Disciplinary Conquest
Salvatore, Ricardo D.

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Why did these different disciplines undertake the task of understanding Latin America? Why did U.S. scholars engage in the laborious work of building regional knowledge? The answer lies perhaps at the intersection of intellectual trajectories, travel experience, and disciplinary rules. As Adam R. Nelson (2005) has convincingly argued, the significant transformations in the structure of higher learning in the United States rested on the very transnational work done by scholars of emerging research universities. He suggests, indeed, that disciplinary knowledge itself would have been difficult to establish in the absence of these traveling experiences.

As a group, the men and women who created the first United States’ universities spent time in virtually every part of Europe (including Russia) and travelled extensively in North Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, Australia, South America, and the Pacific Islands. . . . They forged ties with countless institutions overseas and pursued in an impressive variety of disciplines, from geology, mineralogy, botany, zoology, and other fields of the natural sciences (and medicine) to comparative philology, history, archaeology, theology, political economy, and law. In the process, they developed new approaches to knowledge and used these approaches to
reshape their sense of the United States’ place in an increasingly competitive world system. (432–33)

That is, traveling scholars were the very expression of a profound transformation of higher learning in the United States. Yet geopolitical and historical conjunctures are also crucial for understanding why U.S. scholars felt entrusted with “the mission” to survey and understand Hispanic American civilization. There was, in this regard, a convergence of interests between foreign-policy and disciplinary concerns. Between 1890 and 1914 new trade and investment opportunities made Washington reconsider its relationship with the South American republics. This in turn created the context in which various information-gatherers, from both the business and the scholarly communities, started to explore the natural resources, societies, cultures, and histories of South American nations.

The amateur archaeologist Hiram Bingham, the geographer Isaiah Bowman, the historian Clarence H. Haring, the political scientist Leo S. Rowe, and the sociologist Edward A. Ross achieved national and international recognition for their pioneering work on South America. Through their publications, teaching, institution-building, and particularly through their travel, they contributed significantly to the building of academic interest about South America in the United States. Arguably, they created the first professional arenas for the incorporation of “South America” within the field of vision of U.S. social sciences and humanities. Their interventions in their respective disciplines provided the foundation for what later became the field of Latin American studies. In addition, they left powerful and enduring characterizations of the region that informed contemporary U.S. policies. This chapter provides the general background of the five scholars, their travels, and publications.

Travel implies a physical displacement that stimulates observation and reflection. For U.S. scholars—at least, for the ones I study in this book—travel to South America confronted them with a new reality: with poor, indigenous, and premodern nations in the Andes; and with modern societies and economies in the Southern Cone. Though the five scholars I examine traveled in pursuit of different objectives, most of them took advantage of these travels to observe and report on the condition and progress of the “southern republics.” Whether they wrote about colonial history, contemporary social and racial relations, geographic regions, or political culture, the displacements produced by traveling were sources of productive comparisons and profound reflections about comparative development, foreign policy, and cultural difference. Writing about the
“novelty” of South America, they were able to pose important comparative questions that later became foundational to their respective regional disciplines.

_Hiram Bingham_  

Hiram Bingham was a history professor, a politician, an aviator, and an amateur archaeologist.¹ He first garnered public acclaim in 1911 with the discovery of Machu Picchu, the famous “citadel of the Incas.” As Anthony Brandt writes, “He is remembered for one thing, and one thing only. He was an explorer who found the most famous ancient ruins in the Western Hemisphere: the lost Inca city of Machu Picchu” (in Hiram Bingham 1922, xi). This finding alone granted him a prominent position among world archaeologists.² After the discovery, Bingham obtained financial support from Yale University and the National Geographic Society to conduct long-term explorations in the southern Peruvian Andes. The Yale Peruvian Expedition, a multidisciplinary enterprise he conducted between 1912 and 1915, advanced knowledge of Peruvian archaeology, geography, and geology, as well as of botany and zoology. That is, Bingham’s discovery brought the attention of world archaeologists not only to himself but to Machu Picchu.³ Three of his books, completed long after the exploration, relate to this discovery: _Inca Land_ (1922), _Machu Picchu: A Citadel of the Incas_ (1930), and _Lost City of the Incas_ (1948). In these works Bingham advanced various hypotheses about the function of Machu Picchu: a refuge for the last Inca emperor; the cradle of Inca civilization; a sacred site where Inca virgins were secluded.⁴ After the discovery of Machu Picchu, his attention turned to his archaeological findings—bones, bronzes, pottery, and textiles—which presented him with multiple riddles about the civilization of the Incas. Through his activities as a book collector, historian, geographer, and archaeologist, Bingham helped build scholarly interest about South America in the United States.

