

Dancing with Elephants: International Cooperation in an Interdependent (But Unequal) World

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Abstract.

Cooperative collection development, already an emerging norm among North American libraries, shows signs of being extended to other regions as well. The general intensification of cooperative activities responds, on the positive side, to developments like computerized library catalogs that employ standardized formats, digital technologies, and broadening scholarly agendas. Less happily, it also reflects the constrained budgets and increasing costs that force libraries to share resources just to keep their heads above water.

Libraries and archives in other parts of the world would seem like natural partners in more inclusive cooperative endeavors. The broad general holdings available in our libraries could buttress often weak collections abroad, while scarce offshore imprints would benefit our own students and scholars. But such alliances have in the past often proved difficult to devise and implement, and then inconclusive in their results. This essay uses Latin American examples to explore some of the reasons, as well as to suggest a few rather modest points of departure. Two aspects merit special attention: the

North/South split between more and less developed countries; and the still uncertain prospects for cooperation based in electronic technologies instead of paper.

I. Introduction: Cooperation as Paradigm, Panacea, and Problem.

Cooperation among North American libraries has a checkered past. Every clear-cut success, for example the National Union Catalog or the Name Authority Cooperative Program (NACO), seems to be offset by an effort of at best ambiguous results, say the Farmington Plan or the Conspectus.¹ The rhetoric proclaiming a new library paradigm of cooperative collection development, of “access rather than ownership,” remains in the ascendant. Nonetheless, many of today’s most promising initiatives are still built more around bibliographic technology than library collections, and around newly-created joint ventures rather than the institutions already in place. It’s comforting to think that our latest effort has finally cracked the problem of collections cooperation, perhaps through improved bibliographic control and arrangements for interlibrary loan, or more carefully planned acquisitions programs, or even widespread digitization. But the historical record reveals a stutter-step process that deserves a more cautious approach.

The cooperative wheel of fortune has most recently brought forth the concept of “distributed collections.” The associated programs tend to be narrow in topical focus and modest in their commitments and goals, and to emphasize peripheral materials that are unlikely to generate heavy demand. The “distributed collections” component within the AAU/ARL Latin Americanist Research Resources Project, for instance, invites

participants to redirect seven percent of their Latin American monographs budget toward target areas that they choose themselves.² Priority cataloging is urged but not required, interlibrary loan commitments are limited to normal procedures within each institution, and even statistical expectations are tailored to local capabilities. The early results have been encouraging, not least for the project's energizing effect upon some bibliographers and institutions. Nonetheless, we're still a very long way from ensuring that all current Latin American publications of potential scholarly interest are readily available within the United States.

The ultimate success of the "distributed collections" model will depend upon participants from outside as well as within this country, since even the most comprehensive domestic program will leave many foreign imprints and other resources physically available only in their places of origin. Archival holdings are an obvious example, but a great many newspapers, pamphlets, and journals are likewise out of reach. Expanded cooperative programs might make these kinds of resources more accessible while benefiting overseas partners as well.

The calculus of cooperation seems so clear and compelling that implementation can appear only a matter of detail. International cooperation does suggest many fruitful combinations, but it is also substantially more complicated than we might wish to believe. Open recognition of the pitfalls and complexities should help us to construct realistic programs, and perhaps to avoid yet another cycle of hope (and hype) followed by disappointment.

This paper examines international cooperation using Latin America as an example. The region's cultural assumptions, institutional styles, and operational underpinnings are all quite different from our own, as are the resources available to its libraries and archives.³ A number of past efforts illustrate how these contrasts can play out in practice. Latin America is also in the awkward position of being a subordinate within what is proclaimed as the "new world order." On the other hand, many argue that historical and even current examples of how the North/South divide has affected libraries and library cooperation will lose their force in the face of electronic technologies. A careful look at all the ingredients of successful programs can broaden the perspective. The essay concludes with some more modest suggestions on how we might proceed.

II. Cross-Regional Perspectives on Libraries and Archives.

It's tempting to assume that institutions are essentially the same regardless of location. Libraries, archives, and universities, for instance, may vary because some are rich and others poor, or due to specific circumstances of structure or administration. But they all share the same purposes, interests, and goals, and these are what count. Our discussion begins with a closer look at Latin American institutions, in an exercise that may cast a different light on these comfortable assumptions.

A. The Iberian Documentary Heritage: Bureaucrats, Writers, and Words.

Spain built its colonial empire around bureaucrats and scribes. The mountains of documents generated during some three centuries of imperial rule have since been overlaid by even more paper from the republican period. The expediente, the administrative file constructed to chronicle a particular case, process, or problem, remains the basic building block of Latin American administration. The records are ubiquitous.

Latin America's written traditions are literary as well as bureaucratic. Printing presses were active well before 1600. In Mexico alone, more than ten thousand titles had been published by 1800.⁴ Publishing exploded following independence, early in the nineteenth century. Output rose still further when, later in the century, immigrants flooded into many countries. However, print communication, though comparatively prolific, was through much of this history confined to a tiny literate elite. Press runs were therefore small. Only late in the nineteenth century did the full range of institutions associated with a literate culture begin to take shape, albeit with notable variations from country to country.

The region's strong heritage of documents and printed works contrasts with enduringly inadequate mechanisms to collect, control, or preserve these materials. Libraries have remained weak or non-existent. Archival documents as well as printed resources tend to be scattered among many institutions, none with both the mandate and the means to ensure that all appropriate materials are collected and preserved. The environment within which we would work offers the paradox of a massive written heritage that is in many instances unorganized, inaccessible, or uncollected.

B. The Cultural Roots of Libraries and Archives.

Libraries and archives are created on the premise that there is a documentary stock worth gathering and organizing. Part of the underlying impulse may simply reflect the Western world's penchant for collecting and categorizing. Another element involves the means through which political entities define and assert themselves. Nations are validated, among other ways, when they maintain national archives and libraries, preferably in massive buildings that symbolize the strength, solidity, and stability of the state. These institutions affirm that there is a national culture—peoples, traditions, and history—sufficiently vital and coherent to warrant bringing its manifestations together within a monumental setting. Cults of culture, usually in its most erudite manifestations, may be part of the mix as well.

