
From the Editor

In totalitarian systems, music traditions have been subjected to many forms of pressure to realise specific social projects. Due to the processes of selection and reduction imposed by social, political and cultural institutions, traditional music has taken on new meanings and functions, helping to create the new musical forms and genres which, from the point of view of the totalitarian systems, best fulfilled its political, social and educational functions.

In some respects, the various mechanisms employed by institutions and the resultant manipulation of traditional (folk, ethnic) music were similar across totalitarian political systems in different countries. There were also, however, substantial differences, determined by local interpretations of the totalitarian political ideology and also by the ways in which local music traditions functioned and the state in which they were preserved. The similarities and differences among techniques for manipulating music traditions may give rise to interesting debate among scholars representing different European countries. Just such a debate occurred during the international conference European Seminar in Ethnomusicology held in September 2008 in Warsaw. The papers delivered there, together with several texts by invited authors, comprise the contents of the present issue of *Musicology Today*, which opens with a lecture by Giovanni Giuriati devoted to the memory of the ESEM founder, John Blacking.

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