

**Review: Susana Moreno Fernández, Salwa E. Castelo-Branco, Pedro Roxo and Iván Iglesias (eds.), *Current Issues in Music Research. Copyright, Power and Transnational Music Processes* (Lisbon, Edições Colibri, 2012), 232 pp., ISBN: 978-989-689-243-2**

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**T**HIS VOLUME CONSISTS OF A SELECTION OF NINE PAPERS given at the Lisbon SIBE+ conference in October 2010. A larger selection of communications from the same conference, also peer-reviewed, was published in the electronic volume *Musics and Knowledge in Transit*. The introduction by Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco and Susana Moreno Fernandez recalls the dynamic collaboration which led to the conference and its main topics. This unprecedented event was organised jointly by SIBE, the main scholarly society for ethnomusicology and popular music studies in Spain, and the Instituto de Ethnomusicologia — Centro de Estudos em Música e Dança (INET-md), the central hub of ethnomusicological research in Portugal. The conference took place at the Rectory of the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences of the *Universidade Nova de Lisboa*. Over four sunny October days, an impressive number of scholars, from both the Iberian Peninsula and elsewhere presented ethnographical data on various musics and cultures, and discussed six main topics. The introduction briefly recalls each of them: ‘Transatlantic flows’, on the cultural exchanges between the Iberian Peninsula, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, ‘Dialogic debates in ethnomusicology’, on the complicity of the ‘other’ in the production of ethnomusicological knowledge, ‘Author rights and notions of intellectual property’, ‘The construction and reception of the performative body’, ‘Communication media, technologies and industries of music and dance’, and finally ‘Music and dance: New educational challenges’.

The volume at hand is organised differently, a fact which already demonstrates the important editorial work which took place between the conference and the publication. Only one of the conference topics is directly represented in the volume: the first part, on issues of copyright and intellectual property. The second part of the volume focuses on ‘Discourse, power and memory’ while the third part aims at ‘Rethinking local and transnational music processes’. Each part is introduced by one of the volume editors, respectively Pedro Roxo, Iván Iglesias and Susana Moreno Fernández. Their short and efficient texts draw links between the articles within each section and circumscribe its topic with some additional references. Abstracts of each article are provided at the end of the volume, along with biographical notices on the authors and the editors. An index is present at the end. Four of the contributions are written in English, two in Portuguese and three in Spanish. There are four black and white pictures in the volume (three of them in Aubert’s paper). One author (Prass) uses a brief musical transcription.

In the first part of the volume, Anthony Seeger, Laurent Aubert and Carlo Nardi reflect on issues of intellectual property. Seeger’s paper manages to give, in a lively tone, a very consistent overview of the current state of affairs: although considerable efforts have been made by various institutions, current national and international laws still have a hard time in protecting indigenous people’s rights to manage their own musical traditions. There are law-making problems (nonetheless fascinating for anthropologists), such as identifying what exactly should be protected and who exactly should hold the rights to it. And there are properly anthropological issues (nonetheless troublesome for law makers) such as already extant indigenous conceptions of intellectual property. These are often as precise and explicit as laws can be, but they clash with each other, and they often clash as well with the moral principles underlying national and international laws. While Seeger’s text depicts the situation faithfully, it fails perhaps to grasp this particular problem to its full extent. His final recommendation to ‘pressure for legislation and ethical standards that reflect the aspirations of every community’ may seem plainly consensual amongst ethnomusicologists. But applied as such, it would also mean pressuring to implement gender, race, ethnic and religious discriminations into national laws. The Pitjantjatjara digital archive mentioned by the author is just one example of this: its login system makes sure that only Pitjantjatjara persons can access the archive, and then only the knowledge ‘appropriate’ to their gender and age. While the conceptors of the archive can be proud of its compliance with Pitjantjatjara aspirations, asking to reflect such restrictions in law is really double-edged ethically, and probably deserves at least an explicit discussion. Seeger’s text is nevertheless a wonderful introduction to the debates surrounding intellectual property in traditional musics. Its clear organisation, accessible language and dynamic progression also make it a perfect companion in teaching these issues.