A man of multiple trades, Bingham never attained the degree of specialization that other scholars did. Being financially independent, he was free to be a generalist. He worked on history, geography, and archaeology, occasionally weighing in on U.S. foreign policy. He helped build the first collections of Latinoamericana at Harvard and Yale Libraries.⁵ He believed that business and humanistic instruction could be profitably combined in the education of university men doing business with South America; his students at Yale, if they were to pursue business in South America, had first to learn about the region’s geography, history, archaeology, and government.

Bingham was a “gentleman scholar” with no financial limitations on traveling overseas. (Before starting graduate studies at Harvard, he married Alfreda
Mitchell, heir to the Tiffany fortune.) In 1906–1907, accompanied by the Amazon explorer Hamilton Rice, he traveled to Venezuela and Colombia to retrace the route from Caracas to Bogotá followed by Simón Bolívar during the wars of independence. He wanted to test the difficulty of this epic march on the terrain itself. His account of this journey, published in 1909, was an unremarkable adventure narrative punctuated by encounters with “wild Indians,” mules that refused to advance, dramatically changing natural scenes, diverse animal life, and every now and then, traces of Spanish colonization.

In November–December 1908 Bingham undertook a long trip overland from Buenos Aires to Lima with the explicit purpose of following the historic route used to transport supplies to the rich silver mines of Potosí. This resulted in a second book, *Across South America* (1911), a travel narrative that—unlike his previous book—provided interesting insights and historical background. Traveling on modern railroads from Buenos Aires to Tucumán, he witnessed the dramatic change in the landscape from the fertile pampas to valleys cultivated with sugarcane. Moving on to La Quiaca, Bingham found himself on a cold, dry plateau where nothing grew without irrigation. In Bolivia, Potosí attracted Bingham’s historical curiosity. Here was the “largest city in the Western Hemisphere” in the seventeenth century, now in decay: houses, churches, and convents stood as silent witnesses of a colonial glory, long past (Hiram Bingham 1911b). The local prefect received the U.S. party with red-carpet treatment. Celebrations in his honor lasted a week, including bullfights, dinners, balls, fireworks, and illuminations.

After attending a scientific congress at Santiago, Chile (1908–1909), Bingham and other delegates visited Cuzco. It was probably there, at the museum of Incaica built by the merchant Cesar Lomellini, that Bingham became interested in Inca civilization and history. He was dazzled by the large walls of Sacsayhuaman (Cohen 1984, 83–85). In conversations with local informants Bingham learned of sites alleged to contain Inca ruins, as well as how to find them; Prefect Núñez and other *cuzqueños* pointed him toward the ruins of Choquequirau (Hiram Bingham 1910b). The visit awoke a curiosity in him about Inca fortifications, burial rituals, and the route followed by the Incas escaping from the Spanish conquerors.

Subsequently, Bingham made three major archaeological expeditions to Peru. In the first, in 1911, he discovered Machu Picchu. With the help of local informants (among them hacienda owners who interrogated their Indian tenants and peons), Bingham was able to find the “hidden citadel of the Incas.” Assisted by six other men (the explorer Herman L. Tucker, the topographer Kai Hendriksen, the naturalist Harry W. Foote, the geographer Isaiah Bowman, the
physician William G. Erving, and the college senior Paul B. Lanius), Bingham was able to find in the valley of Vilcabamba another Inca ruin, which he identified as the monument of Victos referred to by the Spanish chroniclers (Baltasar de Ocampo and Antonio de la Calancha, in particular). He then marched down the valley trying to find Old Vilcabamba, again following the traces provided by the Spanish missionary Calancha. This was another historically driven trip. If before he had followed the steps of Bolívar, now he was tracing the steps of the last Inca rulers, Manco Capac and his three sons.

