

Music and the Re-creation of Identity in Imagined Iberian Jewish Communities ¹

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Over the past decades, a phenomenon of «discovering» hidden Jewish communities in Spain and Portugal has developed, leading to functioning Jewish communities in some cases, and festivals promoting imagined Jewish communities in others. In some cases, there is an overlap between these developments, so that actual religious services, with their music, become part of a tourist-office supported festival. This paper will touch on some wider issues of authenticity and the anthropology of tourism, but will focus on the use of music as an identity marker in these activities. Different origins of the music will be examined: it may be a defining aspect of the culture, and/or it may be shared with other regional groups; or it may be adopted from outside, whether actively sought out or received with little or no initiative on the group's part.

In 1492, the Jews were expelled from the kingdoms of Leon and Castile, in 1497 from Portugal, and in 1498 from Navarra, leaving no Jews on the Iberian Peninsula —officially. The Jews we now know as Sephardim migrated to the ex-Ottoman Empire and north Africa, eventually to the Americas too; many, especially from Portugal, settled in Amsterdam. Those who chose to stay in Spain and Portugal had to convert to Catholicism, whether voluntarily, semi-voluntarily or by forced baptism. Of these, a

¹ This is adapted from a conference presentation, for the Canadian Society for Traditional Music; the presentation included video excerpts, and sample symbolic objects from the various events discussed. The research has been sponsored by York University, Toronto (1996-8), the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (1998-2001) and the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture (1998-9).

Interviews and fieldwork. Fieldwork in Sephardic and Crypto-Jewish communities and regions, Spain and Portugal 1991-1998 (fieldwork 1996-7 carried out together with José-Ramón Aparicio). Interviews: José-Ramón Aparicio, Ribadavia August 1994-6, Vigo 1997-8; Centro de Estudos Medievais members, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998; Ribadavia choir members, 1995, 1998; Ribadavia Coordinadora da Festa members, 1998; members of Madrid Sephardic community, 1995-1996; with Oporto and Lisbon Jewish communities 1996-7; Hervás musicians, 1998.

percentage we'll never know exactly continued to practice aspects of Judaism in secret. And, of these, some were caught by the Inquisition, and executed, or tortured and/or imprisoned; some left the Peninsula later, as Catholics, and took up their Jewish identities in other, safer places (incidentally bringing the latest songs with them); some maintained some vestiges of Jewish practices, and of these, some continue to maintain at least some level of Jewish identity up even today, at the end of the 20th century.

In both Spain and Portugal, a phenomenon of «discovering» hidden, or Crypto-Jewish communities has developed, leading to newly-functioning Jewish groups in a few cases, and to tourist buses, and festivals of imagined Jewish communities in others, or a combination. Here, I will touch briefly on some general issues: the anthropology of tourism, appropriation; authenticity; representation and ownership-focusing on music as an appropriation and an identity marker in imagined Iberian Jewish communities, two in particular.

Portugal's 1974 revolution, and the death of Franco soon after, led to dramatic changes in both countries, and an understandable preoccupation with presenting themselves as modern, open, societies. At the same time, scholars were re-examining Jewish history on the Peninsula, and, especially as the 1992 Quincentennial approached, one began to hear more and more about *convivencia*, a rather rosy vision of the three medieval monotheistic cultures. One way to reconstruct —and correct— memories of a «black past» is to repaint it in convivial colours, offering concrete remnants in the form of *Barrios Judíos* (Old Jewish Quarters), the more picturesque the better. The 500 year anniversary of the Expulsion from Spain was the focus of academic conferences, music festivals and tours of «Jewish Spain». While many Iberian cities, towns and villages can be shown to have had at least some level of historical Jewish presence, eight Spanish towns were selected in the mid-1990's to form the *Caminos de Sefarad*: Cáceres, Córdoba, Gerona, Hervás, Ribadavia, Segovia, Toledo and Tudela². Each of these, as well as several other places, such as Tomar and Castelo de Vide in Portugal, can boast the remnants of former Jewish or *converso* neighbourhoods³.

² See José COROMINAS DE RIVERA *et al.*, *Caminos de Sefarad* (Cáceres: Patronato para la Promoción del Turismo y la Artesanía de la Provincia de Cáceres, 1995).

³ The concept of tourist as not only traveller, but also as pilgrim comes into play: the very use of the word «Camino» recalls not only pilgrimage in general but, more specifically, the famous «Camino de Santiago», the road to the pilgrimage site of St James of Compostela, little more an hour's drive from Ribadavia.

Before going on to look at music in the festivals, it seems helpful to take a brief look at recent developments in scholarly approaches to tourism's impact on both traditional arts and perceptions of authenticity and of history. Many of these studies were inspired by Hobsbawm's seminal collection *The Invention of Tradition* —or by the title itself. Others refer to MacCannell's classic study⁴, using such concepts as sight sacralization, front and back spaces, semiotics of signage, and staged authenticity. One scholarly trend reflects a growing aversion to any anthropological statement which resembles a value judgement: changes, even outright inventions are not negative, they are transformations, or new cultural expressions. A different approach, much less apparent in anthropology and its related disciplines, deplors anything identifiable as a falsification of known facts, refusing it any new creative status. Thus, harnessing and reshaping memory may be seen in neutral, implicitly positive, terms by one group of scholars, and as reprehensible by another.

Folklorist Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett is one of the scholars who discuss the problem of appropriating and marketing the past in fairly neutral terms, defining «heritage» as «a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past»⁵. For Josep Martí, a «folklorized version» of a given song, dance, ritual or fiesta is a «fiel y auténtica manifestación de su real contexto sociocultural»⁶. «Staged authenticity» may not be a travesty, for «folklorists have also begun to deconstruct the scholarly; the concept of tradition [...] what was previously categorized as 'impure' and 'anomalous' can suddenly belong to the realm of expressive culture»⁷. Ironically, the very scholars who spurn 19th century romanticism seem to have developed a late 20th century version of it.

