Association for Cultural Equity (ACE): Stories of an Archive

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A Living Archive

In this century, we are witnessing a dramatic shift in the way that archives relate to their worlds as they face outward as well as inward. The enduring image of the archive as a self-enclosed, hermetic haven for scholars – a refuge both arid and poetic – with treasures of cultural patrimony too rarely experienced by a wider world, is fading just a little bit. Along with preservation and protection, archives will focus increasingly on the needs of the public and of source communities (Linn 2014). There is a gradually accelerating movement towards collaborative and community-driven archival practice and public access to archives. The archivist's responsibilities will no longer be limited to conservation and protection. They will not only consider but strive to anticipate the needs of their constituencies. The public and educational archive will pay the expense of the conserving archive. This movement was anticipated by the lifelong practice of Alan Lomax – among a handful of others – to share and creatively disseminate his collections and ongoing work, and to return them to their creators. In his analysis of Lomax's public praxis, Robert Baron wrote:

> Alan Lomax developed a global vision for the protection of traditional cultures at a time when threats to cultural difference were accelerating – a problem he ascribed to centralized media and entertainment industries, as well as government policies. His public folklore thought and practice was informed by a cultural critique that viewed folklore as an alternative to the alienation engendered by modern life. Lomax's view of folklore can

> be characterized as counter hegemonic, and he saw folklore as resistance affected both by explicit expressions of protest and the existence of folklore itself. Anticipating – and shaping – contemporary public folklore practice, Lomax created a repertoire of strategies for safeguarding traditions. These included appropriating the technologies threatening small-scale cultures in order to maintain and disseminate traditions, proposing government folk culture policies, developing modes of presentation for new audiences, and creating conditions for traditions to be perpetuated locally. (2012: 275)

The Association for Cultural Equity (ACE) was founded by Lomax to explore and sustain the world's expressive traditions through cultural activism and the production and dissemination of knowledge based on research and scientific analysis. It contains a vast collection of recordings from all parts of the world made by Lomax and other scholars, their documentation, manuscripts, letters, and project files, unified and inspired by the insights and organizing principles that emerged from his research on the performance arts, and including music that lives only in archives, and, at times in cultural memory. Among others, it includes the recordings that Lomax made in Italy, Spain, Britain, the Caribbean and the United States, showing great attention to regional and local musics, and undertaken after months of study and under financial hardship. After Lomax's retirement in 1996, with the Board's approval, I assumed responsibility for ACE. While keeping to its founding principles, ACE has since significantly broadened its impact through new programs and audiences. It closely partners with the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress, which holds the original collections, with ACE disseminating them globally. A small core staff is supported by interns and researchers, and paid and volunteer consultants. ACE engages multifaceted methods for making the archive come alive through internet platforms, social media, educational activities and initiatives to return the collections to source communities. Its resources and programs include:

- Alan Lomax Online Archive (<research.culturalequity.org>), a free multimedia website of all Alan Lomax's recordings, photos, films, interviews and discussions. 75,000 visitors per year.
- YouTube channel 65,000 subscribers and 23 million views to date.
- The Global Jukebox (<theglobaljukebox.org>), a free interactive website of outstanding performance traditions from around the world.
- Repatriation. Returning documentation to their home communities.
- Endangered Cultures/Emerging Leaders. Training for young people, whose community's expressive culture is undocumented and endangered, to record and preserve their traditions.
- Education. Activities and lesson plans providing educators with curricula and teaching tools based on our unique resources.
- Research Collaborations with scientists and scholars in fields ranging from dance to genetics, in the analysis of expressive culture.

Much of ACE's work is conducted through partnerships and collaborations, including: a multi-year repatriation organized with the Delta Center at Delta State University (DSU) and the Muddy Waters family; return of materials from Gullah Geechee communities in partnership with Coastal Carolina University (CCU); a partnership with City Lore, New York City Center for Urban Folk Culture, that sees over 5,000 students in Title 1 public schools (designated for special funds because of a high number of low income students) using the Global Jukebox to explore the musical heritage of their families and communities. Other current projects are with the Maryland Institute of Technology in the Humanities at the University of Maryland; the Laban/Bartenieff Institute for Movement Studies; the Centro Studi Alan Lomax in Palermo, the Irish Traditional Music Center, the Grenada Sports and Culture Foundation; the Green Foundation; the Rock and Roll Forever Foundation; Keio University, Japan; D-PLACE A Database of Societies, Languages, and Culture, University of Toronto; Columbia College, Chicago; the Library of Congress.

History

Since ACE embodies Lomax's ideas and is custodian of his research and collections, any account of it must include Lomax and his works (Szwed 2010). Lomax was a folklorist, musicologist, writer, and producer who spent his life researching and advocating for unrecorded and under-recognized oral traditions. He strove to reaffirm the value of folk traditions to their source communities and on the world stage, developed feedback strategies in field research, and possessed a high profile approach to publication and advocacy. Lomax attempted to influence government policy on arts and culture and addressed white papers on national cultural policy to the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Public Broadcasting Services, calling for them to attend to local and regional culture in the U.S. In 1972 UNESCO published his influential "Appeal for Cultural Equity" arguing the right of every culture to safeguard, express, and develop its artistic and expressive heritage (Lomax 2003 [1972]). He desired to be remembered most for his trailblazing, multifaceted research into expressive culture known to many as Cantometrics, a cross-cultural analysis of folk and indigenous music and its relationship to culture. Indeed, all this will not be forgotten. But the dangerous lines he crossed to sensitively record and celebrate the traditions of African Americans, one of the most ill-used peoples on earth – the profound attraction of the people he encountered, the beauty and artistry of their music, which declared a distinctive, uniquely inclusive aesthetic and evoked an unrecognized America – these are the things for which he will be most loved and remembered.

From 1933 to 1942, John A. and Alan Lomax, together and separately, made approximately 12,000 recordings in the U.S. and the Caribbean for the Archive of Folk Song at The Library of Congress. After 1942, Alan's independent work travelled with

him like the shell of a tortoise, growing larger and heavier with the passing decades – from his 1940s New York and Washington DC apartments, his London and Paris flats, to Greenwich Village – and dominating his living spaces until he rented a separate apartment/office from Columbia University in the 1960s.

The FBI and MI5 trailed Lomax for forty years, finding nothing more damaging than that he was odd, obsessed with songs, sympathized with progressive causes, and cared little for money or clothes. Nevertheless, Lomax was organized and meticulous, and treated his tapes and manuscripts with great care throughout their many travels together. When restoring and digitizing Lomax's recordings in 1996-1999, twenty to fifty years after they were made, sound engineer Steve Rosenthal would say their quality and condition were such that they could have been recorded yesterday. Lomax's LP and tape collections, which included the work of other scholars, were organized according to regions and subregions of word music discovered statistically in the Cantometrics sample: African Gatherers; Proto-Melanesians; Arctic and sub-Arctic hunters (subregions Siberia, Patagonia, for example); American hunters; American agriculturalists (including Pueblo as a subregion, for example); Tropical Agriculture (Africa, SE Asia, Tribal India; Oceania); Complex producers of Central and South Americas and Mexico; African Pastoralists (including camel herders of N Africa; Old High Culture (Mediterranean Basin, Levant, Middle East, India, Malaysia), Melanesia, Australia; Oceania. Musically and socio-historically this arrangement made sense. Alan believed that librarians would do well to adopt it.

