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Music Reviews as Signs of the Sociocultural Context: Comparative Case Studies of Latvian, German and Russian Music Criticism in Riga During the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century

Muzikos apžvalgos kaip sociokultūrinio konteksto ženklai: XIX a. pab.–XX a. pr. Rygoje paskelbtos latvių, vokiečių ir rusų muzikos kritikos palyginimas

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Abstract

Reviews of music can be seen as 'signs' of a certain era, which indicate the critics' belonging to a certain social or national community. This paper aims to discover the meaning of such 'signs' in the Latvian music history of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: the publications of Riga's newspapers representing three national communities – Latvian, Baltic German, and Russian – are researched. The relationships of these communities were complicated: Germans and Russians competed for influence in the Baltic cultural space, and simultaneously the natives of the country, Latvians, strived to manifest their national identity.

Based on framing theory the paper discusses how the reviewers have selected the reflected events, which details they have made more salient and which rhetorical devices (metaphors, keywords, catchphrases, etc.) are used. The paper presents three case studies related to significant phenomena of music life: the reception of a frequently performed work (the tone poem *Līgo svētki* by Jāzeps Vītols), of a single composer (Alfrēds Kalniņš) and the concept of Latvianness in music in general.

Keywords: framing theory, Jāzeps Vītols, Alfrēds Kalniņš, Latvianness.

Anotacija

Muzikos apžvalgos gali būti laikomos tam tikros epochos „ženklai“, jose skelbiama kritika atspindi konkrečią socialinę ar tautinę bendruomenę. Straipsnyje tokių „ženklų“ reikšmė XIX a. pab.–XX a. pr. Latvijos muzikos istorijoje nagrinėjama remiantis Rygos laikraščiais, atstovaujančiais tautinėms latvių, baltų vokiečių ir rusų bendruomenėms. Šių bendruomenių santykiai buvo sudėtingi: vokiečiai ir rusai varžėsi dėl įtakos kultūrinėje Baltijos erdvėje, o latviai siekė deklaruoti tautinį tapatumą.

Remiantis kadravimo teorija, aptariamas recenzentų pasirinkimas atspindėti tam tikrus įvykius, dėmesys kreipiamas į tai, kokios detalės yra pabrėžiamos ir kokios retorinės priemonės (metaforos, prasminiai žodžiai, posakiai ir kt.) pasitelkiamos tekste. Straipsnyje nagrinėjami trys atvejai, susiję su reikšmingais muzikos gyvenimo reiškiniais, t. y. kaip tuo metu buvo priimamas ir spaudoje pristatomas dažnai atliekamas kūrinys (Jazepo Vytuolo poema *Līgo svētki*), konkretaus kompozitoriaus (Alfredo Kalninio) muzika ir latviškumo samprata muzikoje.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: kadravimo teorija, Jāzeps Vītols, Alfrēds Kalniņš, latviškumas.

Introduction

The period discussed in this paper – the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – entered Latvian history as an epoch of significant socio-cultural change. During this time, the previously German-speaking city of Riga rapidly became more and more multicultural. On the one hand, this tendency was caused by new educational possibilities and a subsequent national revival of ethnic Latvians, and, on the other hand, by the growing immigration of ethnic Russians that the Russian government supported to weaken German positions in the Baltic provinces. During this time, the Riga newspapers began to reflect such

different opinions on social, national, and cultural topics as never before. This tendency also influenced the field of music criticism. The music reviews can be viewed as signs that reflect several characteristics of their era, in this case, the aesthetic views and values dominant among the three national communities of Riga – the Baltic Germans, Latvians, and Russians.

The main goal of this study is to determine what possibilities are offered by the interpretation of these signs from the perspective of framing theory. Its central idea is that by using specific textual elements or images, the writer instills certain opinions or so-called frames in the audience. The discovery of these frames can help us understand the views

of various social or national groups on significant historical and cultural processes and events.

The theory is based on the postulates initially formulated by the sociologist Erwin Goffman (1974) and later adapted by political and communication scientist Robert M. Entman when researching the work of mass media. Entman also provided the following definition:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described. (Italics by B. J.; Entman 1993: 52)

The two keywords mentioned in this definition – to select and make them more salient – also point to the essence of the framing process: information in the media is not simply presented neutrally, but ‘**selected**’ first, choosing which events need or do not need attention; secondly, the depiction of these events contains details that are ‘**made more salient**’, as they best reflect the idea that the mass media wants to bring to its audience, or, in other words, the frame it creates.

Meanwhile, political scientists Dennis Chong and James N. Druckman characterize the main premise of the framing:

[It] refers to the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue. (Chong, Druckman 2007: 104)

Various factors could influence the choice of specific frames used by mass media and their contributors. Researchers Holli A. Semetko and Patti M. Valkenburg offer a comprehensive typology, that derive the designations of the frames themselves from their names. Thus, the following frames are distinguished – Conflict frame (“emphasizes conflicts between individuals, groups, or institutions as a tool to capture the interests of the audience”), Human interest frame (“to show the human view or emotional point of view of the depiction of an event, issue or questions”), Economic consequences frame (“to report events, problems or issues that bring economic consequences to an individual, group, institution, region or country”), Morality frame (“to put events, questions or issues in the context of religious and moral values”), and Responsibility frame (“describes issues or problems that act as a responsibility attribute to the cause and solution of either government or individual or group”; Semetko and Valkenburg 2000: 95–96).

Researchers have also paid attention to the devices (mechanisms) involved in creating frames. From the semiotic viewpoint, these devices could also be perceived as signs that reflect meanings characteristic of certain epochs

and socio-cultural circles. William A. Gamson and Andre Modigliani differentiate between:

- 1) metaphors,
- 2) exemplars,
- 3) catch-phrases,
- 4) depictions, and
- 5) visual images as framing devices. (Gamson and Modigliani 1989: 3)

The above-mentioned Entman notes that frames in the news include such textual elements as:

[...] the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments. (Entman 1993: 52)

Margaret Linström and Willemien Marais modify this list by dividing all devices into rhetorical and technical. Under the rhetorical devices, they mean all mechanisms mentioned by Entman, as well as “word choice, metaphors, and exemplars” (Linström and Marais 2012: 31). Meanwhile, the technical devices, according to Linström and Marais, include 11 units, classified by James W. Tankard (2001; quoted after Linström and Marais 2012: 32) as follows:

1. headlines
2. subheads
3. photos
4. photo captions
5. leads
6. source selection
7. quotes selection
8. pull quotes
9. logos
10. statistics and charts, and
11. concluding statements and paragraphs.

It can be concluded that the divisions of frame creation mechanisms offered by various scholars have many common features; however, the closer they are to the present, the more differentiated they become.

The main area of using framing theory when researching the work of mass media involves the analysis of publications on political processes, especially news. Nevertheless, this theory is also used in studies of popular music journalism (see, for example, McClain 2016). It is easy to explain considering the broad audience of this genre and, consequently, its strong influence on people’s minds. Currently, there are no such comprehensive studies of the role of frames in art music criticism. However, it is undeniable that in this area, the tendency of framing can also be observed. This

is because the reviews of art music always represent not only the individual views of a critic but also his belonging to a certain sociocultural circle. Therefore, the framing mechanisms described above are similarly applied to art music criticism – if not in full, then to a large extent. Moreover, the object of analysis may include not only contemporary publications, but can also be extremely helpful when researching music history. It should be noted that in the period discussed in this paper – the late nineteenth and early twentieth century – editors of daily newspapers paid close attention to reviews of art music concerts. The audience addressed by these critics was also relatively large and influential. This raises the following research question: how to explain the signs of certain positions characteristic of an epoch and used in art music criticism from the perspective of framing theory?

The search for the answer to this question will include analysis of several frames, consciously or unconsciously used by Latvian music reviewers, and representatives of three national communities, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. To explain how they have perceived the new Latvian art music, special attention will be paid to discussions on the national color. The conclusions will be based on three case studies related to three significant phenomena of music life, and I will move from the narrowest to the broadest:

- Thus, I will first compare how the reviewers – representatives of three national communities – have evaluated a frequently performed **work** by a Latvian composer, the tone poem *Līgo svētki*¹ (Midsummer Celebration) by Jāzeps Vītols.
- Secondly, attention will be focused on the reception of a single **composer**, namely, Alfrēds Kalniņš.
- Finally, my research object will be views on **Latvian-ness** in music, its identity, and its characteristics in general.