The second (1912) and third (1914–1915) visits were part of the Yale Peruvian Expedition (YPE). Financed by the National Geographic Society and the Kodak Company, these expeditions attempted to clear the bush that covered Machu Picchu and excavate the ruins, to survey a wider area in search of additional ruins, and to investigate issues concerning the geology, ethnography, physical geography, and biology of the region. Photography and popular magazine articles were among the most salient results of these expeditions. But in Peru the Yale team met the opposition of traditionalists and early indigenistas. The YPE brought back to Yale an important “scientific harvest,” measured by the number of scientific publications it generated and by the collection of bones, pottery, bronzes, and textiles from Peru (later donated to the Peabody Museum at Yale and to different scientific schools in the Northeast). After 1915 and a bitter experience in Peru during the YPE, Bingham ended his exploration and field research in South America. After 1924, he abandoned university teaching for a career in politics: he became lieutenant-governor, governor, and then senator of Connecticut. In the 1930s and 1940s his U.S. foreign-policy concerns shifted from Latin America to China and the Pacific, and he wrote occasionally about aviation and U.S. defense.

Isaiah Bowman

The geographer Isaiah Bowman, one of the members of the YPE, used the results of his South American explorations to build a solid reputation in the field of geography, and from there won positions of power in both government and the academy. In 1919 Bowman was appointed head of the geology and geography division of the National Research Council. He advised President Woodrow Wilson in the aftermath of the First World War, going on to serve as science advisor to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, as head of the National Research Council, as president of Johns Hopkins University, and as vice president of the National Academy of Sciences. As president of the American Geographical Society (AGS), he helped develop professional geography in the United States.
In *The Andes of Southern Peru* (1916), Bowman presented a synthetic and comprehensive view of Peru’s main natural and human regions. He wrote up his explorations in northwest Argentina and the Atacama Desert in *Desert Trails of Atacama* (1924), a book that enhanced his credentials as a regional geographer. At the beginning, he defined geography as the science that studied the relations between humans and their environment. Later, in the 1930s, he advocated for geography to become a “science of settlement” concerned with world agricultural frontiers. Over this whole period, Bowman supervised the compilation at the AGS of the Millionth Map of Hispanic America, a work named for its unprecedented detail and published between 1922 and 1945. The new map proved of invaluable assistance to mining prospectors, geologists, road constructors, land developers, and other geographers.\(^\text{12}\)

After serving on the U.S. delegation to the Peace Conference in Paris in 1919, Bowman emerged as an expert on world politics. He was among the founding members of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), a group established in 1921 to foster the vision of liberal internationalism. Within the CFR, he chaired study groups on U.S.-Latin American relations.\(^\text{13}\) It was Bowman who secured the funding for the first issues of *Foreign Affairs*. After 1926, he began studying pioneer settlements, a research program he extended to various world regions with funding from the National Research Council and the Science Advisory Board.\(^\text{14}\) Out of this research came two important volumes: *The Pioneer Fringe* (1931) and *The Limits of Land Settlement* (1937).

Believing in the power of science to resolve issues of public policy, Bowman upheld geography as the discipline that could make “world order” possible. At the Paris negotiations, Bowman had learned about the tensions in the European colonial world and was able to anticipate its demise. He thought, however, that Dollar Diplomacy was better than protectorates, mandates, and other forms of direct intervention. He was perhaps one of the first U.S. scholars to articulate a defense of economic supremacy over older forms of imperialism. He had been in close contact with President Wilson since 1918, admiring the president’s internationalist idealism, his notion of “scientific peace,” and his vision of a world in which colonial possessions or military might no longer dictate international supremacy. He was quite disappointed about the Senate rejection of the League of Nations and the electoral defeat of 1920.

Bowman first traveled to the subcontinent in 1907, as the head geographer of the South American Expedition. He made a second visit in 1912, when he accompanied Bingham’s YPE. He was in charge of traveling south from Cuzco to the Pacific to survey the 73rd meridian. In these early trips, he observed the physiography, the topography, the settlements, and the economic activities of
northern Chile, western Bolivia, and southern Peru (Bowman 1914). In 1913, under the auspices of the American Geographic Society, he conducted geographical reconnaissance in northwestern Argentina and southern Bolivia.

