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ON THE ISSUE OF MUSICAL SCALES IN THE SONGS OF LITHUANIA MINOR AND THEIR CONTEXTS

Abstract

The beginning of the article discusses phenomena related to the perception of music (specifically, the perception of pitch, musical scale and intonation) that can lead to misinterpretation. The result of the intersection of two emic systems (for example, the original tone system and 12-tone equal temperament) can be perceived as chromaticisms and 'Greek modes'. Performance rules determine slight variations in intonation, depending on the melodic and harmonic context. This can also be misinterpreted as chromaticisms. The notations of the melodies of the songs of Lithuania Minor (from the collections of Christian Bartsch and Ludwig Rhesa) are analysed below, revealing manifestations of the aforementioned phenomena. The fact that chromaticisms and modulations in these notations arose due to misinterpretations is evidenced by the notators' comments on the singers' peculiar intonation, as well as by comparisons with the results of measurements of sound recordings of other musical dialects.

KEY WORDS: music perception, musical scales, Ancient Greek modes, chromaticisms, performance rules, Lithuania Minor, Christian Bartsch, Martin Ludwig Rhesa.

Anotacija

Straipsnio pradžioje aptariami muzikos suvokimo (konkrečiai garsaeilio, dermės, intonavimo suvokimo) reiškiniai, kurie gali lemti klaidingas interpretacijas. Dviejų eminių sistemų (pavyzdžiui, originalios garsų sistemos ir lygiosios dvylikalaipsnės temperacijos) sandūros rezultatas gali būti menami chromatizmai ir „graikiškosios dermės“. Atlikimo taisyklės (angl. *performance rules*) lemia nežymų intonavimo kitimą priklausomai nuo melodinio ir harmoninio konteksto. Tai taip pat gali būti klaidingai interpretuojama kaip chromatizmai. Toliau analizuojamos Mažosios Lietuvos dainų melodijų (Ch. Bartscho ir L. Rėzos rinkinių) notacijos, jose išvelgiama minėtų fenomenų raiška. Kad chromatizmai ir dermėkaita šiose notacijose atsirado dėl klaidingų interpretacijų, liudija ir melodijų užrašytojų pastabos apie savitą dainininkų intonavimą, ir gretinimai su kitų muzikinių dialektų garso įrašų matavimo rezultatais.

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Received 18/04/2026. Accepted 25/04/2026

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PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: muzikos suvokimas, muzikinės darnos, graikiškosios dermės, chromatizmai, atlikimo dėsningumai, Mažoji Lietuva, Christianas Bartschas, Martynas Liudvikas Rėza.
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15181/rh.v34i0.2836>

Introduction

For reasons well known to all Lithuanian ethnomusicologists, the melodies of songs from Lithuania Minor reach us mainly in the form of notation (rather than audio recordings).¹ Can we unconditionally trust these notations (not so much because of possible errors in them, but because of the impossibility of adequately representing subtle intonation phenomena in them)? Especially since the problems writing down melodies in standard five-line staff have been mentioned by those who wrote them down (unstable intonation, singing ‘between notes’, etc.).

To answer this question, we need to complete the following tasks. First, we must review the phenomena of music perception (in this case, musical scales and intonation). Here, the phenomena of the collision of emic systems are important, i.e. when the native musical scales are perceived (in this case) by the listener in the soundscape of 12-tone equal temperament (12TET). Secondly, examples from related musical cultures, for which sound recordings are available, can be examined.

Subject of the study: notations of the songs of Lithuania Minor. **Aim of the study:** to identify the influence of phenomena related to the perception of musical scales and intonation on the notation of song melodies from Lithuania Minor. **Work objectives:** to overview phenomena related to the perception of musical scales and intonation that lead to misinterpretations (such as those arising from the collision of two emic systems), to define pitch performance rules, to examine the notations of melodies of songs from Lithuania Minor in this regard, and to compare the results of this study with the results of acoustic measurements of sound recordings of other Lithuanian musical dialects. **Research methods:** literature analysis, notation analysis, acoustic analysis, comparison, and generalisation. Notations are analysed based on insights into phenomena of perception of musical scales and intonation.