Many North Americans, while acknowledging these attributes of libraries and archives, would consider them no more than secondary features of institutions whose ends are really utilitarian—albeit in an exalted sort of way. Libraries exist to promote the informed citizenry which lies at the foundation of a functional democracy. Archives do the same, while also enabling efficient government and ensuring transparency in official transactions. Citizens are the customers and consumers, not such reified abstractions as “the nation” or “culture.”⁵

Latin American societies have been less insistent in regarding information as a public good, rather tending to treat it as a private commodity connoting prestige or power. Neither libraries nor archives are widely perceived as protagonists in campaigns to strengthen democracy or to consolidate good government. Nor has an activist constituency demanding this role yet emerged. To the contrary, some of Latin America's social theorists have been at the forefront of those questioning the utility of mass literacy and traditional schooling.⁶ Cross-cultural efforts involving libraries and archives may from the first be affected by very different perspectives on their meaning and value.

These contrasting views of cultural and social underpinnings may help explain why Latin American libraries and archives are so often few, small, and poor. The region's national and academic libraries would still seem like plausible partners for new cooperative programs. But when we look more closely, we even here find substantial differences from what our own models might lead us to expect.

C. Potential Partners and Their Cooperative Prospects.

Most of Latin America's national libraries occupy impressive structures in their country's capital city. The appearances can be misleading, since most are also hamstrung by small budgets that allow for little more than basic operations. Acquisitions, for instance, are normally quite limited. Local publications are in theory received through legal deposit, but the laws are weak and uncertainly enforced. Nonetheless, the strongest holdings for each country are generally found in its national library.

In the absence of adequate alternatives, many national libraries serve as reading rooms for secondary and university students.⁷ Latin America's national libraries are also enmeshed in politics. The top administrators are typically political appointees whose maximum tenure is fixed by the electoral cycle. Technical and support staff positions, while usually more secure, may also reflect patronage as well as competence. Programs and budgets are vulnerable to outside decisions. And only a few of these libraries enjoy both the authority and the ability to function as leaders in matters of library standards, national-level bibliographic control, training, or cooperation.

As a group, Latin America's national libraries seem problematic as long-term partners. What, then, of university and academic libraries, whose mandates are presumably similar to those of our own institutions? Here again the picture is mixed.

Public universities continue to dominate Latin American higher education in terms of student enrollments and library size. Only a few private universities have been around for more than a decade or two, though new institutions have more recently proliferated almost everywhere.⁸ Some of these younger universities are very good but, in the absence of either standards or mechanisms for accreditation, many have the look and feel of diploma mills. All too frequently, their "libraries" amount to a few shelves of books in a back room or closet.

Latin America's older public universities, with their longer histories and generally better-established libraries, are those with which collections cooperation would seem most promising. These universities, in accord with longstanding regional tradition, are generally "autonomous": each one establishes its own method of governance, follows its own policies and priorities, and enforces its own procedures.⁹ University authorities are chosen through elections in which students, employees, and faculty members normally have equal weight. Within the universities, those holding key administrative positions usually shift as the elected leaders change. Many public universities have virtually no funds for anything beyond faculty and staff salaries, plus an escalating burden of pensions. Admissions are open and fees are minimal, with even modest increases generating massive resistance. Mexico's flagship Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), for instance, recently attempted to raise tuition from about two cents to \$60 per term, triggering strikes and demonstrations that have finally led university officials to proclaim the payments entirely voluntary.¹⁰ Most faculty members work only part-time, combining their university positions with better-paying jobs. The sense of a scholarly community, as well as opportunities for contacts among all the members of that community, are correspondingly reduced.

Public universities are typically organized around "faculties" or schools, and perhaps special programs or institutes, each with its own library. In some cases the largest campus repository also functions as the central library for a university system. A scatter of completely autonomous units is equally common. Library budgets tend to be tiny, and acquisitions extremely limited. Recent holdings usually center on textbooks and similar

materials that are likely to evoke only limited interest among researchers from other locations. On the other hand, some of these libraries may have strong historic collections, including newspapers and pamphlets. When the older public universities were still new, in the nineteenth century, they often were ceded libraries like those of the Jesuits, that had been confiscated by the state. Donations and extensive purchases were likewise noteworthy in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when these then-elite institutions sought to lay the intellectual foundations for rapidly modernizing nations. While recent acquisitions have often slowed, the older holdings can be strong.

Bibliographic access is typically based on unit-specific card catalogs.¹¹ Most library automation relies on Micro-ISIS, a non-intuitive, non-MARC database management program, distributed gratis by UNESCO, that supports only a few library functions. This software, which encourages free-standing library catalogs in non-standard formats, has helped to foster an extremely fragmented bibliographic universe. Argentina's thirty-seven public universities, for instance, employ at least three mutually incompatible record formats in their Micro-ISIS catalogs, with additional local variations within each of these formats.

Most academic librarians only hold undergraduate degrees in library science. Staffs tend to be small, and libraries are often dumping grounds for employees who didn't work out somewhere else. Pay is low, and training opportunities are generally sparse. Public services have until recently centered on retrieving books from closed-stack collections,

and a great deal of professional staff energy is typically directed toward original local cataloging.

With adjustments to reflect their different institutional structures, and always with a few happy exceptions, municipal and museum libraries, archives, and corporate and church collections share many of these same characteristics.¹² Latin America's bureaucratic legacy includes numerous notarial and judicial archives, frequently maintained apart from repositories for the executive branch, and in the case of some notarial archives actually owned by the functionary or his heirs. Religious orders constructed many of the region's earliest libraries, and parish and cathedral holdings can be likewise substantial. Finally, the region boasts a number of first-rate private collections. All these repositories are likely to hold documents, local newspapers, and other scarce materials. All tend to be understaffed and underfunded. All add to the depth of the region's untapped research resources. Unfortunately, their very limited possibilities make most of them unlikely partners for cooperative endeavors.

An increasing number of independent research institutes and documentation centers, some attached to non-governmental organizations, may carry greater promise. Their collections tend to be strong but narrow, and the nature of the parent institution often encourages dynamic approaches in acquiring and organizing information. Unfortunately, these generally young agencies are still only peripheral players in the overall information environment.

D. Summing Up: The Institutional Prospects for Cooperation.

These characteristics of Latin America's archives and libraries carry a number of implications for international cooperation:

1. Many libraries and archives are subject both to the vagaries of electoral politics and to quick shifts in economic fortune. Continuity and long-term commitments may be problematic.
2. A preoccupation with identifying and then satisfying users' information needs is only gradually emerging. It remains quite common for answers to patrons' requests to begin and end in the local card catalog. Improved user services may not yet be perceived as the primary purpose even of internal adjustments, much less cooperative programs.
3. The region's librarians and archivists are committed to their professions, despite poor pay and sparse training opportunities. But the theoretical and technical knowledge required to implement successful new programs is often in short supply.
4. With scattered exceptions, bibliographic control is based on locally-created, non-standard records within systems using Micro-ISIS. Only a few bibliographic networks allow for shared records or resources. In most institutions, only a fraction

of the total holdings are represented by automated records. Cooperation and resource sharing are more difficult as a result.