Ethnomusicology, while it often reflects this «non-judgmental» approach, at other times may be less romantically oriented. Ethnomusicologist René Lysloff speaks of «plunderphonics»: «history itself is the object of economic exploitation and expansion, offering a virtually limitless supply of natural and cultural resources while also providing an abundance of cheap industrial labor as well as a vast market for inexpensive and disposable manufactured goods. In a nutshell, the past becomes the future's third world»⁸. This reflection cautions us about a too-facile acceptance of the

⁴ *The Tourist, a New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken, 1976).

⁵ «Theorizing Heritage», *Ethnomusicology*, 39, 3 (1995), pp. 367-380; p. 369.

⁶ *El folklorismo: uso y abuso de la tradición* (Barcelona: Ronsel, 1996), p. 226.

⁷ Regina BENDIX, «Tourism and Cultural Displays», *Journal of American Folklore*, 02, 404 (1989), pp. 131-146; p. 132.

⁸ René T. A. LYSLOFF, «Mozart in Mirrorshades: Ethnomusicology, Technology and the Politics of Representation», *Ethnomusicology*, 41, 2 (1997), pp. 206-219; p. 206.

studied neutrality of Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's reflection that «the attribution of pastness creates a distance that can be travelled»⁹, or James Clifford's extended and perhaps rather forced use of travel as an academic metaphor¹⁰.

With all this (and cyber-travel too) in mind, let's return to Spain. Both hidden and imagined¹¹ Jewish communities (along with others) need three main components: physical space, people who inhabit the space, and people to look at them inhabiting the space. The physical space may reflect various situations: (1) there are no more people (i.e. medieval Iberian Jews), only the buildings they lived in or used, sometimes with semiologically significant markings on them; (2) there are no more buildings, just the streets they were located on; (3) there are no more streets, just the areas where the streets were; (4) there is no more area, just the knowledge of where the area was; (5) there is no real knowledge of where it was, just ideas and/wishes about where it might have/ought to have been¹².

Any of these levels can, with some imagination, be set up for display. The people component, though, is a little trickier to manage. They may be (1) «real» Jews, in this case those who immigrated to Spain or Portugal from elsewhere, mostly in the 20th century; (2) the hidden or Crypto-Jews I mentioned earlier, sometimes called Marranos, especially in Portugal; (3) people who think they might be and/or would like to be, for whatever reason, descended from Crypto-Jews, and their supporters (whom I think of as Cryptophiles); (4) people whose families are descended from the converted Jews but who do not consider themselves Jewish in any way; (5) imagined communities.

The development of the idea of touring the Iberian Jewish past exemplifies Dean McCannell's classic study of tourism and anthropology, particularly in McCannell's notions of sight sacralization, ritualization of attitude front/back areas and the semiotics of tourism¹³. Many devices are used to create these communities —signage, costumes, books, tourist bro-

⁹ B. KIRSHENBLATT-GIMBLETT, *art. cit.*, p. 370.

¹⁰ *Routes: Travel and Translation in the late Twentieth Century* (Harvard, 1997).

¹¹ I am taking some liberties with Benedict Anderson's «imagined communities» (*Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* [Verso, 1983/1991]), adapting it from the context of nationalism in which he developed his seminal study.

¹² This is reminiscent of an Ashkenazi Jewish (Yiddish) folk-song in which the wearer of a coat, as the garment slowly falls apart, makes it into a shirt, from the shirt a vest, from the vest a scrap, and finally, when it becomes «nothing», makes «from the nothing, a song».

¹³ D. MACCANNELL, *op. cit.*, 42ff.

chures, site sacralization— and music, connected to the others. For the «real Jews», music is largely their calendar cycle liturgy, the music of their various cultural backgrounds, and whatever they select from the music of their living environment. Among the Crypto-Jews¹⁴, music is largely shared with local village music traditions, and includes a small layer from the past, musically mostly from the early 20th century. But the music assigned to imagined Jewish Iberian communities draws on all possible sources, especially the songs of the Sephardim whose ancestors left Iberia centuries ago and have developed their musical life in Turkey, the Balkans, Greece, Israel, North Africa etc.: what we think of as Judeo-Spanish or «Ladino» songs. This re-construction of musical repertoire has also occurred in Crypto-Jewish or would-be Crypto-Jewish settings, in different ways. In Belmonte Portugal, Jewish songs were learned in the early 20th century and are now seen as part of «our» age-old inheritance. *La Petenera* has been touted by more than one in American Sephardic performance groups as being of ancient Sephardic because a Jewish girl is mentioned in the text. Hispanic *Romances* which survive in New Mexico are automatically designated as Crypto-Jewish, and late 19th-century Sephardic songs from the ex-Ottoman area appear to illustrate a narrative set in 1840's England (when Sephardic Jews had not used Spanish or Portuguese for a very long time) in the 1998 British film *The Governess*. For use in imagined Iberian Jewish communities, music is mostly taken from commercially available recordings rather than fieldwork or documentary sources, and is re-appropriated for the imagined-community-construction «industry». While these songs are not medieval —many are in fact from the 19th century— the implication, articulated or not, is that they are. Some music is also taken from early Iberian music, usually labelled «medieval» (whether or not it actually corresponds to the historical Middle Ages): the music coordinator of one festival said to me, «no importa que sea medieval, sólo que *crean* que es medieval»¹⁵.

The imagined Jewish community festivals I have been able to document first-hand have been those of Ribadavia and Hervás¹⁶.

¹⁴ See Judith R. COHEN, «Belmonte dos meus Amores: Ethnomusicological Fieldwork among Iberian Crypto-Jews», *Acts of the Tenth British Conference on Judeo-Spanish Studies* (London: Queen Mary and Westfield College, 1999), pp. 265-285; and J. COHEN, «We've *always* sung it that way! Re/Appropriation of Medieval Spanish Jewish Culture in a Galician Town», Stacey Beckwith (ed.), *Charting Memory: Recalling Medieval Spain*, special issue of *Hispanic Issues*, forthcoming.

¹⁵ Interview, 1998.