Aubert's contribution is a good follow-up to Seeger's text. It is a case study which gives a great example of 'patrimonial and moral rights versus the realities of the field' (as its subtitle reads). Aubert is both an active ethnomusicologist and was, until recently, the scientific director of the AIMP records in Geneva. It is this experience which he shares in this paper, through narrating the particular story behind one CD published by AIMP in 2009: *Music of the Awajun and Wampis*. With a lively and often humorous tone, Aubert illustrates the paradoxes of trying to respect indigenous people's rights while still complying with national laws (establishing a contract for instance). It also points to the fulcral position of the collector (here Jeremy Narby, a Canadian anthropologist), often asked by the recording company to represent the performers' rights and wishes. Finally, the text highlights the asymmetrical relations between ethnomusicological labels, such as the AIMP, and artists belonging to 'show business' in the wider sense. The sampling practices and ethical standards of these artists are shown to be sometimes supportive of, sometimes antagonistic to, indigenous people's interests. The ethnomusicological producer often ends up trapped between the two. Aubert's story gives a rare insight into these professional challenges, making it a perfect complement to Seeger's text.

Nardi's look at 'library music' (also known as 'stock music') closes this first section of the book. Its first merit is to draw attention to this 'background' music and its economic model. Ubiquitous in popular media (through films and advertisements for example), 'library music' is probably underrepresented in ethnomusicology and popular music studies. Nardi focuses here on the tripartite trade between composers, the companies who buy their productions and integrate them into commercial libraries, and the end users who buy the music to use it in films, broadcasts or other kinds of productions. The whole process is fascinating, and Nardi aptly shows that it effectively manages to erase the personality of the composer from the musical work. His brief analysis of the musical categories which the selling websites offer for browsing ('mood', 'geographic location', 'instrumentation', 'style', etc.) is very relevant to the topic. However, the author chooses to focus on the moral situation of the artist in respect to the publisher, comparing it to the situation of the proletarian in respect to the factory owner. Marx is of course invoked here, with 'alienation' becoming a keyword of the text. What is surprising is that Nardi does not bring into discussion a seemingly obvious difference: while the Marxian proletarian is deprived of his means of production (this is why he sells his labour power to the capitalist), library musicians possess both equipment and musical skills, which are the only forms of 'capital' actually needed to make music. The publisher in effect buys the product of their work, not their bare labour power. Since Nardi does not reflect on this distinction, his use of 'alienation' is in the end somewhat vague, preserving only the moral connotations of the word. He admits that musicians can find interest in working for library publishers (indeed they do so of their own will!), but he also seems to warn against potential

dangers of this trade, dangers which remain unfortunately unclear. Despite the uncertainty of this argument, Nardi's contribution remains fascinating for the information it provides about the transactions surrounding this little known way of making and selling music.

The second section of the volume is devoted to issues of 'Discourse, power and memory'. Pedro Nunes traces the relations between aesthetic taste and political ideology in Portuguese musical journalism. He looks at three journals in particular: *Mundo da Canção*, which appeared during the late period of Salazar's dictatorship, and *Blitz* and *Expresso*, from the early democratic period. By studying the style and references of the musical reviews published in these journals, Nunes shows that journalists shifted from political critique, before the Revolution of 1974, to a more diffuse critique of specific generational and cultural values after that year. He reflects on the way post-dictatorship journalists drew distinctions in their writings between various musical categories and publics, often resorting to emotionally charged vocabularies. Nunes shows that these journalists represented themselves as 'gatekeepers of taste'. This is undoubtedly an important contribution for anyone interested in the history of popular music in Portugal. To complete the approach presented here, it could be useful to also investigate ethnographically the readers of those journals, to see how effective they actually were in shaping Portuguese musical taste.

