In 1942 the Silver Burdett Company, one of the leading textbook and music publishers in the United States, collaborated with the Pan American Union to publish a “Pan American Songbook,” the *Cancionero PanAmericano*. The book contained folklore songs from all countries of the Americas, and was lavishly illustrated with photos and drawings of picturesque rural scenes. Its cover supposedly showed a *huaso*, a Chilean cowboy, but the handsome man appeared to be decidedly caucasian and was dressed in the holiday version of a *huaso* costume: shiny leather boots, elegant checkered woolen pants, and a colorful *manta* over a white shirt. It was a glossy production with a tendency to romanticize rural life and poverty while its Pan-American rhetoric thinly veiled US wartime political interest in a united Western hemisphere. Most of the photographic material in the book appeared courtesy of Grace Line, a US company that dominated the shipping lanes to South America. This songbook could well serve as a symbol for the problematic aspects of cultural diplomacy: A decade after its publication, the former director of the Pan American Union’s Music Division, Charles Seeger, felt he had to beg for forgiveness for having published the book.¹

¹Notes for this section begin on page 156.
Such a vignette might very well introduce a chapter on how various actors in the United States appropriated, misrepresented, and misused Latin American folklore during the era of the Good Neighbor policy. Similar arguments have long been made about the cultural aspects of the Good Neighbor policy as far as cinematic representations of Latin America were concerned, be they feature movies or Walt Disney’s animated films. These analyses are doubtless interesting and convincing, but they only speak to one side of this cultural interaction as they privilege North American agents and tend to render the Latin Americans hapless victims of US power.

To denounce the spread of US ideologies, values, and culture, Latin American scholars themselves have for decades engaged the notion of cultural imperialism supported by economic power. Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart’s *How To Read Donald Duck*, for instance, detailed how Disney comics undermined Latin American identities. First published in Chile in 1973, it became one of the best-selling book in Latin America in the 1970s. With regards to film, scholars have pointed out that even if Latin American film industries could survive the onslaught of American movies in the 1930s and 1940s, they did so by producing movies that were “slavishly emulative of foreign models.” Recently Jean Franco referred to the cultural politics as an “apparently benevolent form of imperialism,” but emphasized that the “formidable propaganda machine” of the United States flooded Latin American media with its version of reality.

One reason for this somewhat limited view is that historians have often reduced the cultural aspects of the Good Neighbor policy to the activities of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA), a wartime creation headed by Nelson A. Rockefeller. Rockefeller is certainly an intriguing figure in US-Latin American relations, and his OCIAA cofinanced several notorious “cultural exchanges,” such as Orson Welles’ filmmaking trip to Brazil, the grand South American tours of *maestro* Arturo Toscanini, and the “caravans” of the Kirstein Ballet. It also supported the Mexican film industry and brought Brazilian star composer Heitor Villa-Lobos and countless other artists to the United States. Moreover, it was apparently Rockefeller’s idea to call on Walt Disney to help improve relations between the North and the South in the Americas. But the cultural aspects of the Good Neighbor policy should not be reduced to
the OCIAA, as many other actors were involved. For instance, we should not neglect the activities of the Cultural Division of the State Department that was established in 1938 and started a variety of programs before Rockefeller entered the arena of cultural foreign policy.

In the past decade or so, the history of US-Latin American cultural relations has been greatly enriched by new analyses that are informed by postcolonial theory. Positioning myself among scholars intent on refining the analyses of US-Latin American interactions, I propose a different approach that takes Latin Americans—their motivations and actions—seriously as actors in their relations with the United States. I will unravel the complicated fabric of international intellectual currents and national expediencies in cultural politics, taking as my example the field of musical folklore. By focusing on the arena of cultural networks and transnational institutions, this chapter will demonstrate that the long-held dichotomies between center/periphery, exploiters/victims cannot always provide a good framework for examining the impact of the United States in Latin America. Certainly, inequality was an element of the “encounter” between Northern and Southern protagonists, but my examination of the inter-American politics of the vogue of folklore that swept the Americas in the 1930s and 1940s will show that a considerable space for negotiation existed.

In the 1930s, the attempts of the Latin American cultural avant-garde to emancipate itself from overly Eurocentric views were joined by the efforts of many educators and bureaucrats. The latter wished to create national cultures that would be rooted in popular culture and would find resonance with large parts of the population. At the same time, state educational institutions for all population groups expanded greatly across Latin America. “Cultural extension” projects played an important role in this expansion, as did the increased integration of intellectuals and cultural workers into these institutions. The rise of fascism in Europe and the aggressive politics of Hitler’s Germany posed a dilemma for the New World. Even as some political leaders across the hemisphere flirted with fascism during the 1930s (most prominently the Brazilian Getulio Vargas and his Estado Novo), the countries of the Western hemisphere started to present themselves as the bedrock of occidental democracy in the 1940s. While Europe descended into turmoil, “the Americas” would be a safe haven for civilization and democracy. In this situation, the New World could not simply hold fast
to the dominant culture of the now-decadent Europe, because operating a democratic system implied taking seriously all non-European cultures and national traditions. Thus the international political situation gave the countries of the Western hemisphere an additional reason to explore their own cultures and investigate the notion of a distinct “American” culture.

Intellectuals and artists from North and South America were able to convince the political establishment that the cultivation and investigation of folklore contributed significantly to the cultural emancipation of the Americas. Yet this essay is not concerned with the “content” of folklore, its performers, nor does it aim to provide a deep analysis of how the field of folklore developed in the Americas or in individual countries. It does not address the question of why and how the binary system of a distinction between “the folk” and high culture developed or changed. Rather, it will examine how cultural workers and folklore specialists used the national and international political constellations of the 1930s and 1940s to further their goals on the transnational level. The convergence of folklore projects on a national scale with trends in the international arena provides the backdrop to this study of the interactions between Latin American proponents of folklore and their counterparts in the United States.

My work thus focuses on the establishment of a transnational cultural network of professionals in a period of international upheaval. Most of the protagonists in my account were not career diplomats but academics and artists who sought transnational interactions for professional rather than political reasons. The focus on a transnational network of folklore specialists does not mean that the state—or international organizations of states—were not important. Both provided important employment niches for folklorists and arenas for their activities. Indeed, in some cases it is not always clear if a protagonist represented either the state or civil society at any given moment. In the case of the United States, some folklore specialists started working for the State Department during the war years, while others collaborated in an advisory capacity. In Latin America, the relations between cultural workers and the state have traditionally been rather close (if not unproblematic). The strengthening of a transnational cultural network indicates that nationalism and national power were only factors among others in the politics of folklore. Despite partially divergent goals, folklorists from North and South actively
built a transnational professional community—and used the
cultural diplomacy of their governments to further their ends.

Given the preexisting interest in folklore across the hemi-
sphere, the new US cultural policies reinforced a transnational
community of scholars. Records of Latin American institutes
of popular arts and folklore, from scholarly societies, as well
as materials from the Pan American Union, the Library of Con-
gress, and the State Department all indicate that the US initia-
tives and resources resulted in increased networking activities
among folklore scholars and helped to bring about the institu-
tionalization of popular arts and folklore studies at museums
and universities across the Americas. Funds from the United
States opened possibilities for research previously not exist-
ing. It is difficult to assess whether or not this process served
to divulge US political values or ideological frameworks. Folk-
lore and popular arts specialists publicly presented their sub-
jects in a Pan American discourse of a distinct popular culture
of the Western hemisphere. Certainly, in a final ironic twist, the
institutionalization of popular arts and folklore in Latin Amer-
ica nourished cultural traditions that were effectively put to
political use against “US imperialism” of the cultural sort be-
ginning in the late 1950s.

