting English-language courses in American libraries and institutes, the community that already read English could be reached. Significantly, many of these projects were not totally altruistic missions because it was expected that with the heightened interest in books about the United States, demand for them would increase along with their production and sale.
But the most critical part of Rivera’s plan and the Books for Latin America Program itself was that during its implementation, the provision of the ALA was that it was not to be involved in cultural imperialism because the recipient countries would select the books. This stipulation was defeated when the ALA drew up a list of “books . . . representative of the American spirit, culture and governmental traditions” (Rivera, “Cooperation,” 3) from which librarians from other countries could select (although the Latin American librarians could select from other, more limited lists). This kind of practice can be understood as a form of cultural imperialism, when one country promotes and imposes its own vision of its culture and, mostly, when this culture is hailed as a paradigm of democracy and freedom that will unify the hemisphere with a single purpose. The ALA used books preselected from a list intended to improve Latin America’s conception of the United States and to counter fascist propaganda. American embassies in the region had the last word about who would receive the books. However, for all the propaganda and imperialistic purposes and practices implicated in the first Books for Latin America Program, as Kraske explains, the CIAA wanted this project to be seen as a nongovernment action sponsored by the ALA (163). The CIAA did not want its involvement with the project made public.

Kraske explains that the second Books for Latin America Program was funded in 1943 by the Department of State instead of the CIAA, a change that resulted in a stronger State Department and American embassy presence (159–60). However, the advisory committee included both governmental representation and the professional counterpart of the ALA and the Library of Congress. One of the important changes was the presentation of books in Spanish translation to reach more people in Latin America. That change represented an intent on the part of the Department of State to improve the U.S. image in the region by using the people’s own language. Other changes included American embassies determining who would get the books and how many, as well as sometimes what kinds of books. Some ALA officers were uncomfortable with this situation. After 1943, the ALA considered terminating the program.

By 1944 the Books for Latin America Program had been evaluated by Lydenberg and Milam in their confidential travel report:

We made such observations and inquiries as we could about the receipt and usefulness of books and periodicals sent under the Books for Latin America Project. The books were welcomed everywhere. In some places where they are out on open shelves and in some others, they are apparently used extensively. In some of the “great” libraries they are obviously not so well used. In many, not even the
current periodicals are out where people can use them freely. In some school libraries the books were said to be above the students' reading level, and could be used only by the teachers. The small libraries in general make better use of them than the large ones; which leads us to question the wisdom of this year's policy of making gifts primarily to strong libraries. . . .

Many librarians did not understand that they were free to select from other lists than those we had sent, this in spite of the very emphatic assurances to that effect in the letters of advice. More buying lists should be available. . . .

In general, however, the project is considered by us to be a great success, but too limited.22

To these observers, the Books for Latin America Program had received strong support from Latin American librarians and readers.

Lydenberg and Milam criticized the policy of sending books and journals to “strong” (i.e., big) libraries because small libraries were making better use of these materials. Their evaluation was a criticism of the idea that the better way to promote books was to put them in large libraries, that is, those institutions that were supported by the Latin American elites. Books and journals were oriented to influence the elites' institutions; however, Lydenberg and Milam argued against this use of them. Their evaluation included strong comments against the ALA policy, but the American embassies had more decision-making power over whom to give the materials to.

But Lydenberg and Milam’s strongest point was their general comment about these programs. To them, these programs were “a great success, but too limited.” If the purpose of the programs was the promotion and improvement of the U.S. image, then the impact of the programs had been limited. This was also a strong criticism against the implementation of these programs by the ALA and the Department of State.

However, despite these comments and criticisms, Kraske explains that the Department of State contracted the ALA for two more projects (160). The Department of State’s increased influence in program decision making created more problems between this government agency and the ALA. Following is an excerpt from a 25 October 1945 memorandum to members of the International Relations Board:

From the time that the State Department took over the sponsorship of the Project, the situation has changed, with the Department taking over progressively more and more responsibility. The choice of recipients now depends almost exclusively on the American
Embassies in the different Latin American countries, although the Department, and less often the Advisory Committee, sometimes exercises a veto. Occasionally also, recommendations coming from some other sources are submitted by the American Library Association to the Embassy, and accepted. . . .