Early on, attracted by the extreme variation of climate and relief in the Central Andes, Bowman decided to study the adaptation of settlers to distinct natural environments. By the time of his third trip to South America, his disciplinary approach was already established: he was to combine “anthropogeography” with observations of physiography. Though still working under a Davisian framework (using geological evidence to focus on long-term relations between human settlements and their physical environments) his interest shifted toward the relationship between humans and physical geography. After 1915, administrative responsibilities at the AGS prevented Bowman from returning to South America for a while. In 1930–1932, in the midst of the Depression, he resumed fieldwork, this time to study farming frontiers in the United States. With his son, he traveled by car to Montana, central Oregon, western Kansas, and Nebraska. He discovered that the U.S. “pioneer frontier,” despite Turner’s prediction, was alive and well (Martin 1980, 114–15). In 1941 he finally revisited the Central Andes, this time as advisor to President Roosevelt during the latter’s goodwill tour to Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru (ibid., 162). His advice, it was reported, was crucial for settling a long-standing boundary dispute between Ecuador and Peru (Wrigley 1951, 47).

Clarence H. Haring

Clarence H. Haring was a Harvard professor fully devoted to the development of the field of Hispanic American history. He was a founding member of the *Hispanic American Historical Review* (1918) and a leading scholar on studies of Spanish colonialism. Harvard served as the resonance box for Haring’s concerns about Hispanic American history and about the promises of Pan-American cooperation. He brought to Harvard the problematic of Pan-Americanism, lending prestige to a doctrine expressing U.S. hegemonic ambitions in the region.

From Harvard, through round tables and workshops, he articulated a network of economists, businessmen, scholars, and policy makers interested in the “problems” of Latin America. He used historical generalizations and these connections to activate policy thinking about Latin America. Over the thirty years (1923–1953) that he taught there, Haring mentored graduate students who later became prominent members of the historical profession. He promoted the formation of Pan-American societies, monitored political develop-
ments in South America, and advised the U.S. government about the emergent field of Latin American studies. He occasionally collaborated with the State Department, providing intelligence and advice.

Haring’s historical publications dealt mostly with the history of the Spanish empire. His two most salient contributions were *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies in the Time of the Habsburgs* (1918) and *The Spanish Empire in America* (1947). In between these two books, he published many essays on the economic and institutional history of the Spanish colonial system. These works criticized the Spanish commercial monopoly, the systems of coerced labor it imposed on indigenous peoples, and the lack of participatory political institutions. He was particularly interested in the similarities and differences between Spanish colonialism and the modern U.S. empire. Earlier than Herbert E. Bolton, Haring conceived a thesis about the “parallel but distinct” paths of historical development of the two Americas.¹⁶ His works on the Spanish empire contain the basis for a project on the comparative study of the Americas, now back in fashion.¹⁷

In addition to historical works, Haring wrote two notable interventions in the field of inter-American relations: *South America Looks at the United States* (1928), and *South American Progress* (1934). In matters of U.S. foreign policy Haring was a progressive thinker; in his writings he anticipated positions close to Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor Policy. He opposed U.S. interventions in the Caribbean, being particularly critical of U.S. policies in Nicaragua. Haring was the academic ambassador par excellence. To him, expertise in the field of Latin America implied responsibilities in the promotion of U.S. Pan-Americanism. He was appointed U.S. delegate to the most important scientific conferences involving Latin America, acting in some of them as organizer. Haring and Leo S. Rowe were the chief U.S. representatives to the Second Pan-American Financial Conference, held in Washington in 1920. In 1935 Haring chaired the U.S. delegation to the General Assembly of the recently founded Pan American Institute of Geography and History. In 1940 he was appointed U.S. delegate to the Eighth American Scientific Congress at Washington, under the chairmanship of Secretary of State Sumner Welles.

