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A VIEW OF THE SEPHARDIC ROMANSA IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

SUMMARY

The type of song, for which the term romansa has become entrenched among the Bosnian Sephards, is the best-known oral-literary creation in the spiritual heritage of the Balkan Sephards. The key themes of the Sephardic romansa refer largely to events in their turbulent Mediaeval Spanish past or to Biblical legends. Elements of epic and lyrical poems are present in the Sephardic romansa, although lyrical content prevails in almost all the examples noted down in the Balkans to date. Jewish-Spanish or Ladino, the language in which they were sung and later noted down, has almost completely disappeared from the linguistic practice of the Sephards in Bosnia-Herzegovina since World War II. Today, it exists only in the folklore singing tradition.

Key words: Sephards, language, identity, oral heritage, the romansa