The actual distribution of the books, placing of orders, etc., is still left to the American Library Association. . . . From the point of view of the Department, visible activities by the Embassies in connection with the Project, and presentation of books at special ceremonies by a representative of the U.S. government, furnish greater propaganda returns than when the government’s participation is more unobtrusive.

On the other hand, the present method has undeniable drawbacks. Grants to libraries are made with the propaganda value as a prime factor. While this is understandable, the interest of the Association is primarily in supplying books to libraries which need and will make good use of them. There is also a tendency on the part of the Embassies to break down the allocations into numerous small gifts, instead of making more effectual donations to a selected group of institutions.23

This conflict situation remained so intense that a draft circular from the Department of State to American diplomatic and consular officers in the American republics dated 13 March 1946 said:

It has come to the attention of the Department, from communications received from many of the posts, as well as from correspondence sent to the American Library Association by recipients of grants under the Project, and from newspaper clippings and other informational materials about the Project, that in many instances full credit for the Books for Latin American Project is given to the American Library Association and no mention is made of the Department’s cultural cooperation program, of which this Project is a part. . . .

The American Library Association handles the operational details of the Project through a grant-in-aid from the Department. . . . It is requested, therefore, that whenever possible appropriate reference be made to the Department’s Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs, through which the Project is made possible, and to the various Embassies, through which it is administered in the field. . . .

[It has been decided to have all correspondence and shipments routed through the Embassies rather than having them sent directly
to the recipient institutions, as had formerly been the practice. This suggestion is not meant in any way to depreciate the part played by the American Library Association in the Project or to discourage Latin American librarians from communicating directly with the Association about their needs.24

This draft was rewritten to eliminate any suggestion of wrongdoing by the ALA. But in a memorandum dated 25 April 1946 to members of the ALA International Relations Board, Rae Cecilia Kelly analyzed the Department of State position with respect to the Books for Latin America Program as part of the evaluation of an international program after World War II. Kelly said:

Within the past six months, under the impetus of the UNESCO drive “for international and intercultural cooperation,” the Department has formulated a new policy with regard to the Books for Latin America Project. Under this concept of operation, the Department will no longer remain in the background, but will publicly further programs of inter-cultural cooperation. In Latin America for example the Department considers it important diplomatically and politically to identify the Project with the Government. Since the office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs has been discontinued, the continuity of the Books for Latin America Project will be the test of the total Inter-American cooperation program in Latin America.25

The differences between the ALA and the U.S. government regarding the Books for Latin America Program were more than disagreements in cultural terms; they were also disagreements on the procedures and operations of the program. The ALA did not oppose all aspects of cultural propaganda and imperialism but regretted that the State Department wanted only to promote the political value of the program and to reject its professional value, which included meeting Latin American librarians’ needs for books and materials.

According to Kraske, in 1947 the Department of State decided to exclude the ALA from further Books for Latin America Programs (164). This was part of a trend already developing when the Department of State took over the American libraries in Latin America. After World War II and the beginning of the cold war, the U.S. government had created a more dynamic presence, which meant the exclusion of NGOs like the ALA from governmental cultural relations as part of its foreign policy. International organizations such as UNESCO and OAS took the place of American NGOs after the war. Another area in which
the ALA participated and that was strongly related to the 1940s book programs was the translation projects. Even though these projects did not have the same influence as the book programs, their impact on inter-American library relations was significant.