At the center of everything that ACE does are Lomax's collections: both his own recordings in a range of formats, film, video, photographs, notes and other documentation and ephemera and the thousands of examples of his peers and colleagues' recordings and documentation. Stewardship is divided between ACE and the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, which holds the physical originals and is responsible for their preservation, cataloguing, and maintenance in perpetuity, while ACE disseminates and publishes digital versions. A summary of ACE's media holdings may be of interest.

- Lomax's independent field recordings, made in Michigan, the Southern U.S., the Caribbean, Britain, Scotland, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Morocco, Romania, Soviet Georgia, and in Lomax's living quarters where he hosted many traditional singers. 10,000 items.
- Field recordings covering all world regions Documentation for ca. 2000 hours of recordings made by dozens of other scholars (audio at Library of Congress).
- Special audio compilations illustrating characteristics of singing and speaking style taken from field recordings. Digital copies of 700 hours.
- Radio series written, produced and hosted by Lomax with interracial casts from 1939-56 for CBS, Office of War Information, Mutual Broadcasting Network, the BBC, and RAI Italy, including: American Folk Songs; Back Where I Come

From; Wellsprings of Music; People Speak to the President captured live man-on-the-street reactions to the Pearl Harbor bombing; Ascoltate, le Colline Cantano. Digital copies.

- Discussions, lectures and Interviews with ethnologists, cultural anthropologists, musicologists, otolaryngologists, folklorists, opera singers, linguists, statisticians, child psychologists, sociologists, primatologists, kinesiologists, dancers and dance analysts. Discussions of 20th century popular music and dance. Bessie Jones's funeral service on St. Simons' Island in 1984; a young Bob Dylan singing "Masters of War"; interviews with Josh White, Marion Anderson, Bernard Absul, Ewan MacColl, Jack Owens, Mable Hillery, John Henry Faulk, Vera Hall, Reverend Gary Davis, President Roosevelt's inner circle, and others. Over 200 hours, digitized.
- Film of dance and work movement assembled for a study of dance 1961-1984 by Lomax, Irmgard Bartenieff, Forrestine Paulay from ethnographic institutes, film distributors, broadcasters, embassies, and private archives throughout the world. Digital copies of 150k feet of 16mm.
- Performances at the Newport Folk Festival by: Howling Wolf, Son House, Bukka White, Skip James, Canray Fontenot, Bois Sec Ardoin, Bessie Jones, Ed Young and the Southern Fife and Drum Corps, Clark Kessinger, and Jimmy Driftwood, filmed by Lomax in 1966. Digital copies of ca 55k feet of 16mm film.
- Ballads, Blues, and Bluegrass 1961 featuring Clarence Ashley, Doc Watson, Memphis Slim, Willie Dixon, Roscoe Holcomb, Memphis Slim, Ramblin' Jack Eliot, Peter LaFarge, Guy Carawan, Jean Ritchie, Doc Watson, and Ernie Mars, filmed in Lomax's Greenwich Village apartment by Lomax, and George Pickow, edited by ALC Wood, restored and digitized by John Bishop.
- The Land Where the Blues Began a 1979 version on film by John Bishop, Worth Long, and Alan Lomax with R. L. Burnside and Jack Owens; tall-tale tellers; fife and drum bands; diddley bow players; and former prisoners, railroad workers, and roustabouts singing field hollers, work chants, and levee camp songs.
- American Patchwork footage with many songs, dances, and stories shot on location from 1978-1985 under Alan Lomax's direction: Former levee and railroad workers, farm women, bluesmen, and versifiers from the Mississippi Delta; New Orleans funeral and jazz parades; Cajun cowboys; Sea Island children; Yaqui Indian dancers and Norteño musicians from Arizona; Sacred Harp singers from Alabama; miners, black fiddlers, and storytellers from Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee; bootleggers, tobacco workers, and flatfoot dancers from North Carolina; cloggers and bluegrass bands from Georgia; break dancers from Philadelphia; Italian/Italian American folk musicians at the Giglio Festival in Brooklyn; and folk artists at the Smithsonian's Folklife Festival. Digital copies of over 400 hours of U-Matic video.

- Performance Style & Culture Research Collection: 200 document boxes and 100 binders of indices, 200 binders of mainframe computer runs, 150 boxes of punch cards linked to media examples of music, dance, and speaking document the 30-year program of comparative research on music, dance, and speech spearheaded by Lomax from 1956-1995.
- Global Jukebox. Four drawers of paper and 8,000 computer files document a multimedia prototype bringing together all facets of the Performance Style & Culture Research collection.
- Photographs Lomax took in England, Ireland, Scotland, Spain, Italy, the Caribbean, and the Southern U.S. Original prints and digital copies of over 5,000 B&W negatives and 750 color slides.

Lomax did not see himself as an archivist and was uninterested in collecting for its own sake. Instead, he continuously mined his materials for research, books, records, radio and television programs, conferences and lectures, and his many cultural affirmation activities. His offices were the center of many projects, some of long duration, others of the moment, in response to contemporary events, such as his Civil Rights era projects to be found in a cabinet called Black Identity. Its contents include a manuscript of black poetry he edited with Raoul Narroll, published as *3,000 years of Black Poetry*; transcriptions of the 1965 Albany, Georgia protest which he and Guy Carawan and SNCC published on LP; scripts for one-minute spots on black history and culture narrated by Jack Walker, aired over black radio networks as "The Black Encyclopedia of the Air" produced 1968-69 by Lomax, John Hendrik Clarke, Raoul Abdul, Arnold Hartley; notes and playlists for a series of early Lomax recordings of African American music to be called Deep River of Song; the unpublished script for a play by Lomax, structured as an African American small church service. The "orifice", as Alan jokingly called it, was also dedicated to Lomax's cross-cultural research project on performance co-directed by Conrad Arensberg, with Edith Trager, Norman Markel, Victor Grauer, Forrestine Paulay, and many other collaborators and advisors over the course of thirty years (Wood 2018; 2020; Savage 2018). It also saw the first prototype of the Global Jukebox in the late 1980s. In short, it embodied the many ways in which Lomax attempted to make known and to understand the artistry of local cultures and people.

In the mid-1980s Columbia University doubled the rent for Lomax's 97th Street office of twenty years and refused to make any accommodation. Lomax was about to land in the streets with all his stuff when dance scholar Martin Koenig turned to an old friend for help, Joseph Murphy, the Chancellor of the City University of New York (CUNY). Murphy was a radical polymath who grew up working class, spoke and composed poetry in the Yiddish and Gaelic of his parents, and had established adult education courses for working people at CUNY. He took to Alan and invited him to the Hunter College Fine Arts Campus, a dilapidated blue brick building on 41st Street adjoining the Port of

Authority Bus Station where buses rolled in and out 24/7, where he preferred to keep his own offices, far from the hubbub of administration on the main campus. The sixth floor was also occupied by the Free Press, directed by Andre Schefflin, another imaginative intellectual and pioneer. For more than a decade, Murphy, Schefflin, and Lomax made a compatible threesome until, one by one, they succumbed to the final vicissitudes – Lomax by a stroke, Murphy by accidental shooting in Addis Ababa, and Schefflin last, by heart failure. The Association for Cultural Equity carried on at 41st Street for another 15 years until we were moved across town to Hunter's Brookdale Campus on 25th Street.

In the 1990s, archivist, teacher, ethnomusicologist, and musician Jorge Arévalo Mateus, who is now Executive Director of ACE, visited the 41st Street office with Nora Guthrie to look at Woody's letters to Alan. It is surprising how much his impressions coincided with mine.