Haring did not travel extensively across South America until the mid-1920s. Ten years earlier, he had visited Spain to complete the research needed for his B. Litt (bachelor of letters) at Oxford, spending some time at the archives in Seville and Simancas. His early professional publications dealt with silver and gold shipped from Peru and Mexico to Spain, a theme central to colonial economic history. Interestingly, these articles appeared in economics journals. In 1926–1927 he obtained funding from the Bureau of Economic Research to

From 1930, when a series of military revolutions interrupted the constitutional trajectory of several countries, Haring gathered intelligence for the Council on Foreign Relations about changing political conditions in South America. He endeavored to show that these “revolutions” were the result of social progress and new demands for political participation, rather than a return to personalist and authoritarian government. In 1937 he headed the U.S. delegation to the Second Congress on the History of America, held in Buenos Aires. There, he delivered the keynote speech, “Race and Environment in the New World,” telling local historians that Anglo-America had become more prosperous than Latin America, but that the possibility of converging trajectories was there, spelled out in comparative history. He also met leading Argentine representatives of the historical profession, among them Ricardo Levene and Emilio Ravignani.

After Pearl Harbor, the State Department encouraged scholars to contribute to the cause of inter-American cooperation. Harvard granted Haring a leave of absence to undertake a tour to South America that included visits to Peru, Chile, Argentina, and Brazil. After attending the Lima assembly of the Pan American Institute of History and Geography, he was to survey the conditions of democratic politics in the region for the Council on Foreign Relations. During this trip, Haring gathered intelligence about Nazi activities in the southern republics. In 1941 he published a pamphlet on the relations between Argentina and the United States. In this study he denounced the presence of German Nazi propaganda in Argentina and examined Argentine public opinion about the European war. His book *Argentina and the United States* (1941) contains valuable information about Nazi organizations in Argentina.

*Edward A. Ross*

Edward A. Ross was one of America’s foremost sociologists. A progressive thinker and disciple of Richard Ely, he developed new concepts and methods for the study of societies. He is well known for his defense of selective immigration and of academic freedom. Although his theorization went beyond any particular region, his observations about and valuable examples from South
America infused his social theory. His sociological tracts are full of “South American problems”: elite exclusionism, racial prejudice, labor oppression, and the colonial legacy. Much earlier than structuralist Marxists, Ross discussed the question of the “feudality” in Andean South America’s and Mexico’s contemporary social relations. Rather than working toward a regional science, Ross strove to build a comparative social theory, made from observations gathered in different world regions.

Ross was one of the last “system builders” in U.S. social theory. His intellectual ambitions compare with those of the great European sociologists Max Weber and Émile Durkheim. His books Social Control (1901), Foundations of Sociology (1905), and Social Psychology (1908) helped lay the foundations of U.S. sociology (Weinberg 1972, chap. 4; Page 1969, chap. 7). In addition, Ross wrote educational books for the general reader, in which he appears as a public intellectual committed to the resolution of U.S. social problems. Some of these books addressed the demographic, social, commercial, and cultural transformations of U.S. society, including, for example, Changing America (1912). Others, like The Social Trend (1922), cautioned U.S. Americans about world changes that were bound to affect the United States. In Roads to Social Peace (1924) he discussed the question of social conflict and the need to endeavor for social peace.

Two of his books contain superb social portraits of Latin America: South of Panama (1915) and The Social Revolution in Mexico (1923). From these works, Ross built the theoretical architecture for a comparative “worldly sociology,” a science of society informed by observations made around the world. A progressive social reformer, Ross participated in important public debates on immigration, workers’ protection, family reproduction, the emancipation of women, and corporate influences on universities and the media (McMahon 1999, chaps. 4 and 6; Weinberg 1972, chap. 4). His progressive views, displaced into the territory of Andean South America, led him to severely condemn social and racial oppression in the region. Despite his progressive stand on other social issues, his opposition to Asian immigration based on racial arguments gained him a reputation as a racist. He coined the term race suicide, later popularized by President Roosevelt.

Unlike the other scholars I examine, Ross was a world traveler in search of the basic organizing patterns of societies. His 1913–1914 South American journeys appear as one moment in a series of travels around the world. He visited South America and Mexico, but also Russia, China, Japan, South Africa, the Pacific Islands, India, and most of Europe. These travels allowed him to compare social trends in different countries and to observe social upheavals.
in the making. Few U.S. scholars could claim, as he did, to have witnessed the Mexican Revolution, the Russian Revolution, and the 1910 Chinese uprising.