Technical Cooperation and Assistance

The technical cooperation and assistance projects were very important for the ALA in the 1940s. Political, economic, and sociocultural implications were always present in these projects. In a memorandum dated 25 August 1935, in advance of plans to help Haiti in its library development, Carl M. Milam wrote to Frederick P. Keppel of the Carnegie Corporation:

My present opinions are that some library venture in Haiti, sponsored by an American agency, would probably be welcomed, that it should be a national reference and lending library (lending because prospective readers appear to be residents of scattered villages and towns as well as of Port-au-Prince and other centers), that the library should be sufficiently governmental in character to gain financial support from the Treasury but sufficiently detached . . . to avoid political disturbance, and that an American librarian should inaugurate the services and give way as soon as possible to the American trained Haitians who, as part of the scheme, might be brought to this country on fellowship.26

Milam and the ALA were very aware of the political and sociocultural implications of any technical cooperation with and assistance to Haiti, a country where, a year earlier, the United States had terminated an invasion and in which suspicion against any American initiative ran high. The technical cooperation and assistance to establish “a national reference and lending library” were intended to found a public library with an American advisor. American-trained librarians in Haiti could then continue adopting the modern model. In this way, library training and technical cooperation and assistance became “part of the scheme” by which the ALA would promote the American library model and librarianship. This “scheme” influenced the conceptual framework of the ALA’s technical cooperation and assistance, and it is fundamental in understanding the structures (steps) by which projects such as the American libraries, library education and training, and Books for Latin America Program were to be implemented in Latin America.

As Kraske explains, in 1943 the ALA helped in the reconstruction of the National Library of Peru after the building and most of its
collection were destroyed by fire (199). Although it was a coordinated effort in which the secretary of state, Cordell Hull, appointed a committee of which the ALA was a part, the ALA played an important role in technical cooperation and assistance during the reconstruction. It is also important to note that during and after the reconstruction, the U.S. government and the ALA sent books to the library as part of the Books for Latin America Program. As in the Haitian case, the ALA wanted to ensure the long-term effect of the transfer of the modern model, so it helped to establish the Lima School for training Peruvian librarians in American library practices.

In their 1944 travel report, Lydenberg and Milam describe how the exchange of people was very important in promoting the method by which American librarianship would come to be accepted in Latin America. Although the interchange of people mostly meant sending Latin American library workers to observe and receive training in the United States, American librarians were also sent to the region to provide technical cooperation and assistance. It is therefore important to analyze the relationship between library training and technical cooperation and assistance programs. Who would receive the technical resources and money in Latin America? According to Lydenberg and Milam, very good librarians existed in Latin America who needed to be helped because of what they represented:

The value of study and observation by Latin American library leaders in library schools and libraries of the United States cannot be overemphasized. Dr. Jorge Basadre in Lima; Sr. Héctor Fuenzalida in Santiago; Sr. Ernesto Gietz, Sr. Carlos Victor Penna and Jorge Alberto Simonelli in Buenos Aires; and Sr. Rubens Borba de Moraes in São Paulo, are centers of modernism in library organization and services, and for training young librarians; their activities give promise of making over the libraries of their countries. They are also centers of friendship for the United States.27

Sending Latin Americans to observe or train was only part of the intention to promote American librarianship as a modern model; as Lydenberg and Milam state, this exchange activity, through which Latin American library workers were brought to the United States, created friends in the region, a very important part of the Good Neighbor policy. It is for these reasons that the Latin American library workers were equally valued in terms of being “centers of modernism in library organizations and services, and for training young librarians” as well as for being “centers of friendship for the United States.” With these U.S. friends, the transfer of the modern model would be
easier; the implementation of library organization and services and the training of new library workers had true believers in American librarianship.

The ALA thus asked for a Rockefeller Foundation grant to support a technical cooperation and assistance project for the National Library in Brazil in 1945. With this in mind, it is possible to understand the request received by Milam and forwarded to David Stevens of the Rockefeller Foundation on 10 February 1945: “A formal request has come from Dr. Gustavo Capanema, the Minister of Education in Brazil, asking that a mission made up of a group of librarians be sent to Rio to study the administrative organization of the National Library in Brazil, and to make recommendations for its reorganization. We know that Dr. Rubens Borba de Moraes, who now holds a responsible position in the Library is eager for this help.”

