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**Editorial address:**
Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore
Vanemuise 42–235
51003  Tartu
Estonia
phone:        +372  737 7740
fax:          +372  737 7706
e-mail:       folklore@folklore.ee
home page:  http://www.folklore.ee/folklore

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## BOOK REVIEWS

# INTRODUCING SETOS ON STAGE: ON THE EARLY PERFORMANCES OF SETO SINGING CULTURE

*Andreas Kalkun*

**Abstract:** The article introduces the choirs who were active in Räpina Parish, south-eastern Estonia, in the late nineteenth century, and toured Estonian towns with their concerts in which they impersonated Setos. The performances of the "Setos" were entertaining or commercial, and humorous dialogues and plays in the Seto language[1] or its imitation were as important as the music at these performances. The "Setos" and the "Seto language" were presented to the audiences as a curiosity next to other entertaining attractions. The performances of Seto culture by men from Räpina Parish followed the traditional models of representing exotic cultures at the time. On the one hand, the peculiar construction of Seto culture by the "Setos" from Räpina represented a revival of the imagined past and, on the other hand, it was a demonstration of ethnic culture foreshadowing the modern folklore movement in the commercial space between folk tradition and elite culture. The early performances of the Seto singing culture represent the searches coinciding with the period of national awakening in Estonia and the curious detours from own national heritage to explore the close Others, the Seto people, though in a very peculiar manner.

**Keywords:** commercial demonstration of Seto culture, impersonating Setos, Räpina Parish, Seto folklore, singing and drama societies

In September 2008, the Republic of Estonia submitted an application for the Seto polyphonic singing culture to be included in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. On 30 September 2009, the committee convened in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, and decided to inscribe 76 cultural phenomena, including the Seto *leelo*, or the Seto polyphonic singing culture, in the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The Seto singing culture became the third item from the Republic of Estonia to be included in this list.[2]

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, when knowledge of Seto culture reached the wider literate circles in Estonia through the mediation of folklorists and linguists,[3] the first performances of Seto culture and choir singing were organised on stage outside the Seto region. Curiously, though, instead of Setos,

the performers at these first staged performances of Seto music and culture outside their home region were Estonians impersonating Setos. According to several late nineteenth-century reports, some choirs from Räpina Parish in Võru County (i.e. the areas neighbouring the Seto region) performed in different parts of Estonia as Setos, wearing ethnic Seto clothes, performing music advertised as Seto folk music or humorous dialogues in the Seto language. Such cultural appropriation or fakelore-related demonstrations of Seto culture were organised outside the Seto region since their target audience were people who had not seen or heard it before and, for obvious reasons, there was no need for these in the Seto region where folklore lived its "first life". The performances were organised by Estonians who were able to see value in the uniqueness and exoticism of this "archaic" oral culture and quite adequately perceived which part of Seto culture would be appealing for and well-received by the audiences of other cultural backgrounds. The Estonians performing Seto culture probably knew well what needed to be done to adapt the lived tradition for the stage. This type of performance was usually commercial in nature as it was organised for profit or for raising funds for charity. The men from Räpina who performed as Setos also took part in the first Estonian song festivals (see Põldmäe 1969, 1976), which, regardless of the entertaining and commercial elements, were viewed as a serious patriotic activity.

After the incorporation of Seto areas in the Republic of Estonia in 1919, the polyphonic Seto choirs with their attractive ethnic clothing and "exotic" voices[4] were often chosen to represent the indigenous or traditional Estonian culture. From time to time there have been some pesky voices asking who the Seto women represent when they perform on stages in Paris or Helsinki. Is it Estonian or Seto culture? Why should Seto culture represent Estonian culture (see, e.g., Salve 2000: 55; Piho 2003)?[5] It is, however, even more difficult to answer the question about who the men from Räpina represented for the late nineteenth-century audiences as they travelled around the country performing these "Seto" songs and culture. Did they represent the "prehistoric Estonian culture" that was depicted through Setos, "the backward kin brothers" of Estonians, or simply some exotic and attractive Others, who were deployed for a comical effect for the Estonian audiences?

In the following I will introduce popular demonstrations of Seto culture and singing by non-Setos outside the Seto region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. My focus is on the displays of Seto singing culture organised for entertaining or commercial purposes. Information about the performances and concerts is traced in newspapers, memoirs, and contemporary documents. The article aims to identify the repertoire and performance style of the concert

performances, to introduce the discussions prompted by these performances, and the reception of "Setos" by the Estonian audiences. I will also explore the possible contexts and causes of this phenomenon.

## SETOS VS ESTONIANS FROM RÄPINA PARISH: THEIR IMAGE AND DIFFERENCES IN THE SINGING TRADITIONS AT THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In the nineteenth century, the prevalent theory was that Setos were Estonians who had once emigrated from their homeland to escape slavery and had been Russianised by the Russian Orthodox Church (Kreutzwald 1953: 105, 108; see also Lillak 2014; Hagu 1978: 618; Mägiste 1957: 170–173; Tampere 1956: 275–277). Researchers of language and folklore viewed Setos as "the perfect primal Estonians" with their preserved archaic quality, which would be useful in the studies of Estonian history and folklore (see Jääts 1998). In light of the theories about peoples' development at the time, it was believed that Setos were 100–200 years behind Estonians. Among folklorists, for example, Rudolf Põldmäe (1938: 3) explicitly claimed that Setos were a century behind Estonians in their "development", while folklorist Jakob Hurt (1989: 42) believed that the difference was at least a few hundred years. Hindrik Prants, a man of letters, folklore collector and history enthusiast, argued that Setos truthfully demonstrated the situation in which "our ancestors lived centuries ago" and that their language and customs were "largely" the kind known from thousands of years ago (Prants 2016 [1910]: 28). The "archaic" Seto folklore was believed to be the key to many questions related to Estonian folklore and history.

Although linguistically closely related,[6] Setos and their Lutheran neighbours in the early twentieth century were highly different in terms of educational or socio-economic circumstances. While at the end of the nineteenth century the Seto region was covered with a sparse Russian-language school network and the literacy rate among Setos was 0.6–0.9 percent (Lõuna 2003: 18), in Võru County literacy was relatively common. In the early twentieth century, the literacy rate increased also in the Seto region, but the difference with the Võru region was still significant. In 1926 the literacy rate among the population of Võru County aged 15 and above was 90 percent, whereas in the Seto region the literacy rate was 44 percent (Võrumaa 1926: 89).[7] The Livonian part of the Russian Empire with its Lutheran religion, network of schools, and a different economic situation contrasted with the Seto region in the Pskov area. When discussing Setos, intellectuals from Livonia preferred to underline the remarkable difference

between the two neighbouring "kinsfolk". In his ethnographic description of Setos (published in Russian and German), Jakob Hurt, for example, found it necessary to emphasise that, unlike Setos, their kinsfolk and adjacent neighbours, Estonians in Livonia, are "twentieth-century cultural people, through and through, with their vices and virtues" (Hurt 1903: 189). Throughout Jakob Hurt's writings, however, Setos are characterised as "primitive", although the term had a neutral connotation in the academic literature of the period, and it is used to describe both the nature of Setos and their religion. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the contrast between the close neighbours and kinsfolk was so stark that Jakob Hurt and Hindrik Prants had to explain in their popularising articles that Setos indeed were "our" close kindred people (see Hurt 1989: 147; Prants 2016 [1910]: 29).