Cultural Nationalism and Americanism in Latin America

Once independent from Spain and Portugal, Latin American
countries continued to look toward Europe for societal models.
Latin American elites sought to escape the “barbarism” they
perceived in their countries (particularly among the indigenous
populations, Afro-Americans, or plain rural people) through
Europeanization. Europeanization meant not only the whitening
of the population through immigration programs but also the
replication of European cultural institutions. A “nativist” cul-
tural movement developed among Latin American artists and
intellectuals only in the final years of the nineteenth century.
Cuban poet José Martí was among the first to question the in-
feriority of the mestizo, while Ruben Darío and Enrique Rodó
elaborated on a Latin American identity that was distinct from
that of Europe or the United States. As Richard Morse has con-
vincingly argued, the quest for a Latin American identity began
in full force during the twentieth century, “amid the disintegra-
tion of Western rationales and received understandings.”
Even in their quest for a Latin American identity, intellectuals remained in close contact with developments abroad, especially with the European avant-garde, and allowed an intensive cross-fertilization of ideas. By the 1920s, disenchantment with the US imperialist adventures combined with the devastation of World War I to challenge the notion of European or North American cultural superiority. Thus the 1920s became a decade of reconsideration of Latin America’s cultural heritage, particularly as far as the indigenous or African legacy was concerned. In Mexico, Minister of Education José Vasconcelos predicted that Latin America was leading the way into a new age, in which the “cosmic race,” the mix of the indigenous, African, and European population would transcend the narrow limits of Western cultures. In Peru, the political leader and essayist José Carlos Mariátegui combined his Marxist stance on economic issues with a steadfast defense of indigenous rights and culture. These are just the best-known exponents of the tendency. At the same time, the social scientists both in Europe and in the United States (there under the influence of German-born Franz Boas) started to engage in comparative studies. With cross-cultural fieldwork, they sought to delineate the relationships between cultures. Intellectuals in Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina were well aware of these trends and started to develop programs of research in this direction as well.

Studying folklore and folkloric music was part and parcel of the Latin American trend toward cultural nationalism. The Cuban government proposed in 1926 a congress on “Music as a means to tighten relations between the American peoples,” and particularly recommended “the study of Pan-American folklore.” Revolutionary Mexico also made pioneering efforts in the investigation of folklore. Mexican rural culture and folklore even turned into a fashionable trend in the United States, but the emphasis was placed less on music than on popular arts. In Brazil, avant-garde artists and writers became important promoters of the folklore movement. They questioned the long-standing fascination of Brazilians with all things French in particular and European in general, and demanded that Brazilian art address Brazilian realities. The vanguard’s notion of brasilidade (Brazilianness), was pitched against that of traditionalists, who sought a Brazilian identity rooted in the eighteenth-century baroque. Apart from appropriating the folk, modern brasilidade included the possibility of dynamically interacting with outside cultural forces, as in the figure of Oswald de An-
drade’s celebrated cannibal that consumes and transforms the other.

The avant-gardists, with their interest in afro-Brazilian and indigenous music forms, played a most important role in Brazilian musical culture. Composer Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–59) even claimed in Paris that “le Folklore, c’est moi”—because his compositions were diffused with Brazilian themes and styles that he had been exposed to during his long years as an itinerant musician. Writer and critic Mário de Andrade devoted himself to ethnographic projects in northeastern Brazil in 1928 and started to write on musical folklore shortly thereafter.21 As director of the Department of Culture of the City of São Paulo, he initiated the collection of Afro-Brazilian and Northeastern folklore in 1937. He financed a research group that traveled for six months through Brazil’s northeast and returned with about fifteen hundred items for the Discoteca Pública Municipal. Though funds were limited, records of this sound archive were distributed to music schools and cultural organizations. De Andrade also founded a short-lived Society for Ethnography and Folklore (1936–39), which produced cartographic representations of folkloric traditions in Brazil, another pioneer effort in Latin America.22 The government of Getúlio Vargas took up folklore for its own aims, recording over one hundred disks of folk music in the late 1930s.23 The government station broadcast a weekly program where the moderator brought in folk performers from all over Brazil to tell their stories and explain the pieces performed.24 Brazilian folklore researchers were also well connected internationally, participating in congresses and traveling abroad as well as within Latin America.25

In Chile the transition to a cultural nationalism was not as closely linked with the avant-garde. Research on Chilean folklore, especially on folk literature, began during the late nineteenth century and was inspired by the German tradition. Contracted by the Chilean government in 1890, the German scholar Rudolf Lenz (1863–38) founded the Sociedad del Folklore Chileno in 1909. The Sociedad organized regular talks and published its own journal.26 In the first decades of the twentieth century, a generation of criollista (nativist) writers favored themes on the Chilean countryside but kept a rather conservative outlook. They spoke about or, at best, for the rural underclass, and romanticized an unchangeable if inegalitarian community.27 Parallel to the literary interest in rural culture, there was also a movement that sought to revalidate Chilean folkloric music.
By the 1920s, modern Chilean composers such as Pedro Humberto Allende, Carlos Isamitt, and Carlos Levin took an interest in folk traditions as well. In 1938, university circles (gathered in the Chilean Commission on Intellectual Cooperation) organized a large exposition on Chilean popular art in Santiago that turned into a resounding success. One year later, at the American Congress on Intellectual Cooperation, the Chilean delegation presented a report on folklore studies, which recommended that all countries organize their folklore societies. The Commission’s brochure, “What is Folklore and What is it Good For?” explained that folklore could provide interesting study materials on Chilean society and ethnicity. Created in a private setting, folklore was perceived as a way to understand how el pueblo, the common people, viewed the world. Several departments at the University of Chile focused on different aspects of folklore investigations, and Chilean students went to Brazil to perfect their studies by the early 1940s.

Interest in Chilean folklore had spread beyond the bounds of art, music, and academe to educators and cultural critics at large. Promoters of Chilean musical traditions claimed that they would contribute to the cultural uplift of all classes and criticized sharply that radio stations broadcast so much foreign music. Musician Pablo Garrido, for instance, lamented that “decadent tangones” killed the spirit of Chileans. As a counter-measure, he wrote a popular book on the Chilean national dance, the cueca. It was the first book wholly dedicated to the national dance, and newspapers and weeklies reviewed it widely. Other writers concurred that the tangos, boleros, Mexican rancheros, and foxtrots that dominated radio broadcasts amounted to “continuous attacks against culture.” The promotion of folklore aimed at erecting a barrier to stop this invasion because “authentic” Chilean culture was under attack from all sides.

After the progressive Popular Front government had taken power in 1938, the revalidation of common people’s culture became an important aspect of fostering chilenidad (Chileneness). By the late 1930s, folk songbooks received enthusiastic reviews in middle-class magazines, which also started to feature articles on provincial fiestas and the customs of peasants and miners.

In academe as well as in cultural politics, folklore had definitely become a concern across Latin America in the 1940s. Even poor countries like El Salvador established a National Committee for Folklore Research in 1941. The committee asked local
priests, teachers, and mayors to participate in the initiative. Within three years it managed to publish a four hundred-page compilation of popular art and songs. In 1946, Colombia established a National Folklore Commission that started to issue its biannual journal one year later. In Venezuela, the efforts of individual researchers and writers were consolidated in 1946 in a special division of the Ministry of Education.