> It was my work as curator of the Guthrie Archive that first brought me to ACE and the Alan Lomax Archive. I had scheduled a visit with Matthew Barton to review and exchange copies of the mutually enriching correspondence between Guthrie and Lomax. As an ethnomusicologist, I was aware of Cantometrics and the Library of Congress 1940 sessions with Guthrie, but not of the close personal relationship between Lomax and Guthrie; nor was I prepared for the scale and magnitude of Lomax's work and what it represents for global cultural knowledge. There, in ACE's cavernous and somewhat shabby offices at 450 West 41st Street, I first glimpsed the force of Lomax's curiosity, intellect, and prescient commitment to a principle he called "cultural equity". Our tour of the archives hinted at the challenges of dealing with the many objects, writings, multimedia, photography, IBM computer readouts, each suggesting big ideas and complex content. With its old recording machines, film canisters and editing machine, file cabinet after file cabinet of papers, and recordings in all imaginable formats, the archive felt like the domain of a wizard, of an obsessive consumed with the search for knowledge on every level. (Jorge Arévalo Mateus)

In the early 1980s, my father made known to me his wishes concerning his opus. Together we walked through the dim back rooms of the Association for Cultural Equity. In the background we could hear the beating of wings in the hallways. A couple of pigeons would have found their way in through a cracked window in the staircase. They would finally settle down to coo for several hours, more often than not against the sound of dripping from the foyer ceiling into a sooty plastic bucket, which Tim the Janitor had considerately placed in front of the often non-functional elevators. It was a good home for the archive, however – seven spacious rooms, the front full of light. The art students loved the building. During our walk through, which lasted several hours, I took pages of notes on a yellow legal pad, which I have carefully preserved as the only real documentation of my father's wishes and explanations of his archive. We looked at shelf after shell, file cabinet after battered file cabinet. There were army green ones lined up like a battery of soldiers under the 78 record collection loaded with correspondence alphabetized by

correspondent and again ordered by date; cabinets of articles and books finished and unfinished, like the Big Ballad Book; the Black Identity cabinet; the many research and grants cabinets, painted flat powder blue and filled with a wealth of correspondence, narrative, and ideas going back to the late 1940s; cabinets of tape logs, correspondence and notes related to each recording project; financial drawers; and drawers marked Personal; and my own favorite, the "Ideas" cabinet. Next Alan opened a drawer marked publishing. He told me about the royalties and recipients. I took notes on what parts of what book, project, or film series belonged to whom. Finally, waving his arms at it all, he pronounced: "Do not put them in The Library of Congress. They will have no life there. I worked at the Library. Since it stopped actively collecting, it has been a dead zone where nothing ever happens …".

Not long before my father unwillingly retired, the two of us were strolling down Broadway. "I would like you to come up here and take over the Global Jukebox," he said. "I don't know if I can finish it, and I believe you can." His trust was an honor, but I knew he wanted more, wanted everything, for me to take on his office and archive, continue his work. I had a university position at the time, and research of interest to me. I couldn't bear to think that that mountain of things and ideas could become my responsibility and consume the rest of my life. But soon fate overtook us both, and all of it, including Alan himself, became my responsibility.

100-plus CDs, 15 Series

On the day after Greek Epiphany, January 7, 1996, I travelled to New York to meet my father's attorney Jeff Greenberg, my aunt, the folklorist Bess Lomax Hawes, Choreometrics co-creator, Dr. Forrestine Paulay, and Roswell Rudd, the jazz composer who'd worked with Alan for decades and knew the recordings backwards and forwards. The office on 41st Street was not operational and had no budget. Before Alan collapsed with a brain hemorrhage, he had signed an offer from Rounder Records to publish "all" of his recordings up to or beyond 100 CDs. Our only way forward was to honor the agreement. We figured that researchers could begin working on this project in the office, enabling me to work from home so Alan could live with us in Tarpon Springs, Florida and enjoy swimming, and my son could continue his school.

That same January, I brought in music historian Matt Barton and ethnomusicologist Andrew Kaye and we began the Rounder project, dividing it into fourteen series plus single albums and box sets, annotated by specialists. I was the general editor, and made most of the musical selections. Having recorded and edited several records, I was not eager to repeat this process a hundred more times, but it was a unique opportunity and a necessity. The Rounder series were: Southern Journey (13 vols.); Prison Songs (2); Portraits (13); Folk Songs of England, Scotland, and Ireland (7); World Library of Folk and Indigenous Music (8); The Spanish Recordings (7); Italian Treasury (11); Caribbean Voyage (12);

Christmas; Land Where the Blues Began (soundtrack for the book); Blues in the Mississippi Night; Songbook series (4); Deep River of Song (12); Concerts and Radio (4); Jelly Roll Morton: 1937 Library of Congress Recordings (two Grammy awards) (8). After Jelly Roll came out in 2005, I decided to stop making records for Rounder. We made the Grammy award nominated Alan Lomax in Haiti (10 discs) for Harte Records in 2007, which was a deep archival project, and Asturias (2) with the Museu del Pueblo de las Asturias. Nathan Salsburg curated 8 LPs and 7 digital albums on our label, Real to Reel.

The Early ACE Board

I knew nothing about not-for-profits, by-laws, or boards, but I found myself presiding over ACE's board, whose distinguished members were well advanced in age. They included my aunt, Bess Lomax Hawes, then Director of the Folk Arts grants program at the National Endowment for the Arts;[1] Clara Shapiro of the Bureau for Social Research at Columbia University (deceased) and of course Alan; Edmund Carpenter, an archeologist and anthropologist;[2] lovable, urbane Lambros Comitas was a Caribbeanist and founder and chair of the Department of Applied Anthropology at Columbia University Teachers College. I soon brought on Barbara Hampton, Chair of ethnomusicology at Hunter, an Africanist and brilliant scholar, who still serves. To represent Choreometrics and the family, cousin John Bishop, an ethnographic filmmaker teaching at UCLA who had made *Land Where the Blues Began* with Alan and Worth Long. Barbara was usually silent, but Ted, Lambros, and John were spell-binding raconteurs. Rolls, fruit, spreads, and coffee were nervously provided. The scarred second hand tables, chairs, and desks that had followed Alan everywhere, the sun struggling through windows layered with grime to weakly illuminate the folkloric figurines on the window ledge, the stained carpeting, and our faces, the essence of Alan on every object and pile of papers, desk drawers of ancient debris, the looming file cabinets, the cooing and flapping of wings – here, time itself was choking like a clogged drain. As I struggled through the meeting agendas receiving little comment, I knew they knew that I was drowning here, every day more drawn in and farther from an exit. So to change the subject, in a pause, one of them would say, "You know, this makes me think about the time that Alan…" and on they flew with mesmerizing tales until it was time to adjourn. Once in a while some-

[1] Bess had established a national folk arts infrastructure by funding through her program a public folklorist, anthropologist or ethnomusicologist in nearly every state in America to conduct statewide folk arts surveys and present folk artists on stages and in museums, and otherwise help them to disseminate and support their work. This program is still in place after nearly forty-five years. She initiated the National Heritage Fellowship Awards, where outstanding American folk artists are honored by their state senators and representatives and receive $25,000. Their filmed annual presentations are a national event.

