

“The Knack Was in the Barrel” or How the Urban Schlager Outlived Socialism

Anton Angelov

(Summary)

Between the mid-1940s and the late 1950s the centralization and ideologization of culture marginalized the schlager-song practice from pre-socialist times. Performing and listening to this musical genre was recognized by the authorities as a relic of the bourgeois past and was at the same time regarded as non-aesthetic by the professional composers. In the 1960s the generational change and the penetration of the new modern Western popular culture in Bulgaria altered the focus of the institutions of the regime. The old-fashioned pre-war schlager lost its political incorrectness to a significant extent and gradually became a convenient instrument in the hands of the institutions thus allowing to cover the attention of the elderly generations.

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