Of course, folklore did have its commercial dimensions. Some countries quickly attracted tourists with folkloric displays—traditional fiestas, music, dances, and rodeos—when air travel and the lack of European destinations after 1939 had turned Latin America into a viable option at least for elite tourists. In Brazil, state organizations directed the transformation of Afro-Brazilians’ carnival and other festivals into tourist-worthy performances. In Mexico, the Ballet Folklórico that performed the *jarabe tapatio* dance rose to stardom among Mexican foreign tourists thanks to the alliance of the governmental Tourism Department and the Institute of Fine Arts. The Chilean tourist service sponsored lavishly and distributed abroad illustrated booklets on the Chilean *huasos*, the cowboys it presented as “a handsome and energetic representative of the race.” In Brazil, interest in musical folklore was so strong that record companies such as Victor RCA and Columbia offered folklore collections to native buyers. Though these commercial aspects did have their effects on certain forms of popular culture (as Nestor García Canclini expounded in a pioneering book), they do neither explain nor represent the vogue of folklore as a whole and are of little importance in this chapter.

Folklore appealed to different groups in North and South for varied reasons—even if the mere definition of the term was contested among specialists. Some defined folklore narrowly as the popular arts of supposedly isolated “traditional communities.” In this view, folklore figured as a distilled expression of the “collective soul” (of a region or nation) that needed to be saved because it was on the verge of disappearing. Others employed a broader concept that included the popular culture of different professional groups (such as miners and fishermen) and even urban sectors. Both groups, however, engaged in documentation and research, although they might apply different standards and approaches. Composers wrote scores on folkloric themes, incorporated folk melodies, indigenous instruments, and rhythms to express national or regional identities. Among many others, Heitor Villa-Lobos or the Mexican
composer Carlos Chávez were two of the most prolific nationalist composers.43

For educators and officials working in the new departments of ethnography, musicology, or linguistics, folklore contributed to a scientific analysis of regional and national cultures. They advocated the promotion of folklore to foster a sense of community (on different levels from local to supranational), maintain traditional skills, and fill leisure hours in a sensible fashion. As in Europe, governments and political parties attempted to instrumentalize folk culture in different ways. In Argentina, some government institutions like the Federal Commission on Folklore and Natives clearly subscribed to a conservative agenda as they attempted to resist the cultural disintegration brought about by the “immigrant floods.”44 In Mexico, Chile, and Colombia, the promotion of folk stood for the valorization of the common people’s culture. Governmental institutions would not only focus on highbrow culture, but dedicate themselves to popular art as well. In these countries, “democratic culture” was a key to the building of the national popular state.45

Despite the importance of popular art for building the national states, a transnational network of music professionals in Latin America promoting “musical Americanism” attracted leading figures in the music world of the 1930s. One of the main promoters of “musical Americanism” was the German-born and trained architect and musicologist Francisco Curt Lange, who arrived in Uruguay in 1930 and within a few years had helped to establish the national radio station, the sound archives, as well as a graduate program in musicology. He also founded the prestigious journal *Boletín Latinoamericana de Música* in 1935.46 Citing the Mexican philosopher José Vasconcelos, he encouraged musicians and music educators in Latin America to draw on their own cultural resources and to emancipate themselves from the slavish adoration of European music. In view of the “hecatomb” he saw coming in Europe, he asked music specialists to request the collaboration of the state in fostering “musical Americanism.” Lange evidently conceived of cultural politics as a means to defend peace, as one of the goals of “musical Americanism” was to contribute to a more-united Latin America.47

Lange had contacts all across Latin America and established especially close links with the Brazilians Mario de Andrade, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Luiz-Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo, and Camargo Guarneri during a trip in 1934. The fact that each issue of the
Boletín Latinoamericana de Música showcased a Latin American country with the help of a coeditor from that same country also helped to form a community of music professionals, many of whom had a strong interest in folklore as one of the bases for “American” music. The leading music journal in Latin America, the Boletín soon found an echo abroad, as it had subscribers from forty-six countries. By the time that the United States entered the arena of folklore studies, networks among Latin American proponents of musical Americanism were already in place.

The Vogue of Folk and Cultural Diplomacy in the USA

The United States was not exempt from this nationalist turn in music in the early twentieth century. Folk symbolized emancipation and democracy during the 1939 US visit of the British majesties, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. The Roosevelts entertained the king and queen during the state dinner at the White House mostly with black spirituals, cowboy songs, folk dances, and only two performances of “art music.” This expressed the slow retreat from the long-lasting dominance of classical music, especially German orchestral music, in the United States. Though the folk music movement had emerged prior to World War I, the Depression heightened its promise. As Peter Filene put it in his recent book: “America’s fascination with folk culture challenged the status quo: it registered dissatisfaction with the emptiness of mass culture and the sterility of high culture, the corruption of power politics, and the vicissitudes of the industrial economy.” Emphasizing the folk took on political overtones shortly before World War II, as it stood for democratic sentiments as well as the proud American nation.

The Depression not only fostered the interest in folklore, but the Work Program Administration (WPA) also provided ways and means to collect folklore from different regions and population groups. Harvard-educated avant-garde composer Charles Seeger, who took charge of the music program at the WPA, instructed his field workers to organize folklore events and collect songs rather than try to force art music on people who did not want to hear it. The Library of Congress began to collect folk music, and founded the “Archive of American Folk Song” in 1928. This institution was the first to record Woody
Guthrie and Leadbelly (Huddie William Leadbetter), for instance. Moving beyond their initial focus on US music, the archivists started to collect folklore from all over the world in the mid 1930s. Latin American material became an important subject in 1938.53

Also in the 1930s, universities across the country started to offer courses in folklore studies. Ralph Steele Boggs, a professor of Spanish with a profound interest in Latin American folklore, founded the first graduate program in folklore studies at the University of North Carolina in 1939. An avid bibliographer and publisher of Spanish language bibliographies on folklore, he was well aware of the work done by folklorists south of the border. He managed to unite prominent researchers, such as Vicente T. Mendoza of Mexico or the Argentine Carlos Vega, in an association called Folklore Americas that started a journal by the same name in 1941.54 Thus important researchers in the field of folklore had already established ties in the 1930s.

The US government had traditionally left cultural diplomacy to private initiatives. As the clouds of war gathered on the European horizon, US diplomats and politicians started to worry about the expansionist aspirations of Germany with regards to Latin America. They were alarmed by the overtures the fascist Italian government made to Latin American countries. The apparent success of German and Italian cultural missions (bilateral institutes, magazine publications, tours of theater troupes) became a preoccupation in Washington circles.55 The Roosevelt administration had made efforts to improve relations with Latin America in 1933 when it renounced unilateral interventions in the internal affairs of its southern neighbors and proclaimed “the policy of the good neighbor.” But only in 1938 did the president create the Cultural Division of the State Department, with Latin America as a special focus.

A newcomer in the field of international cultural relations, the State Department drew on the experience of other organizations such as the (private) United States National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation or the American Library Association. The Cultural Division assembled its staff by bringing in people from outside of the State Department.56 The first director of the Division of Cultural Relations, Ben Cherrington, was a social scientist who had directed a program of international relations at the University of Denver. He first appointed advisory committees and invited representatives of Latin America
for a series of four conferences on the state of hemispheric cultural relations that covered education, art, music, publications, and libraries. Some of these new government appointees were critical of the notion of cultural diplomacy; they warned that cultural politics had their own dynamics and constituted a complex field. Historian Lewis Hanke, an advisor to the State Department, cautioned U.S. Americans not to be offended if Latin Americans would not follow U.S. models in their search for cultural identity. The first generation of cultural foreign policymakers thus kept a certain distance from instrumentalist politics. But with the advent of World War II, many actors in the field, public as well as private organizations, came to believe that the United States should act to create a sense of unity among the nations of the Americas and to develop schemes to intensify cultural relations.

At times it seemed that the Division of Cultural Relations was a step behind the professional or academic organizations in terms of implementing policy. In 1939, the American Musicalological Society had already invited a number of prominent Latin American music specialists to international congress that was taking place in New York in September. The newly formed advisory committee on music of the Cultural Division then decided to appeal to some of these specialists to stay for a “Conference on the Inter-American Relations in the Field of Music” taking place in October.

