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FOLK MUSIC QUOTATIONS AND ALLUSIONS IN LATVIAN COMPOSERS' NEO-ROMANTIC SYMPHONIC MUSIC IN THE LAST DECADES OF THE 20TH CENTURY AND EARLY 21ST CENTURY

Abstract: This article focuses on the one specific question about folk music quotations and allusions in the symphonic music of Latvian composers in the last third of the 20th century (from the 70s) and the early 21st century. Several Latvian composers (e. g. Romualds Kalsons, Pēteris Butāns, Pēteris Vasks, Pēteris Plakidis, Juris Karlsons) in their neo-romantic symphonic works reflects interesting cases of Latvian folk music quotation, quasi quotation or allusion. Overall these are cases that show the composer's ability to actively use and create a similarity with Latvian folk music. However, this aspect raises the following questions. What kind of local (Latvian) traditions regarding folk music use (in general) are represented by Latvian composers? Why, at the end

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of the 20th century and the early 21st century, have several composers continued to use folk music quotations or create folk music allusions? What symbolizes the folk music quotations and allusions in the context of the postmodern period's characteristic musical aesthetic and stylistics? It is hoped that this analysis will provoke a fruitful exchange of views on this question from different aspects.

Keywords: folk music, quotation, allusion, Latvian composers, last decades of the 20th century – early 21st century, neo-romanticism, symphonic music

Introduction

This article will focus on questions of folk music quotations and allusions in the symphonic music of Latvian composers in the last third of the 20th century (from the 1970s) and the early 21st century. Some Latvian composers in their symphonic works, when representing the stylistic tendency of neo-romanticism, reflect interesting cases of Latvian folk music quotation, quasi quotation or allusion. These are cases that reflect the composer's desire to pay special attention to folk music in the context of the characteristic aesthetic and stylistics of the postmodernist period.

Overall, at the beginning of the 21st century, a great number of less internationally known mid- and later-generation composers in Latvia (aged 40 and older), among them Romualds Jermaks (1931), Romualds Kalsons (1936), Leons Amoliņš (1937), Maija Einfelde (1939), Imants Kalniņš (1941), Pēteris Butāns (1942–2020), Vilnis Šmīdbergs (1944), Pēteris Vasks (1946), Georgs Pelēcis (1947), Pēteris Plakidis (1947–2017), Juris Karlsons (1948), Aivars Kalējs (1951), Imants Zemzaris (1951), Selga Mence (1953), Arturs Maskats (1957), Ilona Breģe (1959), Indra Riše (1961), Rihards Dubra (1964), Andris Vecumnieks (1964) and others, present a fundamentally, classically traditional music language expression in their music (particularly symphonic music), organically synthesising it, not too radically, with features of the modernism of the first half of the 20th century in diverse individual variations. Neo-romanticism is the most broadly represented tendency in the music of the above-mentioned Latvian composers in various classical genres.¹

Due to this fact, the music of these composers differs substantially from the music of Latvian composers of the youngest generation (up to forty years

¹ More detailed information in English about these Latvian composers can be found online at the website address of the Latvian Music Information Centre, accessed 20 May, 2020, <https://www.lmic.lv/en/composers>

in age), among whom the most notable personalities are, for example, Rolands Kronlaks (1973), Mārtiņš Viļums (1974), Gundega Šmite (1977), Santa Ratniece (1977), Andris Dzenītis (1977), Jānis Petraškevičs (1978), Santa Bušs (1981), Kristaps Pētersons (1982) and others. The creative quests of these composers are notable for their more radical approach to the adaptation and creation of concepts of new music languages and expressions (the continuation of avant-garde ideas and aesthetics).² Gradually, Latvian composers of the youngest generation have, in their own specific way, taken over the music culture process of the classical genre. However, in the sense of aesthetic and stylistic position, the more traditionally oriented older generation of composers in Latvia still hold a notable balance in the field of their music creations.³

Thus, overall in this period of postmodernism (from the 1970s), which is characterised by a previously unheard-of synthesis and simultaneous active coexistence in culture and arts, there was an inflow of different stylistic tendencies in music, for instance minimalism, *New Spirituality*, polystylism and, particularly, neo-romanticism. All the above-mentioned stylistic tendencies of the postmodernist period reflect a rather wide gallery of stylistic synthesis, retrospectivity and intertextuality.⁴

In this paper, the term *intertextuality* is used in the meaning that became widespread beginning in the 1960s, owing to regular publications by the French linguist Julia Kristeva on the issues of postmodern culture, art and aesthetics. Altogether, when analysing processes that occur in aesthetics and art, the term intertextuality is used as an established synonym for such de-

² Cf. Jānis Petraškevičs, "New Times. New Paradigms?", in: *Music in Latvia*, Rīga, Latvian Music Information Centre, 2003, 28–31.

³ Cf. Arnolds Klotiņš, "Latvian Music in the World", in: Jānis Stradiņš (Ed.-in-Chair), *Latvia and Latvians*, Vol. 1, Rīga, Latvian Academy of Sciences, 2018, 544–547 & 549–551; Jānis Kudiņš, "Latvian Music History in the Context of 20th Century Modernism and Postmodernism. Some Specific Issues of Local Historiography", in: Gregor Pompe (Ed.), *Muzikološki Zbornik / Musicological Annual*, Vol. 54, No. 2, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, 2018, 97–138.