When in the late nineteenth century folklore collectors argued that the archaic folklore was disappearing in Livonia, the Seto region was viewed as the "last stronghold" where old folk songs could still be found in abundance. Jakob Hurt argued that the songs of Estonians in Livonia were long forgotten whereas the "archaic" Seto folklore was still practised and as topical as daily bread.

> *These archaic songs and tales – long forgotten in Estonia and Livonia, set aside to a storage chamber like some useless and despised junk and brought out with considerable effort only by overly eager and tireless researchers – are still held in esteem in the land of Setos and are used in everyday life like daily bread is used to nurture one's body. The memories of Setos and their ancestors cannot be separated. In these memories, Setos search and find elevation to their joys and ending to their sorrows – the teachings of the forefathers are their Bible and reflect in their lives. So it is no wonder that scholars travel to the Seto region as for them this land is a golden well for getting to know the olden times and prehistoric things.* (Hurt 1904: V)

To use Lauri Honko's classical definition, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the singing tradition in the Seto region indeed lived its "first life" in the singing community. According to Honko, the first life of folklore is when folklore is not particularly noticeable, acknowledged or valued because it is an organic part of everything that is happening (see Honko 1990). The tradition did not have a name or clearly delineated subcategories and it was not emphasised for ideological purposes. Folklore lived its life and served its function in the cultural system and in rituals. Even though some rituals entailed a custom to pay to the performer of the tradition (e.g., paid wedding singers, donations to the lamenting bride, several songs for collecting money

at weddings), in most cases singing or dancing was not related to commercial transactions. The singing tradition was generally known but there were, no doubt, some who were more specialised in the tradition – in Seto culture, for example, wedding singers and the so-called *lauluimä'* or "mothers of song". With the arrival of folklore collectors and the intensifying recording of folk songs in the early twentieth century, changes slowly began to take place within the Seto singing culture. Things that had never happened before – such as women from a patriarchal Seto village singing to non-Seto men for money, performing songs to non-Seto audiences outside the ritual practices for economic or other reasons, etc. – started to take place (see Kalkun 2015: 157ff.; Kuutma 2006: 149).

In the immediate vicinity of the Seto region, Räpina Parish, the singing tradition had acquired completely different characteristics. The older folk song had been left to be transmitted by the marginal groups of a lower social status (elderly women, indigent and poorly educated peasants), whereas the choirs and brass bands representing newer and often borrowed tradition had become the more prestigious and prominent part of the music life in the parish. The (initially male) choirs of Räpina successfully participated in the first country-wide song festivals in Tartu (in 1869 and 1879) and in Tallinn (in 1880), and performed at regional singing events in Põlva (in 1855 and 1857) (see Karheiding 1925; Ritsing 1978, 1984: 136).[8] The choir was mainly composed of more educated members of the community (pastors, church sextons, and school teachers), but there were also less educated but ambitious peasants among the singers. The earliest choir active in Räpina Parish was the choir of schoolmasters of the Räpina urban settlement (led by a schoolteacher and church sexton Thomas Undritz), which operated in 1850–1897. Some time later (in 1879–1898), the male (at times also mixed) choir of Tooste (Toosikatsi/Toosekatsi) village started its activity under the lead of choral conductor Jakob Puksov, a schoolteacher by profession, but at times also that of Herman Julius Schmalz. For a shorter period, towards the end of the nineteenth century, a male choir led by Viido Kiudosk and church sexton Daniel Punnisson was active in Mehikoorma urban settlement (Karheiding 1925; Ritsing 1978, 1984).

In the late nineteenth century, folklore collectors and educated locals alike regarded the earlier singing tradition of Räpina Parish as something foreign and different. Owing to its unique features (the "archaic" nature, long texts with monotonic and repetitive musical structure) it was perceived as something similar to the Seto singing tradition. Regardless of that, when Jakob Hurt added folk songs collected from Räpina Parish in his monumental anthology of Seto folk songs,[9] the locals found it problematic. "The people of Räpina and Vast-seliina are not too keen on having them and their folk songs grouped together

with Seto songs," wrote a reviewer of the work, very likely representing many others who had been offended by being grouped together with the "backward" Setos (Reiman 1904: 291).


## ON THE EARLY DEMONSTRATIONS OF SETO CULTURE

The earliest instances of showcasing Seto customs, ethnic clothing, and songs outside the Seto region (by Setos themselves) have disappeared seemingly without a trace. The first precisely documented traces of the performances of real Seto choirs, or other demonstrations of Seto culture outside the Seto region by Setos themselves date back to the beginning of the twentieth century, and it seems that Setos had not been brought on stage before that. The first reports about the new ways of organising Seto choirs and singing outside the traditional environment can be found in the correspondence between Karl Usstav, an innovative priest from Tailova in Seto region, who fought for Setos to have school education, and folklorist Oskar Kallas. In 1911, the priest of Tailova informed Oskar Kallas about the visits of the Hungarian ethnologist Aldar Ban to study Seto ethnography, and the Finnish linguist Heikki Ojansuu to collect folk songs in the Seto region. Usstav mentions among other things: "I'm working hard with a Seto choir and plan to come to perform in Tartu the next summer" (EKLA, f 186, m 76:8, l 1/1).[10] The planned concert in Tartu most likely took place, because it is known that on May 16, 1912, some twenty or so Setos in festive clothes were brought to Tartu, where a celebratory event was held in Vanemuine Theatre to raise funds for the Estonian National Museum. The Setos who participated in the event were photographed for the museum's postcards by a Tartu photographer Woldemar Thomson (photographs No. 27–45 in the album of the Estonian National Museum; see Pildialbum 2008: 59ff.). The ensemble depicted on the postcards is captioned as "A choir of singers from Pechory", featuring not only portraits but also what appear to be scenes of demonstrations of wedding rituals, such as "The godfather is invited to the wedding", "The bride bows to godfather", "Fun at the wedding – nailing the horseshoe", "The bridal couple says farewell", "The bridal couple is taken to the sauna" (Fig. 1), etc.