5. The Latin American holdings of greatest potential interest to overseas partners are likely to center on local imprints and historic materials, especially newspapers and pamphlets. Yet rarity, in conjunction with spotty bibliographic control, preservation concerns, and local service priorities, may limit the accessibility of these resources even if cooperative agreements are in place.

III. Library Cooperation in Global and Historical Contexts: Looking Forward and Looking Back.

The preceding section has considered Latin American libraries and archives as they in (too) many cases are, or have been until recently. Two additional factors need to be addressed in order to understand all of the barriers to change. The first centers on the models and rhetoric of our “global” present; the second looks to the checkered past of international library efforts.

A. The New World Order as Attraction and as Threat.

The presumed common ground between research libraries in the North and the South may be both smaller and less solid than expected. We should be able to overcome most

of the logistical or technical obstacles. Other barriers, however, may prove more difficult to address.

North American academic libraries, despite our convictions of often uncertain and forever inadequate support, enjoy lavishly privileged positions relative to most of our developing-world counterparts. Acquisitions are strong, staffs are competent, our educational models favor active libraries, and our parent institutions are by and large both solvent and focused. Perhaps even more significant, North American librarians enjoy fairly easy access both to decision-makers and to one another: the environment is rich in contacts and connections. Our Latin American colleagues can easily feel envy or resentment.

Northern Hemisphere descriptions of Latin American (“Southern”) libraries and archives—the one offered just above is no exception—routinely focus on challenges, deficiencies, and limitations. The olympian detachment that so easily pervades these remarks will always be grating. An awareness of rank carries into the cooperative arena as well: permanently junior partners may be less enthusiastic about their status than their more privileged peers. The relative positioning of each player may also provide deeper grounds for doubt, since the benefits promised by cooperative programs are often most readily reaped by the stronger institutions. It should come as no surprise when potential partners balk at the prospect of unequal cooperative relationships.¹³ When dancing with an elephant, the elephant usually leads. Some will forego the pleasure.

The broader world context suggests patterns of domination and dependence that can also impinge upon conversations concerning cooperation. Triumphant assertions of “the end of history” proclaim a new global era in which a common experience of (Northern- and Western-led) economic integration and transformation will usher in universal democracy and prosperity.¹⁴ Despite a few dissenting voices, neoliberal economics and a globalized marketplace are the order of the day. Even the grassroots empowerment sometimes associated with the Internet and other new technologies has thus far been conceived along lines native to the North.

This vision may seem unduly pessimistic, and the associated rhetoric overwrought as well as ungrateful. But many observers fear for fading national and local identities as, say, rock music and Hollywood movies crowd out local products, or as shopping malls and chain stores become ever more ubiquitous.¹⁵ At the other extreme, religious and ethnic essentialism, or the rampant crime and extreme insecurity typical of many parts of the world, can suggest an emerging schism between “orderly” world regions characterized by liberalism and growth, and less favored zones doomed to Hobbesian anarchy. Either way, even self-determining institutions in peripheral regions are left with only limited freedom of action.

Several international agencies are exploring these issues within the context of their own development theories and programs.¹⁶ Such analysis, in and of itself, helps to validate the concerns. The concept of “sustainable development” may provide the most promising focus for measures in support of cultural identities and historical patrimonies.

The rhetoric of administrative transparency, government efficiency, and “civil society” likewise encourages attention to all manner of official records. Skeptics, of course, may argue that the whole debate demonstrates yet again the desire to distill diversity into a single array of models, programs, and procedures that can be managed from without.

The increasingly insistent availability of international training, support, and products reflects genuine concern for Latin America’s libraries and archives. Here again, it’s easy to also deduce more interested motives. Functional bibliographic networks, for instance, require common formats and standards. Yet a library that decides to adopt the MARC format for bibliographic control, or that embraces microfilming procedures requiring multiple generations of high-quality film, will in the next instant confront the need for very expensive equipment and supplies. Automated library systems, computers, planetary cameras, silver halide film, conservation materials, and so on, are products that by and large come from the North. The “technical” elements required for full-fledged cooperation can be cumbersome and costly.

B. History and Its Weight.

Today’s terms of international interchange are often uneasy. The lessons of history can reinforce our would-be partners’ cooperative misgivings. A quick review of but three examples of international activity, all within the broad area of preservation reformatting

and each reflecting a different model for connecting with local institutions, may help illustrate the problems.

Around 1940, the Rockefeller Foundation funded a microfilming project whereby the John Carter Brown Library sent a cameraman to South America in order to strengthen U.S. holdings of colonial publications. The effort, which continued over several years, settled on the National Library of Chile's extraordinary José Toribio Medina Collection. The microfilm masters and copies alike, however, remained in the United States, with nothing to show for the project within Chile itself. The original effort was entirely extractive.¹⁷

About fifteen years later, in the 1950s, UNESCO began a short-lived project to microfilm and thereby rescue endangered archival holdings in Central America and the Caribbean. A mobile camera was dispatched to the region, and this time copies of the film were deposited onsite. In the absence of continuing support, however, almost all of the films eventually became lost or unusable. The effort brought few lasting results, even though host country needs were in this case paramount.

The Latin American Microform Project, LAMP, is a consortium, formed in the 1970s, that now includes about forty Latin Americanist collections from North America. LAMP deploys its pooled annual dues and occasional external funds for microfilming projects that focus on scarce or endangered research materials. Some LAMP projects are based within the United States, but most are sited in Latin America. Standard practice calls for

LAMP to cover most or all of the filming costs, and to deposit both negative and positive copies of the film with the host institution. Whenever possible, filming is carried out using local laboratories and firms, in a deliberate effort to strengthen the region's technical capacity as well as minimize costs.

LAMP's copies of the film are managed and maintained through The Center for Research Libraries. The reels destined for Latin American hosts, however, face less certain fates. Climate-controlled storage vaults are almost unknown, and procedures for microfilm storage and use tend to be ad hoc. A good bit of the film has deteriorated, disappeared, or been damaged. Microfilm otherwise donated to or purchased by Latin American libraries and archives has frequently been (mis)treated the same.¹⁸

These internationally sponsored reformatting projects are characterized by ever-greater mutuality. The same tendency would hold for most other kinds of cross-regional endeavor. But the results remain uneven, in large part due to the generally limited institutional and infrastructural depth of the Latin American partners. Successful reformatting projects require not only a high-quality product, but also a broader environment that encompasses appropriate buildings and equipment, trained staff, capable management, internalized technical standards, and ongoing support. Such contexts for success depend on knowledge, persistence, and a good bit of cash.