Conference participants discussed topics ranging from school music, radio exchanges, and folk music collections, but also wrote a memorandum on copyrights—a great concern for the Latin Americans, who complained about the lack of copyright protection their work suffered in the United States. The conference resolved to appoint an organizing committee that drew up a plan for a clearinghouse for music exchanges. Having gained financial support for its plan from Nelson Rockefeller’s Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs and from the Carnegie Endowment, the committee asked the Pan American Union to accept the Inter-American Music Center under its umbrella. The PAU, which had maintained a financially strapped, but continually expanding cultural division since the late 1920s, accepted what must have appeared to be a good deal. Led by Charles Seeger, the new center opened at the PAU headquarters in Washington, DC in early 1941.

The appointment of Seeger as head of the PAU Music Center was a victory for those in Inter-American cultural relations
who favored a focus on folklore and popular culture—as opposed to “serious” music championed by Howard Hanson, Director of the Eastman School of Music and member of the Cultural Division’s advisory committee on music—in the new cultural diplomacy. Indeed, a strong lobby for folklore studies shaped the policies of the Cultural Division of the State Department. Charles Seeger argued that folklore would be a good tool in “trying to reach people, peoples of countries, not just ruling classes”—poorer people who would not attend a concert or an evening at the ballet. The report of the 1939 conference on music recommended that researchers make an effort to find folk songs that were “connected” with people’s lives, songs of “birth and death, heroic deeds, work, of beggars, muleteers, vaqueros,…” Such a focus would also counterbalance the notion that Latin American music was “very gay and sometimes spicy entertainment”—very likely a reference to Carmen Miranda, the scantily-dressed, samba-dancing “Brazilian bombshell” who was at the time sweeping New York off its feet. Carleton Sprague Smith, the head of the music division of the New York Public library, toured South America in 1940 on behalf of the State Department. In his report, he argued that the music of the Western Hemisphere was “not as reflective, as ponderous, as metaphysical” as European music, but rather rough, humorous, exaggerated, as well as sentimental. He wrote that exchanging popular and folk music was more important for “fundamental cultural understanding” than tours by “operatic and other musical stars.” Smith claimed that the cultural understanding brought about by promoting the Americas’ musical heritage contributed significantly to defending freedom in the Western Hemisphere.

Folklore scholars from North and South were quick to jump on the bandwagon, hoping to find sponsors for their subject within and outside the United States. For the renowned folklorist Stith Thompson (University of Indiana), the concept of a “Folklore of the Americas” offered great opportunities to unite folklorists who he considered “scattered and often ineffective.” He pleaded for coordination of national efforts and dreamed of a Pan American Folklore archive. He hoped that the Americas would catch up to European countries like Sweden and Denmark, where folklore studies were advanced. Ralph Steele Boggs saw in the government efforts a validation of his endeavors with Folklore Americas. The Music Educators’ National Conference that met in the Fall of 1942 agreed that teaching Latin
American folk music in US schools was needed to “Americanize the Americas.” The meeting attractions included a radio connection to Brazil, where star composer Heitor Villa-Lobos answered questions about the importance of folklore.69

Thus the consensus among music specialists was to encourage Latin Americans to showcase their own democratic traditions and find their artistic inspiration in “American” traditions instead of looking to the decadent aristocratic European culture. Latin Americans should make the most of the “golden opportunity to establish their own music-cultural independence of Europe.”70 Certainly, Francisco Curt Lange and many other Latin American music specialists favoring “Musical Americanism” could not have agreed more.

Behind the overly optimistic rhetoric about the potential of folklore lay a more realistic assessment of cultural diplomacy as well as a good deal of concern about the current political situation. Seeger, for instance, was not entirely blue eyed about the potential of music as an agent of international understanding per se. As he put it, “[e]ven when in the best of faith we try to put music at the service of broad cultural policies, we cannot assure our non-musical collaborators that we know what we are doing.” A few years later, he declared music to be “a highly competitive field and can be used as a medium for aggression as easily as any other.”71 Political motives and context were also plainly evident in Carleton Sprague Smith’s report on his tour of South America. He pointed out that the German, Italian, and Japanese governments had managed to invite hundreds of intellectuals annually and noted that German and Italian businesses generously donated books to libraries. Reflecting an attitude that might have still been prevalent in the 1930s, Smith considered propaganda as “foreign to our nature.” But in view of fascist activities, the US government had no choice but to adopt more aggressive measures.72 Having met with many radio station managers in Latin America, he urged the United States to produce records with its own folk and popular music, accompanied with scripts in Spanish and Portuguese, so that the US “might thus have Propaganda Half Hours (free of charge) in important Radio Stations … with very little effort.” Among the people he met, he designated “Inter-American key people” who were “friendly to the United States and may be counted on to do what they can to further inter-American exchange,” suggesting that the State Department invite them to tour the US. The worst the United States could do, he warned,
was to issue vague promises about common cultural projects and then not follow up.73

In announcing the creation of the Cultural Division of the Department of State on 27 July 1938, Sumner Welles had called on educational institutions and private organizations to assist the government in developing and implementing its program of cultural diplomacy. Indeed, many of the men and women who were now developing government policy came from and remained active in universities, professional organizations as well as private foundations. To cite just one example, the head of the PAU’s Music Division, Charles Seeger, served on the Advisory Committee on Music of the State Department’s Cultural Division and on the American Council of Learned Societies’ Committee on Musicology. He was a board member of the Music Education Research Council and a consultant to the Carnegie Endowment. As one of the leading members of the American Musicological Society, he participated in a publication project, “Monuments of Music in the Western Hemisphere,” which was in turn financed by the American Council of Learned Societies. Seeger’s ties also extended to broadcasting companies since he was on the advisory committee for NBC’s program “Music of the New World.”74 The financial schemes to fund the different cultural initiatives were equally complex. As mentioned above, Seeger’s Music Division of the Pan American Union was funded by the State Department and the Carnegie Endowment in its early years, but still the PAU’s music division was able to raise $33,970 from private institutions for its operations in its first year.75 When the initial subsidy ran out in 1944, projects continued to be cosponsored by entities ranging from the Music Educators National Conference to the Library of Congress and private foundations.76 Appreciating the opportunity of receiving official validation of their engagement, professional organizations and philanthropies were eager to collaborate with the government. Thus with public and private funding, US folklore specialists working through different agencies and institutions were ready by the early 1940s to engage in the folklore offensive.77

**Policies in Practice**

Though there were quite a few voices demanding reciprocity and warning against the danger of arrogance, there is no deny-
ing that many US protagonists regarded Latin Americans as the junior partner in the enterprise of cultural exchange. Archibald MacLeish, librarian of Congress, found himself pressed to point out to the Conference on Inter-American Relation in the Field of Music in 1939 that Latin American audiences were “a very sophisticated, highly intelligent group of people”; North Americans should not think that they were “going to do the giving.” William Berrien, already a bit more patronizing, stated that there was a “surprising amount of good music available in Latin America to be performed....”78 Also regarding folklore studies, US attitudes were initially rather paternalistic. Thus Seamus Doyle, director of the Folk Archive of the Library of Congress, reported in 1941 that “the value of encouraging, preserving and demonstrating [sic] the oral tradition of folk song is not yet recognized or appreciated,” despite the fact that Latin American folklorists had started to record folk songs and organize archives many years ago.79 Neither did Charles Seeger note any contradictions in calling the Latin American music resources “disorganized” at the same time that he tried—rather desperately—to convince Uruguayan Francisco Curt Lange to let him guest edit a special issue of the renowned Boletín Latinoamericana de Música on the music of the United States.80 Moreover, when it came to establishing the Inter-American Music Center, the power of the US and its desire to be at the center of cultural initiatives was palpable in the decision to completely ignore Lange’s Inter-American Institute of Musicology in Montevideo and establish the center in Washington, DC. At least it seems that once the communication had improved between the folklore specialists of the Western Hemisphere, the attitude of the North Americans tended to change. Lewis Hanke, eminent historian who worked for the State Department, was well aware of the “tremendous handicaps” Latin American folklorists worked under and marveled, “How they accomplish what they do is beyond me.”81