Still, performances of groups who called themselves "Seto choirs" took place in Estonian cities and towns also in the nineteenth century. The first performances of Seto culture outside their home region had been held in the late nineteenth century, already before Jakob Hurt announced his famous call for

***Figure 1.*** *Setos in Vanemuine Theatre: "The bridal couple is taken to the sauna".*
*Photograph by Woldemar Thomson, 1912 (Estonian National Museum, ERM Fk 235:22).*

collecting folklore (in 1888) and years before the first volume of *Setukeste lau-
lud* ('Seto folk songs', Hurt 1904) was published. Thus, it is safe to agree that
it happened before the understanding of *vanavara* ('old treasures', as folklore
was called at the time) and of Seto folklore that something particularly archaic
and valuable had been mediated to the general public via newspapers. The
performances of choirs appearing as Setos followed the traditional model of
representing exotic peoples, their ethnic clothing and customs on stage. Show-
casing Setos could thus be viewed as a representation of the alienating and
exoticising of a minority group. Such performances, no doubt, shared semblance
with the colonialist showcasing and ethnographic performances of "primitive
tribes", and thus inherently entailed the less tactful representation exploiting
the Seto culture.

## DISPLAYS OF EXOTIC CULTURES IN THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY ESTONIAN TOWNS

Musicologists and historians have studied the concerts and staged plays organised in different parts of Estonia in the nineteenth century (see, e.g., Lippus 2008; Rohtla 2005, 2006). Next to the high culture of the elite, the research has also covered, for example, musical performances held at home (Lippus 2012), whereas circus performances, entertainment offered at local fairs, and displays of exotic peoples and cultures have not been studied thus far. Having briefly browsed the nineteenth-century Estonian newspapers, I have found evidence that the displays of exotic cultures were a popular form of entertainment at the time. In the following I bring as an example of commercial demonstrating of exotic cultures an overview of media representations of the performances of black-skinned ensembles.[11] This was clearly not a phenomenon specific only to Estonia; instead, what happened on the territory of Estonia was a modest reflection of what happened in the major centres of the tsarist empire. For example, it is obvious that the performances of so-called "Negroes" in Tallinn, Tartu, and Viljandi were only single stops on longer tours in the cities of the Russian Empire. Occasionally, such demonstrations of exotic cultures or circus performances held in St. Petersburg made news also in the sensational foreign reports section of Estonian-language newspapers.

> *A choir of Negroes is giving concerts in the hall of the credit society, and they attract large crowds. They say that the Negroes' singing is so in tune and beautifully precise that people have rarely heard such nice singing here before. The national songs that the Negroes perform among other repertoire are reportedly quite peculiar.* (Postimees 1895a: 2)

Nevertheless, it is likely that not many of such groups demonstrating exotic peoples for commercial purposes performed in Estonia before the second part of the nineteenth century, as at least the promotional advertisements sometimes emphasised the fact that it was, for example, the "Negroes'" very first visit.

> *On the 10th day of this month and perhaps also later, four Negroes from America will be singing at a concert in the [Tartu] townspeople's club. This is indeed the first time that Negroes are giving a concert in this town. We have heard Negroes singing in Germany; it was very beautiful. Maybe it will be the same here. Black men have often very beautiful voices. And perhaps it is worth listening to them here as well. They would not come and give a concert in a land so far away if they were not fine singers.* (Eesti Postimees 1882: 4)

The performances of the "Negro" culture and music were organised either in the open air (e.g., behind the Coastal Gate or the Harju Gate of the city wall of Tallinn) or in the rented rooms of various German societies (e.g., the German artisans' society or the townspeople's club in Tartu, or the farmers' society in Viljandi). At the open air performances also exotic animals were shown, and the advertisements characterise the foreigners as "funny", "peculiar", "wondrous", and "uneasy-making".

> *This year, the people of Tallinn have a chance to see something rather peculiar behind the Coastal Gate. A group of black men, about 20 of them, full-bred Negroes from Ashanti and its neighbourhood, will be performing their humour and antics, which are rather wondrous and uneasy for our people to see. They have also brought rather many tropical animals with them – elephants, camels, etc.* (Postimees 1889: 3)

The reviews of such concerts sometimes gave overviews of the cultures the performers represented, which were obviously typically prejudiced and disparaging. For example, a review of a concert held in Tallinn emphasised the demonstrated "heathen" practices, the performers' lack of education, and even cannibalism.[12] "They are Negroes, very ill-educated people, among whom human sacrifice and other heathen atrocities are still practised" (Tallinna Sõber 1889: 3). Like elsewhere in Europe, such performances were combined with freak shows and circus acts; at the Tallinn event in 1889, for example, also "dwarfs" performed in a play next to the "Negroes", and there were strongmen and other performers providing entertainment for people. The representatives of exotic cultures were probably also eroticised for the stage – for example, an advertisement of the performance of "Negroes" in Tartu emphasised the scanty clothing worn by the latter:

> *The boys from dark hell, the men of the black country will be performing for a couple of days starting from Tuesday, 10th of October, at 3, 5, and 9 p.m. in the rooms kindly provided by the German artisans' society. Negroes from the Pepper Coast in the land of Africa! Under the lead of Nanna Kru King's son, "Prince Kwente Nimsa", you'll see the peculiar dances, spear throwing, sword and knife fights, fist fights, etc. of their faraway homeland, accompanied by the scantily clad dark pagan boys' singing and praying to their gods. Tickets 50 and 35 kopecks. Children's tickets 25 and 15 kopecks. Director Albert Urbach.* (Postimees 1895b: 4)

The significant number and differences of ensembles presenting exotic cultures are further confirmed in the discussions over the groups' authenticity in the

reviews of the performances. After a concert held in 1884 in Viljandi, a reviewer doubts whether the performers who advertised themselves as "Negroes" were in fact what they claimed to be. As the performers spoke fluent Russian, the reviewer believes they were Russian Gypsies instead, and not at all as exotic, and so the reviewer feels ripped off (Sakala 1884: 2). The advertisement published before the performance of "the Negroes of Nanna Kru" assures spectators of the performers' exotic descent: "These are true African people and their dances and ethnic games are from the land of Africa, not impersonation" (Postimees 1895c: 3).



