

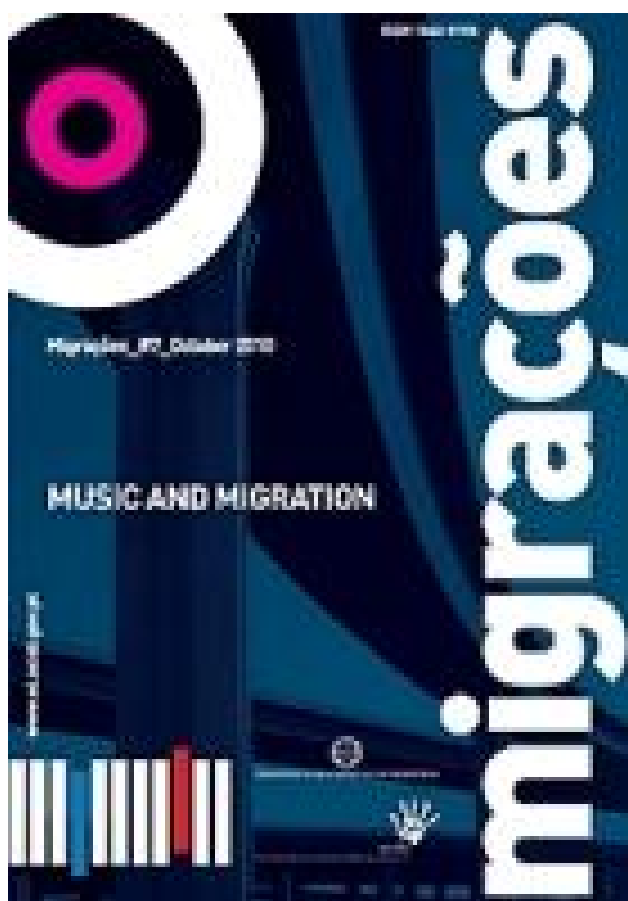
## MUSIC – SUBTEXT OF INTERCULTURAL CONTEXT

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**Abstract:** *This article intends to highlight the importance of music in the context of migrant communities, reflected in the special issue of the publication Migrações. Journal of the Portuguese Immigration Observatory, Music & Migration, #7 October 2010, coordinated by the researcher Maria de São José Côrte-Real (Universida de Nova, Lisbon).*

**Keywords:** *music, migration, identity, citizenship, intercultural context.*



### 1. INTRODUCTION. PROBLEMATICĂ AND STRUCTURE

The special issue of the publication *Migrações. Journal of the Portuguese Immigration Observatory, Music & Migration*, #7 October 2010, coordinated by the

researcher Maria de São José Côrte-Real (Universida de Nova, Lisbon), dedicated to the intense relationships, identity, established between cultural groups from Diaspora and their cultural memory, is important by its focus on contemporary cultural framework where continuity and innovation vectors act by appeal to musical subtext. Being structured into three parts: I. *Research* II. *Good practices* and III. *Notes and opinion articles*, this issue is introduced by Rosário Farmhouse's accompanying texts, High Commissioner for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue, Roberto Caneiro, Immigration Observatory Coordinator and the publisher Maria de São José Côrte-Real.

Music – reliable element of cultural identity, equally universal and particular language – is one of the factors that unify the current community that enables increasingly diverse cultural mixtures characterizing a society that moves on, into the contemporary mixer, towards the global homogeneity and also having the role of maintaining the specificity, the local particularity, that of origin. *“Resulting from – individual or collective – creative processes, music reveals elements that characterize specific cultural identities of its creators, at the same time establishing itself as a new identity element of the community that appropriates it”*, Rosário Farmhouse mentions in his introductory speech (2010:7). This “succulent” number 7

from *Migrações* as Roberto Caneiro names it, therefore brings to the readers, under the organizational print of the publisher Côrte-Real, not only issues such as harmonic, aesthetic involved in music, but also social and cultural ones, political and economic aspects implicitly, that remain within an area (often marginally) of dialogue between cultures. Maria de São José Côrte-Real's complex foreword is meant to build systematically a map of the binominal music-migration and to bring into discussion referential elements of the structure of this special issue from *Migrações*, presenting – intended to be illustrative in this review of the scientific paper *Review of the Air Force Academy* – important names of ethnomusicological research who agreed to participate in the already completed design of above-mentioned binominal: Dan Lundberg (Universitrt of Stockholm), Sílvia Martínez (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), Susana Sardo (Universidade de Aveiro), Maria de São José Côrte-Real (Universidade Nova de Lisboa), Jorge Castro Ribeiro (Universidade de Aveiro), Ursula Hemetek (Universität Wien), Jorge de La Barre (Universidade Nova de Lisboa), John Baily (University of London), Marcello Sorce-Keller (Università ta' Malta), Dieter Christensen (Columbia University, New York), Mark Naison (Fordham University, New York), Jean-Michel Lafleur (Université de Liège) și Marco Martiniello (Centre d'Études de l'Ethnicité et des Migration).