Rather understandably, folklorists in South America, who sometimes had spent years assembling their collections under difficult conditions, were at times suspicious of the sudden interest on the part of the North Americans in their folklore. One model of interaction that was likely to be fraught with difficulty was the “recording mission”—in which North Americans traveled around Latin America trying to record folklore music. One such mission took place in June 1941, when Seamus Doyle joined the American Ballet Caravan (a venture of Lincoln Kir-
stein and George Balanchine) during its South America tour with the task to bring back folk material. In every city that the Ballet appeared, Doyle consulted with local specialists for access to information and material, but often found that they were not willing to provide either. The Brazilian intellectual Gilberto Freyre, for instance, was “pleasant and courteous” but did not help Doyle in finding recordable folklore. When Doyle asked the producers of the Brazilian radio program La Hora Nacional (The National Hour) about the possibility of recording some of the folk singers that had appeared on their program, the inquiry “did not produce an enthusiastic reaction.” Doyle and his crew were not much more fortunate at the municipal sound archive in São Paulo. The US Americans were impressed with the institution, “a most attractive place and very well stocked, cataloged and efficiently managed.” Director Oneyda Alvarenga provided Doyle with copies of the latest publications (classifications of Brazilian folk songs) but despite the “cordial” relations, she was apparently reluctant to share some recent recordings with Doyle and his crew.

Even the Chilean music professor Domingo Santa Cruz, who normally maintained the most cordial relations with the United States, was annoyed about Doyle’s recording tour. Santa Cruz thought that the approach of the recording tour was not “serious” enough and announced to Doyle that he was going to submit a protest in writing to the Library of Congress. Finally, Santa Cruz and Eugenio Pereira Salas choose two performers (“two gypsyish looking females who required a little cognac to put them in a singing mood”) with whom Doyle could record a few songs. Doyle acknowledged that Santa Cruz, who was trying to receive funding for a large-scale folk music recording project from the Chilean government, might be “a little uneasy about collectors, especially from the States, who might mess up the idea by doing a superficial research without adequate qualifications for it.”

Most explicit in his reaction was the Argentine folklore specialist Carlos Vega, who had worked in the field since the 1920s and had good contacts in Europe. He flatly refused to let Doyle copy any of his records on the spot, but “indicated that he would be interested in an offer” from the Library of Congress Music Division for the duplication of his recordings. The Library’s Archive of American Folksong would try for years to collect the funds necessary to make Vega an offer for duplication, worrying that they might lose “the opportunity to
acquire one of the best collections of Latin American folk music.”85 Evidently, Latin American folklorists started to view popular art as a resource that should not simply be given away, but rather something that could be used to bargain with, especially vis-a-vis the United States.

The more the local folklore community was involved in recording projects of the various US agents, the more successful they tended to be. In Mexico, the Inter-American Institute of Indigenous Studies received money from the PAU to prepare eight broadcasts on the subject of musical folklore. Most of the people involved were Mexicans, and the production went ahead speedily. The Archive of American Folk Song also sponsored collection projects in Cuba. For the Archive, this was a convenient way of adding to its collection even during the war years, when field trips within the United States were out of the question because of the rationing of gasoline and tires. The Folk Archive also started producing records with the specific purpose of “exchange with cultural institutions in the other American republics.” By 1944, the Archive reported that its services were in great demand “because of the ever growing importance of American folk song in the consciousness of our people.”86 Another possibility were exchange contracts satisfactory to both parties. Thus the Sound Archive of São Paulo, which had not wanted to share recordings with Seamus Doyle, made duplicates available on an exchange basis to the Library of Congress only a few years later.87

Latin American folklore researchers did not shy away from opportunities that they deemed beneficial. Indeed, for some Latin American folk specialists, the new US policies provided much-needed technical resources to engage in their research. In 1941, for instance, the US State Department invited the Chilean historian Eugenio Pereira Salas and the composer Domingo Santa Cruz, both specialists of folklore, to tour the United States.88 Once in Washington, DC, Charles Seeger of the PAU Music Division asked Pereira Salas to write a short booklet on the state of music in Chile, to be distributed through the PAU. Pereira Salas and Santa Cruz also met with the folklorists of the Library of Congress and exchanged views on different ways to collect material. They managed to convince the American Council of Learned Societies to purchase recording equipment for the Institute of Musical Extension in Chile, a university affiliate concerned with the collection and diffusion of folklore. With the help of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Nel-
son Rockefeller, the ACLS was able to circumvent war-time shipping restrictions. The state of the art recording machines (one portable and one for studio use) with a value of $4,900 arrived in 1943 in Chile where they were immediately put to use. 

Other folklore researchers were able to use the networks they built during the heyday of the vogue of folklore as a springboard to an international career. This was certainly the case of Luiz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo, the Brazilian musicologist and folklorist. Corrêa had just finished his doctoral thesis on the music of Brazilian indigenous people in 1938 and was working at the School of Music of the University of Rio de Janeiro when the Music Division of the PAU hired him for six months on the recommendation of William Berrien and Carleton Sprague Smith of the New York Public Library. 

During his six months in the United States, Corrêa visited many universities and gave talks on Brazilian music at meetings of professional organizations. When he returned to Brazil in February 1942, he took along more than just good memories. He carried with him a State Department voucher for over one thousand dollars, to be disbursed by the US Embassy, and three boxes of recording equipment. The money and the equipment were used during a two-month field trip to record folk music in the Brazilian Northeast. 

The agreement with Corrêa was simple: the Archive of American Folk Song at the Library of Congress organized the shipment of empty disks and recording machines; the original recordings Corrêa made went back to the Library of Congress, while the National School of Music in Rio de Janeiro could retain a copy. Corrêa had a free hand in deciding which material to record and how to spend the allotted money. The agreement was productive as Corrêa sent back almost two hundred records to the Library of Congress over the next six years—and kept two hundred records in Rio.

The correspondence between Corrêa and the Library of Congress reveals the modes of interaction between the two parties. All in all, Corrêa presented himself as an energetic, hard-working, and resourceful young researcher who wanted to “improve the standard of the school” despite the opposition of a conservative majority. In doing so, he represented the kind of forward-looking person the US cultural diplomats and professionals were looking to collaborate with. When he remitted the first records, Corrêa complained that he had no staff whatsoever and was forced to do “everything” himself, including typing the catalogs and even packing the records and
bringing them to the post office. His working environment was abysmal since he was given a small room where the custodian of the schools also kept cleaning equipment. He announced that he was fighting for better conditions despite his marginal position in the school.

In his correspondence, Corrêa was at times apologetic for Brazilian “deficiencies,” most of them of financial or logistical nature. Corrêa asked the US Americans’ indulgence for being late, but insisted he was not lazy (by contrast, he chastised the new editors of the Revista Brasileira de Música, who let the publication of the journal lapse rather than surveying the printing and mailing the issues themselves, as he had done as its previous editor). Also, in the description of his field trips, Corrêa tried to align himself with his colleagues in Washington, DC. From the villages of the Northeast he reported that recording conditions were difficult as the unreliable electrical supply sometimes damaged the machines. As to lodging, Corrêa mused, “You cannot imagine in what kind of hotels we have to stay.... It is just like in the old books of travels in colonial times.”