Collision of emic systems. ‘Ancient Greek modes’

When the native musical scale is perceived by an external listener, it ‘gravitates’ towards a musical scale that is acceptable to the listener. A good example

¹ Most of the melodies from this region date back to the 19th century. Obviously, these were aural transcriptions of live performances; the Edison phonograph was not yet available. The layer of folklore discussed had almost totally vanished by the beginning of the 20th century, together with the folklore carriers–Lithuanians of Lithuania Minor.

here is the (theoretical) equipentatonic gamelan *slendro* scale: in it, all intervals are equal, between M2 and m3 (2.4 semitones), but a 12TET listener perceives ‘inaccurately intoned’ major seconds and minor thirds (Figure 1).

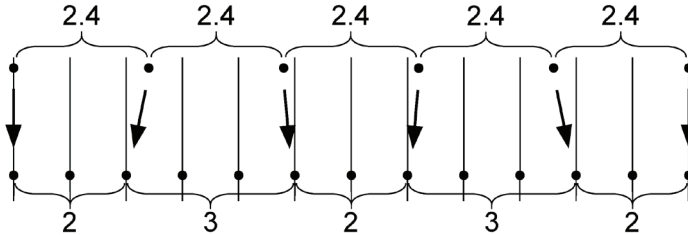


Figure 1. Theoretical *slendro* and its assessment.

Intervals are presented in 12TET-semitones (Ambrazevičius 2017, 99).

It is highly likely that it was precisely due to this collision of emic systems that, as early as the beginning of the 20th century, researchers of traditional Lithuanian singing noted the presence of so-called Ancient Greek modes in the songs (i.e. examples of ‘untempered’ singing ‘gravitated’ towards such modes in the perception of listeners). ‘The ancient tunes of the Lithuanian nation are assembled in diatonic scales (tonal steps) that are found in the musical system of ancient Greeks’ (Brazys 1920, 13). ‘Roughly half of the melodies in the most comprehensive collection of songs published before the Second World War have tonalities of the Ancient Greeks’ (Čiurlionytė 1938, 267).

However, researchers of other European musical cultures have drawn attention to this problem of misinterpretation. For example, Percy Grainger, a collector of English traditional music, stated: ‘The singers from whom I have recorded do not seem to me to have sung three different and distinct modes (Mixolydian, Dorian, Aeolian) but to have rendered their modal songs in one single loosely-knit modal folksong scale’ (Grainger 1908–1909, 158–159). Reidar Sevåg, a researcher of the traditional Norwegian musical instrument the *langeleik*, wrote: ‘Out of the great amount of *langeleik* scales can be abstracted a superimposed scale structure which is heptatonic and has a fixed framework of fundamental, fifth and octave. The other intervals are variable over a spectrum of a little more than a quarter tone, but interdependent in such a way that no two notes can be closer to each other than a somewhat short 3/4 tone’ (Sevåg 1974, 210).

Thus, the so-called hybrid musical scales identified here are those in which there are (often two) stable tonal anchors (for example, separated by a fourth or a fifth), and the intermediate scale degrees divide the interval between those anchors into roughly equal steps (i.e. they do not conform to the 12TET), and are intoned freely.

It is interesting to note that some 'Greek modes' are more common than others. The reason for this becomes clear when we examine how a 12TET-biased listener tends to perceive hybrid scales based on tonal anchors spaced a fourth or a fifth apart. It seems that interpretations of the Lydian and Phrygian modes are less likely compared to other 'Greek modes' (for more detail, see Ambrazevičius 2017, 108).

This is consistent with the findings of researchers of ethnic music. 'Lithuanian folk melodies abound in Ionian, Mixolydian, Aeolian, and Dorian modes, with the Phrygian mode occurring somewhat less frequently, and the Lydian mode very rarely. There is a considerable amount of natural and harmonic major and minor' (Čiurlionytė 1955, 11). 'Of the heptatonic diatonic modes, the most widespread are the Mixolydian, Ionian and Aeolian; somewhat less common are the Dorian and Phrygian; and the least common is the Lydian' (Čiurlionytė 1969, 221). Similar patterns can be observed elsewhere. Jay Rahn, discussing one Anglo-American idiolect, notes: 'Consistent with the findings for other samples of English-language folksong, whereas Mixolydian, Dorian and Aeolian melodies appear throughout, there are no instances of Phrygian or Lydian' (Rahn 1990). Vyacheslav Shchurov writes that among the 'ancient (medieval) modes' found in Russian folk music, the Mixolydian, Aeolian and Dorian modes are abundant, but the Phrygian mode appears 'only as a distinctive characteristic intonation; it is not usually sustained from the beginning to the end of the melody' (Shchurov 1998, 170). Urve Lippus notes that the runic singing of the Estonians, Ingrians and Karelians, and even European Gregorian chant, do not feature the Phrygian tetrachord (Lippus 1995, 95, 122–124).