⁴ Cf. Hermann Danuser, *Die Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Laaber, Laaber Verlag, 1992; Jann Pasler, "Postmodernism", in: Stanley Sadie (Ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 20, London, Macmillan Publishers Limited, 2001, 213–216; Judy Lochhead, Joseph Auner (Eds), *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought*, New York, Routledge, 2002; Katarina Bogunovič Hočevar, Gregor Pompe, Nejc Sukljan (Eds), *From Modernism to Postmodernism. Between Universal and Local*, Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 2016.

nominations as *context*, *tradition* and *allusion*. At the same time, intertextuality is considered also as an expansion of an already familiar idea. Intertextuality is based on the idea that one text can be explained by another, that it can be expressed in other words and so proceeds endlessly. Owing to the circulation of codes any text potentially acquires qualities of quite a different text.⁵

However, without over-accentuating the meaning and significance of the concept of intertextuality, one may conclude that, within the period of post-modern culture, works of art are characterized by a particularly tense manifestation of intertextual meaning, which often tends towards the creation of poetic and stylistic allusions to the styles of previous eras. In instrumental music, however, owing to its absolute abstract and verbally untranslatable nature, just the diversity of styles proves to be one of the most vivid manifestations of intertextuality. Besides, provided the abstract music text itself is basically directed towards the creation of retrospective stylistic allusions, its stylistic prototype can be perceived as the main object, which is indicated to, played upon and further developed by the musical text of a particular work. This reference not only refines notions concerning stylistically contextual qualities of either one specific or several music compositions, but also provides for a fruitful initiative towards the decoding of a particular text and evaluating its aesthetic qualities.

In this context, the methods of musical expression that are characteristic of the style of Romanticism, which were developed in 19th century music, have proven to be significant in musical creations during the last third of the 20th century (in connection with tendency of neo-romanticism). Overall, within the framework of postmodernism, the musical works of every single composer have synthesized separate elements of the classical romantic music language (among them tonal harmony, textural, compositional, genre) of the previous centuries, as well as to some extent, echoing modernist stylistic innovations (including the principle of dodecaphony and its varied modifications, an extensive search for artistic modelling of the sound timbral acoustic phenomenon, and free notation techniques of the musical material layout within space and time).

Using such multi-layered musical language to highlight the inconsistency characteristic of the romantic outlook among different, drastically contrasting spheres of expression, along with the desire to postulate the existence of some ideal and eternal category of beauty, several composers of the last

⁵ Cf. Toril Moi (Ed.), *The Kristeva Reader*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1986.

third of the 20th century have assigned different meanings to the notion of 19th century Romanticism. These approaches not only reveal the Romanticism of emotional experience, but also renew interest in the musical values and beauty of previous eras. Neo-romanticism represents subjective, artistic interpretations and reflections of feelings, rooted in personal experience, and, at the same time, actively synthesizes different forms of musical expression and individualized stylistic solutions.⁶

This article focuses on five Latvian composers – **Romualds Kalsons**, **Pēteris Butāns**, **Pēteris Vasks**, **Pēteris Plakidis**, and **Juris Karlsons** – who represent the older generation in the early 21st century. All five have been a feature of Latvian neo-romantic symphonic music, beginning in the last three decades of the 20th century. At the same time, these composers also provide artistically vivid representations of the folk music quotation, stylistic allusion or *ersatz* (false) quotation (according to Peter Burkholder's classification⁷) in their neo-romantic symphonic works.⁸

Altogether, the expressions of quotations and stylistic allusions have received regular attention in musicological literature.⁹ However, this article does not develop a broad comparison of intertextuality characterizations by different authors, as the main goal is to describe specified manifestations of folk

⁶ Cf. Jann Pasler, "Neo-romantic", in: Stanley Sadie (Ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 18, London, Macmillan Publishers Limited, 2001, 756–757; Martin Wehnert, "Romantik und romantisch", in: Ludwig Finscher (Ed.), *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Vol. 8, Kassel, Bärenreiter, 1998, 464–507; Jānis **Kudiņš**, "Pēteris Vasks as Neo-Romantic: Characteristic Style Signs of Latvian Composer Symphonic Music in the Context of Postmodern culture and art", in: Bogunovič Hočevar, et al (Eds), *From Modernism to Postmodernism...*, op. cit., 303–326.

⁷ J. Peter Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes – Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing*, New Haven / London, Yale University Press, 1995, 3–4.

⁸ It should be noted that there are other Latvian composers in this generation who, in varied genres, including symphonic music, have included folk music quotations or formed stylistic allusions in their musical works. The specific five composers that were chosen for further characterisation were selected, taking into consideration the current broader international recognition of their music.

⁹ Cf. Leonard B. Meyer, *Music, the Arts and Ideas: Patterns and Predictions in Twentieth-Century Culture*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1967; David Metzger, *Quotation and Cultural Meaning in Twentieth-Century Music*, Cambridge University Press, 2003; J. Peter Burkholder, "Musical Borrowing or Curious Coincidence?", in: *The Journal of Musicology*, 35/2, 2018, 223–266; Michael Klein, *Intertextuality in Western Art Music. Musical Meaning and Interpretation*, Indiana University Press, 2004; Марк Арановский, *Музыкальный текст: структура и свойства*, Москва, Композитор, 1998.

music stylistic quotations and allusions in neo-romantic symphonic works by Latvian composers. Thus, in conjunction with a general theoretical view on intertextuality, mainly, the issue is highlighted of the relationship between the identifiable musically original and the quoted or stylistically simulated (imitated) in a concrete musical work (as a concrete and unique example of a stylistic solution). For example, in a paper on quotations in the musical works of the American composer, Charles Ives (1874–1954), musicologist Christopher Ballantine writes:

For every quoted musical fragment in a piece, one can discover a process consisting formally of three aspects:

1. An extraneous fragment is chosen.
2. A dialectic – which may include a distortion of the fragment – exists between the fragment, with its semantic associations, and the new musical context.
3. The new context has primacy over the fragment, by providing the structure through which the fragment, its associations, and its interrelations are to be understood.¹⁰

In this paper, folk music quotations and stylistic allusions are considered as the realisation of one idea (representing the presence of a folk music element in the overall concept of a musical work) in two forms – as a quotation of a specific folk song or dance, or as a stylistic simulation or allusion. Both the quotation and the allusion can metaphorically be identified as the stylistic symbolization of *extraneous* music, and the expression of this in the neo-romantic symphonic works of Latvian composers offers the opportunity to become familiar with the varied manifestations of the stylistic intertextuality and retrospectivity characteristic of postmodernism.