Deference to notions of US efficiency and travel comfort notwithstanding, Corrêa was at complete liberty to decide where and what to record with the US funding. He had not received any directions from the Archive of American Folk Song or the trustful Library of Congress. When the Library of Congress started to issue a “Folk Music of the Americas” series in 1944, the producers were anxious to receive Corrêa’s recommendations for a selection of five titles, and asked him to provide a brief note on the songs. Corrêa thus helped define the official canon of Brazilian folk music in the United States, at least as far as these research institutions were concerned.

The invitation to the United States and the resulting collaboration with the Library of Congress helped to promote Corrêa’s career significantly. Within two years after his return from the United States, his standing in Brazil had become such that he was able to found the Center for Folklore Research at the School of Music, which gave him an extra room as well as an assistant. Carleton Sprague Smith, chief of the Music Division of the New York Public Library and one-time member of the State Department advisory committee on Music, was present at the opening session. Later, the Center would hold regular conferences on folklore that attracted the most prominent specialists in Brazil. Though funding from the US government for recording missions dried out by 1945, Corrêa’s international
connections helped to open other doors. The North American periodical *Musical America*, for instance, solicited and published Corrêa de Azevedo’s opinions on the role music should play in UNESCO, which had just been established. UNESCO’s division of arts and letters had at first been led by Gustavo Durán, and afterward by Vanett Lawler. Lawler, with the support of Charles Seeger and others, then appointed Corrêa as director of the newly created Music Division of UNESCO in 1947. He held this position until returning to Brazil in 1965 and remained a most active folklorist, also taking leading positions in the International Folk Music Council.98

**Conclusion**

Let us return now to the more general questions of cultural diplomacy in the era of the Good Neighbor policy. There is no denying that the folklore initiatives were motivated by and to some extent served US short-term political interests. The more substantial collections of folklore available in the United States and the newly acquired knowledge about it were used for propaganda purposes during and after World War II. Even the personnel of the Pan American Union’s Division of Music—an international body, after all—was “at all times available for consultation” to the US State Department. The War and Navy Departments frequently asked the PAU’s Music Division for “information, advice, etc.” on material that they could broadcast abroad, on scores for folk music they would like to play abroad, and the like.99 The Library of Congress assisted in the development of folklore radio shows and broadcast them in the United States as well as in Latin America. Not only the government, but also the mass media profited from the many resources on folklore. Both Walt Disney and Metro Goldwin Mayer requested duplicates of the Folk Archive’s holdings and asked for guidance on appropriate music for their Latin American films.100

In the post-war period, the shifting political concerns of the US government brought about a dramatic geographic re-orientation of cultural policy. As the United States emerged victorious from World War II and assumed its role as a superpower, conflicts in Europe and wars in China, Korea, and the Middle East absorbed the attention of policy makers. Initiatives in cultural diplomacy focused on these areas as well.101 In the Organization of American States, which superseded the
Pan American Union in 1948, cultural relations were a low priority once the security issues had been clarified with the mutual defense pact. All of a sudden, Latin America played but a minor role in the Cold War battle for hearts and minds.

The nascent folklore research community of the Americas complained in vain to the OAS because of the lack of funding for recording projects. They also found that the Library of Congress reoriented its activities, intensifying relations with the European International Commission on Folk Arts and Folklore while also engaging in projects in Japan and Iraq. Though the State Department continued to finance the production and distribution overseas of US folk music, financial support for folklore collection in Latin America was halted.

Folklore specialists from the South who, like Luis Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo, had benefitted from US government largesse were forced to look to other sources. In the post-war period, US foundations such as the Guggenheim Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and others provided some opportunities for continued exchanges, though the field of folklore was not a priority for them.

The politically motivated decision made by the US government to engage in cultural diplomacy after 1938 thus injected important resources for folklore researchers into a variety of exchange and collection projects. Since folklorists in many Latin American countries had already engaged in significant research and also networking, they were in an excellent position to profit from travels, equipment, and financial resources provided in the context of US cultural policy. Researchers, educators, and the interested public profited from bibliographies and recordings that the experts compiled and made available internationally. This contributed to the institutionalization of folklore research in the North and the South, and helped expand collections. Within the Inter-American organizations, the Committee on Folklore attached to the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History (established in 1928 with its seat in Mexico City) started to publish its journal *Folklore Americano* in 1953. The US-based journal *Folklore Americas*, a project of Ralph Steele Boggs, continued publication until 1968.

The improved networking led to the standardization and professionalization of folkloric research as far as universities, libraries, and government agencies were concerned. Folklore specialists worked hard to establish permanent networks through mutual visits, correspondence, and the exchange of publica-
tions. They freely shared advice, if not their collections. Argentines trained by Carlos Vega introduced their methodologies to Uruguay and Venezuela. In 1947, US folklorist Stith Thompson worked for six months as a consultant in Venezuela where he advised on the structure of the National Service for Folklore Investigation at the Ministry of Education. Moreover, folklorists from North and South profited from the greater international recognition and visibility outside their own countries. Engagement in the transnational arena helped Latin American folklore specialists gain leverage against their employers and earn prestige in their own countries.

The ten years of intense US efforts to promote folklore in the Americas had certainly invigorated transnational collaboration. Through initiatives developed in the Cultural Division of the State Department, personal contacts and professional networks were strengthened, organizations and publications established. But despite the collaboration and the cordial relationships that had developed between US and Latin American folklorists, US influence was not hegemonic. European folklore research had also informed Latin American institutions. In Colombia, a Frenchman organized and led the Archive of Folklore in the Museum of Ethnology. The Brazilians had cultivated their ties to Portugal, as some of the former Spanish colonies did with their parent country. Latin American folklorists took an active part not only in hemispheric ventures, but also in Europe-based international organizations such as the International Folk Music Council (IFMC, founded in 1947 in London). It was a triumph for Brazilian folklorists to host the 1954 World Conference of the IFMC in conjunction with a Folklore Congress organized to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the city. Also UNESCO, especially its music division headed by Corrêa de Azevedo, provided another transnational platform for folklore scholars and sponsored a number of projects.

As much as folklore specialists from North and South America talked about their desire to create a “genuine culture of the Americas,” the outcome of their venture differed starkly from that vision. Much more Latin American folklore was propagated in the United States than vice-versa. Latin Americans were too concerned with promoting their own national or regional cultures to be truly fascinated by folk influences from the United States. The US government, in turn, remained lukewarm in its efforts to export American folk culture, diverse as it may have been.
In the long run, the constant referral to notions of Pan American Folklore and the traditions of “the Americas” was not enough to bind Anglo- and Latin American popular cultures together. Beginning in the late 1950s, the folklore resources assembled with US encouragement during the 1930s and 1940s would be used by a new generation of music artists to promote a common Latin American identity. In the 1950s, precursors such as Chile’s Violeta Parra worked with schools and universities. By the late 1960s, the so-called New Song movement (*nueva canción*) encompassed artists from many Latin American countries who combined traditional musical forms with socially relevant texts. They protested social inequalities and imperialism, and challenged the cultural and economic domination of the United States—thus revindicating the doubters Lewis Hanke and Charles Seeger, who had warned all along about the uncertain outcomes of cultural diplomacy.111

**Notes**

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2. See, for instance, Julianne Burton, “Don (Juanito) Duck and the Imperial-Patriarchal Unconscious: Disney Studios, the Good Neighbor Policy, and the Packaging of Latin America,” in *Nationalism and Sexualities*, eds. Andrew Parker et al. (New York: Routledge, 1992), 21–41.


9. “Latin America” is here defined as the former colonies of Spain or Portugal; “the Americas” refers to the entire Western Hemisphere, from Alaska to Patagonia.