False categorisation

Another phenomenon in non-Western music that often turns out to be a fiction is chromaticisms. This, too, is related to the problem of the collision of emic systems.

Figure 2 presents examples of real and fictitious chromaticisms. In the first scheme, the pitches (marked with dots) are grouped in two categories. In the second and third, they are grouped in one. A musicologist whose perception is based on equal-tempered tuning will hear (relative to C) major and minor thirds (first scheme), mostly 'impure' major and minor thirds (second scheme), and only 'impure' major and minor thirds (third scheme). Admittedly, there is a certain probability that 'neutral' thirds will also be heard, roughly corresponding to the region of uncertainty (a small region around the mid-point between the minor and major thirds). However, in reality, the second and third schemes represent the only 'generalised' third used in the original musical language.

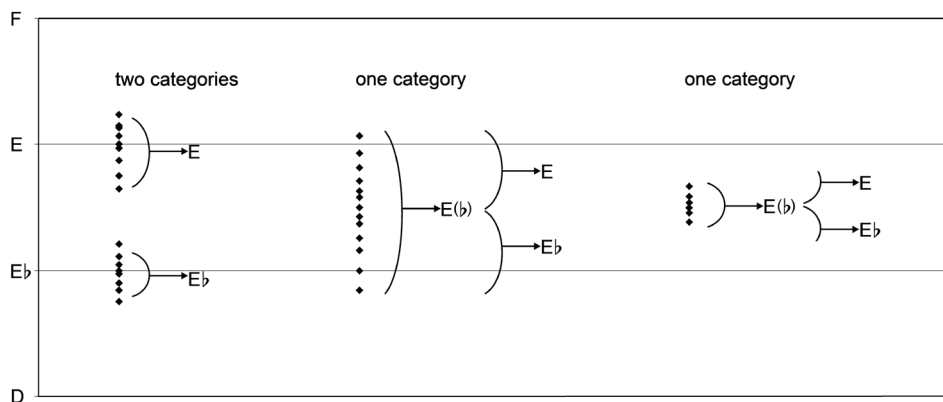


Figure 2. Schemes of true (left) and fictitious (centre, right) chromaticisms (see the text).

If a piece of singing is characterised by wide intonation ranges, it can be stated with near certainty that a listener with a European musical education will interpret the variations within those intonation ranges as notes differing in pitch class. Consequently, they will conclude that the example listened to exhibits chromatic variation, even though such variation does not actually exist in the singer's system. This phenomenon of supposed chromatic variation can be discerned simply by analysing the ethnomusicologist's transcriptions, without even listening to the audio recordings.

Vida Chenoweth, who has studied the music of Papua New Guinea, wrote of this as follows: 'For instance, suppose that thirds are not differentiated into minor, major and neutral thirds in some musical culture. The implication made by European musicologists about the usage of distinct versions of the third and about the corresponding chromatic changes would be merely a kind of "aural ghost"' (Chenoweth 1972, 50).

Performance rules

Live performance differs from rhythmic and musical scale precision; some irregularities are chaotic, but systematic deviations are much more interesting; they are described by the 'performance rules'. One of the most comprehensive sets of performance rules is provided by Anders Friberg, Roberto Bresin and Johan Sundberg; see an excerpt from this set in Table 1.

Table 1

Performance rules related to pitch intonation in the KTH performance rule system (Friberg, Bresin, Sundberg 2006, 148)

Tonal tension	
Melodic charge	Emphasise the melodic tension of notes relative to the current chord
Harmonic charge	Emphasise the harmonic tension of chords relative to the key
Chromatic charge	Emphasise regions of small pitch changes
Intonation	
High sharp	Stretch all intervals in proportion to size
Melodic intonation	Intonate according to melodic context
Harmonic intonation	Intonate according to harmonic context
Mixed intonation	Intonate using a combination of melodic and harmonic intonation

Let us examine one instance of melodic intonation: how the intonation of the leading tone changes depending on the melodic context. 'For example, in a leading tone to tonic progression, the leading tone is often played sharper in pitch than is indicated in equal temperament tuning, resulting in a melodic interval that is smaller than a semitone (i.e., less than 100 cents)' (Friberg, Bresin, Sundberg 2006, 151). This 'gravity' of the leading tone towards the tonic subconsciously emphasises and highlights the tonic.