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra by Romualds Kalsons (b.1936)¹¹

The composition of the Concerto for Violin is interesting – it consists of four movements, which is characteristic of the traditional (classical) four move-

¹⁰ Christopher Ballantine, “Charles Ives and the Meaning of Quotation in Music”, in: *The Musical Quarterly*, 65/2, 1979, 169.

¹¹ More detailed information in English about the music and creative work of Romualds Kalsons can be found online at the website address of the Latvian Music Information Centre, accessed 20 February 2020, <https://www.lmic.lv/en/composers/romualds-kalsons-291#!/>

ment cycle of a symphony.¹² Additionally, there is no first violin group in the orchestra score – in its place is just the solo violin. The growing contrast in the varied musically thematic impulses is characteristic of the entire four cycle construction of Kalson's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, and, schematically, it can be displayed in the following way:

I part	II part	III part	IV part
Exposition of drama, two contrasting themes, Second theme –symbol of <i>romantic ideal</i> .	Aggressive scherzo – echoes and allusions of Shostakovich and Honegger's music.	Lyrical centre, modelling of <i>romantic ideal</i> . Variations of folksong melody – <i>quasi (false)</i> quotation.	Rondo. <i>Echoes</i> of music from previous parts, principle of rondo, dominantly ironic, grotesque. <i>Open end</i> .
<i>d moll</i>	<i>g moll – d moll – g moll</i>	<i>e moll</i>	<i>d – c – g – c – es – d</i>

Altogether, the contrast in the musical characteristic of the varied musical materials and their exposition provokes the formation of the idea of a move towards a *romantic ideal* in the third movement. More than forty years after the composition of this musical work it is still unclear if this melody is truly a quotation of an ancient Latvian wedding folk song. The composer himself indicated that this melody was authentic. However, still today, the original melody has not been found. In that way, it is possible that in Kalson's Concerto for Violin we can encounter a masterful folk music stylistic simulation or allusion (a so-called *false* quotation). The features that in this particular case make the violin solo melody similar (as an allusion) to a Latvian folk song are a narrow diapason (characteristic of folk music's older layers), psalmody (recitation) elements that are characteristic of speaking, diatonic minor.¹³

¹² *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* by Romualds Kalsons is possible to listen to on youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=li7NaHGlktE>

¹³ As a source or one of the originals for this stylistic allusion is such Latvian wedding folk song (its melody), which can be listened to this site (Midi File Archive of Latvian Folk Songs) for audial comparison: accessed May Feruary 2020, <http://www.music.lv/midi/> – Please, choose *Autentiskas melodijas (Authentic Melodies)*, then see the examples by numbering, section 241–260, No. 247, entitled *Kāzu balss (Wedding Voice)*, function *Noklausīties (Listen)*.

Example 1: R. Kalsons, *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, Mvt. III, Theme for Variations

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Violin solo (V-no solo), Violin left (V-le), and Cello/Bass (C-b.). The V-no solo part is in treble clef, starting with a melodic line marked *pp dolce*. The V-le part is in alto clef, playing a sustained chord marked *pp* with the instruction *unis. senza sord.*. The C-b. part is in bass clef, playing a sustained chord marked *pp*. The score is for the first system of the 'Theme for Variations' from the third movement of the Violin Concerto by Romualds Kalsons.

This melody – either an authentic Latvian folk song quotation or allusion – forms a foundation for many variations in the further musical exposition (the solo violin in various combinations with the symphony orchestra), until it achieves an expanded culmination and then fades away and disappears. According to the previously characterised Kalsons Violin Concerto idea (see in the scheme of composition), after the folk song quotation/allusion manifestation, the work concludes (in the fourth movement) with an underlining of the grotesque musical atmosphere, which also brings forth the virtuosity of the solo violin part. In turn, remembering the era that this work was composed in, one can conclude, that, already in the 1970s, the realization of the neo-romantic trend in the music of Latvian composer Romualds Kalsons revealed an almost new, distanced gaze on folk music and its quotation or imitation (allusion), like a voice from the past.

As its own kind of musical ideal, which is missing at the end of the 20th century, in this way, it confirms the varied expressions of the characteristic stylistic retrospective of the postmodern cultural period. And this aspect is characteristic of other composers in Latvia, those authors of neo-romantic symphonic music in the last decades of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century.

Symphonic works by Pēteris Vasks (b. 1946)¹⁴

Several symphonic works by Vasks reflect interesting imitations or Latvian folk music quasi quotations.¹⁵ The first symphonic work that musically ex-

¹⁴ More detailed information in English about the music and creative work of Pēteris Vasks can be found online at the website address of the Latvian Music Information Centre, accessed 20 February 2020, <https://www.lmic.lv/en/composers/peteris-vasks-293>

¹⁵ Characterization of Pēteris Vasks symphonic works partly incorporates explanations

presses this stylistic feature is *Lauda per orchestra* (1986) with its characteristic lyrically-epic and musically-imaginative expression. It is a straightforward orientation towards the symphonic poem genre of the 19th century which nowadays has acquired various stylistic layers of musical expression.¹⁶

It is interesting to note that, in the opus *Lauda per orchestra*, the composer wants the listener to perceive various allusions of stylistic solutions characteristic of the music of Romanticism, also including melodies which resemble Latvian folk dances, obscuring them with contemporary means of musical expression. Furthermore, Vasks composed this work as a tribute to the famous Latvian politician (one of the authorities of the first National Awakening in Latvian society in the second half of the 19th century) and folklore researcher Krišjānis Barons (1835–1923) on the 150th anniversary of his birth. The folk music allusion was demonstrated for the first time in this symphonic work.

Altogether the composition *Lauda per orchestra* is formed based on the sequential exposition of three contrasting themes in an interwoven development (at the same time, they reflect classical sonata form principles.)

