



ANTHONY SEEGER

**A major new reference work
to an understanding of music and social life
in Portugal's 20th century**

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EDIÇÃO E PROPRIEDADE

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REVIEW ARTICLE

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**A major new reference work
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Discussed in this essay:

CASTELO-BRANCO, Salwa (dir.), *Enciclopédia da Música em Portugal no Século xx*,
Lisboa, 4 volumes, Círculo de Leitores/Temas e Debates, 2012.

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The four-volume *Enciclopédia da Música em Portugal no Século xx* (EMPXX) is a magnificent achievement. It establishes a solid baseline for all future works on the music of Portugal and marks the emergence of an important group of Portuguese scholars who are profoundly influencing the way music is studied in Portugal and abroad. The largest musicological work on the music of Portugal published to date, the EMPXX is also one of the most carefully conceived, tightly organized, and self-reflexive reference works this reviewer has ever encountered. As such it certainly merits a review in the *Análise Social*. This review begins with a discussion of the general objectives and organizing principals of the encyclopedia. This is followed by a discussion of entries on each of the three levels of generalization found in EMPXX. In turn, this is followed by reflections on the music of Portugal in *Wikipedia*, on-line reference resources, and the future of EMPXX in the digital age.

OBJECTIVES AND ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES

The 1184 entries in the nearly 1,500 pages of the EMPXX have been prepared by over 150 writers of diverse perspectives, coordinated by an editorial team directed by Dr. Castelo-Branco, who has written an incisive introductory essay that is obviously the result of many hours of discussion and debate within the editorial and coordinating committees. Even if a reader of this journal has no interest whatsoever in music and its role in the events and lives of the Portuguese in the 20th century, that person should not fail to read Dr. Castelo-Branco's essay "Itinerário de trabalho e princípios organizadores" that opens the first volume. He or she should read it because it so clearly defines an approach to music that departs from earlier approaches to Portuguese music in earlier periods. I discuss three points from the essay below; other readers might select different quotations from this very rich introduction.

1. "Na EMPXX, a música é perspectivada como um campo de produção cultural dinâmico e heterogéneo" (Castelo-Branco, 2010, vi). Music is not seen as a "product" or something confined to the domain of aesthetics, but rather as a group of practices that unfold within local, regional, national, and global contexts. These contexts both shape musical practices and are shaped by them. The EMPXX places the study of music firmly in the arena of the social sciences as well as the humanities. Furthermore, the implications of this perspective are visible throughout the organization and entries in the encyclopedia, as I demonstrate below.
2. "Na sua organização global, a obra [EMPXX] assenta na visão de um universo musical plural e dinâmico, compreendendo campos sociais distintos, construídos em torno de géneros e práticas musicais interligadas e com fronteiras fluidas, referidos na obra como 'domínios.' Abordam-se estes domínios como construções simbólicas ideologicamente sustentadas, cujos significados são atribuídos através de um processo interpretativo, para o qual contribuem músicos, ouvintes, estudiosos, meios de comunicação social, editoras fonográficas, instituições da política cultural, entre outros agentes" (Ibid., p. v).

One of the obvious difficulties in creating reference works of this kind is their tendency to reify categories and ideas that in actual use are far more fluid than they appear in the works of scholars, journalists, and media promotions. Scholars have often been complicit, inadvertently or purposively depending on the case, in the reification of genre and the separation of music in terms of certain analytic preferences.

The separation of *música erudita*, *música folclórica*, and *música popular* falsely isolates those genres from one another, and the editors repudiate the classification of repertory into simplistic categories. The editors are very aware of the dangers of reification, and have sought to minimize them through the organization of the encyclopedia itself as well as in some of the major entries. On the other hand, reference works are designed for the general public, and readers wish to find information they are looking for using categories they already know. For this reason some domains have to be distinguished at a practical level, even as they may be criticized or undermined at another.

3. The EMPXX “elaborou mais de metade das entradas baseadas em investigação original no âmbito de domínios que ainda não tinham sido alvo de estudos académicos...” (*ibid.*, p. xi). The normal manner in which reference works are assembled is that an editorial team selects specialists in all of the desired topics and asks them to write their entries based on their previous research. In the case of Portuguese music, the editors found that no previous research existed in many of the areas that needed to be covered. To fill these lacunae, graduate students at the Instituto de Etnomusicologia, Centro de Estudos de Música e Dança (INET/MD) were enlisted to research them and to write MA and Doctoral dissertations on some of the subjects. Others were investigated through archival research (made difficult by the lack of a centralized archive for music and the large amount of material in private hands), interviews, and what the editors call “dialogic editing,” where the subjects of entries were asked to participate in the preparation and editing of the entries pertaining to them. As a result, the EMPXX is not simply a compilation of existing knowledge. It represents the results of a decade of research by a generation of young scholars and their teachers. The publication of the EMPXX thus represents not simply the appearance of a masterful reference work, but is also the publication for a large public of the research and thinking of a new generation of Portuguese scholars. Part of the significance of this work is that, in order for it to be published, a great amount of research on music in Portugal in the 20th Century had first to be completed and reflected upon.