From the Latin American perspective, these examples suggest several conclusions:

1. Local institutions need to ensure equitable arrangements and appropriate follow-up support when they engage in cooperative endeavors.

2. International norms and standards should be scrutinized with care. Compliance with one standard often invokes a cascade of complementary commitments, and a failure at any point can compromise the entire endeavor. Within the reformatting realm, for instance, specialists confidently assert preservation microfilm's half-millennial life span. But repeated local experience demonstrates that Latin American microfilm lasts for only a fraction of this term, usually due to inadequate provisions for storage or inappropriate policies for use: the promised "permanence" is an illusion.¹⁹

Uninformed adherence to international standards can be expensive, unsuccessful, and profoundly counterproductive.

3. The resources and experience needed to carry out projects that meet established standards and are thus technically correct can seem entirely out of reach. More flexible and economical approaches might bring greater success. The necessary adaptations, loosely categorized as "appropriate technology," are peripheral to Northern agendas. Yet modified models often require development and testing capabilities beyond those available in the South.²⁰ Makeshift solutions and mutual frustration are frequent results.

IV. New Forces for Change.

The dispiriting panorama described so far is one of often inert or impoverished institutions, sited within an uncertain international context, whose perceptions are shaped by a mixed historical record. Are the prospects for fruitful cooperation as limited as this analysis might suggest? Changes in at least four interrelated areas offer some grounds for hope. First, Latin America's institutions are evolving, bringing new agendas and expectations to the fore. Second, changing models of research and teaching reinforce these trends. Furthermore, new players, external as well as internal, are extending the potential depth of both cooperative programs and local capabilities. Finally, new technologies may allow fundamentally different kinds of approaches. We now turn to each of these topics.

A. Institutions, Their Agendas and Expectations.

The image of hidebound and insistently irrelevant Latin American libraries, archives, and universities is beginning to change.²¹ Some of the shifts may facilitate cooperation. Redemocratization, which in most countries dates from the 1980s, has encouraged a broad movement toward responsiveness and efficiency. Neoliberal economic doctrines, in conjunction with precarious economic situations, have provoked lean budgets that mandate effective programs and visible results. Private universities are now competing with public institutions for students and resources. International funding agencies are also ever more aware of the role of education in development. Change is slow and often bumpy, but the public institutions that are responsible for many of the region's libraries and archives are becoming more open to new possibilities.

B. Models of Scholarship.

Traditional scholarship in the humanities and social sciences privileged great books, great men, and nation-states. Academic inquiry was organized in terms of discrete disciplines, each with its own research methodologies and preferred information sources. The written word enjoyed pride of place. These approaches have for some decades been in flux. Research agendas now favor topics like popular culture, social history, regional studies, and nuanced examinations of “subaltern” and “post-colonial” actors. Multidisciplinary perspectives are increasingly common. Film, radio, television, and digital media have expanded the array of source materials. The new models have intensified the demand for all-inclusive information services. These trends, worldwide in scope, affect both Latin American academics and the outside scholars who work within the region.

Latin America’s instructional models are also changing, albeit at a perhaps slower pace. Lecture-based teaching and rote learning are giving way to more active approaches. Students are also increasingly expected to confront original sources in their studies. The eventual consequences for libraries and archives will be profound.

Finally, many Latin American universities are stimulating scholarship through new incentives, expanded publishing opportunities, and more rigorous criteria for appointment

and promotion. The results once again include intensified demands for strong libraries, archives, and information services.

C. New Players, Outside and In.

Changes in institutional expectations and the evolving modalities of scholarship and instruction, while they mandate a library response, are all rather abstract. The impetus for change is manifested more concretely through specific individuals, organizations, and agencies. These players, internal and external, old and new, are crucial to the shifts now underway.

More and more Latin Americans are traveling abroad for basic studies or supplemental training, or to attend international seminars and conferences. More and more students and professionals from the North are spending time in the region. Increasing numbers of Latin American corporations, official agencies, and non-governmental organizations rely on sophisticated information capabilities. And the Internet provides immediate access to a host of information products, including library guides and catalogs. The contrast between what is and what could be, and direct exposure to alternate models for operations and services, are raising expectations throughout the region.

Some library organizations and institutions have moved ahead on their own. Venezuela, Chile, and Brazil, for instance, all boast (sometimes shaky) bibliographic networks. National organizations of librarians and archivists, while often preoccupied

with matters of credentials and pay, can also accomplish a great deal. Argentina's ABGRA (Asociación de Bibliotecarios Graduados de la República Argentina), for instance, routinely hosts conferences that include several days of presentations by local and foreign specialists during the Buenos Aires book fair. These and many other examples demonstrate the dynamism within Latin America's library and archival communities. The pressure for change is not solely coming from without.

A number of foreign agencies are engaged in bilateral programs. Cooperation is often an explicit goal as these entities strive to leverage limited resources for the greatest possible impact. One of the most effective North American organizations is the Commission on Preservation and Access, now folded into the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR). The Commission has provided technical as well as financial support for efforts like the Latin American Register of Microform Masters, and has also sponsored preservation training and translation programs in Brazil, Chile, and Venezuela. The Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) has offered seminars and workshops for Cuban professionals, and is poised to add new countries as well. Organizations as diverse as the (U.S.) Library of Congress Field Office in Rio de Janeiro and OCLC have involved themselves in MARC training courses in Brazil and Argentina. The Association of American Universities/Association of Research Libraries "Latin Americanist Research Resources Project" is on the verge of a grant-funded experiment to test its distributed resources model with a few Latin American partners.²² And the Latin American Microform Project has conducted microfilming projects with Latin American institutions throughout its twenty-five years of existence.

Some of these agencies have used their own resources to fund international activities. Since money is always in short supply, foundations and other funding agencies have played a critical role as well. The strategic investments of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation have been particularly important. Direct foundation grants have supported a number of projects for library automation and retrospective conversion, as well as other efforts to adapt information technology to the region's needs.²³ Mellon has also supported training programs and internships, often by means of grants channeled through agencies like CLIR or NEDCC. And the Foundation has funded the "Program for Latin American Libraries and Archives," a Harvard-based re-granting initiative that finances competitive small projects to preserve or improve access to research materials in Latin American repositories.²⁴ By its termination date, in 2003, PLALA will have awarded about \$1,000,000 through awards averaging between \$5,000 and \$10,000 apiece.

