

Books, Cultural Exchanges, and International Relations: Brazil and the United States in a Context of War (1941-1946)

Livros, trocas culturais e relações internacionais Brasil-Estados Unidos em um contexto de guerra (1941-1946)

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ABSTRACT The Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA), subordinate to the US State Department functioned between 1941 and 1946 and was responsible for implementing US economic and cultural policies in Latin American countries during the Second World War (1939-1945). The Office developed projects to foster the exchange of books among the Americas and was helped by teachers, professors, librarians, translators, artists, writers and editors. This article aims to analyze some of these projects, which resulted in the increased dissemination of US books in Brazil, although they were more expensive than European ones. I will demonstrate not only the efficiency of the OCIAA team in Brazil, despite its urgent and temporary nature, but also the publishers' plans for the book market in Latin-America after the war. The

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sources used for this research are documents of the American Council of Learned Societies, the OCIAA, and the American Library Association.

KEYWORDS cultural policies, North-American books, Brazil-United States relations

RESUMO O Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA), um órgão do Departamento de Estado dos Estados Unidos, funcionou no período de 1941 a 1946 e foi responsável pela execução das políticas econômicas e culturais dos Estados Unidos para os países latino-americanos durante a Segunda Guerra Mundial (1939-1945). A agência elaborou projetos para fomentar o intercâmbio de livros entre as Américas e contou com a participação de professores, bibliotecários, tradutores, artistas, escritores e editores. Este artigo pretende analisar alguns desses projetos que convergiram para o crescimento da disseminação de livros estadunidenses no Brasil, apesar dos altos preços se comparados aos livros europeus. Demonstrarei não somente a eficiência da equipe do OCIAA, a despeito de sua natureza emergencial e temporária, mas também os planos dos editores estadunidenses para os livros na América Latina pós-guerra. As fontes consultadas nesta pesquisa foram os documentos da American Council of Learned Societies, do OCIAA e da American Library Association.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE política cultural, livros estadunidenses, relações Brasil-Estados Unidos

In the first half of the twentieth century there was an intensification of cultural relations between Brazil and the United States, mainly during World War II (1939-1945). The Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA), created on 16 August 1940 and originally called the “Office for Coordination of Commercial and Cultural Relations between the Americas,” was the agency responsible for the implementation

of the cultural projects that were part of the political and economic project funded by the US government, with the declared aim of strengthening US relations with Latin American countries. To achieve its objectives the agency gave “notable importance to cultural activities and to communication,” having at its front the Republican Nelson Rockefeller (Tota, 2000, p.51). As noted by Tota, Nelson Rockefeller¹ was “Roosevelt’s man in Brazil” (Tota, 2014, p.101).

The Rockefeller family, owner of the Standard Oil Company, had a great projection in the US cultural scenario in the 1930s, especially after the construction of the Rockefeller Center in New York. The complex of 14 buildings housed offices, shops, and companies linked to communication, such as the Radio Corporation of America (RCA), the Radio City Music Hall, and the studios of the Radio Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) and Radio-Keith-Orpheum (RKO), a Hollywood producer. Nelson Rockefeller, very close to the world of arts and big business since he was the head of the Rockefeller Center, became increasingly involved with the commercial interests of his family. From 1937 onwards he made various trips to Latin America to meet commercial partners and explore future possibilities for business. His interaction with people linked to the US cultural and commercial world associated with his prestige among Latin American elites shown by the trips seems to have concentrated political capital and influenced his choice as head of OCIAA. (Tota, 2014).

Among the cultural activities, already studied by numerous authors, were the production and transmission of radio programs (Klößner, 2008; Sousa, 2004), films (Garcia, 2001; 2004; Castro, 2005; Valim, 2017), cartoons (Moura, 1984; Tota, 2000), magazines (Junqueira, 2000; 2001; Tota, 2000), photography (Mauad, 2014); fine arts (Sadler, 2012), and books (Minchillo, 2015; Morinaka, 2017a; 2017b; 2018a; Tooge,

1 Pedro Tota outlined the profile of the political and administrative action of Nelson Rockefeller in the economic development of Brazil through the Good Neighbor Policy in his book *O amigo americano*. Cf.: TOTA, 2014.

2012). In relation to the publication of fiction, translation projects of Brazilian literature and Spanish language literature into English involved writers, librarians, translators, teachers, professors, artists, and publishers in the Americas, who acted as ambassadors of culture (Morinaka, 2017a; 2017b; 2018a; 2018b; 2018c; 2018d; Rostagno, 1997). The exchange of books, the focus of this article, contributed not only to the bellicose interest, but also to mid and long-term publishing programs for Brazil and the US (cf. Alves, 1968; Calandra; Franco, 2012; Cancelli, 2017; Oliveira, 2015).²

OICIAA worked on various fronts to stimulate the habit of reading about Latin American subjects in US territory, funding, for example, the American Library Association (ALA) project entitled *Exhibit of Latin American Books in the US*³ and the *Experiment in stimulation of interest in books on other American countries and Inter-American affairs*, which covered 328 communities in the Mid-West.⁴ Large amounts of funds were also allocated to the expansion of Latin American studies programs in the US: the Pan-American Centers received funds for social and education activities in units spread across the country;⁵ the University of Texas, in Austin, received around US \$80,000 to expand its programs through the *Assistance to the Institute of Latin American*

2 Obviously in addition to cultural exchanges there were commercial interests, mainly of private companies which wanted to expand the sales of their products to Latin American countries, as shown in the study by MONTEIRO, 2014.