Exposition	Development	Reprise-Coda
<p><u>First theme</u> <u>Second theme</u></p> <p><i>Canto –</i> Latvian chorale folk song/dance music melody allusion allusion</p>	<p><u>First th.</u> <u>Second th.</u> <u>First th.</u> <u>Second theme</u></p> <p><u>First th.</u></p> <p>..... culmination peak!</p>	<p><u>First theme</u>.....silent final sound</p>
<p>a moll.....(d moll)</p>	<p>e molld-a moll..... d moll..... a moll.....</p>	<p>h moll.....</p>

which previous is published the following two articles: Jānis Kudiņš, “Folk music Allusion as Pēteris Vasks Symphonic Works Style Mark. Some Issues About the National Element in the Music of Contemporary Composer”, in: Nikos Maliaras (Ed.), *The National Element in Music*, University of Athens, Music Library of Greece, 2014, 410–421; Jānis Kudiņš, “Pēteris Vasks as Neo-Romantic: Characteristic Style Signs of Latvian Composer Symphonic Music in the Context of Postmodern culture and art”, in: *From Modernism to Postmodernism. Between Universal and Local*, Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 2016, 303–326.

¹⁶ *Lauda per orchestra* of Pēteris Vasks is possible listen to youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJ3R0neRVQ8>

There is a perceptible relationship to Latvian folk music in the melodic structure of the first theme (for example, the natural minor; a narrow diatonic, a motif structure mainly contained in fourth intervals that appears in the exposition of the first theme). In turn, the choral music allusion effect is significant in the exposition of the second theme (the wind instruments are together in a characteristically harmonic vocal arrangement style), which is a typical attribute of Vasks' symphonic and instrumental music. In turn, the characteristic syncopated rhythm of the third theme is similar to the music of a Latvian folk dance, and is characteristic of its rhythmic formula.¹⁷

It is interesting, that the third theme, related to folk music (a stylistic allusion) in the *Lauda per orchestra* reflects a notable link to the 19th century genre of the symphonic poem, where a painting-like (timbrally acoustic) expression provokes a musically pastoral formation in the perception. (Example 2)

Still, overall, the first theme gains the main and, at the same time, the recapitulative expressive meaning of the entire work. Additionally, it is important that it is realised not in a triumphant, but in a more introverted dramatic growth – achieving an extremely harsh (dissonantly sharp) main culmination and then, suddenly, disappearing in a dynamic quiescence.

After *Lauda per orchestra*, the fusion of lyrically meditative and lyrically-epic expression in Vasks' symphonic music had become a typical feature of works created until the late 1990s. In turn, Latvian folk music allusions and quotations are found in such symphonic works as Concerto for English horn and symphony orchestra (1989), Symphony No. 1 *Voices* for String Orchestra (1991) and the Concerto *Distant Light* for Violin and String Orchestra (1997). It is essential to note that in the Concerto for English Horn, there is, so far, the only example of a clear quotation of a specific Latvian folk melody (*Pūti, pūti, vēja māte! / Blow, blow, Wind Mother!*) as a theme of variations in the second part of this four part composition.

Further, in the *Concerto for Cello and Symphony Orchestra No. 1* (1994) it is possible to detect the case of a hidden (*false*) quotation of a Latvian folk song in a deeply conflicting musical expression. It is interesting to note that

¹⁷ As some examples of the originals for this musical allusion is such Latvian folk dance melodies (with characteristic metro-rhythmic characteristics), which can be to look in this site (Latvian Centre of National Culture): accessed 20 May 2020.

https://www.lnkc.gov.lv/Uploads/2015/10/29/1446119634_44.jpg https://www.lnkc.gov.lv/Uploads/2015/10/30/1446209582_6083.pdf

Example 2: P. Vasks, *Lauda per orchestra*, Second theme

The musical score for the second theme of *Lauda per orchestra* by P. Vasks is presented for a full orchestra. The score is divided into several systems, each containing parts for different instruments:

- Flutes (Fl.):** Two staves. The upper staff has a melodic line with triplets and accents, marked *mf*. The lower staff has a similar melodic line, also marked *mf*.
- Oboes (Ob.):** Two staves. The upper staff has a melodic line with triplets and accents, marked *mf*. The lower staff has a similar melodic line, also marked *mf*.
- Cor Anglais (Cor.):** Two staves. The upper staff has a melodic line with triplets and accents, marked *mf*. The lower staff has a similar melodic line, also marked *mf*.
- Arpa (Harp):** One staff. The harp part consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment.
- Archi (Strings):** Two staves. The upper staff has a melodic line with triplets and accents, marked *mp*. The lower staff has a similar melodic line, also marked *mp*. The string part includes arco and pizzicato textures.

in Vasks five-movement Cello Concerto No. 1, on the one hand, it has already reached the boundary, which unmistakably reveals a romantic world outlook in an artistically conceptual form. Overall, the five movements of the Cello Concerto No. 1 (*Cantus I*, *Toccata I*, *Monologhi*, *Toccata II*, *Cantus II*) portray two contrasting worlds – *Cantus I* and *Cantus II* are interwoven with lyrically expressive singing, as well as *Toccata I* and *Toccata II* with their tense, dissonant and chaotic continuum with a wave-like development.

Cantus I	Toccata I	Monolohi	Toccata I	Cantus II
Lyrical canto	Quotations and <i>quasi</i> quotations (allusions) from P. Vasks, O. Messiaen, D. Shostakovich Music	Cadenza of cello solo – lyrically-dramatic canto	Quotations and <i>quasi</i> quotations (allusions) from P. Vasks, O. Messiaen, D. Shostakovich music. <u>Peak of dramatic culmination.</u>	Lyrical canto, transformation of lyrical and majestic hymn. Hidden citation of folksong <i>Blow, wind!</i> (fragment)

A unique dramaturgical resolution in the above composition is the pathetic cadenza of cello solo in the middle of the composition which acquires the specific meaning of a dramatic monologue. It symbolizes the metaphoric quest for the ideal and its deliberate denial in the above Cello Concerto No. 1. However, there is a hidden quotation of a very popular Latvian folk song at the end, a hidden fragment of melody.

Example 3: Latvian folk song *Pūt, vējiņi* / *Blow, Wind* melody.