Central to fulfilling the promise of the general statements in the introduction is how those objectives are realized in the encyclopedia itself. It is, after all, a heterogeneous collection of entries by many authors with diverse backgrounds and interests. There are several ways the structure manages to embody the goals.

The editors had several models to consider as they laid out the plan of the EMPXX. Their decisions about the organization of the encyclopedia are a direct outgrowth of their conceptualization of music, and also of their understanding of the particular needs of those interested in learning about the music of Portugal. One very important model of a music encyclopedia is the massive *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Sadie, 2001), which focuses heavily on the history of European classical music, instruments, composers, and performers, but has expanded its coverage considerably, especially in its online format (http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/public/book/omo_gmo). The *New Grove* entries are arranged alphabetically from A-Z. Some music reference works, however – especially those about European Classical Music (*música erudita*) – are organized chronologically rather than alphabetically.¹ While the EMPXX might have been organized chronologically (starting with January 1, 1900, and continuing to December 31, 1999), if music is defined as a field of cultural production rather than the production of scores and recordings, a chronological organization makes little sense. The editors of the EMPXX had another model to consider in the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* (Porter and Rice, 1998-2002). The ten volumes of the *Garland* are organized by geographic region (for example Africa, Europe, Southeast Asia, etc.). Each volume has a somewhat similar division into three parts, each beginning with an introduction to the region of the world covered by the volume and its culture and music. The general essays of the opening section are followed by a series of essays on “major issues.” For the “Europe” volume Part Two has two sections, “History of Music,” and “Understanding Musical Performance and Ideas about Music,” the second of which includes essays on transmission, musical genres, dance, musical instruments, etc. The essays in Part Two are followed by a series of “detailed accounts of individual music cultures” in Part Three. In the “Europe” volume this section includes separate essays only on countries and transnational ethnic groups. The *Garland* has no entries on individual composers, performers, or cultural figures, but these may appear within the individual country entries. The EMPXX might have been organized by districts or geographic regions, like the *Garland*, but within Portugal. However, such a model would have impeded an understanding of the general processes that affected musical production in all the districts in the country, like folklorization, mass media, music education, etc. The EMPXX combined certain aspects of both the *New Grove* and the *Garland* in its organization.

1 In the *New Grove* a chronological organization survived in the order of bibliographical sources, which appeared chronologically rather than alphabetically at the end of each entry—something puzzling to most social scientists.

It is also worth mentioning that the EMPXX comes with two compact discs held in plastic envelopes inside the covers of Volumes 1 and 3. These are, respectively, *Uma Breve Viagem pela Emissora Nacional (1930-1975)* and *Uma Breve Viagem pelo Arquivo Sonoro do Museu Nacional do Teatro*. They are both fascinating collections, the *Museu Nacional do Teatro* being largely represented by very early recordings that are all now in the public domain. The recordings from the radio station are more recent, and equally interesting. Brief track notes describe their contents. They do not appear to be as fully integrated into the structure of the separate entries as they might have been, but they are definitely worth mentioning and listening to, and present a hint of the materials available in archived audiovisual collections in Portugal.

A DISCUSSION OF SAMPLE ENTRIES

The EMPXX combines features of the *New Grove* (its alphabetical organization, its many entries on individual artists, composers, and short topics), with aspects of the *Garland Encyclopedia* (the different levels of generalization of its essays). In doing so it is making an ideological statement about what music is, and also addressing a practical need for potential users of the EMPXX who are looking for information about particular people, genres, and concepts. EMPXX entries are divided into three levels of abstraction or generalization (*ibid.*, p. vii). The first level includes the “anchoring” or “structuring” entries. These essays provide the conceptual underpinnings of the whole project and address the principal concepts as well as analyze musical processes culturally, socially, and politically. Among these essays are those on musical domains, mass media, the cultural, social, and political processes that have had an impact on musical life, long essays on *fado*, *feira*, and *folklorização* as well as on musical institutions, instruction, research, migration, and tourism. The second level includes entries on groups, institutions, styles, and musical instruments that extend across several domains. Examples of these are *associação recreativo*, *banda militar*, *instrumentos musicais tradicionais*, *música improvisada*, *música religiosa*, *teatro*, and *tuna* (see below). The third and most specific level includes entries on specific individuals, institutions, concepts, events, and publications, among other things. This tripartite structure of entries enables the editors to provide a general critical perspective on major features of the music of Portugal while still attending the need to provide basic biographical and historical information about the history of music in Portugal in the xx century that can be found nowhere else. Unlike the *Garland Encyclopedia*, the general entries appear side by side with the others, in alphabetical order.