The concepts of framing theory, proposed by various researchers and described above, will be used in part during the analysis. This is because not all of them are suitable for the study of art music criticism in the period under review. For example, the headings of the articles mainly reflect only the main topic they discuss (for example, “Konzert”, “Neue Musikalien”), without any hidden meanings. The reviews were also not accompanied by any visual materials. The main focus of the analysis will be on devices that point to diversity in the frames created by critics. These devices include the use of essential keywords, exemplars, catchphrases, metaphors, and the selection of events themselves.

Case study 1

Critical reviews of *Līgo svētki* by Jāzeps Vītols

Already during his lifetime, Jāzeps Vītols (1863–1948) had a significant role in Latvian music, and he faced hardly any of the difficulties experienced by many other artists on the road to recognition: thanks to the communicative character and leadership abilities of Vītols, he enjoyed high authority in the Latvian musical society from an early age. Of course, it was also strengthened by his excellent reputation in the Russian music environment because immediately after graduating from the Saint Petersburg Conservatory in 1886, Vītols became a long-term teacher and later professor at this institution.

The tone poem *Līgo svētki* is one of his early works, composed when he was twenty-six. It premiered on July 19, 1889, in Majorenhof (today Majori in Jūrmala). The performance was the source for the first review on Latvian instrumental music found in Riga's German press, in an article by Moritz Rudolph (1843–1892) from the *Rigaer Tageblatt*.

The **decision to review** this event already deserves special attention. By the end of the 1860s, Latvian music concerts were held quite often, mainly under the auspices of the Riga Latvian Society, founded in 1868, but they were rarely reviewed by Baltic German music critics (the Song Festivals were an exception). The lack of attention to Latvian music concerts is noted by Jāzeps Vītols in one of his articles published much later: in 1923, in an obituary dedicated to the German musician, poet, and music critic Hans Schmidt (1854–1923), Vītols bitterly expresses the following sentence referring to the experience of previous decades:

We said goodbye to the only German critic – an aesthetic who, with annoyance, with real indignation, rejected the unequivocal proposal of his German colleagues – to ignore Latvian music, to silence Latvian concerts [...]. (Vītols 1923: 2)²

What were the main reasons for such a lack of attention? Undoubtedly, there were a lot of established German musical institutions in Riga, for example, the City Theatre (*Stadttheater*), and they provided a qualitative concert life that might have seemed self-sufficient to the representatives of the Baltic German community. Therefore, many of them considered cultural manifestations of ethnic Latvians to be undesirable; such manifestations became more and more frequent in the epoch of the so-called National Awakening (from the 1850s to the 1880s) and, at times, included political subtexts. Of course, several individual members of the German community, including the previously mentioned Hans Schmidt, may have had different views. However,

these were exceptions. Political scientist Ivars Ijabs describes the general trend thus:

The writings of early Young Latvians³, and the reaction to them from the dominant Baltic German elite, show that the emergence of modern Latvian nationalism is to a large extent due to postcolonial mimicry, as described by Homi Bhabha. Attempts to imitate German cultural models and to develop a Latvian high culture lead to hostile reactions from the German side, which, in their turn, lead to the increasing consolidation of Latvian nationalism. (Ijabs 2014, Abstract)

Thus, the lack of attention to most (although not all) Latvian concerts by Baltic Germans can be explained using the terminology of Semetko and Valkenburg through a Conflict frame (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000: 95). However, why was the mentioned performance of Vītols' *Līgo svētki* an exception that was included in the selection of reviewed works? The most likely answer is that the concert was organized not by the Riga Latvian Society or other Latvian institutions but by a guest conductor Fritz Scheel (1852–1907)⁴ – in this time, he worked as a chapel master (*Capellmeister*) in Moscow and was well-known in the German community of Russia. Therefore, there was no reason to doubt the high artistic level of his concert programs.

Reviews of summer concerts in the Riga press were generally less common than in other seasons because the holiday time played a role. Maybe it is the reason why the performance of *Līgo svētki* was only covered in one German newspaper, *Rigaer Tageblatt* – the third most influential daily newspaper in Riga (started in 1876, initially as *Neue Zeitung für Stadt und Land*). According to Baltic German press researcher Roland Seeberg-Elverfeldt, *Rigaer Tageblatt*, along with *Zeitung für Stadt und Land* (started in 1867), presented relatively liberal views and competed with the oldest and most conservative newspaper in Riga, *Rigasche Zeitung* (started in 1778) (Seeberg-Elverfeldt 1977: 662). Meanwhile, the reviewer himself, Moritz Rudolph, was not only a long-term critic but also an outstanding and erudite music historian whose *Rigaer Theater- und Tonkünstler-Lexikon* (1890) still is one of the most significant sources of information about Baltic German musicians.

Rudolph introduces the discussion of *Līgo svētki* by Vītols with a conclusion about its being based on Latvian folk songs (*Lihgo, auf lettischen Volksliedern basierend* [...]). As it will also be seen from future quotes in my study, 'folk songs' ('folk music', 'folk tunes') are the most common keywords chosen by reviewers of Latvian art music of this epoch. It is easy to explain because it follows quite objectively from the strong influence of folklore on art music

in the era of the National Awakening. Rudolph, however, continues the article with a critical assessment of the composition. He believes that *Līgo svētki* by Vītols:

[...] belongs to sound paintings that have unrealistic expectations of music, as, even when following specific commentaries, some specific content nuances were often difficult to understand. This is at least for those who are unable to recall the original poetic images that inspired the composition.⁵ (Rudolph 1889)

The critic also considers that the choice of the theme of a popular Latvian folk song for the central section of *Līgo svētki* was not very successful:

From a purely musical point of view, it should be noted that the well-known midsummer song, whose contrapuntal setting covers the whole second half of the work, sounds much different in instrumental performance and not better than when it is sung with words. Five repetitions of the first tone give this melody a rather stiff character. (Rudolph 1889)

At the same time, Rudolph recognizes the high professional level of the tone poem – “the rich and very diverse arrangement of the [folk] theme”⁶ and the mastery of orchestration (Rudolph 1889).

The critical view of *Līgo svētki* by Vītols can hardly be explained with the above-mentioned Conflict frame. In contrast, Semetko and Valkenburg mention a Human-interest frame (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000: 95) – the personal reflection of the critic tending to be skeptical of programmatic symphonic music in general. It indirectly follows from his addition of the work by Vītols to the list of “those sound paintings that have unrealistic expectations of music” – apparently Rudolph frequently encountered this type of composition in which “some content nuances were difficult to understand”. The article concludes with the sentence:

However, first of all, we would have liked to see the debut of J. Vītols in the field of absolute, i.e., non-programmatic music.⁷ (Rudolph 1889)

Still, it should be added here that this desire by the reviewer is in stark contrast to the mainstream Latvian symphonic music of this period. This is because the composers paid particular attention to programmatic works because they provided the best possibility to declare national ideas corresponding to the time of the Awakening. “Contemporaries” of Vītols' *Līgo svētki* were such compositions as *Latvju Vispārīgo Dziesmu svētku maršs* (March of the All-Latvian Song Festival, 1880), *Latvju tautas brīvlaišana* (The Liberation of Latvian People, 1891), *Latvju dejas* (Latvian Dances, 1894) by Andrejs Jurjāns, a.o.