***Figure 2.*** *The choir of Tooste singing and drama society. Photograph by Reinhold Sachker, 1894 (Estonian National Museum, ERM Fk 1235:37).*

## MEN FROM RÄPINA PARISH IMPERSONATING SETOS

As unexpected as it may be, evidently some Estonian choirs that were active in Räpina Parish performed as Setos on a regular basis in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At such performances, the choirs wore Seto clothing, sang songs that were called Seto songs, danced folk dances and acted out humorous dialogues, sometimes even plays, in the Seto language. The activities of the choir of Tooste (Toosikatsi) singing and drama society are the best documented ones (the choir was active in 1879–1898; see Ritsing 1978; Karheiding 1925: 71). The choir started out as a double quartet and had only male singers. Later on, occasionally also female singers sung with the choir (Fig. 2).

The existing chronicle of the choir[13] as well as people's memoirs about the choir's activities indicate that at one point the more important performances of the choir involved acting as Setos and performing Seto culture. In the following I will take a closer look at the choir's activities focusing on an 1886 performance of the choir in Tartu. This was, by all appearances, a very important performance in the history of the choir, as it is later discussed both in personal recollections and in overviews of the choir's activities. A close reading of the information available about the performance could possibly give some idea about the creative aspirations and the performance repertoire of the "Seto choir", but also the objectives and ideology behind such performances. An early account on the history of choir singing in Räpina Parish by Karheiding reads as follows:

> *The Tooste choir sometimes performed under the name of the "Seto choir" and they were often dressed in Seto clothing at these performances. The more important events were:*
> *1) A couple of folk celebrations in Tartu. During one performance they danced a Seto circle game, during another a Seto play was staged at the Vanemuine Theatre on two nights in succession, followed by dancing. The young men in Tartu were very willing to dance with the "Seto" girls. Mr. Listakind, one of the "Setos", could not help himself and danced so vehemently that when he left the theatre building and stepped out on the street, he felt that his feet were cold: it turned out that his dancing had worn out his traditional leather shoes and foot wraps. At a festivity in Tartu, Jakob Puksov gave a speech in the Seto dialect over a "bad dream", in which he ridiculed Grenzstein, as he, like many other young people at the time, sided with Jakobson.[14] They were paid for the performances (one time 15 roubles by the Vanemuine Theatre, once 10 roubles by Johanson from Luke manor, etc.) and once received the third prize.*

*2) A song festival.*
*3) A singing and folk festival in Tallinn, performing a play in Seto clothes.*
(Karheiding 1925: 71)

This fragment of a recollection gives some idea of the geographical scope of the choir's performances and the nature of the programmes of the Estonians performing as a Seto choir. They performed to large crowds in larger towns; some events were highly prestigious ones (song festivals) and the performances were chargeable. Dancing with the audience and funny plays were of equal importance with singing. The abovementioned "speech" by Jakob Puksov (a long-term choir leader) was probably more like a stand-up comedy or monodrama, joking about topical politics (see Aabrams 2016). Advertisements of the "Setos'" performances in the newspapers of the period also give some idea of their context and style. The performance of the Tooste choir at the folk festivity of the Vanemuine Society in Tartu, on 17 August 1886, was highlighted as a unique event and promoted as Setos' very first visit to Tartu.[15] The advertisement also mentions the ethnic clothing, the Seto language, and emphasises that the songs and plays to be performed would be funny.

> *Setos in Tartu for the first time ever – wearing national clothes, singing many funny songs and telling humorous tales in the Seto language!* (Postimees 1886a: 4)

The programme of the folk festivity was structured in the way that the performances of single and joint choirs and orchestras were followed by various other attractions, such as a "silent play", moving pictures, farces by actors of the Vanemuine Theatre, a circus show with trained horses and an Indian elephant, etc. According to the advertisement, Setos took the floor after the entertainment, right before the flower auction and carousel ride. A review of the concert in the next issue of the newspaper *Postimees* ('The Courier') praised the great celebration and announced that the Seto choir was awarded the third prize among male choirs in the choir singing contest of 22 choirs.

> *Now it is time to focus on the singing contest in which altogether 22 choirs participated. The choirs here were given sufficient time to show how proficient they had become in the sweet art of singing. Among the mixed choirs, the 1st prize was awarded to the Kõrveküla mixed choir, the 2nd prize to the Kardla mixed choir, and the 3rd prize to the Kärevere mixed choir; of the male choirs, the 1st prize was given to the Kavilda male choir, the 2nd prize to the Suur-Konguta male choir, and the 3rd prize to the Setos' male choir.* (Postimees 1886b: 1)

So, evidently, the Seto choir was not only part of the exotic entertainment besides an Indian elephant and trained horses but also participated in the serious choir singing contest. The programme of the joint choirs' concert featured, among other things, choir songs by Estonian composers in German *Liedertafel* style.[16] Performing these songs certainly required special preparation and experience in singing European choral music. The chronicle of the choir also reveals that at this Tartu performance, the Tooste men who performed as the "Seto choir" enjoyed great popularity both when singing the European choir music and in the later performance of folk songs.

## TRADITIONAL SETO CLOTHES AS EXOTIC SHOW COSTUMES

Even though in most cases the Tooste choir performed as a male choir (they also competed in the category of male choirs), it appears that in the more entertaining part of the aforementioned Tartu event they performed also as a mixed choir. Namely, the reviewer of the event expressed approval about using ethnic clothing at the event and mentioned that the young women in the choir wore very beautiful and unique ethnic costumes.[17] Both the concert advertisement and the review highlight the exotic clothing of the Seto choir. The traditional clothing thus played an important role in the transformation process. The chronicle of the Tooste singing and drama society choir does not reveal the reasons why they chose to perform as Setos, but a chronicle entry from 1886 mentions that the choir performed "under the name of the Seto choir" at the event of the
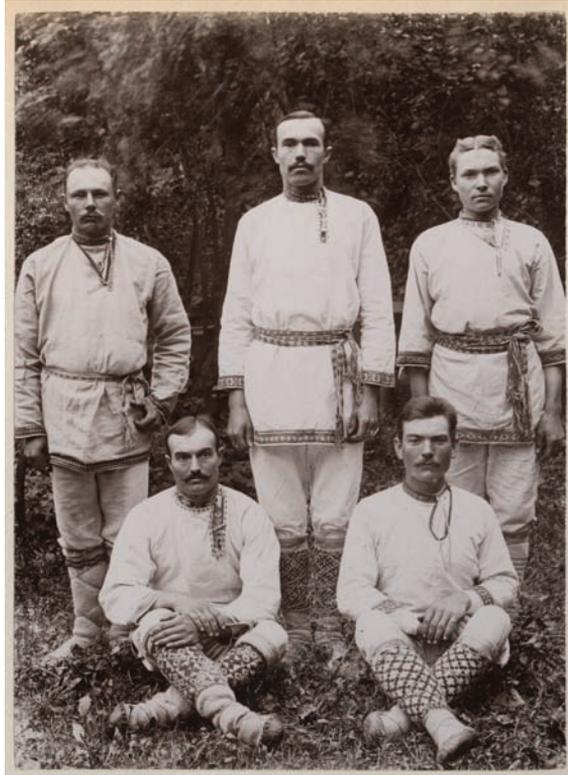


*Figure 3.* "Seto choir". Photograph by Heinrich Tiidermann (Estonian History Museum, F 11684:136).