As an example, let us examine a short level 1 entry on a large subject: *folclorização*. The entry on folklorization can be found under the letter “F” along with *feira*, *folclore*, and the names of a number of specific festivals in different parts of the country. *Folclorização* is listed in the introduction as one of the “level 1” entries, and deals with broad issues of national cultural policy, ideology, and the participation of music in broader social processes. Like most of the entries on complex topics, it begins with a definition, one part of it being “Fenómeno cultural da modernidade, a folclorização conduziu à mobilização e integração das populações rurais na nação” (Castelo-Branco and Freitas Branco, p. 508). The authors then describe how the process of *folclorização* began in the 1930s, but had a long pre-history of studies by intellectuals of rural expressive traditions that can be traced back to the mid-19th century. *Folclorização*, however, is a 20th century phenomenon in Portugal, strongly related to the Portuguese state whose policies profoundly influenced the process beginning in the late 1930s, at which time, the authors argue, folklore became an institutionalized “social field” in the sense of Pierre Bourdieu. Many of the musical representations of “Folklore” were intimately shaped by the cultural policies of the State, and the performing groups also represented the State in a very concrete and tangible way through presentations at local, national, and international events. Presentations of normalized rural musical forms, with their music, dress, and dance formalized through regulations and competitions, were used as representations of the nation from the late 1930s through the 1960s.

The association of the State with “folklorized” rural traditions was fairly common in Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, but in every country the movement had its own specificities. The process in Portugal is discussed in this general entry and also described at greater length in some of the individual entries (for example “Marchas populares de Lisboa”; “Ranchos folclóricos” and “Tuna”). The essay does not end with the events of 25 April, but shows how folklorization has changed and continued to grow in the decades following. This included the formation of the Federação do Folclore Português in 1977 and the proliferation of groups which, now freed from state regulation, had much more leeway with what they considered folklore to be. Overall, the entry demonstrates extremely clearly how music has both influenced and been influenced by State and local policies as well as the active agency of individual musicians, choreographers, and producers. It demonstrates what is meant by a “social field” and also by the organizers’ position that musical forms change, but in ways that are often closely linked to other social processes. The entry is only three and a half pages, but is densely argued and well supported with citations of contemporary literature and references to other entries in the EMPXX.

An example of a somewhat different contribution made by the EMPXX to the study of music in Portugal is the level 1 entry on the *Indústria Fonográfica* (Losa, pp. 632-643). The music of the 20th century was profoundly shaped by the music industry, notably the *recording* industry, in particular. The entry on the phonograph industry also begins with a general definition, based on the work of important international scholars in the field, and then describes how the phonograph industry was established in Portugal and its influence on the music made available to the public. The significance to music in Portugal of large transnational entertainment companies is outlined in some detail, as well as the appearance (and frequently rapid disappearance) of independent record labels. To some younger readers, accustomed to finding every kind of sound they want to hear on the Internet, this description of the recording industry will seem very foreign and strange. But these companies shaped the lives and recordings of hundreds of Portuguese musicians and offered them both opportunities and deceptions throughout the century. This is a very useful entry. The EMPXX does a fine job in this entry and throughout of presenting both the processes and individuals who were important in various ways in the constantly evolving record industry.

An example of a level 2 entry is that on *Tuna*, written by Conceição Capela and Leonar Cruz. I selected it because I did not know what “*tuna*” was. The fairly long entry begins with the basic definition of a *tuna* as a musical ensemble comprised of plucked stringed instruments. The entry goes on to distinguish three distinct types of *tunas* (traditional, symphonic, and academic), and to describe the history, composition, and principal performance contexts of each. Although small, the four black and white photographs of various *tunas* are very helpful. Readers are referred to separate entries on the “*Tuna Académica da Universidade de Coimbra*” and to the conductor/composer “José Pais de Almeida e Silva,” as well as to separate entries on many of the instruments. At the end of the entry the reader is directed to the entries *Folclore*, *Folclorização*, and *Música tradicional*. The entry includes an extensive bibliography and fairly extensive discography that enable the interested reader to go beyond the entry itself for further investigation. Although there is no discussion of the concept of folklorization in the entry, the fairly detailed presentation enables the reader to see some of the larger context of which the *tunas* were a part.

An example of a level 3 entry follows almost immediately after the general entry on *Tuna*: “*Tuna Académica da Universidade de Coimbra (TAUC)*,” written by André Filipe Oliveira Granjo. Unlike the level 2 entry, which described the genre, this entry focuses on a single organization. It describes the founding of TAUC in 1888 and the early history of the group in some detail, with less attention given to more recent decades. The bibliography is extensive, and

the discography is very short—one LP—which reflects either the emphasis on live performance and the importance given to writing about TAUC rather than recording the sounds produced by its members, or the lack of archival copies of what was produced.