[2] Ted had lived with an Alaskan Innuit community, conducted pioneering experiments in visual anthropology in New Guinea (Bishop 1978), and edited the work of Karl Schuster in 12 hand illustrated volumes of indigenous and folk design. Bitter about criticism of his New Guinea work, Ted had dropped out of the field and was writing a shocking expose of the Museum of the American Indian.

one said something vaguely relevant, such as, "Do you think you could put together a soundtrack for an exhibit on surrealism for me?" Those, in the main, were our board meetings for many years. They were a kind of solace, otherworldly distractions from the vast horizon of tasks, one piling upon another – online archive, unpaid unfound artists, Cantometrics, Choreometrics, Parlametrics, Minutage, the Global Jukebox – could it even be salvaged? We were few, our budget small.

ACE and the Library of Congress

In 1997, The Library of Congress was no longer a "dead zone". It was under orders by Librarian James Billington and mandated by Congress to digitize its collections and reach out to the public nationally, and to libraries all over the world. A former professor of Russian history at Princeton, Billington was an astute, fearless administrator who recognized the importance of folklife to the nation, and decided that he would leave no stone unturned to make "The Alan Lomax Collection" a "crown Jewel" of the Library. "The first two years on this job, all I did was read," he told me. "Do you know how many copyrighted plays we have that were never produced – that no one will ever read, except, now, except me – unless we make them accessible?" Billington restored the murals in the Library's Thomas Jefferson building and made it into a national showcase which hosted 100 exhibits during his tenure, beginning with a stunning recreation of Jefferson's original library at Monticello, followed by computerized reconstructions of photographs by Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii (1863-1944), a pioneer in color photography. He also initiated forward-looking educational and documentary programs such as the Veterans History Project to elicit veterans' memories of the two World Wars and the wars in Korea and Vietnam – a project he gave to the American Folklife Center.

The American Folklife Center is an independent entity within the Library. It was under new leadership and had become active, lively, and publicly engaged. When Dr. Billington first came to the city to discuss the terms of its acquisition of the Lomax archive, we walked together from his lodgings at the Princeton Club to the office while he conjured up crown jewels, living legends, and grand receptions with the smooth volubility of an experienced and successful salesman. But my sister Shelley, who equalled the King and Duke in her skill at turning any scenario to pecuniary advantage, had come up from Florida to support me, and being at all times disinclined to walk, was waiting for us at the office. I remember sitting helplessly by, while Shelley trained the unflappable force of her blond Texas charm on Dr. Billington until at last he extracted himself. Nevertheless, the Library held the 1933-1942 recordings of John A. and Alan Lomax so it was the logical place for Alan's original materials. Alan wasn't around to call this one, but I thought he would agree that the Library had changed dramatically for the better, and a national public institution would be the best place for his collections. The Library of Congress and ACE signed a partnership agreement which generously allowed the Performance

Style and Culture research papers to be processed at ACE, prioritized archiving and digitization, and provided for a designated curator and an annual fellowship for research on Alan Lomax's collections. In 2004, the collections joined the 1933-1942 John and Alan Lomax recordings at the American Folklife Center. At the time of this writing, ACE and the AFC have enjoyed fifteen years of productive and amicable collaboration, working closely together on conferences, and digitization, publication, and repatriation projects.

Copyright, Licensing, Artists' Royalties

The CD project opened the door to new prospects and possibilities: licensing, royalty distribution, online dissemination, and repatriation. They didn't occur to us all at once, but ambushed us as we went along.

No sooner had the first CDs been released than licensing requests began to come in; those for feature films had decent fees. Thus, I acquired another heavy responsibility: the artists and their heirs. Jeff Greenberg and I knew this was imminent and that concerted action would have to be taken. Alan had vowed that any producer/arranger income share from his recordings would be put back into his work, which he believed supported folklife and the musicians indirectly. He corresponded for decades with many of the singers, including then prisoners at Parchman and Cummins, and sent all known singers what royalties came in. In recent years this modest income had practically dried up and most addresses were out of date. Now a staff member dedicated to the task of finding artists and heirs was urgently needed. One day Martin Scorsese visited the archive with his producer, Margaret Bodde, who said her husband, musician and producer Don Fleming, wanted to work for us. I hired Don especially to find artists and heirs. We wrote to them, sent copies of recordings and photographs, asking if they wished to continue publishing through Alan, or opt out.

We must have sent out at least $4 million over the last 25 years; I began unsystematically before Don came on and we established procedures. We used court and property records, people finding services, and private detectives, and my cousin Ellen Harold and I travelled to the Mississippi Delta a couple of times to seek people out. When "Po' Laz'rus" was used under the opening titles of *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* we ransacked the country looking for James Carter, who had performed the song for Alan at Parchman Penitentiary in 1959. The prison had lost track of him, but at last, through property records, we located James and his family in Chicago, and he became a well-to-do, worldwide celebrity. When Ed Young's panpipe rendition of "Chevrolet" was used in a Chevrolet commercial, we hired a sympathetic entertainment lawyer in Memphis to help sort out shares between twenty heirs with different claims.

Nathan Salsburg came to us as an intern from the Guthrie Archive, and brought his college friend, Bert Lyons – now one of the leading media archivists in the country. Bert assisted Don, and soon we were filling spreadsheets with the names and addresses

of heirs and few still living artists. The job of accounting to them was inherited in 2011 by Kiki Smith-Archiapatti, now Managing Director.

> When I started at ACE almost 10 years ago, one of my first tasks was to reorganize our royalty distribution system. The accounting system amounted to a morass of spreadsheets and written notes with back of envelope calculations, a system that was increasingly untenable as physical sales of albums decreased and individual digital tracks were streamed and purchased, all of which came to us tallied up in reams of paper statements, to then be distributed to an ever expanding number of heirs. It was in the months spent designing a database to streamline the process of entering and consolidating all these statements that I became intimate with the names of the artists and their heirs of the recordings which we had published. Some of the artists were still living, the young voices on the reels a memory of the men and women in their 70s and 80s, but many had been succeeded by sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, and grandchildren. My contact with the royalty recipients, for the most part, is confined to the yearly mailing of statements and receiving the occasional phone call to let me know about a new address, or the passing of one of the older generation. For me, one of the most rewarding parts about working at ACE and the work we do is our repatriations – a core aspect of our activities at ACE. We collaborate with community partners to bring the songs, photographs, and videos made by Alan back to their home, celebrating the material and the artists in ceremonies, concerts and events, and, when possible, involving the artist's heirs themselves. At our repatriation events, I am finally able to meet the people who had previously been just names on a list, to put a face to the voice, to see the joy and pride in hearing the music of their families, and to hear about their own places in the communities and musical tradition which was recorded so long ago. (Kiki Smith-Archiapatti)

Alan Lomax Online Archive

The CD series called for the recordings to be digitized. Rounder generously agreed to absorb the cost of restoring and digitizing all the 7.5 ¼" tapes, and the acetate discs of the BBC and others, at the current highest sampling rate of 24 and 16bits. In this way all of Alan's post 1942 recordings were digitized following archival practice of making highest quality analog masters at the same time. I thought immediately of putting them online. It was 1997. I called and visited with various librarians and archivists for advice. No one was doing this. Lincoln Center Library for the Performing Arts had an excellent in-house database, but it was a complicated proprietary system and only the person who engineered it knew how to fix it. What if something happened to him?

On a visit with family and friends on Maryland's Eastern Shore I had a chat with the son of my cousin. This young man had recently left college before completing his BA in Japanese literature and was considering a job. He was purportedly intelligent and fond of computers. "Max," I say, "How would you create a relational database of songs on the web?" "Oh, I can do that," he says. "Shouldn't be difficult. Decide on an architecture, program it, input the data." Hence began the five-year saga of the first online archive – a programming pastiche with the design motif of patchwork quilts, no pun intended.