Janina Fyk demonstrated the rule of leading tone using the example of violin intonation (Fyk 1994, 90–92). Two violinists were asked to play a simple sequence of notes several times (Figure 3). It was found that when interpreting the tritone as an augmented fourth (pattern 1), it is wider, while in the case of a diminished fifth (pattern 2), it is narrower; accordingly, the semitones between the leading tone and the tonal anchor are narrower than 100 cents (tempered semitone).²

Let us see how this rule might work in a different melodic context. Suppose, in one case, the scale degree adjacent to the tonal anchor falls between tonal anchors, and in another case it falls in a different context unrelated to the tonal anchor (Figure 4, left). In the first case, that scale degree 'gravitates' towards the anchor (in the example given, it is sharpened), while in the second case, it is intoned regularly (i.e. it is not sharpened).

² Fyk refers to this rule as 'the tonal gravity rule' (Fyk 1995). Andrzej Rakowski (1990) also noted the tendency for the leading tone to be 'tense', manifested in its sharp intonation.



Figure 3. Example for violin intonation testing (applied from Fyk 1994, 91).



Figure 4. Local intonation: leading tone (left) and ascending/descending sequences (right).

Now let us discuss another feature of local intonation, scale-degree intonation in ascending and descending sequences (Figure 4, right). Here, we can observe the effects of the Melodic Intonation and High Sharp rules: in ascending sequences, there is a tendency to raise the pitch, while in descending sequences, there is a tendency to lower it.

Chromaticisms or performance rules?

Researchers of traditional Lithuanian music have often noted that chromaticisms are frequently found in song melodies. Chromaticisms that belong to the 'means rewarding tunes' are 'notable in all songs found in the territory of Lithuania' (Čiurlionytė 1955, 25). 'Most frequently a single mode degree is chromatically altered' (Četkauskaitė 1981, 31), but sometimes two, three or even four degrees are altered (*ibid.*: 31–32). 'Then minor-like melodies acquire Phrygian or Aeolian-Phrygian ... Aeolian-Dorian ... tints, whereas major-like melodies acquire Mixolydian-Ionian tints, and so on' (*ibid.*: 31). The chromatic changeability of various mode degrees is found in songs from the Gervėčiai region (Krištopaitė, Burkšaitienė 1989, 294, 302; Razmukaitė 2003). 'While the melody is developing, the initial minor intonation becomes enriched with major patterns, which move again to minor ones, and vice versa. This game of contrasting colours is very glamorous' (on one song by the outstanding Dzūkian singer Petras Zalanskas, see Krištopaitė, Vėlius, Kuzinienė 2008, 61).

However, the question arises as to whether these are actually chromaticisms, or merely the result of a misinterpretation of performance rules. We conducted acoustic measurements of melodies of songs from Suvalkija (southwestern

Lithuania),³ compared them with transcriptions of the songs, and found that the differences between the supposed chromatic versions are significantly less than a semitone (Ambrazevičius, Wiśniewska 2008). In cases where the chromaticisms in the transcriptions corresponded to trends defined by the leading-tone rule, these differences averaged 38 cents, and when they corresponded to trends in the intonation of pitches in ascending and descending sequences, the differences were only 27 cents, i.e., in summary, about one-third of a semitone. Thus, it is hardly possible to consider these as chromaticisms: such slight differences can be explained by performance rules.

Subsequently, similar studies were conducted using data from two additional Lithuanian musical dialects (corresponding to ethnographic regions), and the same trends were identified, albeit with varying degrees of intensity (Figure 5). Further research should expand the sample size and include the remaining musical dialects.