*Figure 4. "Seto choir". Photograph by Heinrich Tiidermann (Estonian History Museum, F 11684:153).*



*Figure 5. "Seto choir". Photograph by Heinrich Tiidermann (Estonian History Museum, F 11684:155).*

Vanemuine Society and at Luke manor, and sung Seto songs while wearing Seto clothing.[18]

The choir's chronicle reveals that the clothing had been purchased from Seto people by A. Zernask, who was suspected of having profited from the deal. Zernask was later evicted from the choir, but the chronicle does not say whether it was because of this suspicious clothing purchase or some other misdeed.

> *This A. Zernask has spent much money on Seto clothes and the Setos are saying that this is not right. This is why Jakob Song and Joosep Puksov were delegated to get the money from Zernask and make him accountable before the society about how much money he has spent. Whatever they can get back from Zernask, they can keep half of it and the society gets the other half. They will have to deal with it within a fortnight.* (EKLA, f 169, m 152:1, l 16p)

Already the procurement of these Seto clothes raised the issue of their authenticity because Setos had criticised the clothing worn by the choir from Räpina Parish, claiming these to be "incorrect" ones. Photographs depicting the Tooste choir indeed show that the Estonian women did not know how to correctly tie the headdress of married Seto women and, also, their costumes were a peculiar mix of everyday and festive Seto clothing (see Figs. 2–5). The clothes of the choir seem to aspire to certain unity, because all the men in the photographs are dressed in long woollen Seto coats. These Estonian men, dressed uniformly in Seto long coats, have been believed to be so "Seto-esque" that the photo depicting the fake Setos from Tooste has been later repeatedly captioned as "Seto men". Interestingly, they have appeared most recently on a postcard issued by the Estonian National Museum. Thus the respectable gentlemen in white coats and patterned knee-socks have appeared to be more authentic and "truer" than the real Seto men of the period, as the latter used to wear much more versatile clothing.

Evidence of the fact that the choirs of Räpina Parish impersonated Setos already before the Tooste choir's performances is an 1880 letter by Viido Kiudosk, a choir conductor from Mehikoorma, to the organising committee of the third nationwide song festival. Namely, singers from Mehikoorma expressed their wish to organise solo concerts where they would perform clothed as Setos. The choir leader wrote of their plan to "put on a concert of the old songs of the Estonian people, dressed in old Estonian ethnic clothes, or, as we would say – a Seto concert and Seto clothes". Kiudosk referred to this performance as "a little joke" that would enrich the festivities[19].

Recollections of the contemporaries also reveal that the traditional Seto clothing was used by the Räpina choirs only as an attractive performance costume

to underline the ethnic, archaic or "authentic" quality of the repertoire. For example, some recall a performance in Tallinn which had almost failed for the reason that the choir had been commissioned to perform in ethnic clothes but they had not brought these along. Apparently, so little was known about Setos that their traditional clothing could be replaced with any other exotic ethnic clothing and it had no effect on the performance of Räpina singers whatsoever.

> *At a folk festivity in Tallinn there was a farcical situation with the Seto clothes. They had not procured Seto clothes this time even though they had promised to perform at some garden party in Kadriorg in ethnic clothing. So there was nothing else to do but to borrow ethnic clothes from the brass ensemble of Iisaku and perform in these as if they were their own.* (Karheiding 1925: 71)

Introducing foreign culture in exotic ethnic clothing was clearly related to the widely common practices of representing foreign and "primitive" cultures. According to the extant sources, at least some members of the Tooste choir have discussed their activities in this light. The most remarkable example of this is a letter from Hermann Julius Schmalz (1870–1945), member of the choir, to Jakob Hurt. As it appears, Schmalz tried to organise a visit to St. Petersburg after the successful performances at Vanemuine and Estonia theatres in 1886. Schmalz had chosen the famous Ciniselli Circus as the most suitable place for a concert and so he proposed Jakob Hurt, then a pastor residing in St. Petersburg, that he helped organise the "Seto choir" performances for a month in-between the circus shows.

> *As I was visiting folk festivities with my "Seto" choir last year, in 1886, upon the recurrent requests of the societies of the Estonia Theatre in Tallinn and Vanemuine Theatre in Tartu, entertaining people with the songs and dances of Setos, it appeared that the people liked the said songs and dances particularly well as the ovations would not stop after each performance! The newspapers of Tallinn highly praised Setos as well. Realising that, I was suggested by many important men to make this very entertaining and interesting humour available to audiences in larger places; among others the Estonian societies in St. Petersburg were mentioned.* [---]
>
> *He advised me: I should try to make a deal with the Ciniselli Circus in the capital. He said: there were often various people performing ethnic songs and dances in their ethnic clothing! It could be possible – if a deal was made with the director – that we would be accepted as part of the circus for a few weeks and be paid a worthy fee for our efforts.* [---]

> *Would you be so kind as to help me by handling the negotiations with the director of Ciniselli and pass on to him our requests and conditions which would be more or less the following: He would include us at least for a week – even better if for longer – in his circus department and we would perform every night – between other shows – with our Seto songs and dances and would be paid a certain share, or percentage, of the night's profits.* [---][20] (EKLA, f 43, m 20:51, l 1/1)

Schmalz regarded the Seto performances as an exotic attraction, the value of which for him was that it would "paint a truthful picture of the life of our ancestors and of olden times, because, as it is known, Setos come from the ancient tribe of Estonians" (ibid.). Thus Schmalz was informed of the theories of the time that viewed Setos as Estonians on a lower level of development. Setos (or, to be more precise, Estonians dressed as Setos) personified the "awkward" relatives stuck in the archaic "level of development" but possessing exposition value as something foreign and exotic. In his letter to Hurt, Schmalz describes the pleasant attention and havoc that the choir had caused by performing as Setos in Estonian towns.