The image shows a page of a musical score for an orchestra. The score is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. It consists of multiple staves. The top staff is the first violin part, featuring a melodic line with five repetitions of the first tone from measure 3, marked with a 'L' (Lento) dynamic. The second staff is the second violin part, playing a similar melodic line. The third staff is the viola part, also playing a similar melodic line. The fourth staff is the first viola part, playing a similar melodic line. The fifth staff is the first bassoon part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixth staff is the second bassoon part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventh staff is the first clarinet part, playing a similar melodic line. The eighth staff is the second clarinet part, playing a similar melodic line. The ninth staff is the first flute part, playing a similar melodic line. The tenth staff is the second flute part, playing a similar melodic line. The eleventh staff is the first oboe part, playing a similar melodic line. The twelfth staff is the second oboe part, playing a similar melodic line. The thirteenth staff is the first trumpet part, playing a similar melodic line. The fourteenth staff is the second trumpet part, playing a similar melodic line. The fifteenth staff is the first trombone part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixteenth staff is the second trombone part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventeenth staff is the first tuba part, playing a similar melodic line. The eighteenth staff is the second tuba part, playing a similar melodic line. The nineteenth staff is the first bass drum part, playing a similar melodic line. The twentieth staff is the second bass drum part, playing a similar melodic line. The twenty-first staff is the first snare drum part, playing a similar melodic line. The twenty-second staff is the second snare drum part, playing a similar melodic line. The twenty-third staff is the first cymbal part, playing a similar melodic line. The twenty-fourth staff is the second cymbal part, playing a similar melodic line. The twenty-fifth staff is the first triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The twenty-sixth staff is the second triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The twenty-seventh staff is the first xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The twenty-eighth staff is the second xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The twenty-ninth staff is the first maracas part, playing a similar melodic line. The thirtieth staff is the second maracas part, playing a similar melodic line. The thirty-first staff is the first tambourine part, playing a similar melodic line. The thirty-second staff is the second tambourine part, playing a similar melodic line. The thirty-third staff is the first castanets part, playing a similar melodic line. The thirty-fourth staff is the second castanets part, playing a similar melodic line. The thirty-fifth staff is the first guiro part, playing a similar melodic line. The thirty-sixth staff is the second guiro part, playing a similar melodic line. The thirty-seventh staff is the first wood block part, playing a similar melodic line. The thirty-eighth staff is the second wood block part, playing a similar melodic line. The thirty-ninth staff is the first triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The fortieth staff is the second triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The forty-first staff is the first xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The forty-second staff is the second xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The forty-third staff is the first maracas part, playing a similar melodic line. The forty-fourth staff is the second maracas part, playing a similar melodic line. The forty-fifth staff is the first tambourine part, playing a similar melodic line. The forty-sixth staff is the second tambourine part, playing a similar melodic line. The forty-seventh staff is the first castanets part, playing a similar melodic line. The forty-eighth staff is the second castanets part, playing a similar melodic line. The forty-ninth staff is the first guiro part, playing a similar melodic line. The fiftieth staff is the second guiro part, playing a similar melodic line. The fifty-first staff is the first wood block part, playing a similar melodic line. The fifty-second staff is the second wood block part, playing a similar melodic line. The fifty-third staff is the first triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The fifty-fourth staff is the second triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The fifty-fifth staff is the first xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The fifty-sixth staff is the second xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The fifty-seventh staff is the first maracas part, playing a similar melodic line. The fifty-eighth staff is the second maracas part, playing a similar melodic line. The fifty-ninth staff is the first tambourine part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixtieth staff is the second tambourine part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixty-first staff is the first castanets part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixty-second staff is the second castanets part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixty-third staff is the first guiro part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixty-fourth staff is the second guiro part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixty-fifth staff is the first wood block part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixty-sixth staff is the second wood block part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixty-seventh staff is the first triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixty-eighth staff is the second triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The sixty-ninth staff is the first xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventieth staff is the second xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventy-first staff is the first maracas part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventy-second staff is the second maracas part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventy-third staff is the first tambourine part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventy-fourth staff is the second tambourine part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventy-fifth staff is the first castanets part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventy-sixth staff is the second castanets part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventy-seventh staff is the first guiro part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventy-eighth staff is the second guiro part, playing a similar melodic line. The seventy-ninth staff is the first wood block part, playing a similar melodic line. The eightieth staff is the second wood block part, playing a similar melodic line. The eighty-first staff is the first triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The eighty-second staff is the second triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The eighty-third staff is the first xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The eighty-fourth staff is the second xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The eighty-fifth staff is the first maracas part, playing a similar melodic line. The eighty-sixth staff is the second maracas part, playing a similar melodic line. The eighty-seventh staff is the first tambourine part, playing a similar melodic line. The eighty-eighth staff is the second tambourine part, playing a similar melodic line. The eighty-ninth staff is the first castanets part, playing a similar melodic line. The ninetieth staff is the second castanets part, playing a similar melodic line. The ninety-first staff is the first guiro part, playing a similar melodic line. The ninety-second staff is the second guiro part, playing a similar melodic line. The ninety-third staff is the first wood block part, playing a similar melodic line. The ninety-fourth staff is the second wood block part, playing a similar melodic line. The ninety-fifth staff is the first triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The ninety-sixth staff is the second triangle part, playing a similar melodic line. The ninety-seventh staff is the first xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The ninety-eighth staff is the second xylophone part, playing a similar melodic line. The ninety-ninth staff is the first maracas part, playing a similar melodic line. The hundredth staff is the second maracas part, playing a similar melodic line.

Figure 1. Jāzeps Vītols, *Līgo svētki*: an excerpt (see melody with five repetitions of the first tone from m. 3). Source: Jāzeps Vītols [Joseph Wibtol], *La fête Libgo: Tableau symphonique sur des thèmes populaires lettes pour orchestre Op. 4*. Leipzig: M. P. Belaieff, 1890.

In this case, there are no other critical reviews in the Latvian press on the first performance of the *Līgo svētki* by Vītols. However, two influential Latvian-language newspapers, *Dienas Lapa* and *Baltijas Vēstnesis*, retell the already-mentioned article by Rudolph. *Dienas Lapa* especially highlights the positive feedback given by a reviewer on the mastery of Vītols, and his critical notes are commented on by the newspaper as follows:

Latvian folk songs and other musical works based on them will be completely understandable and felt only by Latvian ears and hearts⁸. (“J. Vītols” 1889)

Meanwhile, *Baltijas Vēstnesis* describes the review by Rudolph as a demonstration of a hostile attitude and considers it characteristic of Baltic German views of Latvian music in general. This writing can be viewed as an expression of the Conflict frame:

They [the Baltic German audience – B. J.] attended the concert without knowing that something from Latvian music would also be performed; at least, nothing was mentioned beforehand as is usually the case when other concerts and outstanding compositions are announced. Also, the review of this composition in the *Rigaer Tageblatt* reflects the same hostility.⁹ (B. 1889)

A slightly different reaction to the article by Rudolph in both Latvian-language publications is likely determined by the personalities of the anonymous authors rather than any significant differences in the editorial position of the newspapers themselves. *Baltijas Vēstnesis*, founded in 1868, was close to the Riga Latvian Society. Meanwhile, *Dienas Lapa* (founded in 1886) represented the movement of the so-called *Jaunā strāva* (New Current) that, in some respects, was the opposite of the Riga Latvian Society (which expressed the interests of the wealthier members of the Latvian community). As it is noted by the historian Jānis Šiliņš, *Jaunā strāva* was primarily focused on:

[...] the Latvian students and other intellectuals who did not distance themselves from less educated groups in Latvian society, but worked in their interests, trying to educate them. (Šiliņš n.d.)

However, both newspapers had a similar position in defending the national interests of ethnic Latvians in the multicultural Governorate of Livonia.