Max showed up at the office and we had a solid design down in a week. Thereafter he began coming in later and later, carrying heavy books on programming, until we were at nearly 3 pm. He was learning to program on the job, working late into the night and loathe to rise in the morning. "Max," I said, "one more time, and you're out." Not long after, Max was hired as a programmer by Bloomberg, which normally only hired masters in IT, arriving at work at dawn every day. Meanwhile, to take his place, Max had introduced into ACE a friend from high school who was trying to break into IT, whose reassuringly solid demeanor and warm smile never faltered over the five years the online project stagnated. It was a sympathetic programmer from the financial sector who finally cobbled together, free of charge, a functional site with all of Alan's media, which was announced in the New York Times on Alan's birthday, 30 January 2012 (Online Archive: NYT). I was afraid the families of singers would object if we put up whole songs, but we risked it with a take down notice. We have had only positive responses thus far.

In this way, ACE has been able to make Alan's media collections freely available through the Alan Lomax Archive online, YouTube, and the Global Jukebox websites. Thanks to COVID relief funding awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities in June 2020, we at last have the means to create a multifaceted contemporary site where we can have feedback, exhibitions, and spaces for and interaction with source communities.

Repatriation

Alan was acutely aware that the recordings he had made were the legacies of artists and their communities, and did what he could, given the scarcity and expense of tape at the time, to deposit copies in their national archives and/or creative communities. In 2004, I was contacted by Samuel Floyd, founder of the Center for Black Music Research at Columbia College, Chicago. They were opening a sister center in St. Thomas and Sam wanted a copy of the 62 hours of Caribbean recordings. I agreed, adding the many photographs Alan had taken during that field trip, some of his best. With Sam and Rosita Sands, then Executive Director of CBMR, I traveled to St. Thomas for the opening ceremony. Immediately thereafter we sailed for Nevis, where Sam had set up a local repatriation. Rosita, my husband Edmund, and I treasure the memory of that intensely emotional ceremony on Nevis, which included a PowerPoint presentation of the material, a recitation of the names of participants, "awards" of CDs, cash, and recognition, with witty performances and elegant, eloquent speeches by many local people. Rosita Sands has continued to take a leading role in ACE's repatriations in the Caribbean, and is also on our Advisory Board. The Caribbean collection – both music and photographs – is outstanding, and we have thought long and hard about how to use it to make an impact, and how to engage young people with it. With the Médiathèque Caraïbe, which has a fine multimedia library representing the French Antilles, we have had success. For several years we have been engaging

with Carriacou and Grenada and with Grenadian immigrants in Brooklyn to support Big Drum, Kwadril, and Yoruba traditions, and supporting the work and legacy of Winston Fleary, a revered and influential cultural leader who recently died.

Repatriation is ongoing. Materials are compiled in attractive "repatriation books" designed and produced by Kiki Smith-Archiapatti and presented to cultural centers, libraries and universities, individuals and families in Alabama, South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, Michigan, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City, and the Center for Black Music Research in Chicago, as well as to villages and families in Spain, Italy, Scotland, England, and across the Caribbean. Over the next three years ACE's repatriations will include Carriacou and Grenada, WI; Texas, and Mississippi. National and regional repositories will be identified in Spain, Morocco, and Russia and its former and current republics.

Local communities show great interest in coming into possession of their patrimony, and put together memorializing celebrations, some lasting for two to three days. Caggiano, Italy, a town renowned for its bagpipers and recognized as a heritage site by UNESCO, built an amphitheater against the walls of its 11th castle, and named it Anfiteatro Alan Lomax. We see repatriation as an opportunity for communities and artists to reconnect with their traditions and their own aesthetic values, to rediscover the meaning and artistry of the songs and poetry their cultures had produced. We have tried various approaches to ignite sustained local efforts to teach, perpetuate and build upon these traditions – including the creation of curricular activities based on their songs and social histories, but it is difficult without the presence of a cultural animator and ongoing collaboration and funding from government or the private sector. The task is challenging but must be attempted.

The Global Jukebox

Before the 2000s, Alan Lomax was nearly unique in applying cross-cultural methods to samples of music from around the world, and searching for possible connections between musical characterizers and other cultural domains. From the 1960s through the mid-nineties, he worked with multidisciplinary teams to analyze thousands of examples of recorded music, dance, and conversation from all world regions. In the 1980s, the resulting data and algorithms were incorporated into a single interactive, multimedia, relational database that Lomax called the Global Jukebox. While at the time it was recognized as a brilliant concept and an educational and scientific tool of significant potential, neither technology nor the intellectual climate supported its full realization until this past decade, when the prototype was restored, revised, and contemporized, and now moves rapidly toward completion.

The current Global Jukebox (<www.theglobaljukebox.org>) explores the world's expressive arts, with three areas of focus: Exploration, Education, and Data. It serves the

general public, students, teachers, and researchers. Its educational tools can be used by non-scientists to experience and understand global traditional arts and culture, and to experiment with juxtaposing performance data with ethnographic, ecological, linguistic, and geographic metadata backed by research. The Jukebox contains the Cantometrics dataset of 6,047 traditional songs from 1,041 societies coded on 42 variables and over 700 popular songs, which will soon be joined with eight other global datasets containing metadata, codings of dance, instrumentation, conversation, popular music, and other aspects of culture, along with the audio and video examples on which they were based. John Szinger, the Global Jukebox's Lead Software Engineer since 2015, has helped the application "go from ideas to realization, and watched it grow richer and deeper".

> One of the early tasks was to display the cantometrics codings. This was interesting because it was the oldest legacy code I'd ever worked on. The coding data itself originated on forms encoded by Alan Lomax and his colleagues at Columbia University 60 years ago and entered on punch cards. It has undergone numerous updates onto more modern platforms over the years but the coding format remains unchanged. It took some detective work to unpack it: each coding line was represented as a single number, although different lines have different possible values and some can take multiple values. Once the system was understood, we worked out visualization based on figures in Folk Song Style and Culture (Lomax et al 1968). It was exciting to see the coding display come to life. I've also enjoyed the Journeys, curated experiences that focus on an area of the world or tell a story about music in a related set of cultures with narration, images, and songs. We illustrate the Journeys on the map as well, moving from location to location as the songs play. Recently we added an experience called Find Your Musical Roots, designed for use in classrooms or by any learner. Users enter info about their family and ancestry and create a personalized Journey-like experience with songs from cultures meaningful to them. It is satisfying to design and build a feature and see it come to life, and know that people are using, enjoying, and sharing it. (John Szinger)

Cultures are nested in a four-tiered geographic classification, and characterized by associated peoples, languages and language codes, language families, climate, terrain, historical subsistence practices, focal years of data collection, country, country codes, wiki reference, description, and sources. They are cross-indexed with societies in other cross-cultural databases such as the Database of Places, Language, Culture and Environment (<D-PLACE.org>) and the Human Resource Area Files (<hraf.yale.edu>). This allows researchers to test various hypotheses about cross-cultural diversity in expressive culture, and proposals regarding cross-cultural coevolutionary relationships between song and social structure, movement and speaking, and between musical style and linguistic and genetic histories made decades ago by Alan Lomax.