3 National Archives of Records Administration II (NARA II). Record Group (RG) 229, Office of Inter-American Affairs (OIAA). Project authorizations (PA), 1942-1945. Letter Archives, Box 519; and University of Illinois (UI). American Library Association Archives (ALAA). Record Series (RS) 70/30/20, Committee on Library Cooperation with Latin America Reports (CLCLAR), 1921, 1938-1942, Box 1. (Courtesy of the American Library Association Archives at the University of Illinois).

4 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. PA, 1942-1945. Letter Archives, Box 519.

5 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. PA, 1942-1945. Letter Archives, Box 528.

Studies of the University of Texas project;⁶ while in 1942 the *Special US University Centers for improving understanding of the other Americas and Americans* project received US \$8420 to strengthen already existing programs and develop others of the same nature in various universities.⁷

OCIAA even subsidized literary reviews which were published in specialized journals in the US. One of the OCIAA reports stated that the committee was satisfied with the work of Huber Herring, since he wrote 236 articles about Latin American authors in a period of nine months, despite the low “quality of the magazines where the material is placed.”⁸ As the war was coming to an end, there was a drastic reduction in cultural programs for Latin America. The project was not directly renewed by the agency, but it was recommended that it be redirected to various government and private agencies, with the aim of future funding.⁹

Meanwhile, to disseminate US books in the southern hemisphere, the OCIAA funded similar programs, specifically in Brazil, which will be detailed and analyzed in the next section. The most striking project about US books and their future in Brazilian territory was the trip of various publishers to investigate the Latin American publishing market, explored in the next section. In 1943, a group of publishers travelled to Latin America at the request of the State Department in order to find out about the potential of the publishing industry and, on their return, presented the report entitled “The Role of Books in Inter-American

6 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. PA, 1942-1945. Letter Archives, Box 515.

7 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. PA, 1942-1945. Letter Archives, Box 536.

8 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. Department of Press and Publications: General records, 1941-1945. Legal Archives, Box 1462. Memorandum from David Loth to Francis A. Jamieson. 22 April 1944.

9 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. Department of Press and Publications: General records, 1941-1945. Legal Archives, Box 1462. Memorandum from David Loth to Francis A. Jamieson. 22 April 1944. For other projects to divulge Brazilian publications in the US, cf. MORINAKA, 2017a; 2017b.

Relations.” In addition to the possibilities of publication, printing, binding, copyright, and the sale of books in Latin American countries, the publishers collected information about reading habits and the educational system of each country they had visited and made projections for their business, adopting as a base line the possibility of development in post-war Latin America. The belief in the development of these countries would certainly favor the sale of US material to meet the demand for technical, scientific, and academic books, but this would only be possible if certain measures were taken by the US government to facilitate business.¹⁰

American cultural aspects which influenced Brazil have been researched by Gerson Moura (1984), who studied ‘American cultural penetration’ during the Good Neighbor Policy in the 1940s; Pedro Tota (2000), who reconstituted the history of US cultural products which reached Brazil via OCIAA; Luciano Klöckner (2008), who analyzed the influence of the radio program *Repórter Esso* during World War II and the Cold War; and Darlene Sadlier (2012), who analyzed the cultural machinery used by US diplomacy to seduce Latin American countries, focusing particularly on Brazil in the 1940s. In the field of publications, Laura de Oliveira (2015) examined the US subsidies for a book publishing project for science fiction books carried out by Gumercindo Rocha Dorea publishers, which focused on combating communism during the Cold War. This study differs from that of Moura, Tota, Klöckner, and Sadlier by being centered on publications, a dimension not thoroughly investigated in their research, and differs from Oliveira by the period studied, the 1940s.¹¹

10 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. Regional division (RD), Coordination committee for Brazil: general records, 1941-1945 (CCB-GR). Legal Archives (LA), Box 1264.

11 Two important books about Latin American fiction in the United States deserve to be mentioned: ROSTAGNO (1997) examined the translation of Latin American literature in the United States, specifically in Hispanic countries, and the contribution of the US writer Waldo Frank in its dissemination during the Second World War; while COHN (2012) investigated the role of the CIA which financed literary journals and cultural programs in Spain and the Americas which contributed to the Latin American fiction boom during the Cold War.

This article thus intends to analyze the projects for disseminating US books in Brazil, including the report entitled “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations.” I will demonstrate the efficiency of the actions proposed by OCIAA and their immediate impacts on the Brazilian context. I will also map the ideas about the US book market in Latin America aimed at a more influential and long-lasting insertion policy. This report, added to those of ALA and ACLS, could have been one of the strong supports of the cultural agreements which occurred after 1945 between Brazil and the United States. For the construction of this narrative I initially carried out research in OCIAA documents in the National Archives II, in College Park, Maryland. Record Group 229 (‘Inter-American Affairs’) consists of more than three hundred boxes containing reports, correspondence, and minutes of meetings. In addition to this OCIAA documentation, organizations such as the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) and ALA implemented some of the projects, therefore I looked for their archives trying to find textual traces of the ideological dimension in reports, memoranda, and correspondence. ACLS documents are in the Library of Congress, in Washington D.C.; while the ALA documents are in the University of Illinois Archives, in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois.

PROJECTS TO DISSEMINATE US PUBLICATIONS IN BRAZIL

With the British naval blockade in 1939, the importation of books from European countries, which had been declining since the global economic crisis, fell drastically, being replaced by the United States during the Second World War (Hallewell, 2012, pp.539-544). Let us look at Table 1:

Table 1: Number of books imported by Brazil (1939-1949)

Years	France (kg)	Spain (kg)	Italy (t)	United Kingdom (t)	Japan (t)	United States (t)
1939	36,123	17,391	34,196	32,08	136,718	115,68
1940	6,466	41,245	26,572	31,60	128,805	109,00
1941	847	39,194	0,02	37,57	72,292	166,72
1942	0	17,056	0	24,47	0	123,03
1943	0	16,000	0	26,68	0	86,72
1944	0	234	0	26,51	0	256,18
1945	0	34	0	26,14	0	294,26
1946	48,441	64,617	9,394	40,74	0	224,53
1947	86,127	66,398	45,537	21,78	0	316,62
1948	52,505	54,256	45,806	27,68	4,866	257,85
1949	82,260	26,153	30,282	57,58	5,739t	336,05

Source: Table prepared with information found in Hallewell (2012, pp. 864, 867-868, 873-874, 931).