The first expanded discussion of the *Līgo svētki* by Vītols appeared in the Latvian-language press almost two years later, on February 13, 1891. It dealt with the first edition of the work and was published by the newspaper *Balss* (founded 1878), whose main audience were rural

residents of Latvia. The reviewer was a colleague of Vītols, composer and music critic, the already mentioned Andrejs Jurjāns (1856–1922). His article was introduced with the thesis that nowadays, the nation itself has “corrupted” its folk melodies under the influence of modern music; fortunately, however, “the creative element of the nation” has shifted to composers who raise the folklore heritage to a new level. Several rhetorical questions follow. They clearly show that Jurjāns evaluates the composition *Līgo svētki* also from a patriotic point of view, highly appreciating the choice of the theme – an ancient Latvian festivity:

Which true Latvian will not be moved by happy feelings, seeing such a step of development in the life of our nation? Which true folk lover’s heart won’t beat faster when he hears a composition based on ‘Midsummer celebration’ – this most beloved and joyful ancestral feast [...]? (Jurjāns 1891: 2)¹⁰

The review itself is designed as a hermeneutical description of the work. Namely, Jurjāns links each characteristic of the musical language with a possible programmatic explanation, for example, in such a way:

The beginning of Andante (4/4) is quiet and includes an organ point (18 measures): double basses and kettledrums hollowly play the low G. [...] Thus, the composer has added a gloomy, mysterious color to his tone poem, which tells [...] of an innocent, gloomy sacred grove in the dark night – a place where the ancestral gods lived [...]. (Jurjāns 1891: 2–3)¹¹

Jurjāns also adds very few critical objections to this laudatory description regarding both the instrumentation and musical form (Jurjāns 1891: 3–4). He concludes his article with the best wishes for the young composer Vītols and encouragement to other Latvian composers to follow him. The reviewer, in practice, points out the equality between national color and individuality, stating that “without nationality, there is no originality anymore” (Jurjāns 1891: 4).¹² The last words of the article are quoted from the *Wilhelm Tell* by Friedrich Schiller in the translation of Auseklis (1850–1879), a poet and an ardent employee of the Latvian national movement:

Pie tēvu zemes dārgās ķeries klāt [...] (O mächtig ist der Trieb des Vaterlands [...]) (Jurjāns 1891: 4)

Similarly, like Rudolph, Jurjāns highlights national motifs of *Līgo svētki*. In addition, he forms a frame of the happy Latvian ancestry. The reflection of these subjects in press publications suggests an analogy with other works created by the Latvian composers and writers of this era: it was frequently inspired by the pre-Christianity epoch of Latvian history and the ancient mythology that flourished

before the German crusaders arrived. Several compositions reflecting this thematic are, for example, the choral songs *Beverīnas dziedonis* (The Singer of Beverīna, 1891) and *Gaismas pils* (The Castle of Light, 1899) by Jāzeps Vītols as well as *Kā Daugava vaida* (How the Daugava Moans, the 1870s) by Kārlis Baumanis.

From the perspective of the discussed terminology by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000: 96), we can see the Morality frame in the publication by Jurjāns: the inclusion of national motifs in music is mentioned as a moral obligation of Latvian composers. The quotation by Schiller is a rhetorical device – a catchphrase that deserves special attention because it reflects the paradoxical tendency described in the above-mentioned quotation by Ijabs (2014): at the time of the National Awakening, Latvians perceived Germans not only as their opponents but also sometimes as sources of inspiration and imitation in defending their national ideas. Interestingly, Schiller's quoted lines were included in the 1898 choral song *Pie tēvu zemes dārgās* (Beloved Motherland) by Emīls Dārziņš (1875–1910), which continues to be popular today.

The previously quoted reviews appeared shortly after *Līgo svētki* was composed. More than ten years later, in the early twentieth century, this work was still frequently performed in concerts organized by the Riga Latvian Society. At this time, *Līgo svētki* was appreciated in both the German and Russian press, and we can assume that it could also be explained by the respectable position of the composer in the musical circles of the Russian metropole. The daily *Rizhskij Vestnik* (*Рижский Вестник*) describes him as the pride of Latvians and mentions the *Līgo svētki* as one of his most interesting compositions (Михаловская 1906).

However, a statement by a Latvian-speaking composer and music critic, the previously mentioned Emīls Dārziņš, expressed in 1906, also deserves attention. It was published in the literature and art monthly *Zalktis* founded in the same year. Dārziņš recalls the times when, in his opinion, Latvian music was underestimated in Riga, and as proof, he mentions the rhetorical device of framing as an exemplar. He highlights the reception of the first performance of Vītols' *Līgo svētki*, pointing out that, after the performance, “the German press and audience almost pelted the conductor with stones” (Dārziņš 1906: 152).¹³ Nevertheless, it should be noted that the previously mentioned article by Moritz Rudolph was the only review of the first performance of *Līgo svētki*. It was critical yet correct writing, and not at all comparable to ‘stoning’. Thus, the statement by Dārziņš can be considered as a manifestation of the Conflict frame and a sign reflecting the tension between Baltic Germans and ethnic Latvians (which likely only intensified after the events of 1905), rather than the real reception of *Līgo svētki* by Vītols.

Case study 2

The reception of music by Alfrēds Kalniņš

The object of the second case study, Alfrēds Kalniņš (1879–1951), was one of the most discussed Latvian-speaking young composers in the early twentieth century. Many reviews from this time dealt with the first performances and the first editions of his works. Among the earliest critics, we should mention an article by Dārziņš that appeared in the newspaper *Pēterburgas Avīzes* on February 13, 1902.

This newspaper was published from 1862 to 1865 and, after a long break, again from 1901 to 1905 in Saint Petersburg. At this time, it was a city of education or work for many Latvians. In both periods, the newspaper strongly defended Latvian national ideas. Initially, it was the tribune of Young Latvians (*jaunlatvieši*). As has been noted by various researchers, for example, Gints Apals (2011: 438), this newspaper in 1862 began “using the term *Latvija* (contemporary name of Latvia in Latvian) when referring to the territories in the Baltic provinces of the Russian Empire inhabited by Latvians” (quoted after Pivoras 2021: 569). A patriotic mood was also characteristic of *Pēterburgas Avīzes* several decades later when Dārziņš was a contributor to this newspaper; it correlated well with his personal views. Describing 3 *lyrische Stücke* (Three Lyric Pieces for piano) by Kalniņš, Dārziņš highlights it as the first published work of the young composer and calls him “a poet who expresses his poetic intentions in sounds” (Dārziņš 1902).¹⁴ However, this recognition is supplemented with a criticism – Dārziņš indicates a lack of national motifs in the work of his young colleague:

There is not enough Latvianness in the mentioned pieces. The influences of the great Norwegian lyrical composer Grieg are too strong. We hope that the young composer will try to listen to more national sounds in the future. And let the rustling of the birches of the homeland be the gentle and sad song on which to tune his passionate melodies! (Dārziņš 1902)¹⁵

In these words, we can again find a Morality frame that, 11 years prior, was used in the cited article by Jurjāns; in this case, similarly, a critic encourages a Latvian composer to put the motifs of his native culture in the foreground. However, the statement by Dārziņš does not include such keywords as “folk music” or “folk tune”, and the understanding of the native culture is more ambiguous, expressed through a metaphor – “the rustling of the birches of the homeland”.

A broader understanding of Latvianness is also confirmed by Dārziņš five years later in the literature and art monthly *Zalktis*. This time, his view on music by Kalniņš is even more appreciative:

First of all, Kalniņš is a composer with a strongly Latvian, national physiognomy. This Latvianness is nothing similar to the stilted, conventional 'nationalism' characteristic of many composers, [...] trying to imitate folk melodies or even borrow folk material for their compositions. Kalniņš has never arranged any folk motif in his works. His Latvianness is inherited, it is, so to speak, already in his blood, the inner essence of himself. (Dārziņš 1907: 141)¹⁶

Additionally, Dārziņš agrees with the frequently expressed opinion that the music by Kalniņš is generally sad. However, he associates this feature with Latvianness:

It is just as sad as our grey northern skies, as sad as our pines and spruces, our yellowed birch groves. (Dārziņš 1907: 142)¹⁷

We can see certain contrasts between two readings of Latvian identity in this work - the first is rooted in folk music, the second in the general atmosphere of music, in parallel with nature (again, "birch groves" is the key). Dārziņš obviously prefers the second and "unconventional" understanding. This broader explanation of Latvianness also possibly reflects a new and more nuanced perception in the early twentieth century compared with the epoch of the Young Latvians. It is noteworthy that Klotiņš, a researcher of Kalniņš' music, has also noted the duality in the understanding of Latvianness. He characterizes the early works by Kalniņš as follows:

A compromise between the inertia of national romanticism [i.e., the oldest understanding of Latvianness, characteristic of Young Latvians in the second half of the nineteenth century - B.J.] and a contemporary, psychologically meaningful nationalism. (Klotiņš 1979: 98)¹⁸

The Latvian national color is also frequently noted as a vital sign in the music of Kalniņš by Baltic German and Russian music critics. Vsevolod Cheshihin (1865–1934) from the newspaper *Rizhskaja mysl'* (*Рижская мысль*), reviewing a concert by Kalniņš on December 6, 1910, compares him with Vītols. Although Vītols cites folk music more often than Kalniņš, Cheshihin considers:

Kalniņš belongs to the Latvian School of melodists, which is closely connected with folk songs as the main source of inspiration and guidance for creative work – rather than the school of melodeclamatorists, which has a more cosmopolitan orientation (the latter is represented, for example, by J. Vītols).¹⁹ (ЧЕШИХИН 1910b)

Cheshihin also reviewed a concert of Kalniņš' compositions in 1910 and describes it as follows:

Kalniņš composes in a rather popular style, however, without triviality; he prefers the natural minor and thus manifests a

certain relationship to Grieg, although the subtle, feminine nervousness that characterizes this 'northern Chopin' is not typical for Kalniņš – contrary to Grieg, he is simpler, more masculine but also more colorless; Kalniņš has not yet developed his style, and the greatest gift of an artist – originality – we hardly find in his works at this time. However, the composer is only in the early stages of his career as a musician – maybe he will yet find himself!²⁰ (ЧЕШИХИН 1910b)

The critic also highlights parallels with other cultures and not the unique qualities of the work by Kalniņš when discussing his choral songs. He describes the main figure of the song *Imanta* performed at the Fifth All-Latvian Song Festival, as a Liv hero glorified by the Latvians; Imanta sits on the "blue hill" (*Zilaiskalns*) near Valmiera and waits for them to be released. Cheshihin compares the story with the German legend of Barbarosa, the Serbian legend of King Marko, etc. (ЧЕШИХИН 1910a). The reviewer characterizes the choral song *Kars* (The War), performed at the concert on December 6, 1910, as being rich in patriotic motifs, lively tempos, and energetic rhythms, however, due to its interpretation, it "reminded a diplomatic congress!" (ЧЕШИХИН 1910b)²¹

Using such metaphors to discuss patriotic choral songs includes a certain dose of humor that was not imaginable in the Latvian-language press at that time. Most likely, this is a frame deliberately chosen by Cheshihin – to show that everything that happens in Latvian cultural life is not unique; it has its precedents and peers all over the world.

Among the few German music critics that described works by Kalniņš was the previously mentioned Hans Schmidt – a long-time contributor to one of the two most influential Riga German newspapers, *Rigasche Rundschau* (until October 1894, *Zeitung für Stadt und Land*). In 1889, Schmidt came to this newspaper from the more conservative *Rigasche Zeitung*. His interest in the Latvian culture did not mean that his reviews were always laudatory. Though Schmidt provided mainly positive feedback on Kalniņš's music, we can also find objections to his excessive focus on Latvianness. So, discussing the first editions of several vocal duets and the Piano Suite by Kalniņš, Schmidt considers that the constant search for a national color provokes a certain monotony in the composer's work:

The composer's unquestionable and subtle talent is also revealed in these latest publications. [However,] limiting himself mainly to Latvian national motifs and the extraordinary love of quintuple meter due to their long-term use may leave an undesirable impression. In this way, fantasy and imagination are inadvertently curtailed, which we can see in the works of some Norwegian and Finnish composers. But at the same time, such intimate miniature painting also has its special charm [...]. (Schmidt 1913)²²

It should be added that notes about excessive exploitation of national color can also be found in several other Hans Schmidt's reviews of Latvian composers – I will return to it later.

Case study 3

Views on Latvianness in music

The previously outlined reviews of works by Alfrēds Kalniņš already reflected opinions on Latvianness in music.²³ However, this subject is also discussed by representatives of the three national communities in a broader context. All of them note the dominance of lyrical and sad moods as an essential feature of Latvian music. In 1914, the young critic and one of the first Latvian composers influenced by modernism Jānis Zālītis explained it with historical reasons:

For many centuries, the soul of the nation was sad because foreign ghosts wandered over the countryside of Latvia and suffocated it in a heavy veil of slavery. [...] And it seems that even now the sad songs are closer to the reality of our lives [...]. (Zālītis 1914)²⁴

The *Dzimtenes Vēstnesis* newspaper (started in 1907) that published this conclusion by Zālītis was a successor to the afore-mentioned *Baltijas Vēstnesis*.

Meanwhile, the German *Rigasche Zeitung*, describing a concert of Latvian choirs in 1907, believed that melancholy is a common characteristic of many Latvian and Russian songs:

Furthermore, a mixed choir with 60 participants [...] performed Latvian folk songs by various composers and introduced us to the peculiarities of Latvian tunes whose melancholic character sometimes is similar to Russian folk songs. ("Majorenhof" 1907)²⁵

The reviewer Vsevolod Cheshihin from *Rizhskaja Mysl'* (*Рижская мысль*) also sees a certain analogy with Russian folk music, namely, with lingering songs: he highlights the dominance of sad moods in the concert of Latvian violin music performed by Edmondo Luccini on March 8, 1912, in the Small Guild, Riga. This critic is somewhat ironic:

[...] the best movement of the Meding's [Mediņš' Violin] Concerto, Largo, is based on the Latvian folk song material: this melancholy without any ray of light, captured in a specifically Latvian, phlegmatic tempo, resembles the gloomy tones in some of [Krišjānis] Cepļītis' paintings (in my opinion, he is the most Latvian of the local landscape painters). [...] The Elegy by Alfrēds Kalniņš performed by prof. Luccini is also similar to Meding's Largo; this Latvian song in minor mood sounds even more hopeless than our 'sad howls' (this is what Pushkin said about the Russian lingering songs). However, est modus in rebus: to listen to such elegies in large quantities is intolerable [...].²⁶



Figure 2. Jāzeps Mediņš, Violin Concerto, mvm. 2 (the beginning). Source: Jāzeps Mediņš. *Koncerts vijolei un orķestrim*. Author's edition, n.d.

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3

ELEGĪJA. ELÉGIE.

A. KALNIŅŠ.

Violon. *Andante elegiaco. (♩ = 69.)*
p

PIANO. *Andante elegiaco. (♩ = 69.)*

pp *p*

pp

pp *p*

pp *p*

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Figure 3. Alfrēds Kalniņš, *Elegy* (the beginning). Source: Alfrēds Kalniņš. *Elégie: pour violon avec accompagnement du piano*. Riga: P. Neldner, n.d.

Despite the ironic tone of the reviewer, the *Elegy* by Kalniņš can be highlighted as one of the first internationally recognized Latvian chamber music pieces; this work has also gained international recognition. It was a part of the repertoire of such world-famous artists as the violinist Paul Kochanski (Klotiņš 1979: 121) and the violist Lionel Tertis who recorded the *Elegy* in 1921 (White 2006: 371).

In another context, reviewers also noted Russian and German influences on Latvian music or, on the contrary, their absence. In Jurjāns' articles and speeches, the phrase 'German sentimentality' appears repeatedly. The music by Ādams Ore is described as influenced by 'sentimental German folk songs',²⁷ meanwhile, music by Jāzeps Vītols is praised:

We cannot find the German sentimental taste in his works – they have an independent, original character that sometimes is close to the Russian school. ("Mūzikas komisijas ārkārtējā sapulce" 1891: 2)²⁸

"German sentimentality" is not explained in detail; however, we can conclude that its repeated mentions became a basis for a frame that Jurjāns used when criticizing a frequent but undesirable tendency of his time.

The German reviewers themselves did not set such a quality criterion for Latvian music as an imitation of German examples. On the contrary, the manifestations of national originality were highly valued – at least, in the reviews of All-Latvian Song Festivals. So, in the context of the first such Festival (1873), the newspaper *Zeitung für Stadt und Land* noted the arrangements of folk melodies as the most exciting part of the program, especially the *Jāņu dziesma* (Midsummer Song) by Jānis Cimze. The first original songs by Latvian composers were described as overly influenced by German music and therefore less attractive:

We would like to classify the numerous singing performances of the mixed and male choirs into 3 categories. The first consisted of a few songs created by German composers (Abt and Schubert) [...]. Several songs, which, although written in Latvian, were rather in the form and spirit of German songs. Here we would like to mention songs by C[arl] Baumann. Finally, the major part of the program, for us this time the most interesting and, considering the nature of the Festival, the most significant, consisted of four-part harmonized Latvian folk melodies. ("Von dem in der abgewichenen Woche stattgehabten lettischen Gesangfest" 1873: 6)²⁹

124

Jāņu dziesmas.

a.