1. Pūt, vē - ji - ņi, dzen lai - vi - ņu, aiz-dzen ma-ni Kur-ze - mē.

This Latvian folk song – *Pūt, vējiņi!* / *Blow, wind!* – has a special role in Latvian history. In the second half of the 1980s, when the process to renew Latvia as an independent state began, the folk song *Blow, wind!* became the unofficial anthem of Latvia. Also, the same composer said that the hidden quotation of folk song in his Cello Concerto No. 1 was used deliberately. It is a symbol of the end of the Soviet occupation in Latvia.¹⁸ However, this song quotation reflects a very interesting approach. The excerpt of the song’s melody is hidden deeply in the texture and orchestration, and it not possible to hear immediately. However, the sound produces a peculiar effect – it is an allusion rather than a direct indication.

¹⁸ Interview with Pēteris Vasks, Latvian State Radio 1994.

Example 4: P. Vasks, Concerto for Violoncello No. 1, quotation of folk song *Blow, Wind* motive, V-c and C-b



There is also **Symphony No. 2** (1998) by Pēteris Vasks. Symphony No. 2 is an extended one-movement composition.¹⁹ The dilemma characteristic of the romantic world outlook is exposed by means of the gradual interaction of two themes, providing an insight into more and more nuances of controversy. On the whole, the composition of the symphony creates an association with the principles of the classical sonata form alongside with the exposition, development and repetition of both principal themes, and with characteristics of it, in a transformed way, in the reprise. Of particular importance is the episode which proves to be dramatic, suggesting a new theme right at the very centre of the composition.

Exposition	Episode	Development	Reprise	Coda
<p><u>first</u>, <u>second</u> <u>themes</u></p> <p>Aggressive nature versus lyrical meditation</p> <p>repeated three times in a row</p>	<p><u>new theme (1)</u></p> <p>citation - <i>voice of life</i> from 1st symphony, lyrical and majestic hymn (Vasks' <i>canto</i>) (culmination peak)</p>	<p>transfor-mations of the several elements of the first theme, conflict escalation</p>	<p><u>first</u>, <u>second</u>, <u>first</u> <u>themes</u></p> <p>transformation of fu- neral march (culmination peak)</p>	<p><u>new theme (2)</u></p> <p>elegy, sorrow, dots;</p> <p>allusion of Latvian folksong</p>
<p><i>a moll</i> ; <i>e moll</i> ; <i>a moll</i> ; <i>h moll</i> <i>c-es-h moll</i> ; <i>e moll</i></p>	<p><i>D dur</i></p>	<p><i>tonal inconsistency</i></p>	<p><i>a moll</i> ; <i>e moll</i> ; <i>a moll</i></p>	<p><i>h moll</i></p>

¹⁹ *Symphony No. 2* of Pēteris Vasks is possible listen to youtube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5s3k-LdqbnQ&t=4s>

It is interesting to note, that in the concluding part of the symphony, to increase the drama and the feeling of surprise, the composer makes the listener switch over to a quite unexpected and different coda which presents a recapitulation and significant mode of expression and highlights the folk music allusion. In the diatonically lucid *B minor* scale of the coda on the organ point of the tonic, the voices of clarinets, oboes, flutes, and the bassoon bring forward flashes of a theme deeply related to the melody of the Latvian folk song, like the twinkling of a star.

It is the timbre of the oboe (an association with a reed-pipe in Latvian folk music) that allows the perception of this melody as a related Latvian folk song along with such elements as the diatonic base of the melody, a gradually ascending flow and coverage of the melody within the interval of the sixth.²⁰ Also, the mood of the melody and the similarity to Latvian folk music is easy to perceive and understand for those who are familiar with it. At the same time, this melody displays the composer's ability to create a likeness with Latvian folk music.

Example 5: P. Vasks, Symphony No. 2, Coda

The musical score for Example 5, P. Vasks' Symphony No. 2, Coda, is presented in a multi-staff format. The instruments included are Piccolo (3), Oboe 1, Clarinet 1, Bassoon 1, Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass/Double Bass. The score is written in B minor and features a diatonic melody in the oboe and strings, with dynamics ranging from piano (p) to pianissimo (pp). The melody is characterized by a gradually ascending flow and coverage of the melody within the interval of the sixth.

²⁰ In turn, this fact shows that it is an allusion to Latvian folk music of a relatively younger period, because interval of sixth are typical of many folk songs which were created in the 19th century. One of the possible prototypes for this musical allusion is a well-known Latvian folk song entitled *Three Young Sisters* (*Trīs jaunas māšas*), accessed 20 May 2020, https://lv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tr%C4%ABs_jaunas_m%C4%81sas

However, there are several elements which mark a distinction between the author's creation and absolutely authentic folk music, among them accentuated triple time, and the syncopation in the melody contains the sorrowful mood and nostalgia of the minor key. By means of these elements, the composer is able to give an insight into those stylistic layers which testify to Latvian folk music being affected by the genre of German and Russian popular songs of the 19th century. The composer himself has commented on his Second Symphony coda section:

The ending is a picturesque epilogue, like an unending field. The hero lived, telling people how beautiful the world is, but nobody needed that. Now the hero has died, having lost his call, but remains the Eternal. A folk song (*However this is an allusion, not a specific Latvian folk melody quotation – JK*) plays – that symbolizes hope, that perhaps a new hero will come, who will passionately invite all to live better, with hope. We only have to wait.²¹

Characterising Pēteris Vasks' neo-romantic symphonic music, it must be noted that, after the 2nd Symphony, the composer has not added folk music stylistic allusions or quotations in his further works. It is possible that this aspect no longer had the particular meaning in his creative work that it did earlier, in the 1980s and 90s. In turn, the perceptible folk music allusions in Vasks' neo-romantic symphonic work reminds one of the symphonic music of another Latvian composer – Pēteris Plakidis.