According to the information contained in Table 1, between 1942 and 1945 no books were imported from France, Italy, or Japan. It can also be noticed that book imports from the US declined in 1942 and 1943, but they returned with great force in 1944. In comparison with 1943, the number of imports from the United State in 1944 more than doubled. Since then it can be noted that there was a gradual increase in imports from the US, until the end of the decade with a total of 336 tons, against approximately 93 tons in total from France, Spain, Italy, the United Kingdom, and Japan. Quantitatively, a significant increase in the presence of books from the US in Brazil can be perceived.

On 12 May 1943, Antonio Ribeiro Bertrand, from Livraria Civilização Brasileira, wrote to Henry M. Snyder & Co, a book import and export firm based in New York, to talk about business. According to his assessment, despite the increase in book imports from the US due to the

blockade, trading with Europe still seemed to be economically attractive to Brazilian bookshops. Bertrand warned that if maritime trade was reestablished with Europe there would be a fall in sales of almost 50% of US titles if prices were not improved, since books from Europe were cheaper.¹² Perhaps this was a strategy used by the bookseller to improve prices. This diagnosis is actually corroborated by the report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations.” However, during the war, the import market from the US remained high.

Taking advantage of the political situation and the OCIAA subsidy, the industry of translating US material was at full steam. *Em Guarda* and *Boletim Semanal*, magazines with large print runs, responsible for reporting/disseminating the activities of OCIAA, were sent freely to its regional offices in Brazil which were in charge of distributing them to institutions of interest — English language teaching institutions, cultural associations, universities, and public libraries. *Reader's digest*, translated as *Seleções*, consisting of various types of articles for the general public, gained great popularity in Latin America. In the ideological sphere, according to Sadlier (2012), these cultural products converged to construct an ‘imagined’ progress and prosperity in the United States through a utopian lifestyle of the growing middle class. Mary Junqueira analyzed *Reader's Digest* in the 1942-1970 period in search of representations of Latin America, concluding that the materials emphasized “empty, abandoned [places], without the necessary transformation to achieve progress and the development of a modern world” (Junqueira, 2001, p.324).

12 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA, Box 1320. Letter from Antonio Ribeiro Bertrand, Civilização Brasileira Bookshop, to Mr. W. S. Hall, c/o Henry M. Snyder & Co. Rio de Janeiro, 12 May 1943.

In relation to translation, parallel to the OCIAA projects, the American Consulate General in São Paulo, also dedicated itself keenly to the task. In November 1944, Consul Cecil M. P. Cross saw translation as a very useful tool for the program of cultural relations, through which “the history and civilization of the United States” could become known in the other parts of the Americas. In one of the rooms in the consulate there was a collection of books translated into Portuguese which the public could consult or borrow. However, according to Cross, “perhaps the chief problem in the book field” was “the standard of translation, not usually very high”. According to him, the Cultural Relations Division in São Paulo was “analyzing American books” to the extent that they were published in Portuguese. The project counted on the participation of “four or five prominent intellectuals” and it was expected that “those [translated books] which are too badly done may be revised or even withdrawn from circulation.”

Aimed at a solution of this apparent problem, the consulate intended to gain access to “all translations of American books”, i.e., the approximately four hundred or five hundred volumes available in the market. Half were already in the Division and the other half would have had to be acquired to continue the work. However, the amount of US \$60 annually allocated for the purchase of books was not sufficient, which led Cross to request an increase of at least ten times this value.¹³ After all, efforts needed to be made to disseminate US lifestyle, philosophy, and science through the most efficient tool among Latin American elites. While on the one hand Cross was deeply concerned with the quality of book translations available in the market, on the other, the following narrative of the travelling salesman, who embarked with cases full of products intending to empty them in Latin America, pointed to the importance of the amount of business they managed to carry out.

13 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA, Box 1330. Letter from Cecil M. P. Cross to the Secretary of State. São Paulo, 6 November 1944.

Dr. Lewis Hanke, director of the Hispanic Foundation, received five thousand dollars to travel to Latin America, which he did at the end of 1941 (Espinosa, 1976, p.172). The objective of this trade mission was to establish contacts with people in the publishing market, to foster commercial networks for the export of books produced in the United States. By the end of the journey, Hanke had fulfilled part of his role, establishing contacts with important newspapers and Latin American magazines.

Lewis Hanke's other task was to present a list of two hundred titles recommended by the OCIAA committee to be translated into Spanish and Portuguese. According to the minutes of the 64th meeting in 1944, 28 titles of the list, among the technical and academic works, were being translated and published in Brazil. In relation to fiction books, approximately forty of them, representatives of "first-class literature," had already been translated and placed in the market. The translations were being published in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Porto Alegre, the latter by Livraria O Globo.¹⁴

In one of his letters, Hanke reported that Latin American book-sellers showed interest in discovering books published by "outstanding [US] Catholic publishers." In Brazil, for example, Tristão de Athayde, a writer and professor of the Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, was influential among intellectuals and he certainly could contribute to the translation and publication of books that were of his interest. Hanke thus suggested that Catholic titles such as *Selected Poems of Thomas Walsh*¹⁵ and *Catholicism and the modern mind* by Michael Williams, could be sent to some influential people in Latin America, which would certainly have a positive impact.¹⁶

14 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB. Minutes of Meetings. LA, Box 1351. Minutes of 64th Meeting. 4 February 1943.

