

Old Is New

International Conference – Lisbon 24-26 November 2016

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ABSTRACT:

'Old' music for a 'new' life – The discussions about national opera in the first centuries of the GDR (East Germany) between cultural heritage and musical advancement

Socialist and other totalitarian regimes from their beginnings tried to establish themselves as 'new' societies with new culture: in the GDR – as in many other countries – represented by the socialist realism. This doctrine based itself on the so called humanistic musical heritage, 'old' music from former centuries.

To present the new socialist culture there was a search for a new national opera. But the theorists and dogmatists of socialist realism did not want the composers to compose an advanced opera showing the real socialist life with all its problems, but they wanted the composers to compose an opera with much more traditional ('old') musical material to show the socialist life how it for them should be. So the paradoxical situation became into being, that some composers used advanced composition techniques to characterise the 'old' capitalist persons of their pieces, who mostly were the antagonists of the 'new' socialist persons. But the 'new' socialist persons were characterised by traditional composition techniques.

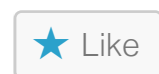
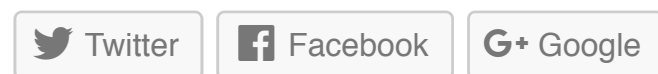
This special situation and the discussion of old and new in the aesthetic discourse of the socialist country in this paper will be analysed with examples. This discourse contains aesthetic questions as well as sociological, and questions of opera theory. The paper will have a short view to the theoretic discourse and the practical realisation or nonrealisation by the composers.

Keywords: socialist realism, cultural heritage, musical advancement

BIO:

Dr. Katrin Stöck studied musicology and theatre sciences as well as German literature at the Universities of Halle-Wittenberg and Leipzig. She is working as scientific research assistant for musicology at the University of Leipzig, from 2013 to 2015 she was researching at CESEM/Lisbon, still being a Member of its working group „Teoria crítica e comunicação“. Her doctoral thesis *Music Theatre in the GDR. Scenic Chamber Music and Chamber Opera of the 1970s and 1980s* appeared (in German) at Böhlau-Verlag Weimar 2013. From 1999 to 2012 she participated in the revision of the *Riemann-Musiklexikon* (Mainz 2012), with specialisation in Music theatre, German, Russian, and Czech composers. She is leading courses and lectureships, organising conferences (International GfM-Conference Leipzig 2008, Int. Congress of Luther research, Wittenberg 2017), and is working as a freelance dramatic advisor. She is specialised in Music Theatre of 20th and 21st centuries, musical life during the dictatorships (GDR and Portugal), theory of Music Theatre.

CONDIVIDI:



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