> *I certainly hope that the attendance at the circus would be much greater if an authentic Seto coat and a peculiar person therein performed there. We saw how the Seto clothing caught attention when people were curiously watching us on the streets of Tallinn; the townsfolk slowed down the horsecars so that they could look at the white Seto coats and patterned knee-socks…* [---]
>
> *We also often laughed at how the townsfolk spoke about us among themselves; some said: 'Es sind kleinrussländer,' while others said "'Finnen" oder "Mongolen'". We heard also many other names about us, such as "Caucasian mountain people", etc.* [---][21] (EKLA, f 43, m 20:51, l 1/2, 1/3)

## HUMOROUS DIALOGUES IN A PECULIAR LANGUAGE AND "ARCHAIC" SONGS

Funny dialogues acted out in the Seto language, or imitating the language, sometimes expanding to the scope of a play, probably shared an equal role with music in the programme of southern Estonians performing as Setos. The "Setos" and the "Seto language" were presented to the audiences as a curiosity next to other entertaining attractions. Besides Setos, a party programme would feature, for instance, a "contortionist (a boneless man)" or a strongman

"who can lift 3 men with one arm and walk around on the stage holding them overhead", etc., and the event concluded with "grand fireworks" (Postimees 1897b: 4). It is understandable that the Seto dialogues performed in this context served entertaining purposes and had to be funny, easily comprehensible, and present Seto culture in a simplistic (or often clearly mocking) manner to capture the hearts of Estonian audiences.

It is probably not a coincidence that the most famous author of popular books in the Seto language, Hermann Julius Schmalz, grew out of this Tooste choir.[22] At the turn of the century, Schmalz published five books in the Seto language (Schmalz 2013), the most famous of which is a ballad of the tragicomical adventures of a Seto man, titled *Tõganitsa Höödo naise võtmise ja tarõ palamise lugu* ('The story of Feodor of Tõganitsa, his finding a wife and the burning house', 1899).[23] Schmalz's texts are probably closely related to the oral performance, that is, all of these contain direct and indirect references to the performances of the texts.[24] The genre of the texts varies but all contain abundant humorous dialogues and reflect relevant topical events. It is quite possible that some of these works were performed at the concerts of Räpina "Setos" from Räpina Parish. The language used by Schmalz clearly shows the specific features of the Räpina variety (e.g., lengthening or monophthongising of diphthongs), but he has also added many Russian loan words to make it sound more "Seto-like", and also for the comical effect. The humorous "Seto books" by Schmalz make rather rude jokes about Setos, who are depicted as cheerful and active "children of nature" who have an opinion about everything but whose ignorance and poor level of education leads them to disasters. In a newspaper advertisement of one of his Seto books, Schmalz introduces Setos and their language as follows: "The personality of a Seto is the same as that of *Kilplased*, while the dialect is funny in itself"[25] (Schmalz 1901: 4), which well summarises the programme and rhetoric of his works.

Schmalz's highly popular, undemanding and simple books probably caused a certain boom in the Estonian book market in the early twentieth century, when several humorous books in the Seto language were published in succession.[26] The books in the Seto language were closely connected with the Seto storytelling tradition, and in many cases it is difficult to tell whether a text is a piece of folklore recorded in writing or a new creation. The most famous Estonian author to follow this trend was artist and writer Jaan Vahtra (1882–1947), who for a short while (in 1906) travelled together with Schmalz's "Seto choir". Vahtra published a collection of humorous tales on the Seto theme, titled *Seto nali* ('Seto joke', 1905), and the inspiration behind these was very likely the

performed plays in the Seto language.[27] One play performed by the Räpina parish choirs acting as Setos has survived in manuscript form and is even older than the "Seto" texts by Schmalz and Vahtra – *Mardisandid: Settu naljamäng lauludega kolmes vaates* ('Martinmas Mummers: Seto farce with songs in three acts', 1886)[28] by the later leader of Mehikoorma singing and drama society, Viido Kiudosk. The chronicles of the Tooste singing and drama society passingly mention the performance of this play:

> *On two evenings in the month of February 1887, the Toosikatsi choir performed a play in the Vanemuine theatre hall in Tartu. They played the farce 'Martinmas Mummers', poeticised by Kiudosk in the Seto dialect. Krumpann's zither ensemble played during the intermissions. On the first evening the audience crowded the hall, on the second evening the attendance was more modest. The audience seemed to like the play and acting a great deal, showing it with their loud laughter and applause. The cast included: Joosep Puksov, Joosep and Jakob Songi, H. Andressoon, Peeter and Kustav Kirotar, Peeter Ritsland, H. Zernask, Leena Kiisk, and A. Nass. The event ended with dancing. Although profits of the evening were good, Krumpmann cheated the actors with their pay.* (EKLA, f 169, m 152:1, l 43)

The unpublished manuscript of Viido Kiudosk's play with songs, *Martinmas Mummers* (see EKLA, f 151, m 10:5), is an important source in studying performances of Seto culture because the manuscript concludes with notations of the "Seto songs" performed as part of the play. Even so, these are not the only traces of the repertoire of "Seto choirs", because the second reprint of Schmalz's humorous pamphlet, *Mia tõmokraat tähendäs* ('What a democrat is') in the Seto language also contains the notation of a popular south-Estonian two-part song *Kulla imä, zirgu imä* ('Dear mother, dear birdie'); also, the choir singing repertoire of the region is represented by the manuscript of *Neli näitelaulu* ('Four songs from plays') by Viido Kiudosk.[29] The *Martinmas Mummers* play, however, includes a number of songs – altogether 11 notations. The majority of these so-called Seto songs are, in fact, rather regular songs of the earlier type from Räpina Parish. Some songs are presented as an arrangement for four voices, for the others only the lead singer's part and its repetition are included, whereas the repetition is often given as a choir part. While some of the polyphonic adaptations are clearly representative of the newer choir singing tradition, i.e. they are not related to the traditional polyphonic styles known in the Seto region or southern Estonia, other songs seem to represent a slightly adapted version of unique polyphony of Räpina Parish.[30]

In his letter to Hurt, Hermann Julius Schmalz also promotes the songs of the "Seto choir" as three- or four-part songs. Lyrics of the songs played an important role and Schmalz has described these as "interesting", "unique", and "funny". Depending on the contents, the songs were sung either by a male choir or a mixed choir.

> *Dances are usually performed in two ways: accompanied by an instrument (accordion) or by singing. The song is written for 3 to 4 voices, has very interesting lyrics, and those who can understand them find them truly unique and funny to listen to. While I visited the folk festivities only with the male choir, I would now like to take some women along as well because singing and dancing is much more appealing with them. I would take about 8 to 10 people.*[31] (EKLA, f 43, m 20:51, l 1/3)

In addition to the adaptations of traditional songs from Räpina, also popular songs by local composers were performed at such concerts. The repertoire of Estonian popular songs still includes some songs on the Seto theme composed by Schmalz (see Kõivupuu 1999; Kolk 2013). Jaan Vahtra recalls in his memoirs how they sang with Schmalz's "Seto choir" the song *Setokõsõ sõidiva* ('Setos took a ride'), one of Schmalz's own creations, and an older folk song well known in Võru County, *Tuup viina tuudi, tuudi* ('A stoup of vodka was brought').