In the second article of this section Irma Ruiz describes how the Mbyá-Guaraní recreated a completely new set of ritual musics for public use in the 1990s. This deliberately discrete community living in Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay had striven to keep the 'whites' (*jurua*) away from its rituals until that period. In particular, the daily sunset ceremony (which lasts symbolically until sunrise) has been very little documented until recently. Ruiz was probably the first scholar to be granted permission by the Guarani to witness these ceremonies in Argentina and to record them in 1973. The author explains that since the 1980s the global change of politics regarding indigenous minorities in South America, and especially the possibility offered to them in Argentina and Brazil of claiming ownership of their lands, prompted the Guarani to change their attitude. The Guarani effectively put up a new repertoire of songs and dances which they deemed suitable for public display. This repertoire is demonstrated by 'grupos corales' for the media, and at folk or touristic events. The groups are made of young Guarani persons, and supported by the rest of the community inasmuch as it serves a collective interest of 'strategical visibility' (author's wording). Nevertheless, the repertoire which these groups perform does not have the ritual importance which the 'private' ceremonies have. Ruiz's article describes in detail the differences between the 'private' and 'public' ceremonies, considering their musical and choreographical features, as well as how they unfold in time, and which emotions accompany their performances. She then asks whether these public musics are indeed 'sacred' and 'traditional', as the Guarani present them (at least to the outsiders). This question is curious since the author herself indicates that 'secular' and 'sacred' do not form a

relevant dichotomy for the Guarani. Furthermore, none of the many discussions which the ‘sacred’ has occasioned in anthropology is reflected by the six references cited during the course of the text. ‘Tradition’ similarly lacks a serious definition. The private ceremonial itself only started to use custom-made guitars and violins in the eighteenth century (as the author indicates at the beginning of her text). One may wonder how ‘traditional’ it could have sounded by then, and what other changes may have occurred in between. There is no doubt that the private and public Guarani repertoires are different from a ritual point of view; the author gives ample evidence of that. But her conclusive argument against the ‘sacredness’ and ‘traditionality’ of the public repertoire could probably be refined by taking in some further thoughts from anthropology.

In the last article of this section, Isabel Ferrer Senabre illustrates a third way to address issues of discourse, power and memory. Her text starts by questioning an apparent dichotomy in the bibliography on Franco’s dictatorship. On the one hand, historical narratives clearly show the hard social and economical conditions of those times, and the repressive mechanisms which many Spanish people had to suffer. On the other hand, when it comes to memories related to traditional musical events, things seem much ‘sweeter’ (author’s wording) and people even express nostalgia for those times. The author begins by mentioning two explanations which already exist for this kind of dichotomy: perhaps music was associated with the ‘good times’ of the otherwise dark period; perhaps also the anxiety experienced in the past simply does not persist very strongly in people’s memories. But Ferrer Senabre offers yet a third hypothesis. It stems from her own fieldwork in Valencia, where she collected memories surrounding a dance hall which functioned from 1939 to 1959. First, the author points to the potential influence of ‘folklorism’: not so much the institutional process itself, but rather the fact of selecting, idealizing and giving a fixed form to sets of past events. Ferrer Senabre suggests that folklorism may have served as a ‘mental model’ for her informants in the way they organized and presented their memories to her, giving more weight to some happenings and downplaying others. The other explanation brought forth by the author is ‘generational memory’: the fact that informants usually recall historical past as ‘in our times’, meaning a shared time of youth and relative empowerment, now forever gone (the reference to Hutcheon’s ‘nostalgia’ is most opportune here). The kind of dichotomy which elder Valencians demonstrate in their remembrances can be encountered in many other places under former dictatorship (a country such as Romania, for instance, is also full of dichotomic nostalgias when it comes to music). Beyond the Spanish case in particular, the hypothesis discussed in this text could probably be extended to understand the ‘sweetness’ of other memories of music in periods of dictatorship.

The third section of the volume is entitled ‘Rethinking local and transnational music processes’. The first article, by Luciana Prass, describes the author’s interactions with ‘quilombola’

communities of Rio Grande do Sul state in Brazil. Nowadays ‘quilombolas’ is a short appellation for ‘communities reminiscent of quilombolos’. As the author explains, the term designates communities of people with African background whose ancestors constituted separate ‘black’ communities in the nineteenth century (sometimes even before) in order to survive and preserve aspects of their lifestyle. Today such communities represent a juridical category in Brazil and are usually involved in long-term claims of specific rights and ownership of their lands. Recordings of quilombola musics have been made by Brazilian ethnomusicologists since the 1940s. Prass brought back some of these recordings to the communities where they were made, and engaged with current quilombola protagonists in discussions about their music, the past, the changes and continuities of their tradition. The text narrates this encounter. Frequent quotations give a lively glimpse of the kinds of reactions occasioned by this sonic encounter with the past.