Bilateral efforts are by no means limited to the United States. Spain's Fundación Histórica Tavera, for instance, has conducted evaluations of Latin American archives, offered occasional small grants, and spearheaded campaigns to mobilize more inclusive programs of support. Spain's "Agencia de Cooperación Internacional" intends to expand its activities. Foreign aid programs based in other parts of Europe and Japan, as well as Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), have also provided support for Latin American repositories. Finally, some Latin American foundations have funded occasional library projects. The national foundations associated with the Liechtenstein-based Lampadia Foundation (Antorchas in Argentina, VITAE in Brazil,

Andes in Chile) have been especially noteworthy for the consistency, strategic purpose, and magnitude of their support.

All the agencies mentioned so far are either philanthropic organizations or non-profit entities. Commercial firms, and agencies that charge to recover their costs, are important as well. OCLC, a non-profit, fee-based service provider, has executed several catalog conversion projects, and is also recruiting Latin American library customers. Systems vendors, equipment suppliers, booksellers both local and foreign, and microfilming firms are likewise expanding their client bases. The products and services offered by these organizations usually conform to international standards, so that each sale expands the regional roster of fully contemporary installations. Commercial firms looking for business can seem like awkward bedfellows to those whose financially disinterested objectives center on improved operations and expanded cooperation. The resonance is nonetheless clear.

International organizations, both young and old, are also playing a role. Latin America's relatively new Association of Ibero-American National Libraries, ABINIA, may evolve into a forum through which the region's national libraries can become more assertive and professional.²⁵ The fledgling "Red de Archivos Diplomáticos Iberoamericanos," Ibero-American Network of Diplomatic Archives, hopes to foster cooperation and common programs among the region's foreign ministries.

More venerable international agencies with a regional presence include IFLA, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. UNESCO, aside from promoting Micro-ISIS bibliographic software, is spearheading the “Memory of the World” program in an effort to rescue endangered documentary heritages. The World Bank has become increasingly interested in the full range of its members’ cultural patrimonies, and has sponsored several meetings of potential donor organizations to develop assistance strategies for Latin American libraries and archives. The Bank, after commissioning the four archival assessment surveys carried out by the Fundación Histórica Tavera in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico, has likewise sponsored intensive planning workshops within each country. The Organization of American States shares many of the same interests.²⁶ Some of these agencies are also involved in overlapping efforts to improve Latin America’s educational systems through programs that encompass information technology and library services. Other initiatives would strengthen Latin America’s contemporary archives and records management programs to the end of transparency and good government.

Libraries and archives deserve pride of place in our discussions of change. But many other individuals, organizations, and agencies are crucial as well. Our long list has only begun to suggest the depth and diversity of the actors, all of whom have roles to play in promoting change and cooperation.

D. Technology and Transformation.

A final impetus for change centers on new technologies for information and communication. Several aspects merit note, starting with the Internet as a communications tool. Expensive and inefficient telephone services, unreliable post offices, and difficult transportation systems have in the past posed daunting obstacles to even the most straightforward exchanges. With the Internet, more and more Latin American librarians and archivists can for the first time participate in a larger world. At the simplest level, e-mail communications provide some of the contacts and connectivity that have long benefited professionals and institutions in the North.

The Internet conveys information as well as enabling communications. Library guides, automated segments of catalogs, information on standards and procedures, and basic statistics are all available online. The flip side of the coin is the capacity to provide institutional information to the world off-site. For some dispersed institutions, coordinated Web pages have allowed even more. The Universidad de Chile, for instance, is a huge, decentralized institution that has generated a newfound sense of cohesion (and also hammered out some common policies) by establishing a centrally managed Web presence. The University's site combines information from a host of its units, including almost all of its previously isolated libraries and documentation centers.²⁷ Thanks to the Internet, the University can now project itself in a way that may eventually affect its substance as well as its image.

Finally, digital technologies can facilitate access to bibliographic and substantive information., The World-Wide Web is dotted with online library catalogs and archival

finding aids. Projects to provide scholarly “content” can be even more evocative. A Mellon-funded digitizing project by the Latin American Microform Project, for instance, has produced page images of hundreds of scarce, printed Brazilian documents from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to the resounding gratitude of researchers in both Brazil and the United States.²⁸ Many similar examples reveal how digital products can overcome the obstacles of distance, scarcity, fragility, and dispersion.

Additional digital initiatives might have still broader impacts. The “American Memory” effort centered at the Library of Congress, for example, is pitched to an audience that includes both schoolchildren and the general populace. Similar programs in Latin America might mobilize new constituencies of users and generate new sources of funds, while highlighting both the strengths and the needs of libraries and archives. The success of such projects, of course, is partially dependent on broad-based Internet penetration and connectivity—both less advanced in Latin America than in the United States.

Latin American libraries, universities, and research institutes are beginning to adapt or to subscribe to journal-based document delivery services. These can provide ready, albeit still only partial, solutions to the problems of incomplete serial collections, poor bibliographic access, and difficult interlibrary loan. Latin American agencies may eventually apply similar models to resources created within the region itself. As in the North, some of the copyright implications are still not clear.

All these forces for change suggest an optimistic outlook for Latin America's libraries and archives. These same elements, however, encompass only some of the preconditions for successful cooperation. The next section focuses more specifically on the needs that have not yet been resolved.

V. Current Changes and the Conditions for Cooperation: A Narrowing Gap?

Institutional transformation, new models for scholarship, and the emergence of new actors are creating a broadly positive environment for improved library services. Electronic technologies that exploit the fluidity of digital information may facilitate new kinds of connections. Programs for collections cooperation require organized holdings, readily accessible bibliographic information, clear arrangements for interlibrary loan, and efficient mechanisms for document delivery. As we think about international cooperation, we need to examine all of these requisites in terms of how they will be affected by new technologies and by our other forces for change.

A. Organized Collections. Organized holdings distinguish libraries and archives from warehouses that merely stockpile papers and books. Almost all repositories, whatever their size or location, contain pockets of unprocessed materials. Projects to organize local holdings are usually decided within institutions, on a case-by-case basis. Broader efforts might select categories of materials or types of institutions (ecclesiastical archives, for instance) that particularly deserve attention. Nonetheless, when we think of collections cooperation, our normal starting point is repositories whose holdings have

already been described. Our universe consists of libraries and archives that deserve their designation.