Although having been trained in American librarianship and being considered a possible friend were not the only reasons for being selected for technical cooperation and assistance, these factors probably influenced the foundation’s decision. The São Paulo library school, founded by Dr. Rubens Borba two years earlier and the first permanent school in the region, and later the Lima school initiated a process in which Latin Americans trained in American librarianship directed projects to implement library education, with the ALA having only an advisory role. Milam wanted the same to occur at the National Library in Brazil, where American-trained librarians could be given technical cooperation and assistance with the certainty that they would continue the implementation of the modern model.

In a letter to David Stevens of the Rockefeller Foundation on 10 April 1945, Milam and Lydenberg offered their support for a grant to the University Library in Chile, giving as their main reason the presence in that library of Héctor Fuenzalida, one of the American-trained library workers and U.S. friends mentioned before by Lydenberg and Milam in their confidential travel report: “[W]e think Fuenzalida has made a very substantial beginning in actually creating a central library for the University. It is well situated, well organized, capable of rendering good reference service and thereby demonstrating the effectiveness of modernized library work.” Again, the principal reason for supporting this grant in Chile was because Fuenzalida could use it to create a “center of modernism” with his American training and with an American advisor for technical cooperation and assistance.

Other factors and reasons for being selected to receive technical cooperation and assistance included being in a reliable and known institution, showing effective and responsible administrative experience, and having the support of the country’s authorities. Being an
American-trained library worker and demonstrating the possibility of the modern model in a region were great assets, in the ALA’s opinion. Also, if a person was considered a promoter of good relations between the United States and Latin America, he or she would receive the ALA’s recommendation, which would help in being able to receive technical cooperation and assistance. These factors were instrumental in inter-American agencies’ decision to grant technical cooperation and assistance, as well as library education and training and book projects, during the 1940s.

Conclusion

Through ALA projects in Latin America, American librarianship progressed, step by step, from conceptualization to implementation as the model to be followed by the Latin American countries in modernizing not only their library practices but their societies in general.

W. A. Lewis, E. E. Hagen, and B. F. Hoselitz explain how ideas of progress and modern civilization that promoted economic growth through industrialization were advanced as a pattern for the whole world. Economic growth and prosperity were not the only critical aspects to modernity; education was an important ingredient as well. In this respect, the development of library practices was fundamental to the pursuit of a modern society. In fighting fascist propaganda, the United States had portrayed itself at least since World War II (and probably earlier) as a modern model whose prosperity and economic growth were important achievements, but they were achievable only in a democratic society. With the cold war as background, the democracy/modernization discourse became part of the rhetoric and actions used to attack Communism around the world and in Latin America specifically.

Not all of the ideas of progress and modern civilization present in Latin America were the result of American influence. Latin American elites had accepted ideas of progress and modern civilization even before the Enlightenment. During most of the nineteenth century, European and American ideas had competed for prominence in the minds of Latin American elites. In the twentieth century, the United States as the modern model gained leadership, although the European model was still influential and would sometimes be used by some Latin American elites in resisting the American model.

In the 1940s, the ALA started to implement the modern model in Latin America. The characteristics and purposes of American librarianship as a modern model were explained by Lydenberg and Milam in their 1944 report:
While the libraries we saw, as a whole, are relatively unorganized for effective use, and are relatively little used, there are many signs of a progressive attitude. Much of it stems from librarians trained in the United States.

Signs of modernism, however, are also seen here and there in the introduction of open shelves, classified arrangement of books on the shelves, public and rural library movements, correlation of instruction and library reading in universities and schools, reserve book collections, union lists and catalogs, centralization of library service within a university, library instruction, and organization of library associations or other cooperating groups.

