

»DAS LACKMUSPAPIER DER ISRAELISCHEN GESELLSCHAFT«. DER SINGER-SONGWRITER MEIR ARIEL (1942-1999)

Felix Papenhagen

Abstract

Within the field of popular music singer-songwriters can be understood as sensitive seismographs for societal circumstances. In this way the Israeli singer-songwriter Meir Ariel (1942-1999) is here conceived as as an adequate mirror, that depicts a broader picture of perceptions and conceptions of certain aspects in Israeli everyday life. His presumably growing degree of popularity and esteem seems to legitimate this point of view.

Beside a short overview of some socio-historical conditions and some biographical information, this paper focuses on the analysis and interpretation of two songs. The first is his answer song »Jerushalajim Shel Barzel« (Jerusalem of Iron), a criticism of the extremely successful propagandistic song by Naomi Shemer »Jerushalajim Shel Sahav« (Jerusalem of Gold). The second song »Midrash Jonati« exemplifies Ariel's deep knowledge and creative handling of religious issues, outstanding in Israeli Popular music.