B. Shared Bibliographic Access. Broad-based resource sharing became possible with the advent of union catalogs, which in turn required organized local collections and common approaches to bibliographic control. The Library of Congress played a central role in standardizing North American cataloging through its card distribution service, which provided high quality catalog cards at minimal cost. The MARC format, whose development again owed much to the Library of Congress, has since become an international norm in the online environment. However, few Latin American libraries use MARC. The region's card catalogs need to be converted to MARC files, its nonstandard automated records need to be upgraded, and all the resulting electronic records need to be amalgamated into union catalogs. The process will be slow and costly.

C. Cooperative Concepts and Interlibrary Loan. The MARC format enables shared bibliographic records, one of the preconditions for collections cooperation. Sharing the books themselves is another matter. A functional, though pedestrian system for interlibrary loan is solidly in place among North American repositories. However, our mechanisms for interlibrary loan are based on undifferentiated access to one another's library holdings, pretty much regardless of subject. Most collections cooperation, by contrast, is built around precise assignments of collecting responsibilities. Librarians

here at home face two main challenges as they confront this disjuncture. The characteristics of international loan transactions add some other twists as well.

The first challenge follows directly from the consortial economics and obligations that underlie most arrangements for interlibrary loan. One library within a cooperative collecting program may focus its acquisitions on a particular category of materials. Separately constructed pacts for resource sharing, however, may mean that interlibrary loan requests for those same materials in the first instance flow toward other holding institutions. Agreements for distributed collections often assume roughly equitable interlibrary loan traffic, but a balance may be difficult to achieve.

The second challenge is at once more subtle and more profound. The distributed collections model seeks to make available the broadest possible range of materials. However, contrasts between areas of cooperative collecting specialization and the varying scale of participants' acquisitions can generate cross-cutting effects. Specialist bibliographers have engineered most of these programs, which have to date arisen within limited fields like Latin American studies. Within these contexts, large libraries may from the first collect more heavily in some specific areas than the smaller repositories that claim them as a cooperative responsibility. On the other hand, almost all research libraries can point to some areas of truly exceptional collections strength—but these areas may fall outside of cooperative programs that are narrow in scope. Our cooperative results, as reflected in actual movements of material, might be more convincing if they

encompassed the full range of our collections. We don't yet really know how to join diverse institutions in topically limited programs for distributed collections.

The architects of cooperative collecting programs in fields associated with global and area studies are beginning to recruit international partners. The same issues of resolving inconsistencies between cooperative collecting pacts and interlibrary loan priorities, and of combining libraries of different sizes and collection strengths, will again come into play. There are other challenges as well. Most Latin American libraries lack access to the online bibliographic databases, like OCLC, that would permit them to precisely direct their loan requests. The diffuse organizational structure typical of many of the region's academic library systems presents another complication. A Latin American engineering or chemistry library, for example, will probably request materials pertinent to its field, but is unlikely to hold items sought by its "developed world" counterparts. Those materials are more likely to be held by libraries which correspond to (and are funded by) other university units. Successful programs will have to address internal as well as international balances between "net borrowers" and "net lenders."

The conceptual clarification that would harmoniously link interlibrary loan procedures with arrangements for collections cooperation has not yet taken place. The specific mechanisms to promote direct exchanges with Latin America are absent as well. Broad changes in the library environment will encourage progress on both fronts, though the leap from general models to concrete agreements will always be a challenge.

D. Delivery Mechanisms. Uncertain and expensive postal services have to date dampened interest in large-scale interlibrary loan both within Latin America and between Latin America and other parts of the world. Courier services offer speedy and secure alternatives, but at prices that are prohibitive for all but the most urgent requests. When many Latin American libraries have to stockpile their exchange materials for want of postage, finding the funds for interlibrary loan is a daunting challenge. Moving hardcopy materials remains very difficult.

Digital technologies could make a substantial difference. Specific requests for materials of limited length could be fulfilled with Ariel or similar software that relies on scanning and facsimile transmissions. A number of local and international experiments, generally combining indexing services with document delivery, are already underway. Digital solutions appear less likely for more substantial items, or as a means to provide comprehensive access to Latin America's huge holdings of retrospective materials. Effective large-scale programs would need to produce durable, high quality digital files, as opposed to the merely serviceable use copies associated with demand-driven arrangements.²⁹ The technical requirements and the costs would both be high.

In the absence of across-the-board digitizing projects, reformatting must focus on narrow categories or individual items. Selection is therefore crucial. A mechanism that tracked interlibrary loan requests, for example, could enable those sources enjoying the highest interest to become priority candidates for digitization. Such targeted digitization, combined with on-demand scanning for journal articles and other short pieces, could

significantly facilitate collections cooperation. Most materials would nonetheless remain in their original state. How this approach could be applied to current imprints, which are protected by copyright, remains uncertain.

Latin Americans have always been alive to the possibilities of “skipping stages” in their quest for development. Economic development and technological change in the more advanced economies have often been painfully disruptive. Since many of the intermediate phases have by now been superseded, it makes good sense for developmental newcomers to leapfrog directly to the most current alternatives. Digital technology is in this sense immensely appealing. Yet on its own terms, and also in the broader context of the conditions for cooperation, the digital impact on collections cooperation is not yet clear.

Conclusion.

North American libraries are edging toward a collections model in which “access” would replace “ownership” as the most telling marker of success. Distributed collections are taking root within a broader context of organized local holdings, online union catalogs, clearcut procedures for interlibrary loan, and efficient delivery mechanisms. This essay has considered international collections cooperation in light of these same elements, with unsettling results. Our plans for the future will need to combine what is theoretically possible with hardheaded analysis and occasional leaps of faith.

Cooperative efforts only work when all the participants satisfy their own needs as well as contributing to common goals. Our bumper stickers enjoin us to “Think globally, act locally,” but the more precise cooperative challenge is to think at once locally and globally, and to act on both planes as well.

One starting point is to understand fully the contexts for our efforts. Latin American libraries and archives have arisen in environments distinct from our own, and they reflect different conceptual frameworks. They also follow their own organizational and operating models. But libraries and archives are by no means the only players in the cooperative programs we would devise. Parent institutions, external agencies, and funding sources are crucial as well. So are bibliographic utilities, systems vendors, booksellers, library consortia, and standards organizations. And individuals—those within all these bodies and also the emerging group of those looking at cooperation and change from other perspectives—are always critical. The mutuality we seek requires a conversation among all these players.