¹⁶ See J. COHEN, «Ay, Ribadavia: Sephardic Musical Re/Creation in a Medieval Galician Town», *TRANSiberia*, 1 (1997), and COHEN, *op. cit.*, forthcoming 2000, for fuller

RIBADAVIA

The Ribadavia *Festa da Isteria* (FDI) began in the late 1980's, originally set up by a group of friends, through the local *Escuela Taller*. One member of the group had participated in the re-construction of Gerona's *barrio judío* and had also been at «medieval festivals» in France. Forming themselves as the Centro de Estudos Medievais (CEM), they carried out some archival research in their spare time, and found documentation going back to 1693, and ending in 1868, about a theatre festival which focused on Old Testament material and may possibly have been connected with *conversos*¹⁷. The «Sephardic wedding» (*boda sefardí*) component was introduced in 1993. Over the years, the production of the FDI moved from the Escuela Taller, and a concept of «by-the-people-for-the-people»¹⁸ to a sophisticated organization currently in the process of formally changing its name from the *Coordinadora* of the FDI to the *Fundación Festa da Isteria*. It has been estimated that as many as 30.000 visitors attend the one full day of the event (the CEM web-page's updated version gives 75.000 for 1998, though my observation of that event didn't suggest such a crowd). It is covered by the media, often attended by Israeli diplomats and/or scholars, and elements of it are imitated by other towns or even consciously «exported» to them. It has also developed a tendency to be viewed by both Jewish and non-Jewish observers and those who have

descriptions, especially of Ribadavia; and de Hervás for an in-depth study of the town's Jewish history. There is also a *Red de Juderías* in Extremadura, and other similar projects are at various stages of development.

¹⁷ The information about the origins and development of the FDI has been gathered largely from interviews with several of its originators, some of whom continue to be involved with it: particularly José-Ramón Aparicio (Ribadavia, 1994, 1995; Vigo 1996-1998), José-Ramón Estévez and José Luis Chao (Ribadavia 1995, 1996, 1998); and Rosa Rivera (Ribadavia, 1996, 1998); also from examination of newspaper clippings from the first years through 1998, and flyers circulated at the FDI (*La Voz de Galicia*, 5, 28-8-98: «Festa da Historia», special supplement). José-Ramón Aparicio is also my research assistant for my ongoing research project on Crypto-Jewish and neo-Sephardic traditions, and has provided invaluable knowledge, expertise and advice. I have attended the 1996 and 1998 events, and in fact was myself a featured singer and lecturer in 1998; have the video of the 1993 event, and was the musical consultant and a performer for the Sons de *Matria Sephardic* Festival held just before the 1994 FDI. More recently, information has also been posted on the web-page of Ribadavia's Centro de Estudos Medievais. (<http://web.jet.es/cem>), text by Emilio González, 1998. Also Centro de Estudos Medievais, *Festa da historia: Voda Xudea*, 1993 (booklet and video); programme booklets 1995, 1996, 1998; clippings files, various years.

¹⁸ Aparicio, interviews 1998.

not attended but have read about it, as an «authentic» survival of «medieval Jewish Spain». In fact, though the members of the Medieval Studies Centre in Ribadavia explained the late 17th century date to me and the lack of certainty that it is connected to *conversos*, their own updated web page now includes the statement «desde el s. xv se mantiene la Festa da Istoria; que rememora la lucha del pueblo judío». Another dating «adjustment» concerns the evening theatre production: originally this was a play by Aparicio put together by the organizers and called *El Malsín*. In 1998 a different, but also recently authored play was performed, but the updated web page casually mentions «obras del siglo xv».

The FDI as now enacted embodies several of the concepts described by MacCannell. Its treatment of sights is dominated by an action in the past¹⁹: for example, a recently instituted code permits only «gente vestida da época» to enter the castle grounds on the day of the FDI, though it is usually an open area. Visitors line up to purchase the special currency used for the *Festa*, the old *maravedí*; the exchange goes towards covering FDI costs, and only this currency may be used in purchasing anything from the existing stores and improvised stalls in the FDI areas. Signage plays an important role, particularly in the *barrio judío*, and is typified by the widespread symbolic use of the *magen David*, the six-pointed «Jewish star» or «Star of David» on banners and posters. Sight sacralization is another feature. The main square, temporarily sacralized by restoring its social gathering function, as distinct from its usual function as a parking-lot²⁰. Symbols such as crosses on doorways placed to ward off the Inquisition, or seven-branched figures «sacralized» their sights. The former church of the Magdalena is decorated with Jewish symbols for the day of the *Festa* and serves as the «synagogue» for the wedding —already de-sacralized, in that it is no longer used as a church, though it retains some Christian symbols, its re-sacralization for the FDI can be seen as a somewhat ironic reversal of historic processes in the Iberian Peninsula. New rules are added and/or adjusted every year to agree with the medieval image the FDI maintains, despite the 17th century documentation. In 1998, plastic glasses for vendors' drinks were being banned, but Coca Cola and loud-speakers broadcasting announcements and recordings of medieval music were apparently acceptable.

¹⁹ D. MACCANNELL, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

²⁰ Sylvia RODRÍGUEZ, «Fiesta Time and Plaza Space: Resistance and Accomodation in a Tourist Town», *Journal of American Folklore*, 3, 439 (1998), pp. 39-56, describes a similar plaza transformation at a New Mexican event, «during fiesta the plaza becomes the transformed site of multiple social, symbolic and political inversions...» (p. 45).

JEWISH ELEMENTS IN THE FESTA

1. *The barrio judío, local merchants, clothing rentals*

The main «drawing card» for the Jewish identification of the FDI is, of course, the *barrio judío* itself as well as the history of Jewish life in Ribadavia²¹. Among its residents, Ribadavia's *barrio judío* is part of local memory, as it has always been recognised in oral tradition, and referred to with pride and affection: «my family have *always* lived here». However, there are exceptions to this affecting vision, reminiscent of Hervás, and, in fact, reflecting a real Jewish historical past²².

