

tion, strengthening of visions of assimilation). In Slovakia there was also a revival of the community thanks to the activation of Jewish youth at the end of the 1950s and 1960s. The second chapter, sort of the core of the book, then describes the activities of the rapid activation of the neological and orthodox Bratislava Jewish religious community, that is, centers of invisible Jews. Despite material lacks, in the years 1948–1952, it was possible to see a development tendency similar to the one in the Czech lands (loyalty to the regime in exchange for the possibility of activities of Jewish institutions, maneuvering between Judaism and communist ideology, a stubborn attempt to maintain one's own religious and social life). A Bratislava feature, however, became discord between orthodox and neological Jews (an independent sub-chapter is dedicated to the conflicts in the community). On the contrary, the fate of religious buildings was similar; Salner also points out in the process the threat to the orthodox cemetery in the 1960s. The third chapter analyzes – again mainly with personal memories – the profile of members of emigration waves to Israel, where mostly secularized Jews went. Also in Slovakia, just as in the Czech lands, the experience of Zionist camps and associations mainly for Jewish youth compensated for real life. Similar also were motives for emigration (anti-Semitism, orphanhood), or non-emigration (worry about relatives, professional career) to Israel. Part of this chapter, however, is the development of official relations to the Jewish state and the anti-Zionist character of the political trials in the 50s. The Zionist move-

ment disintegrated and the emigration of almost 4,000 people after 1968 (whose experiences of August 1968 are brought closer by means of a few impressive documents of personal character) was no longer directed exclusively to Israel.

Peter Salner's new charming and readable book brings another extraordinarily important view of the Bratislava Jewish community after the Second World War. He enriches our current knowledge not only with new original material, but also methodically. He presents a view built mainly on the basis of minority sources of personal and institutional character. In it is the power of work, but also its certain weakness. It is – despite the indisputable obsolescence of the current Salner picture of postwar Jewish Bratislava – augmented by and not always quite consistent connection of Bratislava events to the state and international socio-political situation.

As for the unique period photographs, sensitively accompanying the text, I would welcome reference to the source of the document or a more complete description although the book is, of course, destined for the wider public.

*Blanka Soukupová*

## **VOICES OF THE WEAK: MUSIC AND MINORITIES**

**Zuzana Jurková & Lee  
Bidgood (eds.)**

Prague: NGO Slovo 21 & the  
Faculty of Humanities, Charles  
University in Prague, 2009,  
250 pp + 1 accompanying CD,  
ISBN 978-80-254-4095-7.

In the context of Czech social sciences and humanities, a unique book about music and minorities has recently been published in cooperation with the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University in Prague.

If one coincidentally appears at an ethnomusicological conference somewhere around the world, he would be surprised at the ubiquitous presence of the word “minority.” Why are ethnomusicologists so obsessed with minorities? One could suggest that it is because they often feel like a minority themselves. In the field of musicology, they are the ones studying “weird” music and using such “weird” methods as participant observation. On the other hand, in the field of anthropology, they are also often the “weird” ones dealing with such an elusive phenomenon as music and suspected of being hidden “old musicologists” or “folklorists.”

The Nestor of world ethnomusicology, Bruno Nettl (interestingly enough: born in Prague, 1930, as a member of the Jewish minority in Czechoslovakia), said: “Many ethnomusicologists, after all, have seen themselves for many decades as students of the music of the downtrodden of the world. At the same time, they have often seen themselves as a kind of minority among music scholars and musicians of Europe and North America. Looking back to my days, ca. 1950, as a student, however, I find it ironic that in several important ways, we also saw ourselves as the defenders of majorities, perhaps labeled best as ‘neglected majorities.’[...] It was the music historians, we thought, who were the ones interested in the exceptional – in understanding the greatest of [Western] composers.” (Nettl 2009:12)

Nevertheless, one has to bear in mind that, as Nettl adds, “there’s no doubt that the concept of minority [or majority], and the identification of minorities is to some extent a construction of the observer.” (Nettl 2009:13).

