

Summary:

The thesis “Folk As a Social Phenomenon in the Time of So Called Normalization” does not take folk primarily for a music style but it intends to demonstrate its limits the Communist power in Czechoslovakia had set for independent cultural activities in 1970s and 1980s. That is why the thesis is not a musicological one but a political and historic one.

The text is based on a wide basis of sources: studies in archives, the analysis of valid legislation of that time, studies of contemporary press, interviewing the contemporary witnesses and using the witnesses’ private archives and last but not least the lyrics of the songs themselves have been selected as important sources

The text focuses on important milestones having the information value about the folk in 1970s and 1980s. There is provided an analysis of qualification tests which should have “cleansed” the official stages from “defective” musicians (and from a lot of folk singers as well). The demonstration of possibilities is given here showing the fact the folk could survive and balance on the edge of the public life in spite of all legislation barriers and this either in the form of circumventing the law and using the gaps in the law (folk singers’ union Šafrán (Saffron)) or in the form of “hacking” the system, i.e. gaining influence in an ordinary approved institution and its subjecting to unofficial activities (Young Music Section at the Prague’s Office of the Association of Musicians of the Czech Socialist Republic)