“Dziedājums” (“Canto”) for Symphony Orchestra by Pēteris Plakidis (1947–2017)²²

Similar to Pēteris Vasks, Plakidis also dedicated a work to the anniversary of the 150th anniversary of Krišjānis Barons' birth – the neo-romantic symphonic work titled *Dziedājums (Canto)*.²³ As in Vasks' *Lauda per orchestra*, in Plakidis' *Canto*, the composition of the music is based on the interwoven

²¹ Ieviņa Liepiņa, “Pēteris Vasks”, in: *Music in Latvia*, Rīga, Latvian Music Information Centre, 2004, 37.

²² More detailed information in English about the music and creative work of Pēteris Plakidis can be found online at the website address of the Latvian Music Information Centre, accessed 20 February 2020, <https://www.lmic.lv/en/composers/peteris-plakidis-294#!/>

²³ Pēteris Plakidis had also composed *Canto* as a dedication to the 60th anniversary of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra. *Canto* is possible listen to youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wiBQsQgQrio>

development of the main theme, with elements of individual classical sonata form aspects.

Exposition	Development	Reprise	Coda
<p>1th thema – Electric guitar motive, harsh expression</p> <p>2nd thema – charact. quasi <i>choral</i> motive in wood, winds and strings</p> <p>3rd thema – allusion of folk music, timbre of kokle in harp.</p>	<p>Intertwining</p> <p>development of</p> <p>three themes,</p> <p>Escalation of dramatic expression.</p>	<p>1th thema – Electric guitar motive, harsh expression</p> <p>2nd thema – charact. Corale motive in wood- winds and strings</p>	<p>Birth of 4th thema – nostalgic, sentimental character.</p> <p>It is <i>canto</i> – romantic ideal..</p> <p><i>Open end.</i></p>
<i>G moll F dur</i>	<i>D – a – F</i>	<i>g d</i>	<i>(a) F</i>

Three main themes form the musical development of *Canto*. The melodically plastic formation of the first main theme is supplemented by two timbrally significant leitmotifs. The first can be heard in the altogether exotic and slightly obtrusive voice of the bass guitar, while the second is the *exclamation* motif in the voices of the trumpets. The second main theme creates a contrast with a dissonant cluster motif and the sound of the French horn and trumpets, which stand out. And, basing the development of the music on the consecutive exposition of this contrasting theme, the third main theme has a particular effect, which is formed by the metro-rhythmic pulsation of a lightly drawn dance. In the episodic exposition of the third theme there is the sound of two harps, which, timbrally, creates an allusion to the unique sound of the kokle.

Example 6: P. Plakidis, *Dziedājums / Canto*, third theme

The musical score for Example 6 shows two harps, Arpa I and Arpa II, playing the third theme. Arpa I is in the treble clef and has an octave sign (8va) above it. Arpa II is in the bass clef and also has an octave sign (8va) above it. The notes for Arpa II are labeled as la#, mi#, la#, and la#.

Here we should mention that, in Latvian traditional culture, the *kokle* is an ancient instrument with its own unique semantics.²⁴ The *kokle* theme, the third theme in Plakidis' neo-romantic symphonic work *Canto*, initially gives the impression of a long desired and finally achieved main theme – the *canto* theme. Still, in the further development of the first two main themes, forming a dramatically sharpened musical expression in the two general culmination zones, the *kokle* theme could be interpreted as the distant echo of a *bright past*. The third, or the *kokle* theme, gradually *disappears* in the orchestra layer, and, in the coda, hands over its place to a seemingly unexpectedly blossoming fourth theme, which is raised as a long awaited true *canto* or the confirmation of an ideal. In turn, the allusion to Latvian folk music remains like a discrete caress in its mainly timbral form, allowing for the interpretation of an externally similar motif, like a folk dance, in the imitation of the timbre of the *kokle*.

It should be noted that, in Latvian historiography, Krišjānis Barons, as a collector and systemiser of folklore, is often described as indicating the *kokle* as a Latvian traditional (national) cultural symbol. In that way, in his neo-romantic symphonic work, Plakidis' plays upon this significant person in Latvian cultural history with this allusion to the timbre of the *kokle*. Still, the musical language and expression of this symphonic work contains characteristic elements of a 20th century style (for example, the inclusion of an electric guitar in the score).

Altogether, the previously characterised quotes and, mainly, examples of allusion in the neo-romantic symphonic music by Latvian composers relates to its exposition in an orchestra score. In turn, the next two examples are already related to attempts to broaden the meaning of the folk song quote, reflecting the idea of an intertextual or stylistically intermusical dialogue.

“Vox humana” by Pēteris Butāns (1942–2020)²⁵

So far, in his creative work, Pēteris Butāns has used quotes, allusions and the principle of collage in various genres, as well as created stylistic allusions for

²⁴ Cf., “Kokle and Kokle Playing”, *Latvijas kultūras kanons*, accessed 25 February 2020 <https://kulturaskanons.lv/en/archive/kokles-un-koklesana>; Valdis Muktupāvels, “Kokles”, in: *Folk Music Instrument in Latvia*, Rīga, Latvijas Universitātes Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2018, 141–165.

²⁵ More detailed information in English about the music and creative work of Pēteris Butāns can be found online at the website address of the Latvian Music Information Centre, accessed 20 February 2020, <https://www.lmic.lv/en/composers/peteris-butans-376#!/>

folk music. An artistically original work with an interesting idea is Butāns' composition entitled *Vox humana*. This musical work has two versions – the first version for string orchestra, percussion, piano and the recording of a Latvian folk singer (1998) and the second version is for symphony orchestra with a singer, who sings in a traditional music style (2005).

According to the composer's intention, the work consists of three sections, and the musical material is based on three quotations.²⁶

Exposition	Development	Reprise - Coda
Sonor texture, record of folk-singer singing	Musical development, motives based on a folk song melody. The quotation of two new themes - Russian church chant and Catholic chant <i>Dies irae</i> . Simultaneously development culmination peak!	Sonor texture, record of folk-singer singing

At the beginning and the end of the first version of this symphonic work we hear a recording from the Latvian folklore repository. The recording is of Latvian folk singer Domicella Lipeņa (1901–1992) from Latgale, a historical region of Latvia. This recording was made in the 1960s, and the folk singer sings a song that is sung during the hay harvest.