Signs indicate the entrance to the *barrio*, and store owners increasingly add Jewish-related signage, often with obvious contradictions. Below the sign of the *Charcutería la Hebráica*, with a six-pointed star next to its name, is a poster advertising «bocadillos de jamón serrano» and other similar signs are hoisted above toothsome displays of pork sausages or boiling octopus—all foods which are not *kosher* (*casher*), i.e. which are strictly forbidden by Jewish law. The rental and sales of «medieval» clothes has grown every year, although some people still make their own costumes. Rather than suggest the demeaning insignia Jews were forced to wear at various times during their medieval history, whether in Iberia or elsewhere, the typical male Jewish head covering, the *kippab* (pl. *kippot*, Hebrew) are sold or rented. Otherwise, no distinction is made between supposedly «ordinary medieval» and «Jewish medieval» clothing: one woman working in a *barrio judío* rental shop said to me cheerfully, «me piden trajes judíos, les digo que todos son trajes judíos»). The same woman sold a *kippab* to a solidly-built *señor* from Madrid: when he tried it on and looked in the mirror, she offered him a compliment, with no hint of irony: «Ah, Señor, ahora pareces todo un obispo»²³.

²¹ The web page of the CEM takes the figures of the chronicler Froissart (*Ouvres de Froissart*, Brussels, 1871 [1386], v. 12, 79ff.) (without naming the source) of 1500 Jews, or half the town, living there in the 14th century, but other historians have suggested to me in conversations that this figure was likely to have been highly exaggerated.

²² There was one exception to this in my 1998 interviews, one elderly woman I met on the street, who said, «Jews?! No! Nothing! No-one's ever heard tell of them, no Jewish quarter, nothing! They've just started this now...». This was reinforced by the daughter of the «Hebrew Desserts» baker, who also suggested to me that the auto-identification of the women with the OJQ dates back only to Meruendano's early 20th century history of Ribadavia: L. MERUENDANO, *Los judíos de Ribadavia* [1915] (ed. Facsimile, Lugo: Ed. Alvarellos, 1981).

²³ I was present in the store at the time, August 1998, as this woman, Rosa Rivera, has been involved in the FDI, especially its musical aspects, since the beginning

2. *The «Boda Sefardí» (Sephardic wedding)*

This was instituted in 1993, though reports differ about whether the original suggestion came from the women of the *barrio judío* itself or from one of the CEM members. CEM members consulted what sources they could find: some books and articles, some recently-issued CD's (by sheer chance including my own), and a few members of the Madrid Jewish community. The first *boda*, as I saw it on the videotape they gave me in 1994, included the bride dressed in a traditional Moroccan Jewish *traje de berberisca*, and a beautifully calligraphed wedding contract (*ketubbah*), as well as a number of Sephardic wedding and recreational songs learned from the CD's and sung in the street, as though it were a real wedding party. The «couple» was even led, eventually, to a specially-prepared bed, with more singing and dancing. There were, not surprisingly, a number of discrepancies, aside from the obvious one, that a Jewish wedding would never take place on a Saturday, which is *Shabbat*, the Jewish Sabbath. Not only did the «bride» dance with the «rabbi», holding hands (this could not have occurred) but between dances she leaned back and comfortably smoked a cigarette!

By 1998, the wedding was much more choreographed, and most of the feeling of spontaneity had evaporated —ironically encapsulating the gradual, inexorable demise of «real» traditional weddings. Still, most people seem to have the impression that this is a «real» Sephardic (and, by implication, medieval) wedding. Going through years of newspaper clippings²⁴ which José-Luis Chao, former President of the CEM, generously loaned me for consultation during my stay in August 1998, I could find only one skeptical voice in the media: a solitary reporter of a local paper, whose objections were not subsequently echoed, at least in the clippings maintained in the Center's files²⁵. While the CEM, rather than the Coordinadora,

and I was interviewing her. I would like to thank Rosa («Rosita») for her time, and her constant friendship.

²⁴ Here I would like to thank José-Luis Chao, former President of the CEM, for generously giving me access to his clippings files, and for his warm hospitality, during my stay in August 1998. Fina González, the current President, also provided friendly help and advice, and was instrumental in my being invited to perform and lecture during the week preceding the FDI. The Coordinadora of the FDI, which sponsored my main medieval concert, before the FDI, also was very cooperative in permitting me to circulate questionnaires about perceptions of Sephardic music, and other aspects of my work.

²⁵ Enriquer BANDE RODRÍGUEZ, «La 'Festa da Historia' ignora la tradición», *La Región* (Orense), 21-8-1994, p. 15. In fact, in January 1999, an American newsletter of a

maintains responsibility for organizing and producing the wedding, in 1998 flyers about the wedding were being distributed for tourists, along with those about the other FDI events.

3. *The Shabbat «service»*

The *Istoria* was held on a Saturday and this tradition is maintained. The Saturday choice may or may not have originally been connected to *converso* origins: the reasoning which has been suggested by organizers for this idea is that, as Saturday is the Jewish Sabbath (*Shabbat*), this kind of event could not have taken place in a Jewish setting, and so holding it on a Saturday would be good «camouflage» for *conversos*. It does mean, in any case, that it is problematic for Orthodox Jews²⁶ to attend, even without the «wedding» component. *Shabbat* begins at sundown on Friday, and a synagogue service is held. In 1996, the small Jewish community from Porto, Portugal, a few hours' drive from Ribadavia, decided to hold this service in Ribadavia, and bring a *Torah* scroll²⁷ with them. The service was held in the Church of the Magdalena, the de-sacralized and re-sacralized building in the *barrio judío* mentioned earlier. The media were asked not to film the actual service, and it was explained to the public that it was a religious service, and that they should not applaud. The service itself was a very minimalized version, without a rabbi to officiate and without the quorum of ten adult males (*minyan*) required for holding a public worship service in Orthodox Judaism. After it was over, the local music ensemble from Ribadavia appeared and sang several songs in Hebrew and Judeo-Spanish, with instruments, not realizing that for Orthodox Judaism instruments are not used on *Shabbat* and as part of synagogue worship services.