15 Thomas Walsh wrote books on Catholic themes. Available at: <http://www.catholicauthors.com/walsh.html>. Access: 19 September 2018.

16 LC-MC. ACLS. Box B99. Letter from Lewis Hanke to The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee (WI), P. J. Kennedy & Sons, MacMillan & Company, Longmans, Green & Co., Sheed & Ward and The Dial Press, Inc., New York (NY). 13 March 1941.

American fiction translated by Companhia Editora Nacional between January and September 1943 included the following: *Inconstant star* by Adelaida Humphries; *The moon is down* by John Steinbeck; *Nurse and Susan Merton Army spy* by Louise Logan; and *Oliver Wiswell* by Kenneth Roberts.¹⁷ The abridged version of Steinbeck's *The moon is down*, unanimously approved in the OCIAA committee and published in *Reader's Digest*, was considered of excellent quality. If the publisher of the magazine had rejected the text, the committee had devised an alternative plan to obtain the translation rights and publish it in a serial form in Brazilian newspapers.¹⁸ The insistence on this novel lay in the fact that it represented an allegory of the Nazi regime in Germany and a critique of the totalitarian regime which had advanced rapidly through Europe. Newspaper publications would reach a larger public and would serve as a warning about the consequences of Nazism, against which the Allied countries were fighting. Although Steinbeck was a member of The League of American Writers, an association of writers launched by the Communist Party of the United States, the allegory in *The moon is down* representing the discourse of fear, the lack of liberty, and the abuses of Nazism could serve as a good pamphlet against the German advance. The memorandum that mentioned the Inter-Americas Cultural Relations indicated the need to translate works dealing with the global situation, especially about totalitarian countries.¹⁹

17 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA, Box 1330. Letter from Cecil M. P. Cross to the Secretary of State. São Paulo, 22 October 1943.

18 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. Box 1351. Minutes of 38th meeting. Rio de Janeiro, 16 July 1942.

19 LC-MC. ACLS. Box B72. Memorandum.

The translation of children's books was a smaller project if compared to other genres, but Walt Disney books immediately conquered the Brazilian public, since they were also reproduced in animated cartoons. In 1942, Cesar Civita,²⁰ Special Representative of *Walt Disney Productions* in South America,²¹ sent OCIAA a copy of the Portuguese version of the latest Walt Disney book launched in South America. Civita ended this note hoping that "you will appreciate this effort to provide Brazil with better children books taken from the best editions published in the USA".

An ALA memorandum from 1938 mentioned a study pointing to the scarcity of children's books in Latin America and the need for interventions in this field, since "children of the many countries *might to some extent share a common heritage of stories* and might have good books available (emphasis added)." This action could develop a friendly and solidarity-based relationship between nations in the American hemisphere.²² Shortly afterwards, in 1940, ALA coordinated a group to deal with this issue,²³ and in the minutes of a 1943 meeting, John Engelkirk, from OCIAA, is recorded as reinforcing the need to translate books which could show the history, habits, and some aspects of the life of US society for the children/adolescent public of Latin America.²⁴ Efforts put into this could have a major impact in the long term.

20 Cesare Civita (his birth name), an Italian Jew, emigrated to the US shortly after the beginning of the Second World War. Shortly afterwards, he moved to Argentina as a commercial representative of Walt Disney in South America. In 1941, he founded Editora Abril in Argentina (SCARZANELLA, 2009). His brother, Victor Civita (originally Vittorio) came to Brazil in 1949 and in the following year, in partnership with Giordano Rossi, created Editora Abril in São Paulo and began to publish Donald Duck (HALLEWELL, 2012).

21 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA, Box 1320. Letter from Cesar Civita to Berent Friele. Rio de Janeiro, 29 April 1942.

22 UI. ALAA. RS 70/30/20, CLCLAR, 1921, 1938-1942, Box 1. Memorandum. 4 April 1938.

23 UI. ALAA. RS 70/30/20, CLCLAR, 1921, 1938-1942, Box 1. Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee on Library Cooperation with Latin America. 27 December 1940.

24 Library of Congress, Manuscript Division (LC-MC). American Council of Learned Societies Records (ACLS). Box B96. Minutes of the Joint Committee Meeting. 16 November 1943.

A wide-ranging translation project appears to have been *Assistance to Latin American Publishers*.²⁵ A letter from Mortimer Graves, administrative secretary, mentions the value of US \$75,000.00 allocated to the program.²⁶ Various reports sent periodically to ACLS listed the books which had been translated to Spanish and Portuguese with OCIAA subsidies and which had been or were about to be published in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico. Among these were *Our Democracy in Action* by Franklin Roosevelt, *Economics for the Millions* by Henry Fairchild, *The Study of Man* by Ralph Linton, *Introduction to Economic History* by Norman Gras, *Engines of Democracy* by Roger Burlingame, *Life and Letters of Jefferson* by Francis Hirst, *Negroes in Brazil* by Donald Pierson, and *The Price of Freedom* by Henry Wallace, amongst others.²⁷

In the same way that the US public needed to familiarize themselves with the cultures of Latin America to better appreciate their books, Brazilians supposedly knew little about or regarded the text from their neighbor to the north. The plan to disseminate US publications needed to be activated. In 1943, the regional Brazilian OCIAA began to receive supplements of literary reviews from newspapers such as the *New York Times Sunday Times*, *Weekly Magazine*,²⁸ *New York Times, Sunday Magazine*, and the *Book Review Section*, for the dissemination not only of technical and academic books, but also US fiction.²⁹ Various ACLS reports indicate that the State Department wanted to continue the book

25 Very similar to the program analyzed by OLIVEIRA, 2015.

26 LC-MC. ACLS. Box B99. Letter from Mortimer Graves to the members of the Finance Committee. 25 June 1942.

27 LC-MC. ACLS. Box B99. Reports – July 1942, September 1942, December 1942, March 1943, June 1943 and February 1944.

28 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA, Box 1297. Memorandum BD-3761, from the Brazilian Division to Harry W. Frantz. 19 June 1944.