Andante. f 3. Gimse.

1. St. Jā-ni-ti, wa-ra bungāš, lih-go, lih-go!

2. Lai je-ta-fi Jāh-na mah-te, " "

1. wahrtu sta-ba ga-li-na-i, lih-go, lih-go! wahrtu staba

2. lai fa-neh-ma Jāh-na behrnus " " lai fa-neh-ma

Figure 4. Jānis Cimze, *Jāņu dziesmas* (the beginning). Source: *Dziesmas priekš vtriem vispārīgiem Latviešu dziedāšanas svētkiem*, Riga: B. Dirīķis

Thus, despite the tense political relationship between both national communities, the reviewer from the liberal *Zeitung für Stadt und Land* appreciated Latvian folk music as a source for art music. Seven years later, in the review by *Zeitung für Stadt und Land* of the Second All-Latvian Song Festival (1880), the midsummer songs or *Jāņu dziesmas* are highlighted as especially 'Latvian':

All other Latvian folk melodies sometimes resemble the songs of other nations, and the minor mood which is characteristic of the national element can be perceived as a link that unites everyone; however, the 'Midsummer songs' with their ligo reflect the Latvian character in the purest, most complete way. Each such melody is the most natural manifestation of the Latvian folk tradition [...]. (-y- 1880)³⁰

In the following decades, the demands of German music reviewers grew, and the attitude towards Latvian national topics was no longer so unambiguously laudatory. It follows, for example, from a note by Hans Schmidt about one of the first Latvian symphonic concerts – the program also included compositions by Jāzeps Vītols, Andrejs Jurjāns, Alfrēds Kalniņš, and Emīls Dārziņš:

The source of creative work for all of them is common – rooted in motifs of Latvian folk music, yielding to its urge and influence. Though this feature undoubtedly seems attractive and interesting, it still contains a certain threat. It is obvious that cultivating nationalism too much only harms individual development. Modern music history provides many disturbing examples in this respect. In any art, and especially in music, a universal and musical sense of sonic and spiritual beauty can be admitted as the only homeland; ubi pulchre ibi patria. (Schmidt 1906)³¹

Such an opinion, if it had appeared in the Latvian language press, would most likely have received a counterattack.

Another attitude to the influences on Latvian music is found in the Russian press. One of the discussed thematic lines related to a particular political subtext includes reflections on what Latvian music is closer to – German or Russian. So, Vsevolod Cheshihin, describing the concert of Latvian choirs on August 25, 1891, notes:

In general, the Latvian folk song is a rather unusual phenomenon: it fits perfectly into the Western European minor and major system and can acquire the character of a real German folk song (such as Mr. Vītols' arranged songs or 'boatmen's song' for the horn by Mr. Jurjāns); however, it can also keep the character of a Russian folk song which typically is almost without modulations [...], and the mood of the music is determined by sadness, although hidden (such as in the Hangover Song by Mr. Ozols). [...] Both the yellow color of German

songs and the grey hue of Russian or generally Slavic melodies are characteristics of the Latvian song that, like any folk song, is a child of the surrounding nature. (Чешихин 1891)³²

A similar subject is also discussed by Cheshihin almost twenty years later, regarding the arrangements of folk songs performed at the Fifth Latvian Song Festival. In this case, he draws even stronger parallels with Russian music:

From West Asia, Latvian ancestors brought the ancient scale of five notes, which is also typical of most ancient Russian folk songs. However, the medieval Gregorian moods used by Glinka in his work with a Russian song have only recently appeared in Latvian arrangements, under the influence of Latvians who have studied in Russian conservatories. The Latvian song is still waiting for its Glinka; for the time being, it is mostly harmonized following German models that do not 'fit' it. Nevertheless, even in this form, the Latvian song retains its original, partly Slavic orientation (constant fluctuations between major and minor).³³ (Чешихин 1910a)

Texts by Cheshihin have been cited several times already throughout the article; however, in the context of the latter quotations, it seems essential to provide a broader insight into his personality and aesthetic views. On the one hand, this talented literary and music critic was very positive about the young Latvian art music – like the afore-mentioned Hans Schmidt, he also promoted its popularity among his compatriots by translating lyrics for several Latvian song editions at the turn of the twentieth century (for example, 1903 – Seven Songs for voice and piano by Jāzeps Vītols, Op. 31; a.o.). On the other hand, Cheshihin spent his childhood and youth in an environment where opinions of Slavophiles were prevalent. His father, Evgraf Cheshihin (1824–1888), was the editor of the first long-standing Riga Russian daily, *Rizhskij Vestnik* (*Рижский Вестник*, founded in 1869) and an active supporter of Jurij Samarin's Pan-Slavic ideas (see, for example, Brüggemann 2021: 336, also Jaunslaviete 2019: 59–60). Under the guidance of Cheshihin Sen., the *Rizhskij Vestnik* newspaper also sharply criticized the cultural dominance of Germans in the Baltic provinces, including Riga. Cheshihin Jun. started his work in the press as a contributor to this newspaper (1888–1895), although later he was a music critic for *Pribaltiiskij Kraj* (*Прибалтийский край*, *Pribaltiiskij Listok* / *Прибалтийский листок*) and the relatively liberal *Rizhskaja mysl'* (*Рижская мысль*, 1908–1915). Compared with his father, the son was much more tolerant in his views; however, Vsevolod Cheshihin also strongly felt his belonging to the Russian community, and it can explain his desire to consider ethnic Latvians as closer to Russian and not German cultural influences. Any autonomy of Latvia had no place in Cheshihin's national

concept, which he described as “Russian National-Liberalism” (quoted after Чемакин 2015: 109). Irina Kruminja, a researcher of his life, characterizes his attitude to Latvia as follows:

Cheshishin was extremely fond of this region, especially Riga; he knew and understood its originality, but at the same time, he too clearly felt the alienation, if not hostility, of the environment. The mission of the ‘russifier’ which he voluntarily took over from his father, turned out to be too difficult and ungrateful.³⁴ (Круминя 1996: 137)

Conclusions

Several frames used by music critics have already been described in previous case studies. In conclusion, they will be categorized into larger groups to formulate the most common ‘overframes’.

In Latvian-language publications, the **national color frame** was significant: it was viewed as a **precondition for valuing a work of music conceived by a Latvian composer**. This was, for example, expressed by Andrejs Jurjāns in his previously quoted words, “without nationality, there is no originality” (Jurjāns 1891), which he wrote in a context of praising the tone poem *Līgo svētki* by Jāzeps Vītols.

A similar view was manifested in the critical note by Emīls Dārziņš on the young Alfrēds Kalniņš.

And let the rustling of the birches of the homeland be the gentle and sad song on which to tune his passionate melodies! (Dārziņš 1902)

Initially, critics mainly appreciated the manifestations of national color through folk music citations or corresponding subjects. However, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the definition was broadened to include simply ‘Latvian moods’.

This frame can be viewed as a mark determined by the historical context. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the academically educated Latvians had two paths for integrating into society. One option was to merge with either one or other of the largest national communities, Baltic Germans or Russians, and this would provide much faster and easier personal prosperity and authority. Krišjānis Valdemārs, the pioneer of the Young Latvian movement, ironically described the supporters of this position as shameful Latvians – *kaunīgi latvieši* (see Valdemārs 1863). The second possibility was to prove that ethnic Latvians could also have their own specific culture. The representatives of the national intelligentsia, whose views were reflected in the Latvian-language press, preferred the latter way.

The second ‘overframe’ characteristic of the Latvian-language press can be formulated as the statement – “**others will not completely understand us**”. This thought appears in different variations, from a simple conclusion, as in the quoted retelling of Moritz Rudolph’s article by *Dienas Lapa* (“J. Vītols” 1889) until a sharp and, nevertheless, overdone allegation by Emīls Dārziņš that the Baltic German press had almost stoned the first performers of Vītols’ *Līgo svētki* (Dārziņš 1906)

We can also find contradictory frames when analyzing the way Baltic German reviewers *actually* perceive Latvian music. On the one hand, many articles contain an idea that can be formulated as follows: **The national color is the main feature that makes Latvian music interesting**. Some examples of this are the quoted reviews on Song festivals, highlighting *Jāņu dziesma* by Cimze and other folk songs arrangements (“Von dem in der abgewichenen Woche stattgehabten lettischen Gesangfest” 1873; -y- 1880).