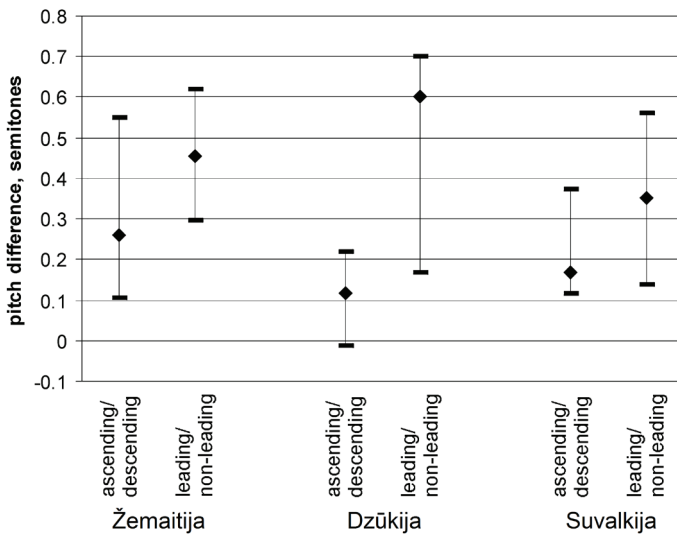


Figure 5. Pitch divergences for different melodic contexts. Diamonds and vertical lines denote medians and interquartiles (Ambrazevičius, Budrys, Višnevskaja 2015, 209).

Later, a pilot study was conducted on examples of traditional singing from Ukraine and Belarus, and once again, similar intonation patterns were identified (Ambrazevičius 2025). Thus, it can be concluded that the intonation rules in question are universal, at least in Western music (according to Friberg, Bresin, Sundberg 2006; et al.) and in Lithuanian and several neighbouring musical cultures.

³ The corpus consists of audio recordings from the 1930s and their modern-day transcriptions (Nakienė, Žarskienė 2003).



Figure 6. An example of 'variable scale' in a song from Lithuania Minor (Paketūras 2003, 157).

Returning to the topic of Lithuania Minor, we can mention another typical example of how musical notation can mislead musicologists. In the 'Lithuanian Encyclopedia of Music', the variable scale is illustrated using a song by Martynas Jankus, a cultural figure from Lithuania Minor. The notation is taken from the publication Čiurlionytė 1938 (see Figure 6). However, an archival audio recording of this song has also survived. There is no variation in the scale there, only broad pitch categories.

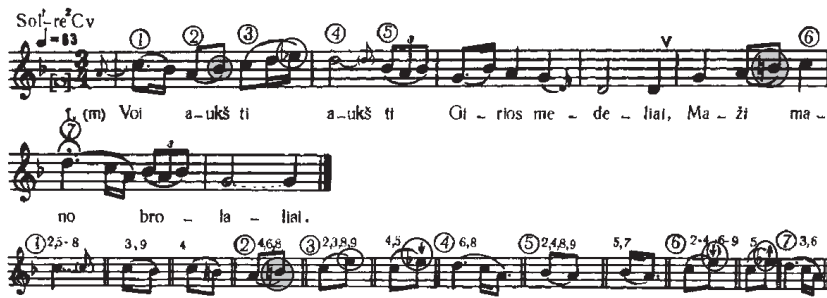


Figure 7. An example of 'changeable chromaticisms' in the Dzūkian tradition (Četkauskaitė 1981, 338).

Fictitious chromaticisms may arise not only from performance rules but also from the aforementioned wide pitch categories. The melody shown in Figure 7 illustrates this point. The E pitch is marked with empty circles: there are as many as five versions: Eb, E, lowered Eb, lowered E, and raised Eb. In fact, all of these versions fall within a single wide pitch category. Another case is the broad Bb-B category (grey circles and other B occurrences). The 'ascending/descending' rule can also be detected here.

Chromaticisms in the notations of songs from Lithuania Minor

I will start with the song collection compiled by Christian Bartsch (1886; 1889). This 19th-century collection contains 453 songs with music transcriptions. It is the largest and most representative collection of transcribed folk songs

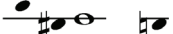
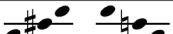
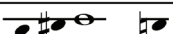
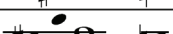
from Lithuania Minor. We have already quite extensively examined the melodies of the songs in this collection from the perspective in question in previous studies (Ambrazevičius, Wiśniewska 2008; Ambrazevičius, Budrys, Višnevskaja 2015, 209–214; etc.); here I will present only the results of that analysis.