Reconstructing the essential components of the Jukebox from data rescued from obsolete hardware and old code consumed over ten years. It was spearheaded by Rich Smith, a friend and retired programmer, who donated his time, and Gideon D'Arcangelo, a leader in multimedia engineering and design, who'd worked for Alan out of college

and continues to give his time to the project. Scientist, anthropologist, statistician, and college friend Michael Flory researched the statistics used in the original studies, and made a new cluster analysis of the Cantometrics data. For nearly four years, researchers Karen Claman and Kathleen Rivera worked with me to revise the culture classification and normalize and increase the song and culture metadata for both Cantometrics and Choreometrics, which Kathleen digitally recoded. Research Associate, Stella Silbert contributed to a new classification of cultures in the Global Jukebox and disentangled, rewrote, and created introductions for the coding guides to seven of the expressive arts studies beyond Cantometrics.

> My work has largely involved looking back through unpublished data, notes, and writings compiled by Alan Lomax over decades, and trying, as a newcomer to Lomax's work, to curate a tidy and accessible version of his lesser known research that would hopefully preserve the spark of some of his most innovative thinking. Describing my role at ACE to a friend, she remarked: "So basically your job is to read the mind of a dead man?" While I could never claim to live up to such a task, this comment encapsulated the profound intimacy of encountering these documents in their raw state. My time spent with this intimidating mountain of notes, theories, experiments, and conclusions, some of them scrawled on the backs of checks or scrap paper and some meticulously edited and rewritten, all brimming with the enthusiasm apparent in their author's prose, has given me a sense of Lomax's immanent presence in every aspect of his highly multi-faceted work. His tendency to swiftly toggle between sweeping theories of cultural evolution and specific examples of cultures' idiosyncratic traditions is one indication that he seemed to simultaneously hold both a macro and micro view of world expressive culture in his mind, and dedicated immense time and research to both. Though he did not provide answers to all of the questions that he posed – which sometimes makes interpreting his writing a challenging task – the scope of Lomax's work and his search for global patterns in the specific leads me to consider him as an almost Darwin-like figure. Though I will never know him personally, I am very lucky to have been afforded contact with his extraordinary mind. (Stella Silbert)

A paper in preparation will announce the first-time release to the scientific world and interested public of eight of Lomax's expressive style studies and their coded data (Wood, Savage, Kirby, Ember *et al.* 2020). The long-awaited publication of the raw data will immeasurably increase the resources available for the study of expressive behavior and performance. A more complete understanding of Lomax's ideas and methods and testing of his hypotheses, as well as new research, may bring his largely unknown studies of expressive culture to fruition.

What does this research as it appears in the Global Jukebox have to offer the public at large? Factor analysis applied during the original research, largely confirmed by a cluster analysis made in 2017, grouped songs together, according to the traits that had been coded, and created a geography of musical and dance style. The Jukebox can depict these large families of culture through music, dance, speaking, in a geography of the expressive

arts that matches ancient regions of settlement and migration discovered by linguists, archeologists, and population geneticists. It offers audio and visual evidence that all peoples belong to one of ten to fifteen "great traditions", each with a unique history, and ecological and economic base.

The libraries, archives, and great monuments built by literate elites east and west represent great traditions which belong to us all, but don't really reflect our ways. Everyone, including the great and powerful, enjoys their own aesthetic, social, and emotional codes and swims in the great streams of oral tradition. Every person can find themselves here in one or two of these. Every person has one or more grand traditions to call their own, and can take pride and strength from the knowledge that they are part of an ancient complex of related cultures having similar aesthetic values, and with a crucial role to play in human history and modern society.

That there is variation and unpredictable change within these big groupings is indisputable, but by and large they are much more internally coherent than they are like other groups. And the big traditions come together, share, and enrich one another, a phenomenon now happening at a furiously fast rate. But analysis of song, dance, breath intervals, and speaking shows what characteristics and patterns are being exchanged and amalgamated, and lead to explanations of, for instance, why this, and not that.

Through the analyses of expressive culture on the Jukebox, we can begin to know and recognize other great traditions, and to see ourselves, our families, our communities as in a mirror. This is important for children going to school with all the world from completely different backgrounds; for teachers of diversity who aren't equipped with the knowledge of what constitutes that diversity; for small communities and those who feel powerless and that they can do nothing but dream of the magazine life. It is important in dynamic societies where the upward mobile cut off their roots as the price to pay for success and belonging. The task ahead is to develop effective ways of sharing the unique resources and knowledge base of the Global Jukebox and to make possible those eureka moments.

We hope that Native American and Australian Aboriginal groups will find that the Jukebox has something of value to offer them, and will permit us to stream their music and dance on it, as well as help to develop much more accurate and meaningful metadata about their songs and cultures. The descriptions for Native American and Australian recordings, many of which are decades old, are often lacking in specificity and completeness, and do not directly quote the real authorities, that is the composers, singers, musicians, and specialists of the communities. We are about to begin a round of meetings, virtual or in person, with the sixty tribes represented on the Jukebox, to request the streaming permissions and to create better metadata, based upon the tribes' own categorizations.

Endangered Cultures / Emerging Leaders

Dominic Raimondo is a Didinga and former Lost Boy from South Sudan. He'd grown up in a refugee camp in Kenya and was brought by Catholic Charities to the United States, where he is now a citizen. I followed Dominic through community college and university. His education had been sparse. For several years he struggled to learn accountancy to no avail. Meanwhile, he was making and glazing clay cows, exhibiting them in Salt Lake City, and selling them to disoriented, homesick South Sudanese immigrants. I suggested he write about them for class and we had an extended and excited conversation about East African pastoral society – specifically the Didinga and their cows. Dominic scarcely contained his excitement as he talked about the young men being given their first cows, naming them, making unique bells and songs for their cows. The most beautiful sound on earth was of the cows being driven down to the river for a drink at the end of the day, as the animals pranced and danced with joy while the young men sang their special songs.

Alan had once written to SONY urging them to distribute small movie cameras to every culture on earth so they could film themselves. With this in mind, I began thinking about starting an endangered cultures program at ACE. In the past I had devised an approach to doing quick ethnographic surveys. The idea here would be to recuperate on film and recording devices, as rapidly as possible, the span of expressive culture of an undocumented society or rural or street subculture. It would require permission from elders/leaders and community consensus, and their agreement to collaborate in the work. The group would unconditionally own and control the documentation. They would be asked if it could be cataloged and described, with the help of an outsider if necessary, and if copies could be archived at a world library and a regional repository. The documentarian would be one of their own people, a young person of good standing with real interest in such a project, who might be assisted by a university graduate student in ethnomusicology or related discipline with useful skills, as well as by local people, and would receive equipment, technical, ethnographic, and archival training and assistance via ACE. ACE would pay for cameras and paraphernalia, computers, viewing equipment for the community, travel, gifts/contributions to the community, and two return trips, one to finish and share the footage, one to work with the community at some length on the care, significance, and possible uses of the heritage materials now in their possession.

When I laid the idea before Dominic, he said that he must do it at any cost, and thus he piloted this program. He returned from the refugee camp in Kenya two years ago with some beautiful footage, having decided he would study anthropology and film at university and make the documentation of endangered cultures his life's work. The following summer he began working with folklorist Thomas Richardson on digitally cataloging the material and making a recorded description of each event. When quarantines are lifted, Dominic will return home to continue filming, bring his footage back, as well as DVDs of the best material to show the Didinga. Meanwhile we are working with Lamont Pearly,

whose project is to document small storefront Black churches like the ones he grew up in, some of which are swallowed by megachurches, while new ones spring up.