This framework suggests several areas for action:

1. Collections cooperation is based on organized collections, union catalogs, procedures for sharing needed items, and delivery mechanisms. Many Latin American librarians and archivists remain unaware of both international standards and “best practices.” They often are likewise unfamiliar with the products and services—integrated library systems, bibliographic utilities, and the like—that build upon these standards.

Training programs, workshops, and fellowships for formal study can all foster a fuller sense of the possible. Partnerships, strategic programs of targeted support, and model or demonstration projects can be effective as well.

Providing information about norms, standards, and products need not be a one-way street. Scientific and technical support in adapting international standards to Latin American circumstances could have practical as well as psychological effect. To cite but one somewhat peripheral example, the Getty Conservation Institute has joined with several Brazilian institutions to explore new approaches to museum environments in that country's "hot and humid" Northeast. Developed-world solutions rely on prohibitively expensive climate control systems, yet local experience shows how far simpler measures might accomplish almost as much. Similar efforts might generate new alternatives in areas that are problematic for libraries and archives, including storage environments but perhaps also matters like automated bibliographic control.³⁰

2. Educational programs are necessary for librarians and archivists, but they could help others as well. Administrators, academics, civic leaders, and politicians might benefit from sessions on the emerging role of information in sustainable development and civil society, what fully functional libraries and archives have to offer, and criteria with which to evaluate information services. These kinds of programs could reinforce the emerging pressures for change while also providing a solid basis for expectations and plans.

3. Most discussions of North-South library cooperation, including our own, draw heavily upon the accumulated lore of the past fifty years. Circumstances are changing, and it's time to devise new experiments and develop new perspectives. These efforts should focus on institutions, but perhaps even more on those individuals whose energy, vision, and ability make them the most likely protagonists of change.

4. North American librarians and archivists, like their Latin American counterparts, devote most of their energies to their home institutions. The complexities of cooperation have, in the United States, also generated a small group of analysts and administrators who concern themselves with cooperative programs per se. The best of these individuals are familiar with technologies, procedures, institutions, and key individuals—and can conjure up resources to boot. Specialists in North/South cooperation could similarly strengthen the prospects for international programs. Those most visible to date have been associated with cross-national training programs and international funding agencies. Other skills, and other institutional backgrounds, may become more important in the future.

5. Electronic communications and digital technologies may offer new cooperative alternatives, particularly for document delivery. The possibilities need to be clarified and then tested through training programs, model installations, demonstration projects, and careful studies of costs, performance, and legal constraints. The

conundrum of cost-effective document delivery within the context of collections cooperation likewise requires attention.

Latin America has an enduring written heritage, and the region by and large is still embedded in a print culture. Our concerns with cooperative collection development are therefore based on a format that some think is doomed to disappear before the digital onslaught. Moreover, effective cooperative programs will require electronic technologies in order to succeed. Nonetheless, both the forces affecting the region's information services and the requirements for successful collaboration go well beyond technological change. The array of actors is also far larger than many might expect. International cooperation is as complicated as it is essential.

When we propose collections cooperation, we are inviting our Latin American partners to dance with elephants. By focusing on print resources, we may be suggesting a dinosaurs' duet. The many additional players to consider reveal both a crowded dance card and an overloaded dance floor. And the band that will get us moving is fully electronic. The images are thoroughly incongruous, which may be why the prospects are so inviting.

Notes:

¹ For the Farmington Plan, see Edwin E. Williams, "Farmington Plan," in *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* (1972) v. 8, p. 361-368; also Edwin E. Williams, *Farmington Plan Handbook: Revised to 1961 and Abridged* (n.p.: Association of Research Libraries, 1961). The Farmington Plan and the Latin American Cooperative Acquisitions Program are both treated in Robert K. Johnson, ed., "The Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials in ARL Libraries: A Report to the ARL Foreign Acquisition Committee from the Latin American Farmington Plan Subcommittee," *Foreign Acquisition*

Newsletter no. 36 (Fall, 1972), p. 1-15; continued in no. 37 (Spring, 1973), p. 8-17. Also see Hendrik Edelman, "The Death of the Farmington Plan," *Library Journal* 98 (April 15, 1973), p. 1251-1253.

For the Conspectus, see (for instance) the three papers in the section entitled "The Conspectus Ten Years On: Achievements and Future Prospects," in *Latin American Studies into the Twenty-First Century: New Focus, New Formats, New Challenges. Papers of the Thirty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials, June 1-6, 1991* (Albuquerque, NM: SALALM Secretariat, 1993), p. 235-264.

² See Dan Hazen, "Current Issues: The Latin Americanist Research Resources Project: A New Direction for Monographic Cooperation?" *ARL: A Bimonthly Newsletter of Research Library Issues and Actions* no. 191 (April, 1997), p. 1-6.

³ Latin America's features are also different from those of other world areas. Some phenomena may be common to many regions, but the variations are both marked and crucial.

⁴ The classic bibliographies on early Mexican publishing are the separate compilations covering Mexico City, Puebla, Guadalajara, Veracruz, and Oaxaca that were prepared in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by Chilean bibliophile José Toribio Medina. Recent updates have been prepared under the auspices of the Instituto de Investigaciones Bibliográficas of Mexico's Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. The Medina volumes alone document about 10,900 titles published through the year 1800.

⁵ A North American rhetoric of reification would emphasize terms like the "information economy" or the "knowledge society."

⁶ Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971). Paulo Freire, taking another tack, argues that education should serve as a vehicle for the consciousness-raising that will generate social change.

⁷ Some national libraries find this less troubling than others. In Argentina, for instance, full reading rooms are perceived as a sign of success. In Chile, the student-led crush is felt to divert scarce resources from the library's "patrimonial" responsibilities.

⁸ Many of the older Catholic universities, in particular, rank among the region's best.

⁹ The specific case of Argentina's Universidad de Buenos Aires is described in Philip G. Altbach, "Survival of the Fittest: The University of Buenos Aires – A Model for the Future?" in *Change* v. 31, no. 3 (May/June 1999), p. 47-48.

¹⁰ The *Chronicle of Higher Education* has covered the story in its weekly print issues dated Feb. 26, March 19, March 26, May 7, May 21, July 23, and July 30, 1999 (all in the "International" section); and in its daily online report for August 18, 1999. As of late August, the strike was still going strong.