In 1998, a visiting Israeli professor²⁸ felt that there were simply too few adult Jewish males present to hold a service, and as an alternative,

Jewish society which tries to seek out and support Crypto- and other «lost» Jewish communities asked me to write a brief report about my work. On receiving it, they censored my remarks about Ribadavia's the FDI and «wedding» in Ribadavia, insisting that they implied «hostility toward Crypto-Jews» on my part.

²⁶ Ashkenazi Jews have several divisions which vary in levels of religious observance: Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist are the main ones. Sephardim have no such divisions and are, at least nominally, orthodox, though in practice observance varies among individuals, families, communities and cultures.

²⁷ Scroll of the Five Books of Moses, the holy writing and religious law of Judaism. A portion is chanted aloud every *Shabbat*.

²⁸ Professor Avram Haim, a specialist in various aspects of Sephardi history and culture, who has often visited Ribadavia, and lectures frequently at various universities and events in Spain.

gave a talk about his experiences as a Sephardic child growing up in Israel, with some songs, to which I added a few afterwards, related to the celebration of *Shabbat*. Many people, especially the few Jews from Porto, were disappointed. Miriam Azancot, the daughter of Captain Artur de Barros Basto, the «Apostle of the Marranos» (d. 1961), said to me later that she was «furious». She commented that if it was all right to produce an invented wedding as thatre, why not Shabbat too: «então, fazem um Shabbat fingido!»²⁹.

4. *Music in the FDI*

1) Music in the documented historical events.

The information is sparse. Eighteenth-century sources mention musicians and women dancers³⁰; in 1865 musicians and bagpipers are paid³¹, and a «Cabalgata» is mentioned, though this is more likely the horsemanship event than a melody genre of the same name. Still, a local Cabalgata melody, in an old anthology seemed to some CEM members a likely possibility; and, with no fanfare, it was included in the marching music of the morning procession³². It was neither identified nor highlighted, simply part of the parade, and had I not been listening carefully, after conversations with CEM members, I would not have noticed it.

2) «Front», «back» and «middle space» music (adapted from MacCannell's typography).

²⁹ Interview, September 3, 1998, Porto.

³⁰ Sources collated by José-Ramón ESTÉVEZ PÉREZ, «Los judaizantes de Ribadavia», *Nuevo Amanecer Sefardí* (Uruguay), 4, 10 (1993), pp. 53-60, from archival documents unavailable for confirmation. 1738: 90 reales for harp and «viola» music; 100 reales for «ordinary musicians», for the theatre; 1733 for fiddles and flute-and-drum players for the theatre and the processions; female dancers are also mentioned.

³¹ Cited in Samuel EIJAN, *Historia de Ribadavia y sus alrededores* [1920] (ed. Facsimile, Lugo, 1981), p. 407, n.1 «la música en 220 (reales), gaiteros en 160»; dancing is included as well. Thanks to José-Luis Chao for indicating this reference to me.

³² «and last, the march which Chinto da Costeira played in the Cabalgata or Paseo which used to be carried out in Ribadavia on the occasion of the public theatre during the Fiestas del Portal» (my translation), in Casto SAMPEDRO Y FOLGAR, *Cancionero Musical de Galicia* (Pontevedra, 1942), pp. 175, 202. Information collated by José-Luis Chao, former CEM President, about the melodies (conversations August 1998, Ribadavia); and subsequent discussions with José-Ramón Aparicio (Vigo, August-September 1998) about the Cabalgata and other event/tune genres and the times of year and circumstances when they were likely to have been played.

Retiring for a round of drinks in Ribadavia's «Bar O Xudeu» («Bar 'The Jew'»), or in the «Papuxa» fulfils a similar back-area function, though from the opposite perspective of carnival-esque de-sacralization.

Front spaces.—Music in the front spaces of the FDI is largely transmitted by loudspeakers, though other non-medieval technical elements are frowned upon, as discussed above. These include a selection of pre-recorded medieval and Renaissance pieces, which a printed flyer summarizes, and the music used for the event called the «Medieval Dance», though in fact, medieval dances have not been satisfactorily reconstructed and much of the music used for these choreographies is not medieval in any case³³. The concerts are rarely, if ever, of medieval music. I was invited to give one in 1998, and it seemed to be the first time that the obvious medieval repertoire for Galicia, for example, cantigas by Alfonso X, had been presented. Usually, visiting groups present Sephardic songs or Renaissance madrigals. The use of Sephardic songs will be discussed separately below.

Back spaces.—MacCannell's back spaces are sometimes made known to the public as a way for them to feel they have privileged «insider» knowledge, reserved for the discerning traveller who doesn't want to be seen as part of the tourist «rabble»³⁴. In Ribadavia, the *mikvé* (ritual bath) is now part of the floor of a popular bar: «insider» residents advise ordering a drink and staying awhile before looking around to identify the water pipes, so as not to antagonize the owner, who needs to keep his business viable. Whether or not a special event is going on, a good deal of spontaneous singing of local songs takes place in one tavern, the Papuxa. During the FDI, this also occurs, but more planned sessions are sometimes communicated to chosen people in advance. Singing can also be heard in other taverns and clubs, but usually much more rarely outside the FDI time frame, as well as in people's homes. To these popular regional songs, the occasional Sephardic song which has become popular

³³ The «Baile Medieval» is done twice in the main square, the first time at the same time as the wedding, so spectators must choose which they will see. One of the pieces was Guillaume de Machaut's «Douce Dame Jolie», a very well-known 14th century song. The woman who leads and teaches the dances told me she had learned it from a visiting British teacher in an workshop elsewhere in Spain, and that this teacher had assured them it was «from the 11th century» and was «the most primitive dance» known. She did not react well to my diffidently presented suggestion that the song was from a known 14th century composer and that the dance was choreographed.

³⁴ D. MACCANNELL, *op. cit.*, pp. 92, 101.

over the decade since the FDI began are sometimes added, leading outsiders to conclude erroneously, as in fact, the wedding music also does, that these are «medieval Sephardic vestiges». A 1930's Carnival song, «A los judíos dejad pasar» («let the Jews go by!») is not part of the day's events either; in fact, it was difficult to find elderly people who still remembered all of it, but in the years when Carnival was still celebrated, it was common in both front and back spaces³⁵.

