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Fado and the Place of Longing

Loss, Memory and the City

Richard Elliott, Newcastle University UK

Ashgate Popular and Folk Music Series

Fado, often described as 'urban folk music', emerged from the streets of Lisbon in the mid-nineteenth century and went on to become Portugal's 'national' music during the twentieth. It is known for its strong emphasis on loss, memory and nostalgia within its song texts, which often refer to absent people and places. One of the main lyrical themes of fado is the city itself. Fado music has played a significant role in the interlacing of mythology, history, memory and regionalism in Portugal in the second half of the twentieth century. Richard Elliott considers the ways in which fado songs bear witness to the city of Lisbon, in relation to the construction and maintenance of the local. Elliott explores the ways in which fado acts as a cultural product reaffirming local identity via recourse to social memory and an imagined community, while also providing a distinctive cultural export for the dissemination of a 'remembered Portugal' on the global stage.

Contents: Introduction; Songs of disquiet: mythology, ontology, ideology, fadology; Taking place: the role of the city in fado; 'Trago fado nos sentidos': memory, witnessing and testimony in fado; New citizens of the fadista world; Tudo isto ainda é fado? Fado as local and global practice; Bibliography; Discography; Videography; Index.

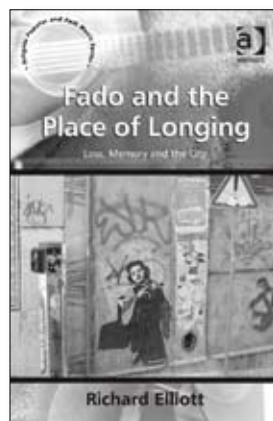
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