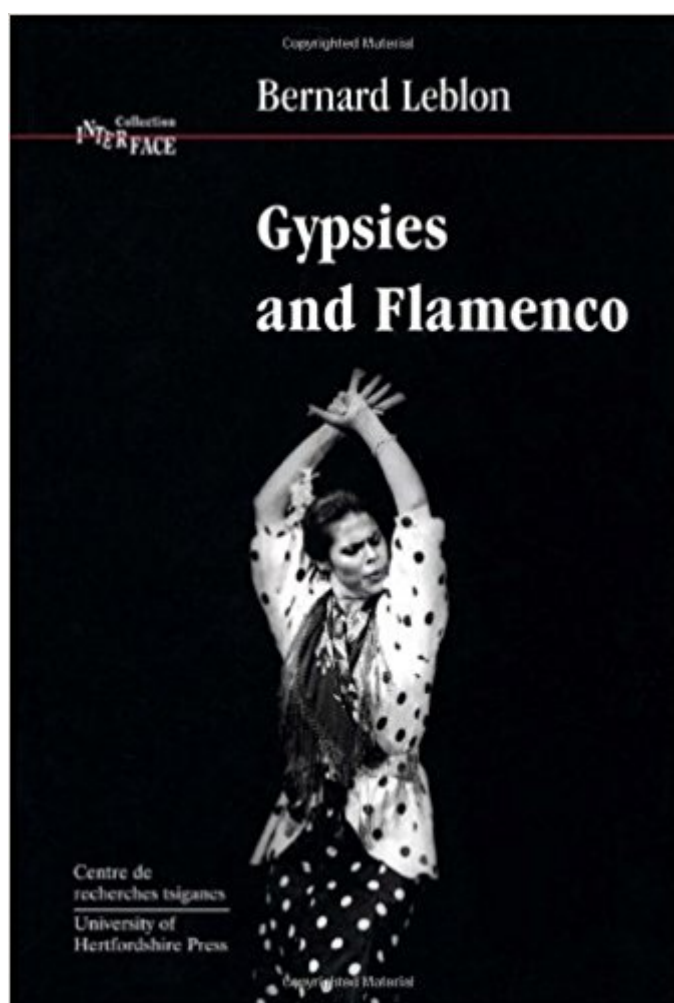


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Gypsies And Flamenco: The Emergence Of The Art Of Flamenco In Andalusia, Interface Collection Volume 6



Synopsis

This definitive work on the contribution of the Gypsies to the development of flamenco traces their influences on music from their long migration from India, through Iran, Turkey, Greece, and Hungary, to their persecution in Spain. This new updated edition provides fuller explanations of some of the technical terms and an invaluable biographical dictionary of 200 of the foremost Gypsy flamenco artists from its origins to the present day, as well as a discography and videography.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“[Gypsies and Flamenco] presents a compelling argument as to the huge debt Flamenco owed to the Gypsy musicians of Europe and in particular of Andalusia. . . . This is an exemplary work and the author deserves acclaim for his contribution to research in this, until recently, uncharted area.”
—Karen Abbott, Brio

Bernard Leblon, retired professor of Hispanic studies at the University of Perpignan, is a member of the Andalusian Flamenco Foundation, a member of the Gypsy Research Centre of the Universit  f   Descartes, and of its associated Research Group on European Gypsy History. His first work on flamenco, *Gypsy Music Styles and Flamenco* was awarded the 1988 Andalusian Flamenco Foundation prize.

I was born into one of the flamenco dynasties listed in this book, on my father's side. He is the nephew of Diego Del Gastor. There is a border between Gitanos/Gypsies (Spanish Roma/Romanies) and the outsiders who study them and speak about them. Although Le Blon makes a few tiny errors, for an outsider this is a job extremely well done. His research is impeccable and well rounded. There are so many exploitative sources of misinformation regarding flamenco----this is a jewel in a haystack for anyone interested in accurate information regarding Gypsies and flamenco. This source is appropriate for the novice and the scholar and for the flamencos themselves, who relish our oral traditions, but also are enriched by modern western scholarship. One other wonderful source of information regarding flamenco origins, is [...] which includes a very informative article by Ronald Lee. Don Pohrenn is a more exploitative, and less respectful author.

While this book may be small, it is loaded with information that any fan of flamenco music must have. Developed from first informal and then formal studies by the author with Gypsies [Roma] that led to a doctoral dissertation in 1980, this history is an eye-opener. Leblon traces the path of Gypsies from northwest India through Europe and finally to Spain, documenting how they took the role of musical entertainers that was nearly left vacant by religious and social injunctions on the indigenous populations. (Jews also served as musicians, especially in Muslim lands.) Their mobility was viewed as a threat to social order, particularly in Christian Spain, which has had a long history of intolerance. After the Jews, then the Muslims, and then the converted Muslims (who were trusted less than converted Jews) were forced into exile, Spanish authorities then placed a series of horrific restrictions from the 16th to the end of the 18th centuries against the Gypsies that make the American treatment of native tribes seem liberal, enlightened, and compassionate. A discussion on the specific origins of flamenco music itself ensues (as well as its name, derived, he concludes, from the Gypsies who fought for Spain in the Flemish war.) The book includes musical and historical comparisons with the gypsies of Hungary. Leblon's attacks on Spanish historical ignorance, although justified, does wear thin. As for the musical origins, details are obscure, though certain milestones are noted, and he ignores the adaptation of palmas (hand-clapping) and the characteristic foot-tapping dances entirely. The second part, an annotated list of 200 flamenco artists (musicians, dancers, singers), is itself a valuable reference; it provides stage and family names, relationships, and accomplishments. A glossary also is added. The student of flamenco will consult this book often. It is an important addition to ethnomusicology.

A very slight and not that well written exposition on Gypsy culture and Flamenco. The chapters on the early history of the people and culture could have been much more extensive and comprehensive. But given that very little literature on the subject is available in English, I'm happy to have something decent to read.

When I was sixteen I met up with a kid named Tinker while we were scavanging the trash bins behind a grocery story. His English was poor but I understood when he invited me to his gypsy camp in the bushes of the Los Angeles River. I didn't understand the singing and the tapping I heard and the flame and the fire that burned but I was immediately mesmerized by the embracing people of the camp. This book is Tinker and his gypsy clan.

While it does contain some interesting anecdotes, this book is fragmented and never manages to delve deeply into its topic. A disappointment.

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