Example 7: P. Butāns, *Vox humana*, Exposition, quoted Latvian folk song

4 ca - 16"
(Femminile voce)
(mp)

Magnetofono

Pļau - nit sī - nu, kam va - ja - ga, pļau - nit sī - nu,
kam - (i) va - ja - ga, man - (i) sī - ņe - ņa na - va - ja - ga.

²⁶ *Vox humana* (first version) of Pēteris Butāns is possible listen to youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajRep8e5jvc>

The folk song serves as the basis for the further development of music in the middle section of the composition. Stylistically, it is a composition formed on a tonal foundation, using sonorous and aleatoric elements, as well as the development of the music's main theme in various layers of textures.

In the middle section two more quotations are highlighted. The first is the Russian church chant, which is performed on the string instruments. The second passage is the historically known Catholic Church Gregorian chant *Dies irae*. The simultaneous sounding of both quotations forms the main zone of culmination in the musical work, particularly accentuating the disappearance of the *Dies irae* motif in the atmosphere of exacerbated (dissonant) expression.

Why are the quotations of two Christian churches used in this symphonic work by Pēteris Butāns? Here one can discuss a hidden programmatic idea. This symphonic work is related to the composer's native region – Latgale (one of the cultural and historical regions of Latvia). Latgale historically was, in turn, dominated by the Catholic Church and the Russian Church. Therefore, Pēteris Butāns' symphonic work *Vox humana* is created as a musical stylistic fantasy based on three different musical quotations. In addition, the folk music quotation is created with a special effect of presence – the composer allows the listener to hear an authentic audio record of a folk song or (in the second version of the composition) a live performance (in *authentic style*) of this folk song.

In fact, in this way, the composer has broadened the meaning and function of the folk song quotation, accentuating more the intermusical dialogue principle in music. The folk song quotation gains a new function in this instance, as its usage maximally approaches its natural form of performance. This allows the quotation to be understood as a contrast and, at the same time, the facilitator of the representation of diverse music in a symphonic work. In it, the quote as an expression of a foreign music places a greater accent on underlining the characteristic intertextuality of postmodern culture. At the same time, this resolution brings forth the folk music quote as a metaphorical symbol, giving the neo-romantic symphonic work the meaning of an idealised voice of the past. In another symphonic work, composed at the beginning of the 21st century, one can also encounter this kind of function of broadened folk music quotation.

“Vakarblāzma” (“Sunset Glow”) by Juris Karlsons (b. 1948)²⁷

The symphonic vision *Vakarblāzma* (*Sunset Glow*, 2007) is such an opus. In this work, one of the archetypes proves to be the totality of those poem and portrait genres that were characteristic of late Romanticism and Impressionism.²⁸

Being a musical portrayal of a natural phenomenon, namely, the sunset glow, this symphonic work’s style can be associated with the basic notion of impressionism in music – to reflect the mood of a moment alongside the changeability of different moods (based on the intensive use of the twelve tone chromatic scale). This idea forms the basis of the whole composition, saturating it with the principle of interwoven development. All in all, the features characteristic of the impressionistic music style are supplemented by other stylistic layers and nuances.

Exposition	Development	Reprise	Coda
Exposition of basic theme (leitmotiv of <i>cuckoo</i>) as the <i>first theme</i> and exposition of variant of this theme as the <i>second theme</i> . The natural performance in the evening, elegy, minor, intensive use of twelve tone chromatic scale.	Transformations of basic theme and several of its elements. Culmination peak: transformation of basic theme in the <i>lightning vision</i> . Intensive use of twelve tone chromatic scale.	Exposition of basic theme as the Latvian folk song (sing folk singer). Lyrical culmination of composition.	Transformation of melody of Latvian folk song in the major tonality. Elegy, mix of major and minor elements, timbre of the bass flute.
<i>h moll</i>	<i>h moll-G dur-B dur-a moll</i>	<i>h moll</i>	<i>D dur</i>

It is interesting to note that the composer does not avoid using illustrative means of expression to create common musical expressions, such as the clear imitation of a cuckoo’s song and the striking of a wall clock, reaching a climax in the portrayal of thunder and lightning. In turn, the exposition of

²⁷ More detailed information in English about the music and creative work of Juris Karlsons can be found online at the website address of the Latvian Music Information Centre, accessed 20 February 2020, <https://www.lmic.lv/en/composers/juris-karlsons-295#!/>

²⁸ *Vakarblāzma* (*Sunset Glow*) of Juris Karlsons is possible listen on this website: https://sonichits.com/artist/Juris_Karlsons

the basic theme of *Sunset glow* stems from the melody of a Latvian folk song (the lyrics of the song metaphorically associate the evening natural phenomena with grief and memory of a mother who has passed away), included in the reprise section of the composition.

Example 8: J. Karlsons, *Vakarblāzma / Sunset Glow*, Reprise, quoted Latvian folk song

15

Hn. I, II

Chimes

Hp.

Brievi (Freely)

Narrator

p

Kyu - koj' juo - ru - za - gyu - zi - te, tu kyu - ko - ji, es rau - doj.

Vln. I

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Narrator

Tu kyu - ko - ji, es rau - do - ju; o - bi di - vi, buo - ri - ņi.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

On the one hand, this folk melody organically fits in the whole system of musical and stylistic expression. But, on the other hand, the vocal part seems to be coming from quite a different reality (a romantic *ideal*, a *voice from the past*, or *eternity*). Besides, as stated above, in the composition the composer has radically expanded the notion of the quotation in music.

