

Bjaliks 1967: 64). Muzikologs Arnolds Klotiņš raksta, ka populārajai mūzikai pēc 1. pasaules kara bija īpaša sociālā funkcija: tā spēlējās ar vērtībām, intīmām jūtām, izceļot klišeisku liriku par mīlestību, uzticību, draudzību, “intīmiem priekiem” un tādējādi piesaistot karā garīgi traumētās, t. s. “pazudušās paaudzes” interesi (Klotiņš 1987: 242, 247). Daļēji var piekrist šim viedoklim; tomēr vienlaikus jāatzīst, ka izsmelošas analīzes par mūzikas patēriņu Latvijā starpkaru posmā pagaidām vēl trūkst. Jāņem vērā arī globālā mediju tirgus un skaņierakstu tehnoloģiju lomas pieaugums 20. gadsimta 20.–30. gados, kas nenoliedzami ietekmēja gan Latvijas mūziķus, gan mūzikas patērētājus (Gronow, Saunio 1998: 39).

Mūsdienu pētījumos tiek aplūkoti arī daudz plašāki sociālie konteksti: piemēram, vēsturniece Ineta Lipša uzskata, ka “pazodusī paaudze” jeb karā fiziski un emocionāli cietušie jaunieši bija tikai viena no garīgi traumētajām grupām. Otra grupa, viņasprāt, bija 20. gadsimta sākumā dzimušie un karā emocionāli traumētie bērni – “šaubīgā jeb nervozā paaudze”, kas bija psihoemocionāli nestabila, jūtīga pret sociālām un politiskām krīzēm, morāli nenobriedusi (Lipša 2009: 144).

Rezumējot visu izklāstīto, var secināt: neraugoties uz negatīvā diskursa eksistenci un centieniem izskaust *šlagerus*, jēdziens turpināja pastāvēt starpkaru Latvijas izklaides kultūrā. Par to liecina neskaitāmas atsauces presē, Latvijā un ārzemēs izdotas skaņuplates, dažādi *šlageru* nošizdevumi, kā arī laikabiedru atmiņas; šis materiālu klāsts sniedz bagātīgu vielu turpmākai pētniecībai.

## THE SCHLAGER DISCOURSE OF THE 1920s AND 1930s REPRESENTED IN LATVIAN MONTHLY MUSICAL MAGAZINES

Alberts Rokpelnis

### Summary

**Keywords:** music journalists, attitude to popular and art music, negative argumentation schemes

In interwar Latvia, diverse opinions existed regarding schlager as a genre of popular music. The music journalists usually were academically educated musicians whose writings were based on the idea of them being a part of a so called ‘elite culture’. When they did write about schlager music, most of the opinions expressed in various press publications were relatively critical.

The aim of this article is to research the discussions about schlager in specialized Latvian monthly music magazines. The main tasks are to detect existing schlager discourses and to analyse the negative

argumentation schemes. This research paper is relevant, as, up until now, there has not been a broad discussion about this topic.

The word 'schlager' is a polysemous term that dates back to at least the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Inspired by operetta, the word 'schlager' was used to describe very popular songs of that time. Since then, 'schlager' has had a long path to become considered an independent genre in modern musicology. In the 1920s, the meaning and the usage of the word was unclear and frequently undefined. After analysing three monthly magazines – *Mūzika* (1925–1927), *Latvijas Mūziķis* (1927–1934) and *Mūzikas Apskats* (1932–1939) – the author found a total of 42 publications that contained the term 'schlager' used in a broad sense.

The analyses are based on the discourse-historical approach, created and defined by Austrian linguist Ruth Wodak (2001). She offers already complete schemes for investigation of written texts. Using this approach, I successfully clarified the most important negative argumentation schemes in these publications. For instance, 'the topos of danger' and 'the threat' was detected in 20% of the cases, showing the situation that the journalist is warning the public of the unknown danger that listening to or producing schlager music could cause. When using the word 'danger', the authors usually mean the decrease of musical taste in society and particularly in the youth, which is caused by foreign modern dance music (tango, foxtrot etc.), jazz and schlager. Of course, there was no definition of good or bad taste, only the viewpoint that academic writers provided. Another important argumentation scheme was 'the topos of responsibility'. The conditional formula is simple: if we can trace who is responsible for the emergence of the specific problem (the spreading of schlager), then that person has to find solutions for it. In this case, the blameworthy are musicians and Latvian composers who are not composing 'qualitative' modern popular music, in other words, they are provoking the import of foreign music. This topos includes identifying those who support 'schlager culture' (tenor Artūrs Priednieks-Cavara [Kavara], schlager composers Oscar Strock [Oskars Stroks] and Sascha Vlady, singer and coupletist Jānis Āre). The third noticeable scheme is 'the topos of reality' that can be paraphrased as: schlager spreading is reality and that is why specific decisions have to be made. For example, professional Latvian musicians such as Paula Līcīte, advocated the idea that 'schlagerisation' is happening and has to be stopped by forbidding the import of schlager and restricting local schlager producers. By promoting musical education, she stressed the idea of youths' 'turning back' to art music and rejecting schlager as a phenomenon (Līcīte 1926, 1928).

The conclusion of this analysis is that the negative discourse regarding schlager music was being used as a tool for the cultivation of opinions of the elite, disregarding what music consumers actually

wanted. These ambitious ideologists and defenders of the art music refused to admit that popular music genres, including schlager, generally have a different function and purpose.

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<sup>12</sup> Pārpublicēts no laikraksta *Brīvā Zeme* tā paša gada 14. maija numura.