> *I remember that the mixed quartet performed such peculiar songs as: 'Setokõsõ sõidiva' and 'Tuup viina tuudi, tuudi'. Let me note at this point that the former was purely Hermann Juulius Schmalz's creation, both the lyrics and the tune. The second song is most likely an old folk song from Võru County, with lyrics adapted, revised, and improved by Schmalz.* (Vahtra 1935: 193–196)

The song lyrics harmonised with the humorous dialogues, and were often used for a comical effect. By the end of the nineteenth century, folk songs and their adaptations had become a valued national heritage for the nationally minded audience. The popular national repertoire would include music of widely varying age and origin and authored creation, but was highly valued among Estonian-minded audiences. The reviews of the Räpina choirs performing as Setos also indicate that these concert shows in ethnic clothing were popular largely due to their national character and supposed "authenticity". For example, following a performance in Tartu, a reviewer commended the use of folk tunes and the modern polyphonic arrangement characteristic of folk songs. The practical purpose and humour of "ancient" song texts were once again mentioned in relation with the Seto choir.

*It is particularly gratifying that Estonian folk tunes are already being sung by performers. Estonian folk tunes, somewhat expanded and with other voice parts added, were sung by the Kõrveküla mixed choir when they won their first prize. These funny but also practical folk songs were sung by the Seto choir who were highly praised for that.* (Postimees 1886b: 2)

## ON THE CRITICAL RECEPTION OF THE "SETO" CHOIRS

According to the information that could be traced in the newspapers of the period, and the choir's chronicle, at the turn of the twentieth century the choir of the Tooste singing and drama society, or its reduced ensembles, performed, in Seto clothing, with great success at the major folk festivities of the Vanemuine and Estonia societies in Tallinn and Tartu. They also appeared on stage elsewhere in the country, reportedly in Pärnu, Viljandi, Kuressaare, Valga, Rakvere, Tapa, Ambla, Jõgeveste, Äksi, Voldi, Tõrva, Kaagvere, Jõgeva, Põltsamaa, Kavastu-Koosa, Krüüdneri, Ulila, etc.

While the wide range of places where the choir performed indicates that the performances were profitable, the choir was not always very amicably welcomed. The negative critique was mostly targeted at the old and boring songs on the one hand (even though other critics praised these as ancient and "authentic"), but on the other hand the discontent may have been caused by the disrespect for the Seto people and the fact that there were no actual Setos in the advertised Seto choir.

A typical critic who was not familiar with older folk songs and the arrangements complained that the songs were too long and repetitive and the tunes were monotonous. The old songs were thought to be boring and gloomy. The reviewer of the concert at Tapa had expected to hear newer songs and wondered why such humorous lyrics were sung to sombre melodies.

*The Seto brothers gave a concert here on the 12th day of this month. Since it was organised late in the evening, when it was already dark outside, not many people were attending. One could be somewhat satisfied with the performance of the songs, but since the melodies were like old melodies tend to be, that is, very monotonous, and the same song words were repeated over and over, and the words were funny but the melodies sombre, they did not go at all well together. The concert would have been much livelier and more popular if Mr. Schmalz had bothered to include some newer songs among the old ones. From the very first songs, the audience*

> *made too much noise with clapping and stomping, so that the performers thought that they were asked for an encore and, for no reason, repeated several songs, which was very awkward and embarrassing to hear.* [---] *It would probably have been better if the choir leader had excluded the tale about the death of the gelding and the burden of sin entirely from the performance.* (Postimees 1899: 3)

Along with the repertoire, the criticism also targeted the performance style. Apparently, performing as Setos involved making strange gestures or acting out and humorous mimicking of certain physical "Seto" qualities. Many reviewers describe how the choir performed "Seto songs" to peculiar movements. Depending on the critic, it was referred to as funny or ridiculous stupidity. Reviewers of the concert in Valga, for example, have many positive things to say about the choir but are critical of the "boring" old melodies and certain lapses in taste. We learn about the songs in the repertoire and that the singers moved in a strange way during the performance.

> *In the first part, the songs and especially dances were received with great ovations. In the second part, the distasteful ending of the song 'Lüü iks pille peeno huuli'* ['Play the instrument, gentle lips!'] *put off the audience, whereas the songs 'Pini handa höörätõlli'* ['The dog swirled its tail'] *and especially 'Keresse Ivvo ruuna hingeheitmise lugu'* ['The story of how Ivvo of Keresse's gelding died'] *with their very peculiar words and also funny melodies drew a never-ending applause until they were repeated. The concert is worth visiting for this one song only. In the third part, the audience wished that the verses of the song 'Neiukõsõ noorõkõsõ'* ['Dear maidens, the young ones'] *would be shorter, because with such length and the rather unvaried melody it seemed boring. But all the more interesting was the following song 'Rikas raha raputõlli'* ['The rich man showed off his money'] *because of the strange bodily movements of the singers.* (Eesti Postimees 1897: 2)

Besides the criticism of the choir and the performance, some also concerned themselves with the fact that the choir performed as Setos. The critique was not only targeted at the representation of Setos and ethical issues but was prompted by the fact that the choir's performing as Setos was for some reason found inauthentic. A reason for that could have been not Seto-like (or too fancy) costumes, poor use of the Seto language, or dancing that did not resemble that of Setos.

> *On 13 August, a concert of the so-called "Seto mixed choir of Räpina"*
> *conducted by Mr. H. J. Schmalz was held at Woldi. [---] The singers were*
> *supposed to perform in Seto ethnic clothes, but they appeared on stage in*
> *fancy boots and posh store-bought hats. The speech and language of the*
> *characters revealed that most of them do not even know who Setos are*
> *or how they live. [---] The song 'Keresse Iwwo ruuna hinge heitmise lugu'*
> ['The story of how Ivvo of Keresse's gelding died'] *went rather nicely. On*
> *the other hand, the "authentic Seto dance" had nothing in common with*
> *Seto dancing. All in all, the concert was not particularly entertaining or*
> *instructive, which justifies the general disappointment of the spectators*
> *after the concert.* (Postimees 1900: 3)

Jaan Vahtra's memoirs include an incident of how secondary school students,
who were present at the 1906 concert in Mulgi region, had shouted to the "Setos"
with hostility: "Go back to your Seto region!" When an event called "A funny
concert of Setos" was organised at Väike-Ulila manor in 1900 and it was ad-
vertised in the local newspaper *Olevik* (The Present), an anonymous reader
sent the newspaper an angry note in which he "disclosed" that the clowns who
performed all over the country as "the Seto choir of Räpina" were neither Setos
nor came from Räpina. The reader, probably from Räpina himself, found it con-
cerning that Räpina Parish was represented by the "crazy" Schmalz with his
group, who in such an inappropriate manner mixed up the culture of Lutheran
Räpina people with the "backward" Seto culture.