A common strategy of creating «back areas» for tourists is making a «fetish of the work of others»³⁶: Besides the music events, craftspeople have adapted their work for public display at the festival. Local baker Herminia's traditional six-pointed pastries, supplemented by her assiduous collecting of Jewish pastry recipes from various Sephardic communities, have become a symbol of Ribadavia's Jewish past; correspondingly, her bakery has become an official «sight» and sports a new «marker»: a medieval-style sign and matching paper bags, advertising «Doce Artesanal, especialidade en Doces Hebreos».

Middle spaces.—In the FDI, I see these as the streets. In the FDI, street music is inconsistent: sometimes the Coordinadora allows it, sometimes it acts to control it. In 1996, I saw a group of mostly young people spontaneously dancing the *jota* and *muiñeira*, with bagpipes and conga drums, in a street of the *barrio judío*: they were told to stop as this was not part of the official programme. In 1998, however, I was unaware of any street musicians being asked to stop, although in theory they had to obtain permission.

5. *Jewish music*

Jewish music in the FDI is heard mostly in the front spaces: in the wedding, in concerts, and, to a much lesser extent, in the *Shabbat* service. Occasionally some songs from the wedding are heard in back spaces, either sung by participants in the wedding, or on a bar's stereo system, live or on CD, but this happens increasingly rarely since the original wedding song coordinator moved away from Ribadavia in 1995³⁷.

³⁵ Interviews, 1998.

³⁶ D. MACCANNELL, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

³⁷ José-Ramón Aparicio, who was also intensely involved in other aspects of the FDI from the beginning, and was a key organizer of the 1994 *Sons de Matria* Sephardic festival in Ribadavia. He and José-Luis Chao, then President of the CEM, heard me

It seems to me that the development of the use of Sephardic songs in the «wedding» can be seen in three main stages:

Stage 1, 1993-5.—José-Ramón Aparicio³⁸ was in charge of preparing the wedding songs for the first time it was staged, in 1993. He learned several songs from recordings, including those of the Moroccan Sephardic ensemble *Gerineldo* (of which he did not know I was a member, and didn't know me at the time) and a CD re-issue of a 1950's recording by Gloria Levy, from an Egyptian/Turkish Sephardic family in New York City³⁹. Aparicio has considerable experience with traditional songs; he learned them, and taught them to the women of the *barrio judío* who wanted to be part of the «wedding». At this point, they were sung, as explained above, to create an atmosphere of spontaneity, in the street, with improvised dancing.

While watching the 1993 video, I was struck by some melodic changes the women had made to the songs, particularly, in one case, changing a minor to a major mode⁴⁰. In 1995, I interviewed some women about this; at first they were unaware that they had made any changes, then they commented, «But we've always sung it that way!» The «always» surprised me, as they had known the songs only for a couple of years, but seemed to feel they were simply a new part of their own repertoire. Several smaller changes were also made, adapting Sephardic pronunciation to Castilian or at times Galician pronunciation, and adding instrumentation. In 1995 they also learned some songs from my workshops, and several from recordings of other artists in the 1994 *Sons de Matria* festival, especially Bosnian-born Flory Jagoda —one of the few successful composers of Judeo-Spanish song. It is common in traditional cultures for a song to acquire «generations» status after only one or two generations have sung it; in Ribadavia this elevation from acquisition to remembered tradition seems to have been accelerated by the ongoing pressure to generate ever more collective «memories» of a Sephardic past, even if the songs themselves are a few centuries younger than the «remembered» period.

give a lecture-recital on Sephardic music in Vigo in 1993, already had CD's of my Sephardic ensemble, *Gerineldo (De Fiestas y Alegrías)*, Madrid, Tecnosaga, Saga KPD 10.897, 1992), and invited me to be the musical director of *Sons de Matria*, and, in 1995, teach some new songs for the wedding: in this way. This is how I became involved as a participant-observer with the FDI and related events.

³⁸ See n. 37.

³⁹ *Sephardic Folk Songs*, New York, Folkways FW8783, 1958.

⁴⁰ See J. COHEN, *op. cit.*, 2000, for a fuller explanation.

Stage 2, 1996-7.—From 1993 through 1995, Aparicio tried to control changes in pronunciation and singing style, with some success, and, as well, to keep the presentation informal and spontaneous. After he moved from Ribadavia, the wedding singing became less spontaneous and more organized; and the pronunciation slipped back from Judeo-Spanish to standard Castilian, etc. Several of the singers left, to be replaced by others who had not been there when the songs were first learned. Still, in 1996, when in fact Aparicio participated, but as a participant rather than organizer, the atmosphere was still quite spontaneous, though there was no dancing in the street and the ceremony had been moved from the improvised «synagogue» construction to the de/re/sacralized Magdalena.

Stage 3, 1998-?—In 1998, the CEM took the step of hiring a choir director for the wedding songs. Though a trained, competent and sensitive musician, he had no experience of Sephardic music at all, and preferred to work from musical transcriptions rather than from the available recordings, so that under his direction the typical style became completely lost. Several of the women singers were new that year—including some from the new director's church choir—, and those who had been there in previous years felt their suggestions were not taken seriously, and stopped offering them⁴¹. Guitars and mandolines are used, though in most cases these songs are meant to be sung *a capella*, and in any case instruments are inappropriate both for a Jewish wedding ceremony and on *Shabbat*, and the occasional tambourine is tapped with no attempt to use either a local Galician style or a Moroccan or ex-Ottoman Sephardic style.

The changes are now deliberate, unlike those made more instinctively to adapt to local style in earlier years. They are, not surprisingly, consistent with standard choir practice: changes in dynamics and tempo within one song, a «choir» rather than traditional vocal timbre, and omitting verses and sometimes entire sections of songs were among the main changes. Ironically, while the Magdalena has been re-sacralized to be «Jewish for a day», so that in a way the banished Iberian Jews have reclaimed a Christian space — their singing has now been re-shaped by the Church! I am sure that this was not the intent of the choir director or anyone else, but the irony is present nonetheless.