29 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA, Box 1297. Memorandum BD-3718, From the Brazilian Division to Francis Jamieson. 12 June 1944.

program after the war, meaning that plans had to be drafted at that moment. In the opinion of Charles Thomson, they had to revise some aspects of copyright and types of subsidy, as well as changing the target to school books. This seemed a good reason to highlight the importance of books for the children and adolescent public.³⁰

In the academic sphere, the professors who worked to improve knowledge about various aspects of culture in Brazil were: William Rex Crawford, a professor in Pennsylvania University in Philadelphia and US cultural attaché in Rio de Janeiro, who gave various talks about US literature;³¹ Professor Carleton Sprague Smith, director of the Music Division of the New York Public Library, and Visiting Professor of Social History of the US in the Escola Livre de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo;³² and Dr. Morton Deuwen Zabel, Professor of US Contemporary Literature in University of Chicago, who held a series of conferences entitled “Contemporary North American Literature” in Rio de Janeiro³³ and in São Paulo.³⁴

The cultural exchange of teachers, professors, artists, and librarians, which would have a direct impact on the dissemination of books and US culture, won greater space in Brazil and became increasingly closer to the Ministry of Education and Health. One of the direct consequences of this movement was Decree-Law no. 4.668, from 8 September 1942, which divided in two the discipline of English and Anglo-American

30 LC-MC. ACLS. Box B96. Minutes of the Joint Committee Meeting. 2 June 1942.

31 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA, Box 1310. Clippings: *O Estado de São Paulo*, *Diário de São Paulo*, *A Gazeta*, *Correio Paulistano*, *Folha da Manhã*, *Folha da Noite*, *O dia*, and *Diário da Noite*.

32 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA, Box 1310. Clippings: *O Estado de São Paulo*, *Diário de São Paulo*, *A Gazeta*, *Correio Paulistano*, *Folha da Manhã*, *Folha da Noite*, *O dia*, and *Diário da Noite*.

33 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA, Box 1311. Letter received 6 September 1944.

34 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA, Box 1330. Letter from Cecil M. P. Cross to the Secretary of State. São Paulo, 28 July 1944.

Language and Literature in the course of Anglo-Germanic Language and Literature of the National Faculty of Philosophy of Rio de Janeiro: English Language and Literature and North American Literature.³⁵ According to correspondence of John E. Englekirk, from the OCIAA Division of Science and Communication, to Waldo Leland, Director of ACLS, OCIAA and ACLS had a direct and active participation in the choice of professor to occupy the position.³⁶ Englekirk wrote that “the Minister of Education has asked us verbally to name a professor to that post [Chair of North American Literature at the National Faculty of Philosophy]. Up to the present time, however, this request has not been confirmed in writing. The Brazilian government, it is understood, will pay part of the salary, the usual amount paid Brazilian professors, and it is assumed that we are to add to that in order to cover the candidate’s dollar obligations in this country.”

Since this was the first Chair of US Literature in the Southern hemisphere, Englekirk continued, “[i]t is our feeling, therefore, that some person of prominence should be named to this post so that the word may spread rapidly throughout the rest of the Americas and stir up an interest and a desire to create similar posts and to invite others of our more distinguished literary scholars to fill them.” He, thus, suggested the names of Thornton Wilder, John dos Passos, or Steven Vincent Benet, who were considered inappropriate by William Berrien, from ACLS, in a confidential letter to Waldo Leland.³⁷ Berrien showed that he was aware of the Brazilian context and proposed that they should indicate someone to the position, arguing that:

35 *Diário Oficial da União*, Rio de Janeiro, 10 September 1942. The division between English Literature and American Literature in the 1940s is still present in the curricula of some English Language and Literature courses in Brazilian universities.

36 LC-MC. ACLS. Box B71. Letter from John E. Englekirk to Waldo Leland. 4 March 1943.

37 LC-MD. ACLS. Box B71. Letter from William Berrien to Waldo Leland. 10 March 1943.

It is also well to keep in mind that Tristão de Athayde is a man whose likes and dislikes are very much taken into account by Minister Gustavo Capanema and Dr Santiago Dantas, Director of the Faculdade. The man who is to go to Rio for this particular assignment must be acceptable both to the rightist Catholic elements led by Tristão de Athayde and to the liberal writers and artists of important circles in Rio de Janeiro. To send for this particular post a man who is not acceptable to both factions would be to militate against the broad influence that a man who could satisfy both factions would have in Rio de Janeiro. [...] It is of course evident that a conservative or reactionary Catholic might well please Tristão de Athayde while displeasing a great number of important liberal elements with modern ideas in literary circles in Rio de Janeiro, with whom he would have to get along if he were to be thoroughly successful, both inside and outside the Faculdade.

