

Kniha je doplněna bohatým obrazovým materiálem, který jednotlivé vzpomínky nejen ilustruje, ale někdy i doplňuje. Kromě toho je zařazen místní rejstřík, bohatý seznam literatury a archivních pramenů a překlady resumé do angličtiny a němčiny

– důležité součásti každé odborné knihy.

Souhrnně lze říci, že třetí díl edice je vydařený – a můžeme se těšit, jaké téma zvolí editorky a editoři pro příští svazek.

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Edwin Seroussi. Sonic Ruins of Modernity. Judeo-Spanish Folksongs Today. London – New York: Routledge, 2023. 240 pp. ISBN 978-1-032-27654-0

Edwin Seroussi, Professor Emeritus of Musicology at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, has devoted his lifelong research to the sacred and secular musical cultures of the Mediterranean and the Middle East, interactions between Jewish and Islamic cultures, popular music in Israel and Judeo-Spanish folksongs. It is to the latter topic that he has dedicated his latest monograph.

In CD liner notes, concert programs and scholarly literature the aura of antiquity of Judeo-Spanish folksongs is often emphasized, as they are frequently presented as petrified elements of medieval Hispanic culture, as evidence of the original legacy of pre-1492 Jewish presence on the Iberian Peninsula. However, as Seroussi shows, the actual gestation period of most these folksongs occurred in the late 19th and early 20th century. From the late 1950s onwards, they began to be recorded and performed on concert stages.

Thus, the main point of the monograph is a critical revelation of the origins, provenance, changes in the meaning and migratory trajectories of most of the texts and melodies, as well as the final post-traditional “fossilization” of Judeo-Spanish folksongs (i.e., sung in Ladino language), which simultaneously reflect the modern journey of the Sephardic Jews.

Drawing on theorizing on post-traditionality by the sociologists Shmuel N. Eisenstadt and Anthony Giddens, and also British folksong collector Albert L. Lloyd and ethnomusicologist Petra Gelbart, among others, Seroussi conceptualizes folksong in the post-tradition period as a “ruin, as a place inviting ‘visits’ by ‘tourists’ – nowadays an assorted public of diverse ethnic, national, socio-economic and religious backgrounds – curious about the past of other cultures. As modern ruins, the songs are reconstructed, pre-

served, and cared for by different agents and, indeed, one usually has to pay for a ticket to be granted access to them” (p. xiv, 23) – whether to gain entrance to concerts or to buy printed collections or recordings. Yet many “sonic ruins” are now available for free on the Internet. In addition to Walter Benjamin’s essay, Seroussi’s choice of this conceptualization was inspired by a visit to the Museo Sefardí garden in Toledo in 2014, where the tones of some of the songs analyzed in the book poured from hidden speakers.

In terms of methodology, the monograph combines years of detailed research with archival sources and interviews, and also draws on sources from other scholars – in particular, the four-decade ethnography of Judeo-Spanish folksong by Susana Weich-Shahak and a special event by Israeli radio Kol Israel (The Voice of Israel), which aimed to document carriers of this repertoire who arrived in Israel, as part of the pioneer collection developed since the mid-1950s by the Ladino radio broadcast program directed by Moshe Shaul. Today, “cyberethnography” has also become an indispensable source of data for Seroussi.

The history and cultural memory of Sephardic Jews (Sephardim) are marked especially by their triple diasporic experience: The first experience is the one shared by all Jews, their removal from the Holy Land after the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. The second

relates to their traumatic removal from the Iberian Peninsula, while the third was the displacement of the Sephardic Jews from the lands in which they settled in the aftermath of their expulsion from Iberian Peninsula (in the successor states of colonial France and the former Ottoman Empire in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East).

Moreover, Sephardim represent both micro- and supra-national imagined collectives. On the one hand, they feel part of the modern Hispanic commonwealth. On the other, they developed a Jewish sub-identity, defining themselves both vis-à-vis the Ashkenazim and vis-à-vis the “Sephardic” label applied to all non-Ashkenazi Jews (including Mizrahim, i.e., Jews from Arab-majority countries).

While Ladino has overwhelmingly achieved the status of a post-vernacular language, the rediscovered Judeo-Spanish folksongs have survived to the present day and have become perhaps the most prominent object of Ladinostalgia and symbolic identity marker of today’s global but small community of Sephardic Jews. From the last two decades of the 19th century, documentation and dissemination of the Ladino folksongs was also influenced by internal Jewish colonialism (civilizing projects of, e.g., Algerian or other “French” Jewry in the world of Islam), Spanish republican philo- and anti-Semitism and the beginnings of the recording industry in the Middle East. It was

these songs that allowed them to highlight the distinctive and prestigious Iberian Jewishness already in the former Ottoman Empire, where they conceptualized themselves as carriers of a noble European cultural heritage. Thanks to electronic mass media especially, the canon of Judeo-Spanish folksongs has spread all over the world.

The core of the book consists of five case studies, each of which is dedicated to a selected song. With fascinating detail, and sometimes almost in the spirit of a detective story, the author traces the songs from the time of their creation through the often transcontinental transformations of the textual and musical components, and the journey from the original manuscript to today's "ruins": truncated and variously simplified and standardized versions. Modern Sephardic performers were influenced not only by non-Jewish Spanish folksongs and older genres such as *romancero* or Arabic *wasf*, they also drew inspiration from early 20th-century Spanish musical theatre, Argentine tango and flamenco couplets, well-known Greek, Turkish, Bulgarian and Arabic tunes, North Moroccan musical elements, and traces of French chansons or Viennese waltzes. Judeo-Spanish folksong in its current form is now

circulating mainly in global cyberspace, and many of these pieces have lost their exclusive connection to Sephardic Jews as their original carriers and have become part of the repertoire of international performers in various kinds of art and popular music. According to Seroussi, the 1990s were certainly the Golden Age of Sephardic commercial recordings. Even in the Czech Republic, for example, the song *Cuando el rey Nimrod* was recorded in 1993 by Jana Lewitová and lutenist Rudolf Měřínský on the album "Sephardic songs". In 2022, the Mackie Messer Klezmer Band, a local klezmer music group performed this song at the Jewish Town Revived cultural and historical festivity in Třebíč.

Seroussi's book is published as part of the SOAS Studies in Music series, one of the world's leading series in the discipline of ethnomusicology. Accompanying audiovisual resources are available on the website of the Jewish Music Research Centre of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The monograph is very inspiring for ethnomusicologists in general, since the processes of transformation of the form and meaning of folksongs as sonic ruins can be observed in a similar way in the repertoire of variously defined human collectives.

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