Ross spent the second semester of 1913 on the west coast of South America. On his way, he spent a few days in the Canal Zone, where General Gorgas explained how he had eradicated infectious disease in the area, malaria and yellow fever. In this colonial enclave Ross first “saw” the contrast between Spanish backwardness and U.S. modernity. He spent sixteen days in western Colombia, traveling on horseback from Cali to the Cauca Valley. He visited all the ports down to Guayaquil, then traveled to Quito and Riobamba. Next, he visited Peru, where he stayed for six weeks; he spoke at the University of San Marcos in Lima. He rode from Cuzco to see the ruins of Machu Picchu, accompanied by the “vagabond traveler” Harry Franck. In Bolivia he spent a week in La Paz, taking from there a train to Antofagasta. In Chile he spent a month traveling north to south, reaching Lake Nahuel Huapi, on the Argentine border. Returning to Santiago in January 1914, he took the Transandine Railway to Argentina, where he visited the cities of Cordoba, Tucumán, Salta, and Rosario (Edward A. Ross 1977 [1934], 136–37).

Ross went to South America to observe society. In preparation for the trip, he learned Spanish and read historical materials about the different countries. In addition, he was well read in the history of religion, the Middle Ages, ancient empires, and traditional systems of hierarchy. To evaluate South American societies, Ross interviewed Chilean landowners, sugar planters in northern Argentina and Peru, managers of smelting firms in Chile, and university administrators in Arequipa, Santiago, and Buenos Aires. He also talked to U.S. and European residents, paying special attention to foreign missionaries’ reports. The University of Wisconsin and U.S. progressive organizations financed Ross’s travels (his first trip to Russia in July–December 1917 was funded in part by the American Institute of Social Service). In the 1920s and 1930s Ross became fond of Mexico and accepted invitations to give conferences and participate in academic meetings there.

**Leo S. Rowe**

From 1920 to 1946, Leo S. Rowe, a political scientist at the University of Pennsylvania, served as the director of the Pan-American Union (PAU), the institution that channeled U.S. views and policies in matters of hemispheric integration and that was the precursor of the Organization of American States. He was a scholar-statesman, a promoter of Pan-Americanism, and a knowledge-gatherer on a hemispheric scale (Salvatore 2010a). His obituary (1946) presented him as
the foremost advocate of inter-American friendship, understanding, and solidarity (Welles 1947; Hill 1947). During his early contact with South America (1906–1908), Rowe acknowledged the progress made by Argentina, Brazil, and Chile in constitutional government and economic growth. He thus combated the U.S. misconception that the countries south of Panama were lands of recurrent revolutions. Well before the advent of the Good Neighbor Policy, Rowe promoted U.S. cooperation with the “southern republics” in culture, law, and education. Indeed, he was the first scholar to articulate a coherent strategy of “intellectual cooperation” with them.18

A progressive thinker, Rowe was interested in improving the quality of municipal and state governments in the United States, freeing local elections from the corruption of “machine politics.” He was active in the formation of the National Civic Federation, an association directed toward those goals (Cyphers 2002, 38). Believing in the power of public opinion to control the abuses of government, he tried to share his concern for “American democracy” with South American intellectuals. Rowe’s administrative experience is itself interesting. He moved from positions in colonial government in Puerto Rico and Panama to serve as head of the Pau. Under his tenure, U.S.-Latin American relations improved significantly. He is credited with presenting practical solutions to end the U.S. intervention in Haiti, with finding an amicable solution to the U.S. dispute with Venustiano Carranza in Mexico, and with arbitrating long-standing border disputes among South American nations.

Rowe’s policy of “intellectual cooperation” anticipated FDR’s Good Neighbor policies by more than a decade. Under his leadership, the Pau enacted a policy of collective hemispheric defense, a multilateral version of the Monroe Doctrine. In collaboration with James Brown Scott, Rowe promoted a common system of inter-American law and was instrumental in the establishment of the Central American Court of Justice (Scarfi 2009).

Rowe’s early works dealt with the comparative history of constitutional government, urban improvements, taxation, and higher education. Before he assumed the directorship of the Pau, he published two books: one about his own experience in colonial governance (The United States and Porto Rico, 1904); the other about the problems of municipal administration (Problems of City Government, 1908). His last important book, The Federal System of the Argentine Republic (1921b), was a comparative study of Argentine and U.S. federalism, where he reconsidered his earlier prejudice against Hispanic political culture.