Unfortunately for accuracy of historical perception, while some of the current and former women singers recognize and even deplore the changes, the general reception —and erroneous misconception— of the songs as «authentic survivals of a medieval Jewish Iberian past» has not changed:

⁴¹ Personal communications.

no matter how far they stray from an already distant authenticity, the general public is perfectly ready to accept them for what they are implicitly presented.

Friday night, Shabbat: This was discussed above. The songs Professor Haim and I sang were a mixture of Sephardi and Ashkenazi songs traditionally sung on the Eve of *Shabbat*; none was known to the public, though we each taught a few simple refrains in both Hebrew and Judeo-Spanish.

HERVÁS (CÁCERES)

For reasons of space, Hervás will not be treated as fully as Ribadavia; as well, I do not have the ongoing intensive experience with events there which it has been my good fortune to enjoy in the latter. Nevertheless, it is relevant to bring up some events and issues here.

It is unnecessary to repeat the detailed and well-documented study of the history of the Jews of Hervás, and the designation and perception of its *barrio judío* so capably carried out by Marciano de Hervás⁴². Picturesque Hervás' inhabitants are often ready to oblige awestruck tourist/pilgrims with tidbits of collective Jewish «memory», while the entrance to the town is dominated by a huge billboard advertisement for the «Hotel Sinagoga». Hervás is even featured in a Canadian artistic documentary film about Sephardic Jews and Crypto-Jewish survivals⁴³. The «medieval Jewish festival» of Hervás is a recent invention: the 1998 event I attended was only the second time it had been held.

In 1998, the event was held over three days. Originally there were plans to include a reading of the *Torah* for *Shabbat*, conducted by members of a Madrid Jewish congregation, but for various reasons, this fell through at the last minute. A play by Madrid Jewish playwright Solly Wolodarsky, about the Inquisition, was performed, and the local traditional music ensemble, *Retama*, performed Sephardic songs which they have been learning from various recordings for some years⁴⁴. The *barrio judío*, as in

⁴² «La invención de la tradición: leyendas apócrifas sobre los judíos de Hervás», *Revista de Dialectología y Tradiciones Populares*, LII, 1 (1997), pp. 177-203 y *Los judíos de Hervás* (Hervás: Artesanía «El Lagar», 1997).

⁴³ *Memory and Expulsion*, dir. Simha Jacobovici, Toronto, 1995.

⁴⁴ Thanks here to all the members of *Retama* for their help and friendship, and especially to their director, José-Antonio Martil, for his open and friendly conversations;

Ribadavia, became an open-air market-place, and residents were asked to wear «medieval Jewish clothing»: as there is really not one style identifiable as «medieval Jewish clothing», this was interpreted to mean anything from simple tunics, to home-made «medieval-style» clothing or kaftans from Morocco.

The music was largely limited to front spaces: open-air performances down by the river, by *Retama*; members of the group also sang in designated parts of the play. There was very little music in the street, the «middle space», though a couple of wandering musicians from elsewhere were seen, and an older craftsman from Salamanca was quietly displaying and selling his hand-made flutes in a non-central area. I didn't hear very much singing in the back spaces; though at night the disco music in Hervás' several bars was very loud and the bars were crowded. Unlike the «official» music events in Ribadavia, *Retama's* performance included some local regional songs and dances. Again, unlike Ribadavia, no pamphlets were distributed, and there was far less media coverage, though the cultural attaché from Israel did attend, as well as other mayors and planners of the *Camino de Sefarad* and the *Red de Juderías*.

As in Ribadavia, outsiders tend to take the event at face value, assuming that the performers and at least a good part of the inhabitants of the *barrio judío* are not only *converso* descendants, but actually Jewish. In other words, for many observers, they were witnessing a re-enactment of memory: «the lie contained in the touristic experience presents itself as a truthful revelation»⁴⁵.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the Hervás situation is the interplay of popular memory and its manipulation by institutional publications and proclamations. In one of the Hervás tourist booklets, Miguel Gómez Andrea voices an objection to «escépticos materialistas», articulating a wistful preference for «el lado mágico de la vida»⁴⁶. This «magic side» of life reaches what may be its nadir in the tourist office's comic book⁴⁷. In this popular sales item, superficially presented historical elements are interspersed with scenes in which a middle-aged Sephardic woman explores her Iberian roots with her son (who does the driving), and every few pages has sudden dizzying, mystical visions of her own ancestors' past in Hervás.

Historian Marciano de Hervás has no patience with the «it's a hybrid new expressive culture» viewpoint. His detailed and carefully documented

as well as Mercedes, Carmen, Fernando, Begoña, Paola, Josué and Martín for their warm hospitality. Pedro Gómez García of the Concejal de Turismo and other organizers of the festival also made me feel welcome.

⁴⁵ D. MACCANNELL, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

analysis of «apocryphal legends about the Jews of Hervás» is replete with such unequivocal terms as «pseudomitología», «fábulas pseudohistóricas», «falsificaciones» and «deformaciones» which have become «los más peligrosos enemigos de la historia de un pueblo...»⁴⁸. From my own perspective as an ethnomusicologist, this also constitutes the «pseudomitología» of Sephardic music: most people who hear the songs in this context assume that they are remnants of medieval Sephardic music — an impossibility on many different levels. Nothing is done to correct these visions⁴⁹.

CLOSING REMARKS

These festivals raised questions for me as an ethnomusicologist beyond trying to understand why aspects of performance practice in Sephardic wedding songs are changed. However laudable the motives, is it ever justifiable to perform aspects of a culture not one's own, particularly aspects concerned with ritual and ceremony, and if so, under what circumstances? How justified, if at all, is it to make changes in the traditions represented; indeed, to what degree is accuracy possible? Returning to Martí, yes, the folklorized form has its own essential validity, being «absolutamente fiel al sistema sociocultural del cual ha surgido»⁵⁰, even possessing a «coherencia semántica y funcional con su contexto humano»⁵¹. It can be

⁴⁶ «Algunos misterios hervasenses», *Ferías y Fiestas. Hervás 1996* (Hervás: Ayuntamiento de Hervás, 1996), s. p.