A perusal of the entries in the four volumes of the EMPXX reveals impressive attention to detail, extensive bibliographies that in many cases include both publications and unpublished materials, and extensive discographies as well as filmographies when appropriate. Many entries are illustrated by one or more black and white photographs. The project is immense in scope and accomplishment, and should help future generations of scholars to quickly locate relevant publications and materials that will help them pursue their own studies, or perhaps just to learn more about an artist or composer they love to listen to.

Some readers will find the single-paragraph style for long entries difficult to read and many of the photographs a bit small for the material presented in them. Clearly this was done to economize on space and publication expense of a very large and complicated project. One beneficial side effect of this parsimonious use of space in EMPXX is that the volumes are small, relatively light in weight, and fit much better in the hand than most encyclopedias.

WIKIPEDIA, PRINT ENCYCLOPEDIAS, AND FUTURE USES OF THE EMPXX

As I was writing this review, the venerable *Encyclopedia Britannica* announced that it would cease publication, largely due to online competition and a shrinking market for published encyclopedias. Students (and some faculty) today are far more familiar with *Wikipedia* than with printed encyclopedias. In an effort to compare the EMPXX with *Wikipedia*, I searched the Portuguese language Wikipedia site for information about the *Tuna Académica da Universidade de Coimbra* (TAUC), and found an entry. The differences in the two entries are dramatic. The *Wikipedia* entry highlights the date of founding and has more information on recent history but neither bibliography nor discography. The EMPXX is far more detailed about the first decades, provides bibliography, and mentions the single disc. Clearly anyone seriously interested in the subject would learn more from the EMPXX. Looking up the generic word, *Tuna*, led me to an article that raised a different issue. The *Wikipedia* entry began with a general definition of *tuna*, but then discussed only *tuna académica*. There is no mention of either the rural *tuna tradicional* or the *tuna sinfónica*, which are discussed in the EMPXX. An uninformed reader such as myself would have no idea, based on reading in *Wikipedia*, that there have been distinct types of

tuna, each with its own history and development. In this case the *Wikipedia* article does have a bibliography of six items, two of which are blogs and one is the proceedings of a 2009 conference. The *EMPXX* article has 13 bibliographic items and includes the books but not the 2009 proceedings (it has earlier ones) or the blogs listed in *Wikipedia*. There are no entries for *Folclorização* and just an outline of an entry for *Indústria Musical* in *Wikipedia* (its main useful feature being access to a list of record companies in Portugal), and the entry on *folclore* is largely a discussion of international folklore scholarship, with little specification for either Portugal or Brazil. While the entries in *Wikipedia* will certainly be improved in coming years, they will probably lead to the predictable strengths and weaknesses of the *Wikipedia* entries on music in the United States. These tend to be far stronger on popular music genres, individual artists, and popular groups than on topics with a smaller number of computer-literate fans, and there is little integration of one entry with another.

Given the serious shortcomings in the best-known open source encyclopedia on the music of Portugal, it would be very useful if the *EMPXX* were available in an online form. It is an extremely important resource that would reach many more readers online than it can in printed form. Its many cross-references could be turned into links, enriching the readers' experience, and its photographs could be scaled so that they could be enlarged for detailed study by those interested. When *EMPXX* was originally conceived, the Internet was not nearly the research resource it has become in recent years. Issues of budget, access, intellectual property rights, and other considerations certainly played important roles in the decision to publish the encyclopedia in printed form. It is to be hoped, however, that the information can eventually be made available in a way that can be easily accessed online and, at some future time, updated as desired so that recent bibliography and discography can join the rich information already provided and new perspectives can be broached on the subjects so thoughtfully presented in its pages. One can dream of some well-funded future with an intense use of Internet-2.0 to continue the work that the *EMPXX*, its editors and advisors, and its 150 contributors, have begun.

In the meantime, the *Instituto de Etnomusicologia, Centro de Estudos de Música e Dança*, of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa has a database of the entries and research used to produce them. This is presently only available to researchers who go to the Institute, but even in this form it can serve the further development of research about, and appreciation of, the music of Portugal.

To conclude, the *EMPXX* is a magnificent achievement. It is one of the best organized, self-reflexive, and original reference works I have examined.

I highly recommend it not only as a source of information about music, but as a very thoughtful model for how to present information to the general public in a way that is accessible, useful, and sophisticated. Everyone involved in this project is to be warmly congratulated, including organizers, advisors, authors, financing agencies, photo-clearance specialists, proofreaders, and the publisher. The study of the music of Portugal has been greatly advanced through their collective efforts.

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