Where ACE is Now

ACE is recognized for its policies and programs, leadership in repatriation to people and places of origin, online archival dissemination, international partnerships and endangered cultures/emerging leaders initiative, and for working at the interface between the humanities and social sciences, ethnomusicology and scientific musicology, and cultural evolution. It has an active professional board of directors and advisory board, with roles, committees, and duties; a strategic plan, statement of ethics, declaration of our position on Black Lives Matter.

Over the years, we have received support from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Concordia Foundation, the Rock Foundation, the De Menil Family Trust, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Green Foundation, the Documentary Heritage Program of the New York State Archives, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities; America for the Arts; the Reed Foundation; Save America's Treasures; and anonymous individuals. Hunter College of the City University of New York, and Jennifer Raab, its president, have been immeasurably generous in providing a home for ACE.

Any progress made by the Association for Cultural Equity/Archive is owing to the generous, talented, hardworking people who loved Alan and his work, contributed to ACE's mission, and participated in its endeavors, including Forrestine Paulay, Gideon D'Arcangelo, Jeffrey A. Greenberg, Steve Rosenthal, Edmund R. Wood, Rebecca B. Roberts, Christopher Roberts, Wendy Kaczerski, Pierra Roberts, Adelaide De Menil, Edmund S. Carpenter, Lambros Comitas, Matthew Barton, Andrew Kaye, Max Streeter, Ellen Harold, John Tam, Lori Waldo, Nathan Salsburg, Don Fleming, Bertram Lyons, John Szwed, Luisa Del Giudice, Geoffrey Clarfield, Kiki Smith-Archiapatti, Karen Claman, Kathleen Rivera, Lilian Caruana, Jorge Arévalo Mateus, Marco Fernandez Guarino, Miriam Elhajli, Maisa Atayeva, Stella Silbert, Jesse Rifkin, Samuel Floyd, Winston Fleary, Todd Harvey, James Billington, Peggy Bulger, Betsy Peterson, Nicole Saylor Steven Winick, Ellen McHale, David Dean, Little Stevie, Judith Cohen, Rosita Sands, William R. Ferris, Daniel Sheehy, John Szinger, Martin Szinger, Alona Weiss, Trevor McIntosh Fleary, Esther Fleary, Princess Noel, Odysseus Chairetakis, Dominic Raimondo, Lamont J. Pearly, Barbara Hampton, Robert Baron, Anthony Seeger, Michael Frishkopf, Ellen Koskoff, Bill Pierson, Bill Nowlin, Giorgio Adamo, Sergio Bonanzinga, Luigi D'Agnese, Sabbatino Albano, Giovanni Coffarelli, David Marker, Patrick Savage, Katheryn R. Kirby, Carole Ember, Patricia Campbell, Philip Yampolsky, Jane Beck, Naomi Hawes Bishop, Chris Mulé, Giuseppe Balsamo, Raffaele Di Mauro, Violet Baron, Massimiliano Morabito, Tina Bucuvalas, Vassiliki

Chrysanthopoulou, Michael del Rio, Thomas Richardson, John Bishop, Barry Dornfeld, Amanda Dargan, Steve Zeitlin.

A Future

ACE has unique cultural resources and knowledge to give and to return to their sources. The dilemma is always how to do it effectively, how to share and make a significant, even a lasting impact. It has become clear to me, for example, that some repatriations – for example, one that we are currently engaged upon in Mississippi, need to include training and subsidies for young African Americans, probably students and local youth, in digitizing, interviewing, recording, putting together podcasts and radio spots, so that they can feature prominently in delivering the cultural assets we provide to their hometowns, schools, and the state. Their voices need to be the ones heard interviewing elders, discussing the material, singing and playing it in old and new versions, presenting it on radio, local television, and in college classrooms. This is a strategy that could work in the Caribbean – in Carriacou and Grenada – where people who desire cultural renewal are discouraged by a lack of interest and support from government. Ultimately, governmental and educational bodies must create permanent opportunities for cultural work and for the insertion of living (and past) traditions and traditional artists in school curricula in a big way. The Endangered Cultures / Emerging Leaders Initiative could be deployed on a large scale, possibly through partnerships with other organizations worldwide, without forgoing its key ingredient: one to one mentoring over a substantial period. These are not expensive programs, yet they carry promise.

We are building out the Global Jukebox with content created by source communities, portals for international archives where new recordings and films can be shared, and where they can develop their own educational materials; a mobile app to reach the vast world population without computers; visualized musical and dance Diasporas; "Journeys" dramatizing the musical signatures, salient themes, and creative loci of the six ethnic groups most influential in the development of American folk and popular musics.

Lomax, Irmgard Bartenieff, and Forrestine Paulay collaborated on a study of dance they called Choreometrics, based on an analysis derived from the study of film of dance and movement worldwide. It has never been published in its entirety, but it holds great promise and I predict that it will turn out to be influential in many fields. With a diverse group of ethnochoreologists and Laban dance analysts, Forrestine Paulay and Miriam Philips will develop a curriculum to teach the system. Paulay and I are writing a book publishing and explaining the system, and MITH (Maryland Institute of Technology) will develop a method of simultaneously coding dance for Choreometrics and Laban variables online.

ACE has the problem of all small not-for-profits: uncertain funding, impact not easily measured, and an uncertain future. Like other U.S. NGOs, it has limited support from the government and staff has to spend a large percentage of its time on fundraising. To con-

tinue, ACE requires a better funding base. It also needs to act effectively in the spheres of cultural revitalization and of producing cultural knowledge that reaches people and makes a difference. This is a tall ambition, but we have no choice. I think of what Alan once said:

> I have never been to a neighborhood, no matter how nondescript, nor worked with an individual, no matter how unlettered or misfortunate, who did not have something original to offer in the shape of song, story, dance, craft or game. Our task is to bring up this wealth of orally transmitted, neighborhood-located material and give it scope and place for development. (Lomax 1978)

Nathan Salsburg is curator of the Lomax Archive at ACE. Here is what he found at ACE:

> In October of this year, 2020, I will have worked with ACE for 20 years. I started at the New York City office at the age of 22, making coffee, post office trips, and spreadsheets of publishing data. I recall one of my first tasks being affixing an arbitrarily assigned series of "accession numbers" to DAT (Digital Audio Tapes) containing what were at the time the best possible quality transfers made by the Library of Congress of Alan's 1936-'37 Haitian recordings. In 2014, when we were cleaning and packing the office for its move across town, I threw those tapes away, their having become totally obsolete as both the media they were and the media they contained (newer transfers had been made direct-to-digital in the intervening years).
>
> My interest in the Lomaxes was and has remained fundamentally musical – I came to ACE with no archival, technical, or academic bona fides, but as a listener and a fan. For the first few years I entertained notions of eventually leaving the office and pursuing a graduate degree in ethnomusicology or folklore. But as time went on I realized that my intimate access to the depth and breadth of the Lomax materials was a rare and powerful blessing, and I try to apply myself to it with as much rigor as I would a graduate program. This involves something vaguely like what experimental composer Pauline Oliveros called "Deep Listening," which I have taken in my practice to mean an undistracted focus on not just the musical information I'm receiving, but the sounds of the movements of the bodies making it, the space where its being made, the space beyond that space, etc. Often this reveals fun extra-musical ephemera: roosters crowing, a phone ringing several rooms away, the sound of a cup being placed in a sink, or a car backfiring in the distance.
>
> One recording in particular stands out for its suggestion of an occurrence taking place just beyond the reach of the understanding, but serves to place the recording squarely and unmistakably in its geographical and social context. It comes from a Tuesday evening prayer service outside the small town of Medon, Tennessee, which was recorded by Lomax and Alan and Fisk University sociologist Dr. Lewis Jones in August of 1941 on behalf of the Library of Congress and Fisk. Jones and Lomax were multiracial collaborators on a study of African American social change in the Mississippi Delta, which they were just about to begin. We don't know why on their way to Clarksdale they stopped at the Maple Springs Baptist church to record spirituals, lining hymns, and preaching – nearly two dozen items. Towards the end of the meeting, Pastor Silas C. Long leads the singing of the African American hymn, "I'm Gonna Stay On the Battlefield":