⁴⁷ Antonio ROA CILLA y Miguel GÓMEZ ANDREA, *Hervás. Imágenes de su historia* (Cáceres: Diputación de Cáceres, 1996).

⁴⁸ Marciano de HERVÁS, art. cit., pp. 178, 182, and 202.

⁴⁹ Ironically, my daughter, then 12, made friends with the younger members of *Retama* and was asked to sing with them at their second performance. They gave her a «medieval Jewish» robe and, as she has accompanied me on fieldtrips and concerts concerning Sephardic songs all her life, she easily fit in. The director asked me to sing one song with her, and as we were singing it, a photographer from *El Mundo* took several close-ups of us. Immediately afterwards, I gave him my card and explained that we were Canadians, not from Hervás, and that if he used the photo he should make sure this was clear. The following week (July 21, 1998) the photo appeared in *El Mundo*, and we were identified as *vecinas* of Hervás; I sent in a correction but it was never acknowledged. No one I spoke to from Hervás or other parts of the *Camino de Sefarad* seemed to find this important, and indeed, of itself it isn't; but it is symptomatic of the attitude exemplified in that «lo que importa es que crean que sea medieval» remark.

⁵⁰ Josep MARTÍ, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 192.

read as its own «cultural text», as Lysloff argues for studio recordings of «authentic» field tapes⁵².

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett suggests that «heritage is not lost and found, stolen and reclaimed»⁵³.

But perhaps these attractively open-minded approaches need not apply to *all* aspects of heritage, including religion and ritual. The staged wedding of the *Festa* may indeed be, like Lysloff's recordings, a new «cultural text», or they may be, as de Hervás sees the re-shaping of Hervás' Jewish past, a reprehensible and indeed dangerous falsification. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett posits that «curatorial interventions may attempt to rectify the errors of history, and make the heritage production a better place than the historical actuality it represents»⁵⁴: much of the activity around the restoration of Spain's image vis-à-vis its Jewish history can be related to this observation. Moving from theoretical to concrete terms, one village woman told me and myself that one could tell the Ribadavians were «real Jews» because their festival «made so much money»⁵⁵. While the *Festa* may promote positive attitudes of a multicultural past, in this case it ended up working with popular memory reinforcing the very kind of negative stereotype which was a factor in the expulsion of the Jews in the first place!

Inevitably, questions of appropriation bring us to questions about boundaries and identity, who is the insider and the outsider, who is qualified to authenticate these activities, if indeed they can or should be «authenticated». The answers are seldom easy. In Spain in general, and this remote corner of Spain in particular, where so many people may be descendants of *conversos*, they are even more difficult. How much is appropriation and how much re-appropriation? Perhaps it is an illustration of the past as part of the heritage industry's «value-added» approach: as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett puts it, this value-added past «transports tourists from a now that signifies hereness to a past that signifies thereness...», part of the «collaborative hallucination» or the «tourist surreal»⁵⁶. It is as if people are eager to acquire new memories, or perhaps reshape the ones they have.

Lysloff remarks accurately that the ethnomusicologist is «caught in a web of conflicting notions of aesthetics, ethnographic truth, acoustical reality, cultural legitimacy, and specific intellectual interests»⁵⁷. He does not

⁵² R. T. A. LYSLOFF, art. cit., p. 210.

⁵³ B. KIRSHENBLATT-GIMBLETT, art. cit., p. 369.

⁵⁴ B. KIRSHENBLATT-GIMBLETT, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums and Heritage* (Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), p. 8.

⁵⁵ Fieldwork tape, July 8, 1997.

⁵⁶ B. KIRSHENBLATT-GIMBLETT, art. cit., pp. 375 and 371.

⁵⁷ R. T. A. LYSLOFF, art. cit., p. 210.

include ethical dilemmas in this already daunting list, but this is yet another element to be considered: though it is far more concretely present in Portugal than in Spain, there is not only a Jewish past, but a Jewish or Crypto-Jewish present. The ethics of tourism and, indeed, scholarship, should not be the same for human beings as they are for buildings and streets with a documented, reconstructed or even imagined past. If, as he suggests, the past is indeed the future's «third world», care must be taken not to consign those who are descended directly from this past back to it.

Meanwhile, for Sephardic Jews watching a video of a representation of their tradition performed inaccurately by outsiders on the Jewish Sabbath, the question must still remain: even if the motivation is all positive, is this representation justified by the actors' sincere conviction that they are doing is reclaiming a past cruelly taken from them —while educating the public about it? And, after all, historians' interpretations of the past differ widely— witness the deeply differing presentations of the Inquisition and the existence of Crypto-Jews by scholars in the past decade alone, let alone those of the past centuries! All things considered then, which is the truth, and whose representation —or mis-representation— of the past will most inform the present and the future?

Tanto en España como en Portugal, en las décadas de los 80 y 90, se identifican cada vez más restos y vestigios de la presencia de los judíos, y se ha hecho una promoción importante académica y turística de éstos. En algunos casos, esa identificación ha ido junto con una identificación individual con el judaísmo contemporáneo; en el caso de un pueblo portugués, una comunidad entera. Sin embargo, un resultado más visible ha sido la creación de festivales de comunidades judías «imaginadas». Ese artículo utiliza la antropología del turismo para examinar asuntos de autenticidad, apropiación e indicadores de identidad. Concretamente, enfoca el uso y la función de la música sefardí en festivales de creación reciente en dos pueblos del *Camino de Sefarad*: Ribadavia (Galicia) y Hervás (Extremadura).

In both Spain and Portugal, over the past several years, more and more historically Jewish sites have been identified, discovered and promoted, both academically and for tourism. In a few cases this has accompanied individual identification with Judaism or, in one Portuguese town, a significant group. More often, it has led to newly-created festivals of imagined Jewish communities. This article uses approaches from the anthropology of tourism to examine issues such as authenticity, appropriation and identity markers. More specifically, it focuses on the function of Sephardic music in recently developed festivals of two *Camino de Sefarad* towns, Ribadavia (Galicia) and Hervás (Extremadura).