¹¹ Among Argentina's public universities, for instance, only about twenty percent of all holdings are currently represented with automated records. This and other Argentine figures were gathered in a survey whose results are included in Argentina, Sistema de Información Universitaria, *Módulo de Bibliotecas. Proyecto: Base de datos Unificada (BDU)* (unpublished project proposal, 1999), especially Appendix V, "Resumen del resultado de encuestas." See also E. Barber, N. Tripaldi, S. Pisano, V. Werner, "La automatización de las bibliotecas universitarias argentinas: Proyectos y perfiles de implementación" (typescript, ca. 1998).

¹² The Fundación Histórica Tavera circulated preliminary draft reports on archives in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico in the spring of 1999. These reports, commissioned by the World Bank, were the focus of subsequent planning workshops in each country.

¹³ The ongoing debate concerning the motives and consequences of foreign assistance programs crystallizes much of the argument. For one insider's recent overview see Linn Hammergren, "Review Essay: The Development Wars: Analyzing Foreign Assistance and Policy," *Latin American Research Review* v. 34, no. 2 (1999), p. 179-197. The debate over benefits in situations of inequality cuts both ways, with "senior partners" often concerned that they'll be tapped for an unreasonable share of the total costs.

¹⁴ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

¹⁵ Néstor García Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995) is among the works offering a more nuanced (and optimistic) view.

¹⁶ See, for example, Organization of American States, Inter-American Council for Integral Development, "Programa Interamericano de Cultura" (typescript, ca. 1997). The World Bank, among other agencies, is chewing through various internal working documents to refine its understanding and approach. See, for instance, "WBI Partnership Learning Program on Records and Archives Management in Development" (typescript "Draft Proposal [06/28/99b].") The Bank, in particular, is constrained to devise an economic argument in favor of cultural programs. The same theme prompted a late 1998 meeting at the Getty Center. See "Meeting on the Economics of Cultural Heritage," *Conservation: The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter* v. 14, no. 1 (1999), p. 21-22. For a final example, see Jef Malliet, "Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development: How Are They Connected," *ICCROM Newsletter* no. 24 (September, 1998), p. 10-13. (ICCROM is the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, headquartered in Rome.)

¹⁷ This lapse has recently been rectified, thanks to follow-up funding from the Rockefeller Foundation.

¹⁸ This phenomenon is certainly not unique to Latin America. A study of microfilm prepared in Indonesia, for the most part with Ford Foundation support, found that the overwhelming majority of the reels left in the country have suffered severe deterioration for want of proper storage and care. The microfilm prepared as a "permanent" replacement for extremely fragile originals has become unusable well before the originals themselves. See: Roger Tol, with a contribution by Timothy Behrend, "Acid Irony? Or How to Deal with Negatives Positively: An Evaluation Report of the Microfilming Projects in Indonesia Supported by The Ford Foundation" (typescript, 15 June – 16 July, 1998).

¹⁹ This outcome also reinforces the widespread fascination with digitization as a means for both preservation and access. Preservation advisors drum away about evanescent electronic files, but the microfilm that they would substitute has proven equally impermanent.

²⁰ Several Brazilian archivists, for examples, are experimenting with paper made from banana fibers as a substitute for the expensive, imported "Japan paper" commonly used in book and document repair. The initial results are promising, but the new product still needs exhaustive testing in a full-scale paper laboratory.

²¹ To cite but one example, the World Bank is providing substantial support to modernize public universities in several countries. In Argentina, one category of grants has enabled an electronic network that links most campuses internally and that also provides connections among the institutions. Another program has supported the "Sistema de Información Universitaria," whose seven modules (including one for libraries) cover areas including accounting and finance, personnel management, academic administration, and statistics. See Argentina, Secretaría de Políticas Universitarias, Programa SIU, *Programa SIU* (typescript and powerpoint slides, julio de 1999).

²² The grant, carrying the somewhat inelegant title "International Cooperation to Expand the Range, Accessibility, and Availability of Research Materials for Latin Americanist Students and Scholars," corresponds to a new program under the Department of Education's Title VI, Section 606, whose equally inelegant rubric is "Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access Program."

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- ²³ Chile's "Alerta al Conocimiento" (<http://www.alerta.cl>) has thus received a grant to automate its document delivery operations.
- ²⁴ See <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~drclas>, under "Other Programs," for a description of this Program.
- ²⁵ See the ABINIA home page: <http://rrpac.upr.clu.edu:9090/abinia/index.htm> (last updated in November, 1997, according to a visit on August 24, 1999).
- ²⁶ The Argentine workshop was held in Buenos Aires on July 7 and 8, 1999. The Brazilian session followed in Rio de Janeiro on July 13-15. The Brazilian workshop was accompanied by a workbook including many of the formal presentations: see Mesa Redonda Nacional de Arquivos, *Caderno de Textos* (Rio de Janeiro, 13 a 15 de julho de 1999), as well as the compilation *Legislação Brasileira de Arquivos* (Rio de Janeiro: 1999).
- ²⁷ See <http://www.uchile.cl> for the Universidad de Chile homepage, prepared by its Sistema de Servicios de Información y Bibliotecas (SISIB).
- ²⁸ See <http://www.crl.uchicago.edu/info/brazil/> for the Center for Research Libraries/Latin American Microform Project's "Brazilian Government Document Digitization Project."
- ²⁹ High profile efforts like the massive scanning project at Spain's Archivo General de Indias may have created unrealistic early expectations for what major digitizing programs might accomplish. The fullest description in English is Pedro González, *Computerization of the Archivo General de Indias: Strategies and Results* (Washington, DC: Council on Library and Information Resources, September, 1998).
- ³⁰ The joint Getty Conservation Institute/Brazil activities were presented during the 9th congress of ABRACOR, Associação Brasileira de Conservadores-Restauradores de Bens Culturais (the Brazilian association of conservation specialists) held in Salvador, Bahia from October 25-29, 1998. See also "Project Updates: Collections in Hot and Humid Environments," *Conservation: The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter* v. 13, no. 3 (1998), p. 21. Uruguay's Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, División de Ciencia y Tecnología, in conjunction with the Programa Regional para el Fortalecimiento de la Cooperación entre Redes y Sistemas Nacionales de Información para América Latina y el Caribe (INFOLAC), has proposed a home-grown cooperative cataloging project as an alternative to the costly approaches now available. See "Proyecto para desarrollo de un sistema de catalogación cooperativa en Internet para América Latina y el Caribe," dated marzo, 1999, under "Proyectos" on the INFOLAC Web site: <http://infolac.ucol.mx/>.



[dancing with elephants]