However, there is also another frame. It can be found in several reviews by Hans Schmidt (1906, 1913). Its central thesis states that “**cultivating nationalism too much only harms individual development**”. We can assume that the emergence of this frame was determined not only by the tendencies of Latvian music itself but also, in the opinion of many, excessive exploitation of national ideas in various European regions at this time.

In Russian periodicals, we also frequently find the highlighting of national color as the main feature that makes Latvian music interesting. However, another aspect was especially highlighted by Vsevolod Cheshihin (Чешихин 1910a), namely, the view: **Latvian folk music has much more in common with Russian traditions than German traditions, and Latvian composers should also get closer to them**.

The representatives of the three national communities have used various rhetorical devices for influencing their audience. Articles by Latvian and Russian critics are especially rich in metaphors: music concepts are frequently explained through parallels with nature (Jurjāns, Dārziņš, Cheshihin) or historical events (Zālītis, Cheshihin). German critics are much more cautious in this respect: describing specific compositions or performances, they prefer purely musical characteristics related to form, instrumentation, rhythm, etc. It can be assumed that German music reviewers in Riga (this certainly does not apply to the entire German cultural space) were somewhat skeptical about the programmatic explanations of music, highlighting its self-sufficiency and following the path marked by Eduard Hanslick in his monograph *Vom musikalisch-Schönen*. Latvians also believed that the atmosphere of the National Awakening could better be represented when musical and non-musical ideas were

linked – in the case of criticism, with metaphors, and in the case of music itself, with programmatic titles.

Regarding other rhetorical devices, such as quotes or catchphrases, it can be concluded that these tools are used by representatives of all three national communities. However, their selection sometimes reflects completely different frames – the quote by Jurjāns, borrowed from Schiller (“Pie tēvu zemes dārgās ķeris klāt [...]” / *O mächtig ist der Trieb des Vaterlands* [...], Jurjāns 1891), and the catchphrase used by Hans Schmidt, “*ubi pulchre ibi patria*” (Schmidt 1906), are almost symbolic opposites.

The three case studies presented in the paper cannot cover the whole network of music criticism in Riga in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, considering that they deal with reviews of the most authoritative Riga music critics and composers from the chosen period, they could be perceived as essential signs of the era reflecting its sociocultural context. The provided studies also offer valuable material for comparison with other multinational countries to answer the questions: which of the discussed frames are common for different regions, in which situations have they been used, and how have they changed over the ages? Thus, the topic discussed in the article also raises some significant perspectives for further research.

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Endnotes

- 1 A shortened version of the title, *Līgo*, also is frequently used.
- 2 *Pavadijām vienīgo vācu kritiķi — estētiķi, kurš ar īgnumu, ar patiesu sašutumu atraidīja savu vācu kolēģu nepārprotamo priekšlikumu — ignorēt latviešu mūziku, noklusēt latviešu koncertus [...].*
- 3 Young Latvians, *jaunlatvieši* – Latvian intellectuals, initiators and active participants of the so-called First Latvian National Awakening in the 1850s–1880s.
- 4 Later (beginning in 1900), Fritz Scheel was the first music director of the newly founded Philadelphia orchestra.
- 5 *[...] eins von denjenigen Tongemälden, in denen der Musik manches Unmögliche zugemuthet wird, und die darum, selbst beim Verfolgen der speciellen Inhaltsangabe, in ihren Einzelzügen vielfach unverständlich bleiben, wenigstens für denjenigen, der sich die zu den musikalischen Themen ursprünglich gebörenden Gedichts-Gedanken nicht zu vergegenwärtigen versteht. [...].*
- 6 *[...] der Verarbeitung des Themas, die reich und von großer Mannichfaltigkeit ist [...].*
- 7 *Wir möchten aber von ihm vor Allem erst einmal eine Probe absoluter, also nicht programmatischer Musik hören.*
- 8 *Latviešu tautas dziesmas un citi mūzikas saskaņojumi, kas uz tām dibinājas, pilnīgi būs saprotami un sajūtami tikai latviešu ausīm un sirdīm.*
- 9 *Viņa atnāca – nezīnādama, ka tanī dienā būs dzirdams arī kāds gabals no latviešu puses; vismazākais pa avīzēm par to ne kas nebija iepriekš minēts, kā tas ar citiem koncertiem un*

ievērojamākām kompozīcijām mēdz notikt. – Arī kritiķa pārsprīdums "Rīg. Tageblattā" par šo kompozīciju dveš tādu pašu naidīgu garu.

- 10 *Kuru istenu latvieti gan nepārtrauks priecīgas jūtas, redzot šādu attīstības soli mūsu tautas dzīvē? Kura istena tautas mīļotāja sirds gan nepukstēs ātrāki, dzirdot skaņās liktus "Līgo svētkus" – šos vismīļākos un līgsmākos senču svētkus [...].?*
- 11 *Andante 4/4 sākas klusītiņām ar 18 taktis garu organa punktu, basiem velkot un timpāniem dobji dimdinot zemo G. [...] viņš līdz ar to visam pievienojis drūmu noslēpumainu krāsu, kas tēlo [...] nakts tumšumā vientiesīgo, drūmo svēto birzi, kur piemita [...] senču dievi [...].*
- 12 *[...] bez tautības jau nav oriģinālības.*
- 13 *[...] bezmaz tika par to no vācu preses un publikas ar akmeņiem nomētāts.*
- 14 *[...] dzejnieks, kurš savas poētiskās intencijas izteic skaņās.*
- 15 *Augšā minētie gabali vēl par maz latviski, viņos vēl pārāk izmanāms lielā novērģu liriķa Grīga iespaids. Jāvēlas, kaut jaunais komponists censtos turpmāk vairāk noklausīties tautiskās skaņās. Un dzimtenes bērzu šalkšana lai būtu tā lieģi sērā dziesma, uz kuras tas lai skaņotu savas jūsmīgās melodijas!*
- 16 *Kalniņš vispirms ir komponists ar noteikti latvisku, tautisku fizionomiju. Šis latviskums nebūt nav [...] meklēts, konvencionēls "tautiskums", kādu mēs sastopam pie daudziem komponistiem, kuri [...] grib [...] imitēt tautas melodijas vai pat aizņemties no tautas materiālus priekš savām kompozīcijām. Kalniņš nav ne vienu vienīgu reizi savās kompozīcijās apstrādājis kaut kādu tautas motīvu. Šis latviskums ir viņam iedzimts, ir, tā sakot, jau asinīs, ir viņa paša iekšējā būtība.*
- 17 *Viņa ir tikpat drūma, cik drūmas ir mūsu pelekās ziemeļa debesis, cik drūmas ir mūsu priedes un egles, mūsu dzeltējušās bērzu birzes.*
- 18 *Kompromiss starp tautiskā romantisma inerci un laikmetīgo, psiholoģiski saturīgo tautiskumu [...].*
- 19 *А. Калнынь принадлежит к мелодической школе латышских композиторов, творчество которых тесно примыкает к латышской народной песне, вдохновляется и руководится ею, но не к школе мелодекламационной, более космополитической по своим стремлениям (каков, например, И. [Я.] Витоль, недавно получивший за романсы Глинкинскую премию).*
- 20 *Пишет А. Калнынь в довольно популярном стиле, чуждом, впрочем, трививальности; любовь к естественному минору обуславливает некоторое сходство его с Григом, но у А. Калныня нет утонченной женственной нервности, свойственной этому "северному Шопену"; он проще и мужественнее Грига, и безцветнее его; своего собственного стиля А. Калнынь еще не выработал, и высшей добродетели художника, оригинальности, у него еще пока немного. Но он еще только начинает свою музыкальную карьеру; может быть, еще найдет самого себя!*
- 21 *"Война" (Karš) более походила на дипломатический конгресс!*
- 22 *Das entschiedene und feinsinnige Talent des Komponisten spricht auch aus diesen jüngsten Publikationen. Eine vorherrschende Beschränkung auf lettische Nationalmotive und besondere Vorliebe für fünfteilige Taktformen könnten auf die Dauer doch vielleicht verhängnisvoll werden. Sie engen die Phantasie und Erfindung unwillkürlich ein, wie an so manchem norwegischen*