Every librarian who adopts or adapts modern library methods does by that act bear testimony to the cultural leadership of the United States in this field, for most of those methods are known by everybody concerned to have originated largely in this country. We have the opportunity to assist the younger generation of librarians to bring new life and new points of view into these libraries through fellowships for study in the United States, through aid to library schools in Latin America, through translation of library publications and through encouragement to every native effort for improvement.

Lydenberg and Milam stated the ALA's mission in Latin America. They explained that American librarianship was the modernizing force in Latin America, that ALA projects during the 1940s had the intention of promoting U.S. library practices as a modern model. This modernization process, according to Lydenberg and Milam, could help Latin American countries establish a more democratic society. In the American experience of library management, libraries are considered neutral institutions that represent all of society's sectors or, at the very least, a middle sector whose values might represent the rest of society. As ALA representatives, Lydenberg and Milam wanted to transfer these ideas to the Latin American scene. Although their intentions were in good faith, they imposed cultural ideas that homogenized librarianship practices in the whole hemisphere: "'Modernity' as we shall understand it, refers to the main cultural direction of global development. Thus the drift toward a sort of global cultural homogeneity that is recognized (with certain qualifications) in . . . this discourse to drive from the dominance of particular—'modern'—way of life which has multiple determinants" (Tomlinson, 27).

As Tomlinson says, U.S. modernity was part of a cultural imperialism that threatened to eliminate the diversity of other countries and regions in the name of a modern homogeneity. During the
1940s, the ALA practiced cultural imperialism in the way that it tried to homogenize hemispheric librarianship using the American model. It is interesting that the librarian community in Latin America did not resist this cultural imperialism but instead promoted American librarianship with great enthusiasm because it saw the United States as the natural leader in this area.

The U.S. government wanted to combat fascist propaganda in Latin America during the 1940s. As part of the Good Neighbor policy, the U.S. government used the American cultural experience as a modern model to help Latin American development. American librarianship was shown as representative of the knowledgeable progress in which public libraries, books, and professional education were important in accomplishing this mission. For that reason, the ALA as the professional organization that symbolized American librarianship was an integral part of the projects promoted by the U.S. government. The ALA wanted to improve library practices around the world. In particular, it had the vision of helping developing countries standardize their library practices. The ALA's role was basic; as the professional NGO, it was the perfect vehicle with which the U.S. government could direct its initiatives without looking suspicious or imperialistic in the region.

The differences between the U.S. government and the ALA in regard to library projects in Latin America concerned ways of implementation rather than ideological or political objections. The ALA from the beginning had notions about the political and ideological implications of the library projects in Latin America. The ALA wanted to be the leader of inter-American library relations and understood that role as part of the Good Neighbor policy to the region. The ALA in conjunction with the U.S. government established very important projects to present American librarianship as a modern model, including the American libraries, the Books for Latin America Program, and the technical assistance and cooperative projects.

The Good Neighbor policy was received well by most of the urban middle and high sectors of the Latin American countries. As Gilbert M. Joseph and Steve J. Stern explain, new questions about the way in which modernization projects were received not only by the urban middle and high sectors of Latin American societies but also by other geographical and social sectors of these societies need to be answered. What kind of resistance did these sectors manifest? Was it a failure of the implementation of these projects, a special type of resistance, or a different kind of incorporation of the so-called modern society? These new questions need to be analyzed in order to better understand the implications of the relationships between the American modern model and Latin American societies.
Notes

I need to thank some institutions that helped during the research process of this article: the Columbus Memorial Library, the Organization of American States, the University of Illinois and its University Archive, and the American Library Association Archive. I would also like to thank Leyda Ponce de León González and Bill Payne, who helped during the editing process. The mistakes are my responsibility.

1. The Good Neighbor policy is considered to represent a less imperialistic attitude toward the Latin American region. After President Franklin Roosevelt announced the policy in his inaugural address on 4 March 1933 until his death on 12 April 1945, the United States kept its promise of no armed intervention in the region. Moreover, this less imperialistic attitude was shown in other actions, such as when the United States pulled its troops out of the Dominican Republic in 1924 and eliminated the Platt Amendment in 1934, allowing the United States to invade Cuba at its will, and, in 1936, pulled its troops out of Haiti (Guerrant).