## 2. MUSIC AND MIGRATION. MUSIC ROLES WITHIN MIGRANT GROUPS

Music – important identity marker – mainly expresses its marker qualities within marginality. This marginality, seen not only within ethnic boundaries<sup>1</sup>, space of confluences and cultural interference, gives rise to the need for expression of belonging, and music, through its symbolic potential, being meant to configure differences and similarities. „*Music, and folk music in particular, constitutes a special case as an identity marker. Especially since it, together with other forms of expression, moulds our perception of what collective human identity*

*actually is.*”, as Dan Lundberg mentions (2010:42). Community membership involves both introspection and expression, the culture functionality by implementing various forms of highlighting, being accomplished implicitly through music. But this highlighting is the more obvious, the larger the cultural diversity is. Therefore, the stronger the need of expression is, the more emphasized the membership is required to be.

In particular, music is meant to maintain cohesion in Diaspora groups, to preserve the language and to transmit it to young people. It contributes substantially to evoking memory, to keeping alive emotions of migrant population that accompanied and remained with her, unlike other cultural items that had remained far behind. By this, we should understand that the repetition of these cultural practices (through music) is a source of comfort for the migrant population. Sometimes, after generations' succession, after keeping some evoking ritualized forms through music, „*cultivating the 'retention of musical models' (Carvalho, 1991) which retains and evokes the past era*” (Castro Ribeiro, 2010:105), successive generations born out of migrant groups, may create a dynamics musical innovation by enriching, through new forms of expression, the own cultural expression and bringing closer the host cultural space, thus helping to create a new identity<sup>1</sup>. In this framework of cultural reconfiguration through music, passing from 'natural order', folklore to the 'aesthetic order' of cult music should not be omitted.

Furthermore, music, used to maintain cultural identity, to create cohesion, sometimes split on ideological and religious foundation, has a therapeutic role for the immigrant and for the group, stimulating self-esteem and getting closer the person that is situated far from the own cultural framework, to an

<sup>1</sup> “*This is specially typical to the second or third migrant generation, born and brought up in a new land.*”, Baily and Collyer note (2006), cited by Castro Ribeiro (2010:105); more, Baily (2010:159) underlines the fact that the role of music (in the sense of implicit innovation) is „*to reinforce an encapsulated sense of identity*”;

imaginary cultural landscape that begins to shape.

But these roles that music have are filled with significance for the ethnomusicology researchers, that consider it a source of analysis of migration, as source of information on behaviors and attitudes, on openness, on rendering the possibility to configure the intercultural dialogue. In a brief presentation, Maria de São José Côrte-Real (2010:92) succeeds the transfer from music towards citizenship matters and intercultural dialogue: „*Body and mind reactions pointing in opposite directions in circumstances such as musical sound preferences, choice of leading references and reflection on one's identity-belonging, seem to highlight the discussion on citizenship, implying openness to diversity, creativity and collaborative endeavour on the interpretive experience*”.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS. CHALLENGES OF GLOBAL WORLD

This new space, under the umbrella of globalism, overturning effects caused by disjunctive cultural logic, by the more frequent appeal to conjunctive logic in a global world, forecasts the role of music, in the new context of cross-cultural manifestation of the need to maintain the group in an identity and not so stable balance. The challenge suitability for the cultural dynamics is immense. Thus, the group – „*the group entering in performance, constituting and reconstituting itself – imagining itself as it is consolidating itself, and consolidating itself as it is imagining itself -, always re-actualized*” (de La Barre, 2010:147) – is forced to adapt, not to a host culture, but to a dynamic, multiethnic supra-culture, where the mixture represents the greatest danger. Thus, the role of the ethnomusician becomes more important, who is forced to study the music of migrant groups, not in relation to the stable and unique cultural environment, but to a trans- and intercultural framework. Seen as a phenomenon with a decisive role in acculturation relations, the music of migrant groups has changes (of migrant culture and host culture), not in

relation with the original models, but rather with a music of time, and not of space.

The question which this special issue of *Migrações* answers to, directly or indirectly, is that concerning the logic (and ethics) that govern the music of migrant groups, namely, the unstable equilibrium which this involves, in a world hungry for culture: „*On the one hand, the ethic of responsibility (reason) and its values of universalism and humanism, the progressive and finally indifferent inclusion of 'all' in an undifferentiated and repetitive world music; on the other hand, the ethic of conviction (emotion), the 'music of periphery' with their potential of resistance through cynicism and silence, their perfect indifference in being represented by the center, also revealing, denouncing and eventually exhausting the pitfalls, the contradictions of the 'repetitive society' (Attali, 1977). A resistance which, by the way, would be directly proportional to the degree of exclusion that these musics 'suffer'*. (de La Barre, 2010:153). Within such a framework, where both „*music relaxes and awakens*” (Côrte-Real, 2010:73), its study, correlated with the dynamic, globalizing context, is a necessity.

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