- und finnischen Tonsetzer wohl zu erkennen ist. Doch hat solche intime Kleinmalerei immerhin auch ihre speziellen Reize [...].
- ²³ See also previously quoted words by Dārziņš about Kalniņš (his music “is just as sad as our grey northern skies, as sad as our pines and spruces, our yellowed birch groves”: Dārziņš 1907).
- ²⁴ *Garus gadusimteņus tautas dvēsele skuma, jo pār Latvijas laukiem klīda svešas ēnas un smacēja to smagā verdzības tumsā. [...] Un šķiet, ka pat tagad vēl šīs skumjās dziesmas mums tuvākas mūsu dzīves īstenībai [...].*
- ²⁵ *Ferner wirkten mit ein gemischter Chor von 60 Personen [...], der lettische Volkslieder verschiedener Komponisten vortrug und uns einen Einblick in die Eigenart lettischer Weisen gab, die mitunter dem melancholischen Charakter des russischen Volksliedes ähnlich waren.*
- ²⁶ [...] в лучшей части концерта, в ларго, Мединг пользуется материалом латышского народно-песенного творчества: меланхолия безпросветная, в специфически-латышском флегматическом темпе, напоминающая мрачные тона некоторых пейзажей Цеплита (этого, по моему, наиболее латышского из местных пейзажистов). [...] В роде ларго Мединга написана “Элегия” Калныня, исполненная проф. Луччини; латышская минорная песня звучит безнадежней нашего “грустного воя” (как отзывался Пушкин о русской протяжной песне). Но est modus in rebus: слушать такие элегии в большом количестве – вещь нестерпимая [...].
- ²⁷ [...] *vācu sentimentālu t[autas] dziesmu [...].*
- ²⁸ *Viņa darbos neatrodam vācu sentimentālā gara, tiem ir patstāvīgs oriģināls raksturs, kas vietām pieslejas krievu skolai.*
- ²⁹ *Die [...] zahlreichen Gesangsvorträge des gemischten und des Männerchores möchten wir in 3 Categorien ordnen. Die erste bildeten einige von deutschen Componisten (Abt und Schubert) verfaßte [...] Lieder. Wesentlich wenig verschieden von diesen waren einige ursprünglich allerdings in lettischer Sprache verfaßte, aber doch mehr im Geiste und der Form der deutschen Liedcomposition gehaltene Gesänge. Die Lieder von K. Baumann möchten wir hierher rechnen. Der überwiegende Theil des Programms endlich, für uns diesmal der interessanteste und in Bezug auf die Natur des Festes der bedeutungsvollste, bestand aus vierstimmig harmonisirten lettischen Volksmelodien.*
- ³⁰ *Wenn alle übrigen lettischen Volksmelodien hin und wieder denjenigen anderer Nationen ähneln, wenn durch das im nationalen Element vorherrschende Mollgeschlecht sich ein gemeinsam um alles schlingendes Band erkennen läßt, so bewahren die “Jāņa dziesmas” mit ihrem Libgo den reinsten, vollständigsten lettischen Character. Jede einzelne dieser Melodien ist der unverfälschte Ausdruck des lettisch Volksthümlichen.*
- ³¹ *Ihnen allen insgesamt gemein ist die Vorliebe, mit der sie sich durch heimische Volksmotive in ihrem Schaffen anregen und bestimmen lassen. So sympathisch und interessierend dieser Zug an und für sich gewiss auch anmutet, birgt er doch zugleich unleugbar eine gewisse Gefahr in sich. Ueber der allzu ausschließlichen Kultivierung des Nationalen erleidet die Entwicklung des Individuellen nur zu leicht empfindliche Einbuße. Die Musikgeschichte kennt hierfür gerade in neuerer Zeit manches warnende Beispiel. Wie überhaupt schon jede, so erst recht die Tonkunst sollte nur das eine Vaterland der allgemein menschlichen und musikalischen Empfindung der klanglichen und seelichen Schönheit allein kennen – ubi pulchre ibi patria.*
- ³² *Вообще латышская народная песня представляет собой довольно любопытное явление: она вполне уместается в рамках западно-европейского минора и мажора и может принимать совершенно немецкий народный характер (таковы песни гармонизации г. Витоля или “песня лодочников” для валторны г. Юрьяна), но может и сохранять характер русской народной песни, с трудом модулирующей [...], звучащей основной, хотя и скрытой грустью (такова “застольная песня” г. Озоля). [...] желтый колорит немецкой песни и серый – русской или вообще славянско дают окраску и латышской песне, которая, как и всякая народная – дитя окружающей природы.*
- ³³ *Из западной Азии предки латышей принесли ту пяти-тонную древнейшую гамму, которая лежит в основе и древнейшей русской народной песни. Но обработка латышской народной песни по средневековым грегорианским ладам, примененным к русской песни Глинкою, началась лишь недавно, под влиянием латышей, побывавших в русских консерваториях. Латышская песня еще ждет своего Глинку; пока она чаще всего гармонизуется “не к лицу” по немецким образам. Но даже и в этом виде она хранит свой оригинальный склад, отчасти славянский (постоянные колебания между мажором и минором).*
- ³⁴ *Чешихин чрезвычайно любил этот край, особенно Ригу, знал и понимал его своеобразие, но в то же время слишком отчетливо чувствовал отчужденность, если не враждебность окружающей среды. Слишком тяжелой и неблагодарной оказалась миссия “обрусителя”, которую он добровольно перенял от отца.*

Santrauka

XIX a.pab.–XX a. pr. Ryga iš vokiškai kalbančio mies- to sparčiai plėtėsi į daugiakultūrį centrą. Viena vertus, tai paskatino suaktyvėjusi edukacinė veikla, etninių latvių tautinio pabudimo procesai. Kita vertus, siekiant susilpninti vokiečių įtaką Baltijos kraštuose, Rusijos vadovybė aktyviai ragino etninius rusus emigruoti, tad daug jų atvyko ir apsistojo Rygoje. Visa tai paveikė muzikos kritikos sferą. Todėl muzikos recenzijos gali atspindėti savo epochą, pavyzdžiui, Rygoje gyvenusių trijų tautinių bendruomenių – Baltijos vokiečių, latvių ir rusų – estetines pažiūras bei vertybes. Visa tai gali būti interpretuojama pasitelkiant kadravimo teorijos modelį. Straipsnyje analizuojama, kaip muzikos kritikos spaudoje pateikiami trys aspektai:

- kuo pasižymėjo tuo metu dažnai atliekamo kūrinio – Jazepo Vytuolo poemos *Līgo svētki* precepcija,
- kas būdinga tekstams apie konkretų kompozitorių – Alfredą Kalniņ,
- kaip tekstuose perteikiama latviškumo muzikoje samprata.

Atitinkamai šiame tyrime buvo išryškinti XIX a. pab.–XX a. pr. muzikos kritikų dažniausiai pasitelkiami „ženklai“, kurie spaudoje latvių kalba būtų šie:

- latvių kompozitoriaus muzikos kūriniai būdingas nacionalinis atspalvis yra išankstinė prielaida suvokti šį kūrinį kaip vertybę;
- „kiti mūsų taip nesupranta kaip mes patys“.

Vokiečių spaudoje būdingi du vienas kitam prieštaraujantys aspektai:

- nacionalinis atspalvis yra tai, kas daro latvių muziką įdomią,
- „perdėtas nacionalumo / tautiškumo puoselėjimas kenkia asmenybės / individo raidai“.

Rusų spaudoje išvelgiama tendencija, kad latvių liaudies muzika turi daug daugiau bendro su rusų ir vokiečių tradicijomis, nei manoma. Todėl latvių kompozitoriai taip pat turėtų labiau šlietis prie šių tradicijų.

Straipsnyje aptariami recenzijų pavyzdžiai yra siejami su to meto Rygoje gyvenusiais ir kūrusiais autoritetingais muzikos pasaulio atstovais. Todėl šios muzikinės apžvalgos gali būti laikomos to laikotarpio „ženklais“, atspindinčiais XIX a. pab.–XX a. pr. sociokultūrinius kontekstus.

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