From the 453 Bartsch songs, we selected only items containing chromaticisms, that is, only items with at least one scale degree spelled in two chromatic versions were considered. This set comprised 92 transcriptions. Five of them were excluded from further consideration, because the chromaticisms appeared only once in short (16th) intermediate notes or/and these songs were of modern German origin, reflecting a different musical thinking.

Chromaticisms in the 87 transcriptions came in several types (Table 2). The chromaticisms of ‘sharp leading tone’-type occurred most frequently (first, second, fourth, fifth and sixth data rows in Table 2). That is, a note is sharp (neutral) if it appears in strong interaction with a tonal anchor, i.e. if it works as a ‘leading tone’, whereas it is neutral (flat) if it appears in a different musical context. Figure 8 shows a typical example of transcription.

Table 2.

Occurrences of different types of chromaticism in Bartsch (1886, 1889) (Bartschas 2000), and Rhesa (1825) (Rēza 1958; 1964).

pattern	occurrence (number of songs)	
	Bartsch	Rhesa
	46	11
	28	6
	12	1
	7	1
	4	1
	3	3
(#)	3	—
#, ♭ in the same context	9	2
other	21	2

‘Ascending-descending’ chromaticisms comprise the other type frequently found in the collection under investigation. That is, the note is sharp (neutral) if it appears in ascending sequence, whereas it is neutral (flat) if it appears in descending sequence (third data row in Table 2; see example in Figure 9).

Moderato Pilupėnai, 1846 **Bd.**

- Ma - mu - žė, mie - go no - riu, Se - no - ji,
mie - go no - riu. Ne - į - ma - nau kur
gul - ti Nei kur pa - si - il - sė - ti.

Figure 8. An example of transcription containing chromaticisms (Bartschas 2000, 207). Consider the spelling of B across the melody. Sharper versions are encircled by empty circles, while flatter versions are encircled by grey circles (this also applies to the following examples).

Andantino Apie Širvintą, 1857 **B.**

Po dar - žu - žį vaikš - čio - jau, Žo - ly - nu -
žes min - džioj. Da - bar su Die - vu, Ža - lios rū -
te - lės, Dau - giau jūs ne - lan - ky - siu, Da - //ky(siu).

Figure 9. An example of transcription containing chromaticisms (Bartschas 2000, 136). Consider the spelling of C across the melody.

We can now supplement the findings from Bartsch's collection with similar findings from Martin Ludwig Rhesa's collection (Rhesa 1825). Several revised editions of this book were published later; it was first published in Lithuania in 1935–1937, and later in 1958–1964 (which is the edition used in this paper). This collection is considerably smaller than Bartsch's, but it is significant in that it was the first published collection of Lithuanian folk songs. It contained 19 songs with apparent chromaticisms; typical examples are provided in Figures 10–12, and a summary is given in Table 2.



Figure 10. An example of transcription containing chromaticisms (Rėza 1964, 295). Consider the spelling of G across the melody.



Figure 11. An example of transcription containing chromaticisms (Rėza 1964, 282). Consider the spelling of F across the melody.



Figure 12. An example of transcription containing chromaticisms (Rėza 1964, 293). Consider the spelling of G across the melody.

These three examples show mostly cases where the leading tone rule applies; as in Bartsch's melodies, such cases prevail. The examples in Figures 10 and 12 fall into the first data row in Table 2, and the example in Figure 11 falls into the second data row. In addition, the intonation of F (the last staff in Figure 11) can

be regarded as an example of ‘descending-ascending’ chromaticism. The intonation of F in Figure 12 is also interesting: usually the higher version of this pitch is intoned (this is related to the ‘standard’ intonation of this scale degree; and it also emphasises the tonal anchor G, which sometimes becomes prominent); however, in the descending passage (see the third staff), it is intoned lower.

Outcomes and future research

After examining the chromaticisms in the notations of melodies from Lithuania Minor, we can summarise our findings.⁴ It is natural to predict that the chromaticisms in transcriptions of Rhesa’s and Bartsch’s collections are merely the outcome of the inappropriate notation of pitches intoned slightly higher or lower, though usually by less than a semitone, in agreement with the performance rules. In the transcriptions, the tendencies towards the ‘chromatisation’ of leading tone and ascending-descending sequences are clearly observed. The chromatically different versions in the identical melodic contexts point to wide intonational zones and accidentals in parentheses prove the definite discrepancy from 12TET, as well as the problems of transcription mentioned by the transcribers themselves (e.g. Bartschas 2000, 40–43).