Berrien believed that the three names recommended by Englekirk could participate in other missions of lesser importance, where their performance would not be dependent on pleasing every group. For this mission in particular, he had thought about recommending Dr. Morton D. Zabel to Nelson Rockefeller, since “Zabel is one of our most stimulating critics, and has written articles on sculpture and the plastic arts published in the leading magazines, which shows that he is alive to fields other than literature and represents the well-integrated personality and scholarship which would please intellectuals in Brazil.” Professor Zabel thus received a grant to hold the first chair in the University of Brazil for two years, being succeeded by W. J. Griffin, from St. Cloud State University of Minnesota (Espinosa, 1976, p.303).

However, these attempts to disseminate US books was not always well regarded by Brazilians. In the literary column of *Folha Carioca*, dated 12 October 1944, Valdemar Cavalcanti wrote about a collection of books about English cultural life translated into Portuguese by Brazilian intellectuals living in London, and available in bookshops at reasonable

prices. Cavalcanti highlighted the objective, concise and accurate nature of the collection, reiterating the objective of the translation of English books to allow their diffusion and not for “propaganda,” as the Americans had been doing. In an ironic tone, he said that the intention of the English was not to “win our admiration through adjectives and photographs.”³⁸

Antipathy towards the cultural projects which presented the Brazilian public with US books showed a concern with political manipulation. The suspicion of political propaganda underlying these exchanges was not well regarded by either US or Brazilian critics. Furthermore, due to the strong ties of the Brazilian intellectual elite with Europe, mainly Britain and France, cultural production coming from their neighbors was not legitimated. All of these impressions and opinions were collected and registered by the US publishers who visited Brazil in 1943.

THE IDEAS OF US PUBLISHERS

“The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations” is the title of a confidential report written in 1943, “made at the request and done under the Direction of the [US] Department of State” (p. III). The 108 page document is signed by George P. Brett Jr., president of Macmillan Company, Burr L. Chase, president of Silver, Burdett & Co., Robert F. de Graff, president of PocketBOOKS, Inc., Malcolm Johnson, executive vice-president of Doubleday, Doran and Co., and James S. Thompson, executive vice-president of McGraw-Hill Book Co. It was mimeographed by Book Publishers Bureau, Inc, The American Textbook Publishers Institute, New York.³⁹

38 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA, Box 1297. Memorandum (BD-4756) from the Brazilian Division to Francis Jamieson and Harry Frantz. 17 October 1944. Clipping attached: *Folha Carioca*, Rio de Janeiro. 12 October 1944.

39 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. RD, CCB-GR. LA. Box 1264. Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”.

The report presents the result of a six-month study about the publication, sale, and printing of books in Mexico, Panama, Columbia, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. Despite the limitation of time to complete the task, the group managed to obtain a large amount of information to assess the issue, not only for the special situation of war, but also considering a “long-range cultural program” (p. III). The success of the work was to some extent due to the local connections of the staff of the OCIAA regional divisions.

The document shows that the distribution of US books in Latin America was encountering some difficulties at that moment without any prospect of improvements in the future. The problems were related to shipping, credit, high prices at the place of origin and non-controlled prices in the destination countries, fluctuating exchange rates, unsuitable sales teams, confusions regarding import regulations and taxes, and the lack of interest of US publishers in the export of their products.

On the other hand, there was a large circulation of books from France, Spain, Germany, Italy, and Britain, despite the temporary commercial closure. The team which wrote the 1943 report found a strong French influence in medicine and culture and a German influence in pure and applied science, a tendency that had been found in 1939 by the sociologist Richards F. Behrendt.⁴⁰ All of this was the result of a well-organized European trade system which facilitated consignment sales, had an extended payment period, allowed merchandise to be returned through consulates, and offered low prices, classified by the 1943 report as “colonial prices”, mainly for books coming from Britain.⁴¹ A large number of commercial representatives of British publishers travelled continuously to South America distributing bibliographies for free, while there was also a representative of Publishers Association of Great

40 LC-MD. ACLS. Box B72. BEHRENDT, Richards F. Foreign influences in Latin America. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 204, n. 1, p.1-8, 1939.

41 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.10.

Britain based in Buenos Aires. His work consisted of “promoting new British titles throughout the continent, and that they have the active, intelligent and wholehearted support of the British Council.”⁴² French books translated and published in Brazil, Canada, or New York cost half or less than half the price of works coming from the US. Books translated into or written in Portuguese or Spanish were sold at 8 or 10 US cents, so that the report stated, “*we have little chance of increasing the dissemination of United States ideas via books.*”⁴³

Above all, it continued, the “*Latin-American reader has long considered American culture inferior to that of Europe*, that the reader is convinced that this deficiency exists in the fields of literature, the humanities and social sciences, and often suspects that it is so even of technical books.”⁴⁴ To resolve this problem, the section of the report entitled “General Responsibility” stated that publishers should make US literature and culture available in Latin American countries as the Europeans were doing. “*We must at all costs avoid giving the impression of trying to foist our culture on South America. But we should make it available even though it shows little financial return for a long time to come.*”⁴⁵

In relation to US books translated into Spanish or Portuguese, it was noted that they were sold without any regulations. Latin American publishers contacted an American publisher and tried to get the best royalties in advance, while translators were paid two or three hundred dollars. Publishers often divided the original text in three parts and distributed them among three different translators. After the translations

42 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.16-17.

43 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.10. Emphasis added.

44 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.18-19. Emphasis added.