In her clear and well documented paper, Katherine Brucher describes a significant ‘revolution’ in the world of Portuguese brass bands. *Pop Show N.º1*, composed by Amílcar Morais, was a medley of hit songs and popular tunes from both Portugal and abroad. It was the first of its kind. As Brucher explains, brass bands had been under the political obligation to play either arrangements of classical music (Beethoven being a favourite) or Portuguese compositions. Due to this constraint, their repertoire seemed ‘static’ and unattractive to many young musicians in the 1960s and the 1970s. In parallel, many young people were emigrating to escape military draft, poor economic conditions or both, and Portuguese brass bands had serious difficulties in renewing their members and audiences. Morais’s *Pop Show N.º1* was published, significantly, in August 1974, a few months after the revolution which overthrew the Estado Novo. Brucher aptly shows how fresh and stimulating it must have sounded by then, especially for young people who could hear it as a musical sign of the new times which were opening to them. The career path of Morais himself is also telling, as the man who revolutionized Portuguese brass bands was a soldier who had practiced composition almost exclusively in the army. The change in repertoire, the new political possibilities and the economic improvements of the 1980s led to a global change in the perception of brass bands amongst Portuguese youth. More bands appeared in the following years and their technical skills improved. More pop medleys were also composed and continue being composed for them to this day. Brucher draws on the bibliography, her own fieldwork, and her experience as a brass band musician, to unfold this fascinating social and musical story anchored in *Pop Show N.º1*.

In the third article of this section, Javier Campos Calvo-Sotelo reflects on the status of ‘Celtic music’ as both a musical category and an analytical challenge for ethnomusicologists. He starts by stating very clearly that ‘[Celtic music is] a re-creation without any historical grounding’ (my translation), a fact which has been demonstrated by many scholars. Some of them even developed in the process a kind of ‘academic Celtophobia’ (p. 194). Nevertheless, Campos Calvo-Sotelo also

points out that ‘Celtic theory’ has been around since the late eighteenth century. And even as a fictional category, ‘Celtic music’ does attract many followers. Both facts demonstrate at least some resilience of the category to its critics. Hence the need to analyse the Celtologic discourse itself, a goal stated at the end of the introduction. From there on, the text progresses through a curious succession of hypotheses whose object remains only vaguely defined. For instance, the idea that Celtic music appealed to its audiences in the 1950-70s as both politically ‘committed’ and more ‘sensual’ than most political songs of that period is certainly interesting. It is followed shortly by the assertion that ‘the psychoacoustic effect [of Celtic music] is in many cases inert, hypnotic [...] resulting ideally in the transporting of the listener to a realm which transcends the daily routine and liberates the imagination’ (my translation). The text gives no evidence of this Celtophonic effect, and does not comment either on the banality of ‘transcending the daily routine and liberating the imagination’, a goal shared by most popular musics at that time. Further on, the hypothesis of ‘Celtic music as a Trojan horse’ (author’s wording), is more audacious: according to Campos Calvo-Sotelo, the United Kingdom, France and Spain could have encouraged ‘Celtic music’ as a cultural trend in order to ‘dissolve into a politically unrealizable project the seismic tensions of their respective peripheries’ (and also to promote tourism in those regions). Again, no evidence is given to support the allegation of political manipulation which, as it stands, resembles a conspiracy theory more than a factual analysis. Throughout the text, ‘Celtic music’ is invoked, but no example of a ‘Celtic’ tune or band is given. These uncertainties will probably not reassure the possibly ‘Celtophobic’ reader. On the other hand, those who have some idea of what the ‘celtic’ musical branding represents in Europe may find in this essay a good many hypotheses to reflect upon.

Overall, thanks to its fourteen contributors (counting the editors), the volume gives a fascinating insight into a wide array of contemporary ethnomusicological issues. The papers are well balanced, homogenous in their length, and are written all in a clear and accessible language (an important point in a trilingual publication). The volume also demonstrates the central position of the Iberian Peninsula at the crossroads of current ethnomusicological research, through the joint work of the Spanish and Portuguese teams of SIBE+ and INET-md.

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