These assumptions are confirmed by the results of studies on other Lithuanian musical dialects (specifically, acoustic measurements of their melodies). In these studies, at least in most cases, no chromaticism was detected. Particularly noteworthy are singing examples from the Suvalkija region, which borders on Lithuania Minor, and where many melodies of the same type as those in Lithuania Minor have been recorded.

It is impossible to collate Rhesa’s and Bartsch’s transcriptions with non-existent sound recordings from their time and their location. However, sound records as old as possible and made as close as possible to Lithuania Minor do exist, and these are from interwar Suvalkija. These records do not show chromaticisms; the chromaticisms occur only in the transcriptions due to the 12TET-biased perception of peculiar scales. It seems that we can also extrapolate, with sufficient confidence, this statement to the melodies of Lithuania Minor.

Rimantas Astrauskas, who studied Bartsch’s tunes, noticed that if we ‘take off those *becars* [natural signs] we could find that the same tune fully coincides with the big family of tunes that are spread in southern Lithuania’ (Astrauskas 2007, 9). It is also possible that the transcribers adapted the tunes according to classical (‘German theory’) norms; Astrauskas cites several comments on this subject by Bartsch and other authors (Astrauskas 2007, 8). Probably, the classical

⁴ Here I quote an updated version of the text by Ambrazevičius, Budrys and Višnevskā (2015, 212–213).

norms served as an additional factor in the decision about the transcription of ambiguous pitches. Not least is the conscious or unconscious aesthetic nuance: if several solutions are possible, it is very likely that the transcriber will choose the one which ‘adorns’ the tune.

Furthermore, Rimantas Sliužinskas, who has studied the hymns of Lithuanian (*lietuvininkai*) Lutherans from Lithuania Minor, noted that they are performed in a distinctive manner, deviating from the original (German) hymns (Sliužinskas 2003, 169). ‘Despite treating Lutheran religious ceremonies with great respect, locals are unable to accept the original German style of singing the psalms. Ordinary Lithuanian Lutherans from the Klaipėda region modify or simply create new melodies, which adhere to their own understanding of the music’ (Sliužinskas 2026, 13). It would be interesting to conduct acoustic measurements of those hymns; possibly a certain ‘de-chromatisation’ could be observed there. These valuable insights encourage further exploration of the musical language of Lithuania Minor, which, as it turns out, is more complex than what is apparent in the musical notation.

Conclusions

When examining scales in traditional music, standard notation on a five-line staff serves only as an approximate rough draft. Relying solely on such notations can lead to ‘aural ghosts’, i.e. misinterpretations of the original pitch systems, and, as a result, erroneous theoretical concepts. When interpreting musical scales and intonation phenomena, it is necessary to rely on a knowledge of music psychology – the principles of pitch perception. Precise acoustic pitch measurements help reveal patterns in original pitch systems. The melodies of folk songs from Lithuania Minor are probably not characterised by ‘Ancient Greek modes’, tonal modulations and chromaticisms, but rather by unique intonation phenomena, primarily defined by the pitch performance rules. The rules of musical performance are more or less universal: they also apply to other musical traditions and non-traditional music (academic, jazz, etc).

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Rytis Ambrazevičius

APIE DERMŲ PROBLEMAS MAŽOSIOS LIETUVOS DAINOSE IR JŲ KONTEKSTUS

Santrauka

Mažosios Lietuvos dainų melodijos mus pasiekia daugiausia notacijų pavidalu (o ne garso įrašų). Ar galime jomis besąlygiškai pasitikėti (ne tiek dėl galimų klaidų jose, kiek dėl to, kad jomis neįmanoma tinkamai perteikti subtilių dermės, intonavimo reiškinių)? Juk problemas, kylančias iš melodijų užrašymo standartinėje penklinėje, minėjo patys užrašytojai (nestabilus intonavimas, dainavimas „tarp natų“ ir pan.).

Norėdami atsakyti į šį klausimą, turime atlikti tam tikras užduotis. Pirma, turime apžvelgti muzikos suvokimo reiškinius (šiuo atveju – dermų ir intonavimo suvokimo). Čia svarbiausi yra eminių sistemų sandūros reiškiniai, t. y. kai klausytojas suvokia originalias dermes (šiuo atveju) lygiosios dvylikalaipsnės temperacijos (12TET) ribose. Antra, turėtume išnagrinėti gretimų muzikinių kultūrų pavyzdžius, kurių garso įrašai yra prieinami.