Recently, the little Czech ethnomusicological minority celebrated a great success: not only that it hosted an international conference on music and minorities in May 2008, which was attended by more than 60 scholars from 23 countries (see <http://musicandminorities.googlepages.com/musicandminoritiesgroupmeeting2008>), but it also found enough support to publish a collective monograph accompanied by a CD.

The book consists of the most interesting conference articles related to the following themes: (i) reconsideration of the term “minority”; (ii) music of Romani subethnic groups (iii) music of other minority groups such as ethnic, regionally specific, religious or social; (iv) cultural policy; (v) representation.

Yet, the publishing itself was not the only goal. The book attempts to bring ethnomusicological research paradigms closer to each other. Only 22 articles which were successfully chosen by an international advisory board have been published. (However, in order to keep maximum scholarly openness, all of the papers that were submitted are published on the conference Web pages.)

The book opens with Zuzana Jurková’s concise and pregnant introduction about the state of Czech ethnomusicology. Her text is followed by Bruno Nettl’s “meditation” (as he calls it), summarizing his experience of research of American Indian cultures, minority music makers

in Iran and his living in musical minorities in prewar Czechoslovakia. From the methodological point of view, one of the highlights of the book is undoubtedly the article “*Cultural Policies and Minority Musics in Kosovo and Sri Lanka. What Can We learn from a Comparative Study?*” by Svanibor Pettan and Lasanthi Manaranjanie Kalinga Dona. Let me also mention Johannes Brusila’s “*Between Minor and Major. Discursive and Neomaterialist Reflections on Lasse Mårtenson and ‘Finland–Swedish’ Popular Music*”, which is one of the most theoretically interesting papers published here.

Concerning the topic of Romani music, we can learn about communities in Bulgaria, Turkey, Poland, and Ukraine and the Machwaya Roma in America. Two articles also deconstruct stereotypical Gypsy images in post-romantic academic music and the popular music of Goran Bregović. Similar to that, the phenomenon of Yugomania and Yugo-nostalgia is entertained. Other music cultures and topics we can encounter in the publication are: hardcore rap culture, the Armenian minority in Ukraine, contemporary musical peasant traditions in Slovenia, the musical heritage of the Czech Brethren in Poland, Bulgarian cultural politics concerning the Turkish minority, Bessarabian Bulgarian musicians, the Sorbian minority in Germany, minority cultural policy in the media in the area of Vojvodina, policy of the music archives, and finally, music of prisoners.

If we take into account that, in the Czech environment, interest has been concentrated much more on the construction and consolidation of its own cultural identity than on the knowledge

of different cultural groups, least of all, minorities (Elschek 1991, cit. Jurková 2009:8), then we could say that this seemingly marginal book is a big achievement. The person who put both the conference and the book together, Zuzana Jurková, is a founding member of the Study Group Music and Minorities of the International Council of Traditional Music and the founder of the Ethnomusicological Program at the Faculty of Humanities of Charles University. She says: “If we consider the situation of ethnomusicology in Czech culture as an indicator of the state of this culture then Czechs would appear to be emancipated from their egocentric complex as they begin to pursue knowledge of those “others,” including those who at first glance are the minorities and the weak.” (Jurková 2009:9).

**Veronika Seidlová  
Daniela Stavělová:  
ČERVENÁ RŮŽIČKO, PROČ  
SE NEROZVÍJÍŠ. Doudlebská  
masopustní koleda: tanec,  
identita, status a integrace.  
[Red Rose, Why Don't you  
Thrive. A carnival carol from  
Doudleby: dance, identity,  
status and integration.]**

Prague, The Institute of Ethnology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic + Association for Children's Creativity in Dance, 2008, 85 pages + DVD

Even a fleeting glance at the comprehensive edition of “Folk dances of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia,” which is published