45 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.22. Emphasis added.

were finished they put the different parts together without any editing and made them available for sale in the market. After the sale of the translation rights US publishers seemed not to accompany the process and did not assess the final product. In this operation, “many American books have been so badly translated that they have prejudiced the reader against American literature, and because they have not sold have discouraged the publisher from considering further titles.”⁴⁶ Refusing to accept the situation, the report stated that until that moment no initiative had been taken to present the life and culture of the United States positively, rather to the contrary, some books did this negatively. Indeed, the section closed with the following phrase: “*We do not suggest any form of censorship, but we do feel that some better showcase for our goods is immediately necessary.*”⁴⁷

Their greatest concern was the translation of technical books, in relation to which the team consisting of publishers, writers, literary agents, and educators raised six problems to be assessed: whether sworn translation should be obligatory for all genres, the high cost of technical translation in comparison with the translation of general subjects, quality control methods, equal profits for all including the author, translations into English, and the ideal contract for translation rights.⁴⁸ It can be perceived that the group of publishers was concerned with translation, which corroborates the efforts of the US consul Cecil Cross to improve translations, as seen in the previous section.

Investigating the publishing market from the commercial point of view, the executives observed:

46 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.27.

47 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.28. Emphasis added.

48 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit.

(i) an increase in the demand for technical US books due to the growth of students in undergraduate courses in engineering in Brazil. The temporary blockade of European trade provoked by the Second World War meant that Brazil had been importing books from the US, and according to a Brazilian book trader, US books were better than British as they were less conservative about new processes. There were also many US engineers working on projects spread through Latin America, funded by US agencies, who involuntarily disseminated the importance of technical books in their social groups, which would certainly impact the demand for technical books in the future;

(ii) books from the area of medicine imported from the US cost between two and four times as much as books coming from Europe, particularly France. Although doctors liked American technical books, the price was impeditive. Probably the market for US medical books would face risks after the commercial reopening with Europe;

(iii) the importance of school books and the possibility of the sale of American books to the Latin American market. The team presented a detailed report about the Latin American school system and perceived the nationalist aspect which permeated the choice of books. Obviously each country would protect its own interest and would not use school books which “indoctrinated future citizens in the national interest and way of life, and [they would be] jealous of the intrusion of philosophies inconsistent with, or antagonistic to, the ideas and philosophies deemed to be for the good of the nation;”⁴⁹

49 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.85.

(iv) the inclination of the Latin American public for more serious books — classics, biographies, history books, historic novels, etc.⁵⁰ Readers were aware of US best-sellers, despite a delay of a few months for translations to appear in the market. Different from the US public, who appreciated mysteries and detective novels, Latin American preferences were for romances and westerns (which had been the preference in the United States in previous decades). The publication of Overseas Editions lowered the cost of fiction in English, sold at US \$1.50, while in the US each book cost US \$2.50. Translations of these titles into Portuguese or Spanish were sold at eighty cents or a dollar. The public tended to choose a translation because of its intelligibility and price, opting for the cheapest version.⁵¹

To improve this type of trade the report suggested three lines of action. First, during the war, the reduced amount of paper for publications for export required immediate planning. The War Production Board had already announced that from 1 January 1944 there would be an unspecified reduction, but probably fifteen percent, added to a reduction of ten percent in 1942. It was suggested that the 1943 excess be allocated to publication for export to Latin America, distributing equal quotas among publishers, irrespective of titles to be published, “*since we conceive it to be dangerous to allow any element of censorship to enter, however remote.*”⁵² To conclude the report, it is mentioned that the proposals were to receive only an initial funding and they would gradually follow the market tendency, except for subsidized translation programs, which could be altered according to the political situation.⁵³

50 “The most serious book consumers’ basically refers to the local elites, since the level of illiteracy was high, at least in Brazil. Despite the National Plan for Education, created by the 1934 Constitution, the general level of illiteracy was approximately 56%. Regional rates indicated that the highest level of illiteracy was in the North and Northeast of the country.

51 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit.

52 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.106. Emphasis added.

53 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit.

Second, a short-term plan could be implemented through cultural institutions, sending them the lists of available titles and authors, export agencies, and literary supplements of newspapers. The same tactic could be used for Latin American titles by producing and sending catalogues to universities or other interested parties. In relation to local representation, the solution was for a central office to prepare catalogues of books published in the US, supervised by a cultural attaché with a knowledge of the books published in Latin America.⁵⁴ There was a large-scale project being prepared at that moment by the Book Publishers Bureau Inc. together with the Library of Congress and the State Department, which catalogued old, new, and specialized book bibliographies, but it was far from ideal. This list, according to the report, had to be supplemented with more wide-ranging bibliographic tools such as the Cumulative Index.⁵⁵

Third, as a long-term tactic, it was recommended that an industry of the Foreign Trade Act Corporation type be created, aimed at negotiations with Latin America in periods of war, and with a view to future expansions. “If the thesis is accepted that a higher percentage of export business is advisable for the stability of the industry in the future, and that *books of US origin must increasingly be used as conveyers of our ideals, our manner of life, and our technology*, we must eventually possess a tool to meet the needs of this situation.⁵⁶ The dilemma to be resolved in this case was that of the book representatives acting in the US or Latin America, since any industry like this would remove them from the market, undermining their already established business. At any rate a cooperative venture of this nature would need more studies.⁵⁷

54 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.103.

55 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.17.

56 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit., p.95. Emphasis added.