Lietuvių etnomuzikologai tradicinių dainų melodijose dažnai randa „graikiškas dermes“. Tačiau dažniausiai tokias išvalgas lemia nekorektiškos hibridinių dermių interpretacijos (nulemtos originalių dermių „pritempimo“ prie 12TET). Pažymėtina, kad statistiškai tose interpretacijose (ir ne tik lietuvių etnomuzikologų) dominuoja joniniai, miksolydiniai, eoliniai ir doriniai variantai; fryginių ir lydinių aptinkama rečiau. Tai nesunkiai paaiškinama tų hibridinių dermių suvokimu („pritempimas“ prie fryginių ir lydinių variantų mažiau tikėtinas negu prie kitų).

Kita eminių sistemų sandūros problema – klaidingas kategorizavimas, t. y. kai išorinio suvokėjo kategorijos neatitinka originalių kategorijų. Pavyzdys: kai originali garso aukščio kategorija yra plati, išorinis suvokėjas ją perskiria į dvi (pavyzdžiui, originalioje muzikos kalboje yra apibendrinta, neskiriama tercija, o 12TET respondentas ją skiria į mažąją ir didžiąją). Arba kitas pavyzdys: originalioje muzikos kalboje tercija yra neutralioji (tarpinė tarp didžiosios ir mažosios), dėl kategorijos pločio intonuojama šiek tiek žemiau ar aukščiau. 12TET respondentas tai nekorektiškai diferencijuoja – identifikuoja skirtingus mažosios ir didžiosios tercijos atvejus. Tai klaidingai interpretuojama kaip chromatizmai, dermėkaita, moduliacijos.

Atlikimo dėsningumai (angl. *performance rules*) lemia nežymų intonavimo kitimą priklausomai nuo melodinio ir harmoninio konteksto. Tai taip pat gali būti klaidingai interpretuojama kaip chromatizmai. Šis reiškinys aiškiai matomas Mažosios Lietuvos melodijų notacijose (Rėzos ir Bartscho rinkiniuose) – jose žymimi chromatizmai atitinka atlikimo dėsningumų tendencijas. Tokios pačios tendencijos matomos ir gretimoms Mažajai Lietuvai Suvalkijos dainų melodijose. Be to, yra išlikę nemažai šių dainų garso įrašų iš XX a. 4-ojo dešimtmečio, taigi šias tendencijas galima patikrinti eksperimentiškai – matuojant garsų aukščius. Buvo atlikti ir kitų lietuvių muzikinių dialektų, taip pat baltarusių ir ukrainiečių dainavimo pilotiniai akustiniai tyrimai – visur randamos tos pačios tendencijos. „Chromatinės“ versijos skiriasi mažiau nei pustoniu. Fiktyvių chromatizmų gali atsirasti ne tik dėl atlikimo dėsningumų, bet ir dėl minėtų plačių garso aukščio kategorijų.

Rimantas Astrauskas (2007) teigia, kad, užrašant Mažosios Lietuvos melodijas, veikiausiai papildomą poveikį turėjo klasikinės normos, t. y. sprendžiant, kaip užrašyti „netiksliai“ intonuojamą garsą, pasirenkama versija, kuri geriau atitinka klasikinį muzikinį mąstymą, yra estetiškesnė. Be to, Rimantas Sliužinskas, tyrinėjęs Mažosios Lietuvos liutvininkų liuteronų giesmes, pažymėjo, kad jos atliekamos savitai, nukrypstant nuo originalių (vokiškų) giesmių (Sliužinskas 2003, 169). „Jie negali perimti originalaus vokiško giedojimo stiliaus. Paprasti Lietuvos liuteronai iš Klaipėdos regiono modifikuoja melodijas arba tiesiog kuria naujas,

atitinkančias jų pačių muzikos sampratą“ (Sliužinskas 2026). Šios vertingos išvalgos skatina toliau tyrinėti Mažosios Lietuvos muzikinę kalbą, kuri, kaip aiškėja, yra sudėtingesnė, nei matoma notacijose.