11. For a stimulating discussion on the relationship between intellectuals and the state in Argentina, Chile, Peru, Mexico, and Cuba, see Nicola Miller, *In the Shadow of the State: Intellectuals and the Quest for National Identity in Twentieth Century Latin America* (London: Verso, 1999).


14. Vicky Unruh dealt with the relations between the European and the Latin American vanguards in *Latin American Vanguards: The Art of Contentious..."


17. This is from the program of a planned “First Pan-American Congress of Music” which was supposed to meet in Havana in February 1928. However, I have been unable to find more information on the congress.


20. The traditionalists enjoyed a strong influence in architecture, where they promoted a neocolonial style, while the moderns dominated in literature and music. For a discussion of the different exponents, see Daryle Williams, Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930–1945 (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 26–51.

21. His relevant writings on music include Mário de Andrade, Ensaio sobre Musica Brasileira (São Paulo: I. Chiarato & Cia., 1928), A Mãusica e a Canção Populares no Brasil (Rio de Janeiro: Ministério das Relações Exteriores Divisão de Cooperação Intelectual, 1936), Cultura Musical (São Paulo: Departamento municipal de cultura, 1936). Many of his works were translated into Spanish within a few years of their initial publication. The Brazilian literature on Andrade includes more than two hundred biographies, collections of letters, and the like (around half of them published after 1990), but unfortunately no biography is available in English. From the context of musicology, Vasco Mariz, Três Musicólogos Brasileiros: Mário de Andrade, Renato Almeida, Luiz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo, Coleção Retratos do Brasil, vol. 169 (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1983). Andrade and Almeida gave important impulses to folklore studies at the time, but later ethnomusicologists have revised some of their theories. See Gérard Béhague, “Recent Studies on the Music of Latin America,” Latin American Research Review 20, 3 (1985): 220.
22. Modern composer Mozart Camargo Guarnieri also engaged in research during the second Afro-Brazilian Congress in Bahia, 1937. Arquivo Folclórico da Discoteca Pública Municipal, Catálogo Ilustrado do Museu Folclórico, 2nd vol. (São Paulo: Secretaria de Educação e Cultura, 1950), IX.


25. Brazil was one of the few non-European countries that participated in the International Folklore Congress that ran concurrently to the 1937 Universal Exposition in Paris. The League of Nations’ Institute of Intellectual Co-operation cosponsored the congress. See Nicanor Miranda, O Congresso Internacional de Folklore (São Paulo: Departamento de Cultura, 1940); Musée National des Arts et Traditions Populaires (France) and Georges Maurice Huisman, Travaux du 1er Congrès International de Golklore, Tenu à Paris, du 23 au 28 août 1937 à l’Ecole du Louvre (Tours: Arrault et cie imprimeurs, 1938).

26. Lenz was professor at the Pedagogical Institute of the University of Chile. Soon after his arrival, he developed a great interest in the Mapuche language and culture as well as popular poetry. Also in U.S. universities, German émigré musicologists became prominent in the 1930s. See Richard Crawford, The American Musicological Society, 1934–1984 (Philadelphia, n.p: 1984), 10; and Reinhold Brinkman and Christoph Wolff, eds., Driven Into Paradise: The Musical Migration from Nazi Germany to the United States (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).


28. Pedro Humberto Allende for instance was the Chilean representative at the 1928 Prague Conference of Popular Arts that was sponsored by the League of Nations’ Division for Intellectual Cooperation.

29. The exposition was organized by the Chilean Commission on Intellectual Cooperation, an affiliate with the League of Nations. Museo de Bellas Artes, Catálogo de la Exposición Americana de Artes Populares (Santiago: n.p., 1943).

30. Julio Vicuña Cifuentes, ¿Qué es el Folklore y para qué Sirve? (Santiago: Comisión Chilena de Cooperación Intelectual, 1940), 4. His colleague Abdón also considered folklore to be a window on “the feelings and the thinking of the people at large” (el pueblo mismo), the “soul of the people.” Abdón Andrade Coloma, “Introducción,” Archivos del Folklore Chileno 1 (1940): 7.

31. Oreste Plath, who went on to become one of Chile’s most prolific folklorists, was one of the Chilean students in Brazil in 1943. The Brazilian foreign ministry and the Chilean Commission on Intellectual Cooperation funded his stay.

32. Garrido was not a traditionalist per se since he worked mainly as a jazz musician for many years and wrote hundreds of articles on its positive aspects. Ercilla, 16 September 1941, 16. By 1947, Garrido was in charge of
the Music Department of the Dirección de Informaciones y Cultura, a government agency coordinating and implementing cultural policy.


34. Plath wrote many articles on folklore in magazines such as Hoy, Eva, Er-cilla and the newspaper La Nación. For a sample see “Aspectos del Folklore,” Hoy, 17 December 1942, 63; and “Animalismo Oceánico y Campero en el Hablar del Pueblo Chileno,” Hoy, 11 March 1943, 59.


36. For an interesting discussion on the uses of folk in Venezuela, see David M. Guss, The Festive State: Race, Ethnicity, and Nationalism as Cultural Performance (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 15–18. The Revista de Folklore was the official organ of the Colombian Folklore Commission, which depended from the Ministry of Education.


39. Carlos Del Campo, Huasos Chilenos: Folklore Campesino Autorizado por la Dirección del los Servicios de Turismo del Ministerio de Fomento (Santiago de Chile: Lito Leblanc, 1939).

40. Carleton Sprague Smith, Musical Tour through South America, June–October, 1940 (Washington, DC: n.p., 1940), 43.


42. Space does not allow a comprehensive listing of the major tendencies. For the traditionalist approach, see, e.g., Félix Coluccio and Gerardo Schiaffino, Folklore y Nativismo (Buenos Aires: Editorial Bell, 1948); for the broader definition, Julio Vicuña Cifuentes, Qué es el Folklore y para qué Sirve? (Santiago: Comisión Chilena de Cooperación Intelectual, 1940).

43. This nationalist turn in music also took place in Europe, where Bela Bartok, Antonin Dvorak, Charles Debussy, Sibelius, and Grieg all attempted to compose specifically national music.

44. Félix Coluccio and Gerardo Schiaffino, Folklore y Nativismo (Buenos Aires: Editorial Bell, 1948), 7. For a comparison to European folklore studies, see Felix J. Oinas, Folklore, Nationalism, and Politics (Columbus: Slavica Publishers, 1978), and James R. Dow and Hannjost Lidfeld, The Nazi-fication of an Academic Discipline: Folklore in the Third Reich, Folklore Studies in Translation (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993). The
example of Nazi Germany has contributed strongly to the identification of folklore with fascist politics.


47. Francisco Curt Lange, “Americanismo Musical,” Boletín Latino-Americano de Música 2 (April 1936): 117–30. The first issue of the Boletín included contributions from the United States. Beginning with the second issue, separate sections were kept for “Studies on the United States” and “European Studies,” usually with more articles in the latter section. Keeping the Latin American and the Anglo-American heritage strictly apart was a strong tendency throughout the hemisphere. See Pérez Montfort, Avatares del Nacionalismo Cultural: Cinco Ensayos, 29–30.

48. Chilean Domingo Santa Cruz and Brazilian Heitor Villa-Lobos were both classical composers who strongly supported folklore investigations.

49. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library and Museum, Great Britain Diplomatic Files, Box 38. The program of the evening is available online, <http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/psf/box38/folo343.html>, consulted 22 September 2002.


54. The original but clumsy journal title, Folklore of the – de las – das Americas was changed to Folklore Americas in 1943. It remained in existence until 1968.