In the given opus, the quotation is not only a quotation of the melody of the folk song. In line with the composer's concept, the central episode should present a Latvian folk song. However, it must not only be performed, but sung as well. Besides, it must not be simply sung, but sung by a real folk song performer (as a real folk performance on the stage), and nobody else. In this respect, the composition by Karlsons serves as an example for an essentially new understanding of the function of the quotation in contemporary music. The quotation here seems to confirm a real interaction of different music culture traditions. It is interesting in an epoch when the further development of classical traditions is becoming topical in the realm of art.

Conclusion

When analysing the quoting of folk music and the expression of stylistic allusions in the neo-romantic symphonic music of certain Latvian composers of the older generation at the end of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century, one can conclude, that it has been a trend that has been quite regularly represented by many composers. This trend also reflects certain characteristics of local musical history.

Much like in many other European nations, as well as Latvia, in the second half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, national composition schools formed, which initially were based on the stylistic traditions of Romanticism. In part, there was a characteristic trend to turn towards folk music, which was expressed both as quotations as well as arrangements in various genres of classical music. It should be noted that, at the end of the 19th century, almost all the best known Latvian composers were graduates of the St. Petersburg State Conservatory and were, more or less influenced by the well-known Russian composer and composition lecturer, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908), and his cultivated approach to the creative process of music, which involved folk music and the usage of its elements in musical works. Later, this influence was reflected in the creative work of the next generation of composers in Latvia in the first half of the 20th century. Additionally, this was facilitated by the situation that, in the first half of the

20th century, the aesthetic ideas and stylistic direction of modernism were represented minimally (fragmentarily) in the music of Latvian composers in the 1920s and 30s. However, after World War II (during the time of Soviet occupation), the dominating political ideology in Latvia delayed and limited the representation and expression of modernism in art and music.²⁹

In that way, after individual, limited attempts to adopt modernism (avant-garde) in the 1960s, in the 1970s there followed the music of the younger generation, which displayed the characteristic stylistic retrospectivism and intertextuality (polystylism) of postmodernism. Neo-romanticism formed as a broadly represented trend in the last decades of the 20th century, and, similarly, like in the music of Romanticism in the 19th century, attention continued towards the manifestation of the folk music element in musical works.³⁰

Altogether, as was observed in the previously noted characterisations of the neo-romantic symphonic works of Latvian composers, quoting and stylistic allusions to folk songs creates an associative impression of the ideal, which echoes older music cultural layers of the past (in this way accentuating the expression of stylistic retrospectivity). In certain situations the boundaries of quotation usage were broadened in an attempt to become as close as possible to an authentic folk music performance and sound form in a musical work.

In turn, in instances of allusions, one can observe their manifestations in a peculiar overall musically stylistic context. In the last decades of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century, in the genre of academic music, the tendency of neo-romanticism was based on the realization of principles of allusions (similarities to the 19th century Romantic style of music). Thus, the folk music element simulation (allusion) is the component of a more or less refined general *play of stylistic allusion*, which many Latvian composers have realized in their neo-romantic symphonic works.

²⁹ Cf. Arnolds Klotiņš, "Latvian Music in the World", in: Jānis Stradiņš (Ed), *Latvia and Latvians*, Vol. 1 Rīga, Latvian Academy of Sciences, 2018, 524–534, 541–548; Jānis Kudiņš, "Latvian Music History in the Context of 20th Century Modernism and Postmodernism. Some Specific Issues of Local Historiography", in: Gregor Pompe (Ed.), *Muzikološki Zbornik / Musicological Annual*, Vol. 54, No. 2. Ljubljana: University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, 2018, 97–138.

³⁰ Jānis Kudiņš, "Former *Outburst of Creativity* in Latvia. Some Historical Preconditions and Characteristic Style Tendencies", in: Rima Povilioniene, Jūrate Katinaite (Eds.), *Music That Changed Time*, Vilnius, Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, Lithuanian Composers' Union, 2014, 38–45.

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Summary

This article focuses on five internationally recognized Latvian composers – Romualds Kalsons, Pēteris Butāns, Pēteris Vasks, Pēteris Plakidis, and Juris Karlsons – who represent the older generation in the early 21st century. These composers provide artistically vivid representations of the folk music quotation, stylistic allusion or *ersatz* (*false*) quotation (according to Peter Burkholder's classification) in their neo-romantic symphonic works, created in the last third of the 20th century and at the beginning of the 21st century, the period of Postmodernism in culture and arts.

The Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (1977) by Romualds Kalsons (b. 1936) musically reflects a vivid stylistic simulation of Latvian folk music. In many symphonic works by Pēteris Vasks (b. 1946) – *Lauda per orchestra* (1986), Concerto for English horn and orchestra (1989), Concerto per violoncello ed orchestra No. 1 (1994), *Distant Light*, Concerto for Violin and String Orchestra (1997), *Symphony No. 2* (1998) – creates the stylistic allusion of folk music in various ways. In the symphonic work *Dziedājums (Canto)*, 1985 by Pēteris Plakidis (1947–2017) creates the allusion to folk music, emphasizing the peculiar timbral imitation of the kokle, which is a significant instrument in Latvian traditional culture.

In turn, Pēteris Butāns (1942–2020) in his symphonic work *Vox humana* (1998/2005) and Juris Karlsons in his symphonic work *Vakarblāzma (Sunset Glow)*, 2007 radically expanded the notion of quotation in music. In the symphonic works of both composers, the quotation is not only a quotation of the melody of the folk song. In line with the composers' concept, the central episode should present a Latvian folk song. However, it must not only be performed, but sung as well. The quotation here seems to confirm a real interaction of different music culture traditions. It is interesting in an epoch when the further development of classical traditions is becoming topical in the realm of art.

Overall, the neo-romantic trend in the music of five Latvian composers reveal the view of folk music and its quotation or imitation (allusion) as a *voice from the past*. As its own kind of musical ideal, which is missing at the end of the 20th century, in this way, also confirms the varied expressions of the characteristic stylistic retrospective of the postmodern cultural period. This aspect is characteristic of many composers, authors of neo-romantic symphonic music in Latvia in the last decades of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. It can also serve as a basis for comparison with the neo-romantic symphonic music of composers from other countries.