I'm gonna stay on the battlefield,
I'm gonna stay on the battlefield,
I'm gonna stay on the battlefield,
Till I die, till I die…

It's a beautiful, rousing performance in any season, at any time, but when listening to it in June of 2020 – its relevance to the upheavals rocking America's streets and the fever-pitch of opposition to white supremacy and racist violence – one is nearly overcome.

Then the song ends. The singers start introducing themselves – in addition to the pastor, there are eleven of them – but their introductions are nearly impossible to make out under the noise of what has begun to happen outside the church. A car horn starts honking, a voice hollers "WOOO" and something unintelligible. Engines rev. It sounds deeply threatening. Local youth come to raise hell after learning of a white man inside the church? Did they see Alan get out of his car or drive through town with out-of-state license plates? As the singers speak their names, their voices reveal no sign of fear. They must be used to harassment, or perhaps what we hear are some boisterous neighborhood fellows. But no – African American youth taught respect for elders wouldn't dare or even wish to indulge in such behavior, so we may deduce the marauders are white from their brazen aggressivity outside the little church. Lomax made no mention of this incident in his field notes; he may have been too upset to write about it. It is the stoicism of the singers' introductions that to my ears holds the key – and they don't pause as though they're surprised by the racket. It is 1941, after all. Their impassivity betrays how accustomed they are to such iniquities. They can't stop them, but they can push right on through, fighting and ultimately winning on the moral and spiritual battlefield if not on the social or political one.

Not yet, that is.
"Till I die, till I die." (Nathan Salsburg)

Last Words

For an Italianist anthropologist, ethnomusicologist/folklorist by praxis, the happiest moment of my time at ACE occurred in Sergio Bonanzinga's living room in Palermo June of 2017, when Sergio, Giorgio Adamo, and I decided that a center in Palermo would be the ideal repatriation site for the 1954-55 recordings Alan made with Diego Carpitella – with all respect to the one that occurred in 1955, when Alan left copies with the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome. Alan and Diego began their Italian fieldwork in Sicily, so it seemed to me (and Alan agreed) that Palermo was the most fitting place for these extraordinary documents to begin to work their magic.

The "living archive" that ACE has become is at least a partial realization of Alan's vision of the return and dissemination of cultural treasures, of community appropriation of technology, and of amplifying voices, with particular respect and love for those of African Americans. He would expect better and more, of course; and we are right there with him. Our hope for ACE as we go forward is that we continue to contribute to the important issues of race, tradition, culture, and equity.

FIGURE 1. Alan Lomax in Dominica, Caribbean Islands, 1962.

FIGURE 2. Alan Lomax at the Delta Blues Festival in Greenville, Mississippi, 1979.

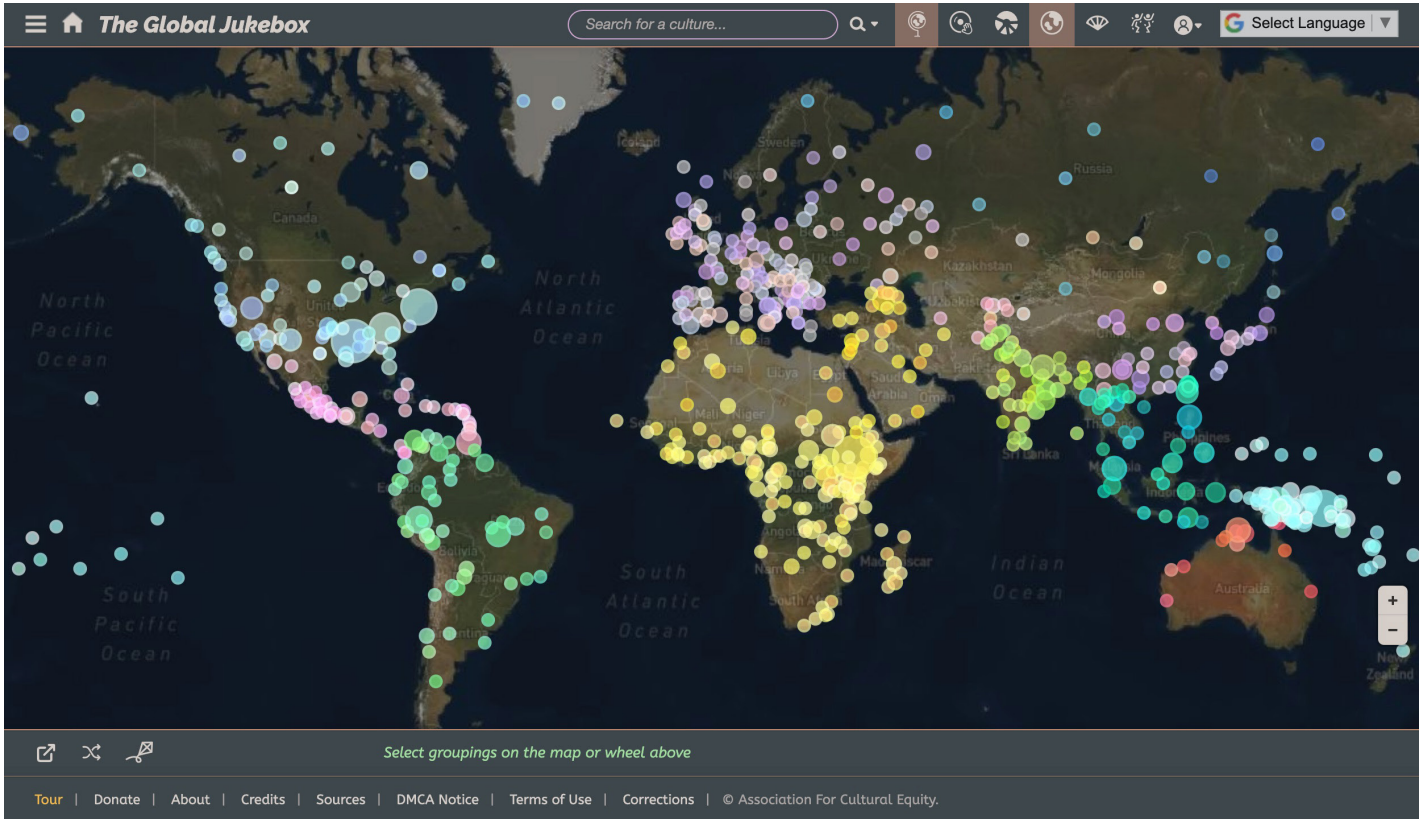

FIGURE 3. Screenshot of the interactive map in The Global Jukebox website.

FIGURE 4. The film archive in the original offices of the ACE.

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