

zināmu attīstību diferencētības un lielākas precizitātes virzienā, kas tomēr neved pie dažādu nozīmju pretrunīguma pārvarēšanas. Vītoliņa galvenā izteikšanās par raudām un raudu zudumu notika 20. gs. 60. gadu beigās un 70. gadu sākumā. Biļķina svarīgais 1949. gada raksts *Par baltu tautu dziedāšanu un dziesmām no 9. līdz 13. gadu simtenim* ar tajā izteikto kritiku par iespēju, ka Atskaņu hronikas epizode „Dzirdēja zemgaļus gaužamies [...]” būtu interpretējama kā vēstījums par bērū raudām, viņam, visticamāk, nebija zināms. Atliek vien minēt, vai tā iepazīšana būtu atstājusi iespaidu uz Vītoliņa spriedumiem.

Kas attiecas uz raudu žanru latviešu kultūrā, par to var teikt astrofiziķa Mārtina Rīsa (*Martin Rees*) vārdiem: „Pierādījuma neesamība nav neesamības pierādījums” (citēts no: Sagan 1997: 213). Šajā rakstā nav pētīts, vai senajiem latviešiem ir vai nav bijušas raudas, bet gan tikai tas, ka hronikas par tām neko nevēsta un ka to ziņas nevar izmantot kā raudu bijuma pierādījumu. Jautājums paliek atklāts. Ir tikai noskaidroti kādi maldi. Taču, un tas ir svarīgi – jo plaši izplatīti un dziļi iesakņojušies.

ON THE CONCEPT OF THE LOST LAMENT IN 20th CENTURY LATVIAN HUMANITIES, WITH SPECIAL INSIGHT INTO THE CONTRIBUTION OF PĒTERIS ŠMITS (1869–1938) AND JĒKABS VĪTOLIŅŠ (1898–1977)

Mārtiņš Boiko

Summary

The archives and collections of Latvian traditional music and folklore do not document any trace of laments. This is an exception in the context of the musical heritage of the cultures of Latvia's neighbours (Lithuania, Estonia, Belarus and Russia). In the early 20th century, this lack of laments became a concern among Latvian intellectuals. As if facing some kind of cultural defect, they rushed to close this “gap” by arguing that laments had previously formed a part of Latvian musical culture, but had vanished in later centuries. These intellectuals based this idea of the lost lament on several passages from the medieval *Chronicon Livoniae* (written by Henry of Livonia in the 1220s) and the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (early 14th cent.) in which they found reason to believe that laments were known in the Latvian Middle Ages.

The concept of the lost lament was introduced by the influential linguist and folklorist Pēteris Šmits (1869–1938) in 1918 in his book *Latviešu mitoloģija* (“Latvian Mythology”). Šmits was deeply influenced by Otto Böckel's (1859–1923) *Psychologie der Volksdichtung* (1906), where the German folklorist and politician argued that the death lament

(*Totenklage*) has to be seen as an evolutionarily essential part of every folklore tradition. Even if there was no lament in a contemporary musical tradition, Böckel was convinced that it must have disappeared at some point in the past. Šmits applied Böckel's ideas to the Latvian case, thus "rescuing" it from being blamed as imperfect. His interpretation of the passages in the chronicles as containing evidence of the lost lament was passed undisputedly from one book to another until the late 20th century.

In the second half of the 20th century, the musicologist and folklorist Jēkabs Vītolīņš became the most influential advocate of the concept which has been presented in several of his studies of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Paradoxically, in one of his writings, in the small book *Латышская народная песня* ("Latvian Folk Song", 1969), in only a few words he expressed the supposition that the lament probably could not have developed in the context of the ascetic and restrained Latvian mourning behaviour and music.

A simple semantic and contextual analysis shows that the chronicles do not prove the existence of a medieval lament. And it is surprising that Šmits' concept could flourish in the context of an advanced chronicle research represented in the 1920s and 1930s by the historians Leonid Arbusow Jr (1882–1951) and Vilis Biļķins (1884–1974). It thus remains open to discussion if the surprising survival of Šmits' concept has to do with communication problems among Latvian intellectuals or with the tendency of some of them to adhere to national romantic interpretations of the Latvian past.

The case under discussion is symptomatic in many ways: it focuses the sources of ideas and the ways of thinking in the 20th century Latvian folkloristics, characterizes the interdisciplinary relations and registers ideological and other extra-scientific implications.

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