2. In this essay, the working definition of the term motive comes from the term motivation as used in psychology. The concept of motive is important for understanding the actions, factors, variables, and elements that represented inter-American relations during the study period. The motives were historically constructed and affected the relations among nations. They thus help in understanding historical development.

Two motives, benefactor and imperial-paternalistic, are analyzed in terms of inter-American relations. The benefactor motive was intended to cultivate collaboration and cooperation between Latin America and the United States horizontally. Neither side imposed its ideas, theories, or ideologies; rather, both sides cooperated in the attainment of hemispheric development. The imperial-paternalistic motive was used by the United States (its government, the private sector, and NGOs) to impose its interests and the kind of development it wanted on Latin American countries. The expressed wishes of the citizens of those nations were not taken into account. Both motives had very important roles in inter-American relations. Sometimes one of the motives was more present than the other, but most of the time both motives competed with and contradicted each other, creating great confusion in terms of understanding the ideas, theories, and ideologies behind the motives.

3. The term modern in this article comes from the concept of modernization: “Modernization . . . is the process of social change in which development is the economic component. Modernization produces the societal environment in which rising output per head is effectively incorporated. . . . This view of continuous and increasing interaction between economic and non-economic factors in development produced a second step forward, namely, systematic efforts to conceptualize modernization as the contemporary mode of social change” (Lerner, 387).

“A model . . . is merely the indication of a simpler and more accurately determinable state of affairs, with the intention of facilitating deduction of further consequences which can then be tentatively reapplied to the more complex and elusive real system. By describing a system by means of definite postulates which specify the properties of the model, and thus in a way give rise to it, it becomes possible to deduce further consequences from the postulates and about the model by rigorous deduction” (Gellner, 435).

4. The four federal agencies were the Office of Facts and Figures, the Office of Government Reports, the Coordinator of Information, and the Office of Emergency Management (Kraske, 138).
6. See Véliz for a good discussion about centralization in Latin America.
7. C. M. Milam and M. A. Milczewski, “American Library in Mexico,” 14 August 1941, American Library Association Archive, 7/1/50, Box 4, 1, 3.
8. C. M. Milam, notebook (confidential), 1941, American Library Association Archive, 7/1/50, Box 4.
9. In this case, the ACLS and CIAA did not work to avoid the arrogant act of naming the library in Managua, Nicaragua, “Biblioteca Americana.” It is possible that the reaction in Mexico to the name “American” as a U.S. institution was more problematic than in Nicaragua, showing that the North American countries did not treat all Latin American countries equally.
10. This library was named Artigas-Washington in honor of the independence leaders of Uruguay and the United States, José Artigas and George Washington.
11. These libraries had individual directors and a board of trustees, and they also formed an advisory committee on American libraries in Latin America to oversee long-range planning. The committee included members from the Department of State, the ALA, and the Library of Congress. See General Principles and Manual for American Libraries, both in American Library Association Archive, 7/1/50, Box 4, 9-10.
13. Ibid., 11-12.
15. M. A. Milczewski to L. Carnovsky, 4 November 1946, American Library Association Archive, 7/1/6, Box 4.
19. M. A. Milczewski to Malcolm Davis, 26 June 1942, American Library Association Archive, 7/1/6, Box 4.
23. International Relations Board, Memorandum, 25 October 1945, American Library Association Archive, 7/1/6, Box 4.
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28. C. M. Milam to David Stevens, 10 February 1945, American Library Association Archive, 7/1/6, Box 5.
29. C. M. Milam and H. M. Lydenberg to David Stevens, 10 April 1945, American Library Association Archive, 7/1/50, Box 5.
31. See Tomlinson, chapters 3, 4, and 5, for a good discussion of this topic.

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