Rowe first visited South America in 1906. In June of that year he sailed from New York to attend the Pan-American Conference at Rio de Janeiro. From Rio he traveled overland to Argentina. This allowed him to observe farming
communities in Santa Fe and Entre Ríos before reaching Buenos Aires. He established an academic connection with the University of La Plata, where he spent six months at a residential college, interacting with students of veterinary, agronomy, and law. During the Pan-American Conference at Santiago (1908), he and various other delegates traveled to Argentina. In November of that year, accompanied by Ambassador Rómulo S. Naón, Rowe visited the northwest provinces to survey educational institutions. The results were published as “Progresos educacionales en la República Argentina” (1910). He then returned to Santiago, where he embarked on a ship that took him from Valparaíso to Guayaquil.

In September 1909, invited by President Porfirio Díaz, Rowe traveled to Mexico City to attend the inauguration of the National University of Mexico (UNAM). In his lecture, he praised the progress made during the Porfiriato, without anticipating that a great social upheaval was in the making (Leo S. Rowe 1910a). Though there were some disturbances, Rowe assured U.S. reporters that no revolution was to be expected. Contemporary political unrest was, rather, a sign of an increased demand for political participation. When he returned to Mexico in December 1911, the revolution was in full swing (Leo S. Rowe 1911). In 1914 he visited Argentina for a third time, this time staying five months. In Buenos Aires Rowe delivered a series of conferences about the state of U.S. democracy. There in South America’s most modern city Rowe interacted with intellectuals with European manners. The dramatic contrast between Caribbean colonial outposts and Belle Époque Argentina impressed him greatly, affecting his views as a constitutionalist and political scientist. After the start of the First World War, he promoted the doctrine of “the rights of neutral nations,” looking for allies among the southern republics.

As a top-level representative of the U.S. government in the field of inter-American cooperation, Rowe received red-carpet treatment across the hemisphere during his travels from 1907 to 1909. Everywhere he went, he was treated as a celebrity: banquets were organized in his honor; his addresses were printed in local newspapers; and scholarly societies granted him honorary membership. Before assuming the directorship of the PAU, he was granted honorary degrees by the universities of La Plata in Argentina (1906), Católica de Chile (1907), San Marcos, Lima (1908), and UNAM (1910). His success also had much to do with his message. He spoke about the United States’ willingness to intensify commercial and cultural relations with the southern republics, and about the need for closer intellectual cooperation between the two Americas. Years before, President Theodore Roosevelt had stated that personal ties with elite, university men were crucial for a greater cooperation with
“Latin nations.” Rowe carried this advice into practice with great effectiveness. After taking office at the PAU (1920), his opportunities to visit South America multiplied. Rowe used these occasions to evaluate the state of democracy and development in the subcontinent, and to spread his gospel of good will and intellectual brotherhood. To Rowe, travel was an instrument for building inter-American connections. He believed that private tourism could help to build Pan-American cooperation. In 1934 he established the travel division of the PAU with the explicit mandate of promoting tourism among the Americas (Leo S. Rowe 1945).

**Conclusion**

These five scholars traveled to South America to report on the new conditions and possibilities of a region recently incorporated (or in the process of being integrated) into the sphere of U.S. economic influence. It is significant that they made their direct observations of the “southern republics” during a period in which the United States was redefining its relations toward the subcontinent, from a position of Caribbean policeman (Big Stick policy), to one of financial enticement (Dollar Diplomacy), to one of hemispheric friendship and cooperation (Good Neighbor Policy). This important transition in foreign policy stimulated them to examine a central question: the modernity and civility of South America in comparison with the achievements of the United States.

In a way, the changing language of the hegemon (from “dependencies” to “neighbors”) opened up possibilities for a growing field of transfer of advice and knowledge (North to South) that by itself promised the continued interest of the United States and its institutions of higher learning in the “newly discovered” region. This motivated U.S. scholars in several fields of inquiry in the social sciences and the humanities to pose questions, gather data, and present preliminary syntheses that later served as the basis for the construction of regional subdisciplines, such as Hispanic American history, South American geography, and Andean archaeology. Though the building of disciplinary fields of regional knowledge took place in U.S. research universities, South American travels delimited the boundaries of the research designs, posed the core questions constitutive of each subfield, and advanced, however tentatively, the relations that these inquiries had with the extension of the U.S. informal empire in South America.