55. Stefan H. Rinke, “Der letzte freie Kontinent”: Deutsche Lateinamerikapolitik im Zeichen Transnationaler Beziehungen, 1918–1933, Historamericana


57. All four conferences took place in late 1939. For a good overview on the debates surrounding the implementation of cultural diplomacy, see Ninkovich, The Diplomacy of Ideas: U.S. Foreign Policy and Cultural Relations, 1938–1950.


59. Carleton Sprague Smith of the Music Division of the New York Public Library told the Cultural Division of the State Department that he had already received a grant of five thousand dollars from the Carnegie Corporation to that end, and that he was seeking further support from Rockefeller Foundation and the Pan American Union. “Memorandum: Interviews in New York City by Mr. Charles A. Thomson, March 24 and 25, 1939,” US National Archives, RG 59, Box 237, 111.46/108, College Park, MD.

60. Francisco Curt Lange was the only Latin American who gave a formal address at the meeting. One Guatemalan conductor and the Brazilian musicologist Marx-Burle (in New York for the World’s Fair) were present but did not contribute much to the discussion. Department of State, Division of Cultural Relations, “Conference on Inter-American Relations in the Field of Music. Digest of Proceedings. Principal Addresses,” 1940, US National Archives, RG 353 Box 30, College Park, MD.


62. The long-time director of the PAU, Leo Stanton Rowe, was a strong proponent of cultural exchanges. Founded in 1928, the PAU’s Division of Intellectual Cooperation initially organized academic exchanges, compiled lists of cultural societies, coordinated bibliographic exchanges, and informed cultural institutions across the Americas, as well as the League of Nations, of the relevant decisions taken by the Pan American Conferences. During the 1930s, the PAU issued bulletins like the Panorama, Lecturas para Maestros, and Points of View series (in English, Spanish, and Portuguese) that presented American issues and intellectual life. Pan American Union, Division of Intellectual Cooperation, Report of the Division of Intellectual Cooperation of the Pan American Union (Washington, DC: n.p., 1941). See also David Barton Castle, “Leo Stanton Rowe and the Meaning of Pan Americanism,” in Beyond the Inter-American Affairs, ed. David Sheinin (Westport, London: Praeger, 2000), 33–44.

63. Charles Seeger, "Brief History of the Music Division of the Pan American Union,” 1947, 1, Columbus Memorial Library, Washington, DC.


65. Berrien, “Report of the Committee of the Conference on Inter-American Relations in the Field of Music,” 88. This was in the suggestions of the
subcommittee on community and recreational music. Seeger was a member of the committee.


72. Smith also pointed to a persistent problem that hampered US efforts: unlike the Italians and the Germans, US Americans were reluctant to learn Spanish or Portuguese. Smith, “Musical tour through South America: June–October 1940,” 280. Some of the steps the Italian government undertook, such as teaching and student exchanges, certainly were a cornerstone of all international cultural relations. Smith was also aware of the travels of fellow music specialist Antonio Luaidi, *Viaggio musicale nel Sud-America* (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Nazionale, Stampa, 1934).

73. He considered Mario de Andrade and Luiz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo “key people” even though they spoke little English. Smith, “Musical Tour through South America: June–October 1940,” 44, 286.


76. In an oral history transcript, Seeger says that Carnegie gave fifteen thousand dollars for three years, and that the first year of the center at the PAU was paid by the OClAA. Seeger et al., “Reminiscences of an American Musicologist,” 295.

77. Oliver Schmidt points to the same phenomenon in “Small Atlantic World: U.S. Philanthropy and the Expanding International Exchange of Scholars


81. Lewis Hanke to Gilbert Chase, 1 January 1943, AFS 7324–7398, Archive of American Folksong, Library of Congress.

82. The Kirstein-Balanchine American Ballet Caravan was one of the projects financed by Nelson Rockefeller’s Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs. Interestingly enough, the pieces performed by the American Ballet Caravan were “Concerto Baroco,” a Balanchine choreography set to *Bach’s Concerto in D minor for Two Violins*, B.W.V. 1043, and the “Ballet Imperial,” set Tchaikovsky’s *Piano Concerto in G Major*—though the choreography might have been modern, the music was not. The OCIAA did favor contemporary compositions in other instances by promoting composers such as Aron Copland.


85. Since Peronist Argentina had fallen out of grace with the State Department, it became more and more difficult to obtain funding for this project. B. A. Botkin to Harold Spivacke, 22 February 1945, Archive of American Folk Song, Folder “Argentina,” Library of Congress.


88. Pereira Salas had studied in the US as a Guggenheim Fellow in 1933 and was one of the founders of the Chile-United States Cultural Institute in November 1938.


90. The title of Corrêas thesis was “Escala, ritmo e melodia na música dos índios brasileiros.” Seeger et al., “Reminiscences of an American Musicologist,” 300.


94. Luiz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo to Harold Spivacke, 27 January 1943, AFS 7324–7398. In other ways, though, Corrêa adapted slowly. In January 1944, the Library of Congress wrote almost apologetically to remind Corrêa he had to turn in his accounting records on the funds and on the material shipped to Brazil: “Please do not misunderstand me. I do not desire to terminate our joint project. On the contrary, I hope that we shall be able to cooperate for many, many years to come. On the other hand, as a government official, you will understand why it is necessary for me to give these final accountings…. If you are willing to continue to work with us in the future, I must begin to arrange for an extension [of the funding].” Harold Spivacke to Corrêa de Azevedo, 28 January 1944, AFS 7324–7398.
95. B. A. Botkin to Corrêa de Azevedo, 16 November 1944, AFS 7324–7398.
96. Corrêa de Azevedo to Harold Spivacke, 7 January 1944, AFS 7324–7398.
97. Duncan Emrich, Chief, Archive of American Folk Song, to Luiz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo, AFS 7324–7398.
98. Luiz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo, Minhas memórias da UNESCO (a música nas relações internacionais), 1947–1965 (Curitiba: Pr6-Música, 1967), 3–7. One generation later, the Brazilian musicologist Vasco Mariz had a very similar international career, as president of the Inter-American Council on Music, secretary of the Brazilian National UNESCO commission on music, and vice-president of the Brazilian UNESCO commission.
100. How folklore was used and rediffused by mass media and other cultural institutions in the United States is beyond the scope of this paper. “Annual Report 1945–46,” 1, Library of Congress, Archive of American Folk Song.
102. The Pan American Union was demoted to being the “secretariat” of the OAS.
103. T. M. Pearce to William Dorson, 14 July 1948, US National Archives, RG 43, Lot 60D 665, Box 1b.
106. Thompson, incidentally, considered Vega to be the one of the most able folk music specialists he knew. Stith Thompson, “Folklore in South America,” The Journal of American Folklore 61, 241 (1948): 256–258.
107. This was due to the long-time presence of the eminent French ethnographer Paul Rivet (1876–58), the founder of the Musée de l’Homme in Paris. See Academia Colombiana de Historia, Homenaje al Profesor Paul Rivet (Bogotá: Editorial A.B.C., 1958).


110. Members of the State Department’s advisory committee had recognized this issue early on. Olga Samaroff Stokovski, for instance, argued that Latin Americans were predisposed to suspect “self-interest or desire to dominate on our part.” She cautioned that exchanges needed to happen “on a footing of equality” and that the United States should not use economic power to force recognition of their music by other countries. US National Archives, RG 59, 111.46 Music/3-245, Olga Samaroff Stokovski to Charles Childs, 2 March 1945.

111. This is not the place to discuss current musical cultures in Latin America, but I would like to point out that music life is less dominated by US groups than the neoliberal policies of their respective governments would lead one to believe. New Song is still an important genre. Jane Tuomas-Serna, “The ‘Nueva Canción’ Movement and its Mass-mediated Performance Context,” *Latin American Music Review* 13, 2 (Fall/Winter 1992): 240–256.

**Bibliography**


