

## Nationalism in Music in the Totalitarian State (1945-1989)

January 24-25, 2015 Budapest, Archives and Research Group for 20th-21st Century Hungarian Music, Institute of Musicology, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Writing about the *novaya fol'kloristicheskaya volna* (New Folkloric Wave) Richard Taruskin mentions 'a sort of state-promoted neo-nationalism' in the Brezhnevite Soviet Union. Though the slogan of 'internationalism' was widely used behind the Iron Curtain, especially in discourses on music, a medium generally regarded as international, nationalistic attitudes, mentality and ways of behaviour appeared everywhere in Eastern- and South-Eastern European music and musical life between 1945 and 1989. The use of ethnic folk music and the frequent reference to 'national traditions' propagated for example by the Stalinist cultural policy in the fifties, became constant elements of the musical practice. The same tendencies can be observed in the music of other totalitarian states of the time, in South-Western Europe, South America and Asia as well. Musical nationalism, as a tool of expressing the primacy of a musical tradition over Western avant-garde music generally viewed as manipulated and supported by the power politics of the USA, can be detected not only in the cultural propaganda, but in musical compositions, the composers' self-interpretation, in music history writing, in the critical reception of contemporary music, in the habits of musicians, in music policy, and in popular music too. The decades between 1945 and 1989, however, brought about changes in the interpretation and function of musical nationalism in the totalitarian states, beginning with the widespread Zhdanovian ideal of (pseudo)folkloristic national classicism through the reference to 19th-century revolutionary romanticism to experiments with the combination of avant-garde music and national tradition later, at the time of the political and cultural loosening, which was linked, at the same time, surprisingly with a neo-conservative, neo-national turn as well. The changes in the interpretation of nationalism didn't leave the popular music scene untouched either, which was intertwined with the folk music revival movements (for example the Dance House Movement in Hungary) in the second half of the mentioned period. Nevertheless, the national traditions and the earlier historical experiences of different countries and nations determined basically the course of these processes influencing considerably the role and the appropriation of the phenomenon 'nationalism in music' in these totalitarian states.

We invite proposals for papers to the following or similar themes:

- National traditions versus avant-garde music
- Nationalist composers in a totalitarian state
- Nationalism as a tool of music policy
- Nationalism as a tool of political resistance
- Folk music revival and the revaluation of folk music in contemporary composition
- National discourses in musicology and music criticism
- Nationalism in popular music

Proposals are invited for individual papers of 20-minute duration. Proposals consisting of a title, abstract (max. 250 words), and short biographical notes, should be submitted by e-mail as an attached word file to the organizing committee at [magyar.zenei.archivum@btk.mta.hu](mailto:magyar.zenei.archivum@btk.mta.hu) by **April 7, 2014**. Please include contact details and institutional affiliation (if any), along with details of anticipated AV requirements. The conference language will be English.

#### Keynote speakers

Hermann Danuser, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin  
Richard Taruskin, University of California, Berkeley

#### Conference committee

Jim Samson, Royal Holloway, London  
László Somfai, Bartók Archives, Institute of Musicology, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest  
Stefan Weiss, Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien, Hannover

#### Conference Organizers:

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More information about the conference and about the Archives and Research Group for 20th-21st Century Hungarian Music: [http://zti.hu/mza/index\\_en.htm](http://zti.hu/mza/index_en.htm)