57 Report “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations”, op. cit.

In 1943, the OCIAA Education Division put into practice the third action, since it intermediated the *Assistance to the proposed United States International Book Association, Inc.* project, whose objective was to stimulate the export of books published in the United States. The justification of this project was that the majority of books circulating in Latin America came from European countries and not the United States. As a result, its neighbors conceived as models of leadership and culture the ideas coming from the Old World. Therefore, “[t]his project will make it possible to bring to the peoples of the other Americas the culture and ideology of this country as embodied in its literature, which will thus naturally influence a trend in those countries toward the intellectual and educational sources and methods of the US (emphasis added).”⁵⁸

ALA reports show that the cultural project involving books had already begun in 1938, when the Rockefeller Foundation provided US \$30,000 for cooperation between US and Latin American libraries.⁵⁹ The conclusion of one of the reports, signed by Rodolfo O. Rivera, the assistant executive, highlights that:

The librarians who have visited us will undoubtedly exercise a great deal of influence not only on their own libraries, but indirectly on the other libraries of the country and on the public as well. Indirectly, and because the public library is something very American, we are making friends for the United States. Moreover, *the influence of this country increases the more the Latin Americans come in contact with the library movement we are sponsoring. Indirectly also our influence will be felt in colleges and unviersties where a good library can do much for the type of instruction offered.* This movement will certainly influence the book trade, and the publishing business in general. Better books and book catalogs may be a result, and efforts at national bibliographies are already under way in Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro (emphasis added).

58 NARA II. RG229, OIAA. PA, 1942-1945. Letter Archives, Box 515.

59 UI. ALAA. RS 70/30/20, CLCLAR, 1921, 1938-1942, Box 1. Report to the Committee on Library Cooperation with Latin America. 1940.

It can thus be noted that the concern with divulging US ideology through cultural programs predates the commercial report about the role of books, but it served as a parameter for the regulation and support for the infrastructure which began to be constructed to combat the cultural influence coming principally from Germany and Italy through books. Although the budget for ‘intellectual’ exchange had been the lowest among all the cultural activities, OCIAA managed to mobilize a large part of Latin American elites. Journalists, writers, publishers, critics, professors, and artists came together in galleries, universities, museums, libraries, and associations around the Pan-American cause.

Deborah Cohn (2012) links two of Jarol Manheim’s concepts (1994, *apud* Cohn, 2012) about public diplomacy programs to show the effectiveness of the United States in this field: the first is ‘people-to-people’ contact, planned to defend government policies and portray the nation to a foreign public. The second, ‘government-to-people’ contact, refers to the efforts of the government to influence the public opinion or the elites of other countries to obtain external political advantages in the target nation. The practices used by US diplomacy during the Cold War, the period examined by Cohn, efficiently integrated the two types of contact. First, it disseminated US art as a form of expressing artistic liberty and to bring prestige to the nation, and second it approximated foreign artists and intellectuals, who functioned as vehicles to influence public opinion with their ideas (Cohn, 2012, p.27).

These experiences in the field of US government cultural diplomacy in the Second World War, implemented in the Americas under the Good Neighbor Policy, appear to have functioned as a type of incubator to inspire future plans for cultural diplomacy. OCIAA projects aimed at the seduction of Latin American intellectual and cultural elites covered the fine arts, literature, and music, since cinema and later television would seduce the masses.

FINAL REMARKS

The book exchange network, the “The Role of Books in Inter-American Relations” report, and the correspondence exchanged between OCIAA, ACLS, and ALA unveiled the games of power which propelled those responsible for US cultural policy, who were not only interested in the aesthetic function of art or the pedagogical function of technical and academic books. This intense venture of seducing Latin America, together with the victory of the Allies over the Axis in the Second World War, achieved even greater and more lasting objectives, since it came to change the behavior of the Latin American elite which increasingly distanced itself from Europe and grew closer to the US, seen as a model of economic supremacy to be copied. The cultural policy of war, appropriated as symbolic capital, projected US books ahead of expressions of the masses and the intellectual elite, ideologically molding and influencing Latin American cultural and education consumption behavior, despite the short effective period that OCIAA operated for (1941-1946). Moreover, it positioned the country at a level of economic and cultural supremacy among the nations of the Americas.

Despite the distrust and some negative criticisms of Brazilians about the intellectual and academic knowledge produced in the US, diagnosed by the group of publishers, OCIAA managed to bring together and build bridges between institutes, universities, and intellectuals in Brazil, which grew as injections of foreign capital continued to interest bureaucrats, even after the Second World War. This expansion guaranteed the Latin American market for US books which conquered a colossal space when compared to the pre-war period, but the same did not occur with Latin American books in the US. The result of the very successful intellectual exchange was of great importance in the diffusion of ideas and the translation of American technical, academic, and literary books into Portuguese and Spanish from that moment onwards.

After the construction of academic and cultural bridges, the continuation of subsidies was still of interest to the US government, to maintain good relations with Brazil. Following the disbanding of OCIAA in 1946, the State Department assumed responsibility for exchange through its embassy in Brazil. Despite the drastic reduction in the budget for this type of project, it was not advantageous for the United States to completely block the channels of ideological control. For this it also counted on connections between the interested parties to create a type of multiplier of print culture. With the strengthening of relations and the consequent increase in interest in Latin American books after the Second World War, academics, writers, and publishers signed contracts and opened other channels of exchange, without the direct intervention of a state cultural policy.

As communication vehicles modernized, more US best-sellers were adapted for the cinema and translated into Spanish and Portuguese, increasing the speed at which these products were made available in the market and became part of the daily lives of average Brazilians, stimulating a mimetic immersion in the universe of ideological values of the United States. As the years passed, as the common man became distracted with the glamour of Hollywood, confabulations were made in the dark backrooms of US diplomacy, in a conspiracy with the Brazilian elite, resulting in the overthrow of President João Goulart in 1964. In the following year the MEC-USAID Accord was signed for the reform of third level education in accordance with US patterns. The Good Neighbor international diplomacy, which took its first steps in the Department of Press and Propaganda and in the Ministry of Education and Health in the 1940s, guaranteed its more dominant insertion in the Ministry of Education and Culture in the 1960s, when its ideological influence, obviously led by the economy, gave the United States the status of a partnership apt to propose education reforms in the country, which had already fulfilled its role as a foot soldier in the Cold War playing board.

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