> *But since they are boasting that they come from "Great Räpina" and since*
> *the "Seto choir of Räpina" is currently giving concerts over there, I dare*
> *to say some words in this matter. To put it briefly, there is neither "Seto*
> *choir" nor any other public "choir" in Räpina at the moment. Räpina is*
> *not part of the Seto region, here people neither speak the Seto language*
> *nor wear Seto clothes. It is not at all right that some man from Räpina*
> *has brought along a man from Yuryew (Tartu), a Gypsy, or someone of*
> *other origin, and they parade together under the famous name of "Seto*
> *choir of Räpina". The leader of this "choir of frauds" should leave the*
> *name "Räpin" be and call his choir anything else that he chooses.* (Uus
> Aeg 1899: 3)

## IN CONCLUSION

### Performing as Setos: Modern nationalism and ethnographic surrealism

At the beginning of the twentieth century, several manifestations of folklore flourished in Estonia, people viewed borrowed cultural phenomena critically, the studying of early cultural tradition was initiated, and attempts were made to construe "authentic" Estonian folk music and dance culture (see Lippus & Steinbach 2009: 114ff.; Kapper 2013). Initially it meant embedding elements picked from the early tradition, which for some reason were considered Estonian, into German or Russian style "European" music, dancing or art. In order to finance national museums and societies, however, people started to organise popular fundraising events and concerts, which among other acts featured country people in ethnic clothes, who had been brought to town to perform oral rural music tradition in a new urban setting (see Pulst 2014; Õunapuu 2011).[32] Institutions involved in studying folklore also took part in such activities as they started to define and safeguard the line between adapted folklore and national and "genuine" tradition.

Who is qualified to perform culture is a heavily loaded question that has elicited varying responses throughout history (see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 75; 1988). In the late nineteenth century, when the choirs of Räpina Parish travelled around performing as Setos, the boundaries of genuine tradition, a revival, fakelore, or elite culture were not exactly where they became established over the course of the twentieth century. Modern phenomena, such as the budding Estonian national awareness and a search for the roots of Estonian culture, the processes of defining its boundaries and establishment, became mixed with earlier phenomena, such as the colonialist demonstration and abuse of exotic cultures for entertaining purposes. In the development of Estonian national culture, the choirs of Räpina Parish represented an important institution – a singing choir and a cultural society consisting of Estonians; and via these organisations *par excellence*, the national movement reached from the elite to the "ordinary" people (see Jansen 2007: 406ff.). On the one hand, these choirs from a peripheral location emulated the modern and national choir-singing and society movement, which took place elsewhere in Estonia, but on the other hand they imitated the age-old and familiar models of performing colonialist foreign cultures or the freak shows at fairs and circus performances.

The exoticising and entertaining or commercial demonstration of the culture of Setos, close neighbours of Estonians, did not cause major ethical problems at

the time, and it was considered sufficiently presentable. Setos were still largely illiterate at the time and they had no "voice" to comment on or criticise the performance or representations of their culture (see Kalkun 2015). While today the issues of cultural appropriation and presentation of small and indigenous peoples continue to be relevant and very acute, performing as Setos in the late nineteenth-century Estonia prompted no major discussion. Over the course of the twentieth century, the traumatic histories of small and indigenous peoples became particularly topical, constantly triggering issues of rights and ethics – for example, who are allowed to sell their music as Tibetan music (Upton 2002); who is permitted to wear the traditional Sami clothing and represent the Sami (Valkonen 2009); to whom belongs the Nordic heritage in Scandinavia (Aronsson & Gradén 2013), and to whom belongs Seto folklore (Kalkun 2015; Kuutma 2012, 2009a, 2009b). However, in the nineteenth century these questions were not pondered on.

In a way, the performing of the Räpina choirs as Setos could be viewed as a very modern phenomenon. Folklorist Marju Kõivupuu (see Kõivupuu 1999) has referred to Schmalz's "Seto choir" as the first modern-day folk ensemble on Estonian soil. However, performing foreign folklore makes this *innocent* folk ensemble quite different from today's Estonian folk ensembles, who work hard to show their "own", inherited tradition. In the shows of the Räpina choir, the Seto culture was approached in a surrealistic fragmentary and contorted manner, representing the aesthetics that values fragments, curious collections, and unexpected juxtapositions (see Clifford 2002 [1988]: 117ff.), which was probably effective as a demonstration of an "exotic" and "peculiar" culture. The Estonians performing as Setos, who travelled in the nationally awakening Estonian towns and rural areas, making crude jokes, speaking a strange language, and wearing unusually matched traditional Seto clothes, in a sense associate with the term "ethnographic surrealism" coined by James Clifford. The "Setos" from Räpina creatively combined phenomena that were no longer acceptable a few decades later. The utopia they construed of the Seto culture combined the past and the future and operated in the commercial space between folk culture and elite culture.

Cultural appropriation and demonstrations of other cultures are always related to practical, ethical, political, and economic issues (see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1988: 149). The advertisement of the first-time introduction of Setos on stage by the Räpina choirs was, in fact, deception. It is possible that the general Estonian public was not prepared to see Setos without the added dressing of entertainment, and Setos themselves were not showcasing or exporting their "first life" of culture for outside audiences at the time. The early performances

of the Seto singing culture by Räpina parish choirs represent the searches coinciding with the period of national awakening in Estonia and the curious detours from own national heritage to explore the close Others, the Seto people, though in a very peculiar and alienating manner. Digging through the garbage of history enables us to date the beginning of the folklore movement in Estonia to an earlier time but also adds to the context of the early academic representations of Seto culture.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## NOTES

[1] In 2002, the Seto Council of Elders declared Setos as a separate people. In Estonia, there is a tendency to interpret the Setos as a segment of Estonians. Russia recognises Setos as an ethnic minority and, for example, unlike Estonian censuses, Russian censuses give Setos an option to identify themselves as Seto by ethnicity. Similarly, the Seto language has been generally viewed as a special variety of the South-Estonian dialect. Today, however, even Estonian linguists agree that Seto is a language, not a dialect. The Setos themselves regard it as a separate language.

[2] Today, next to the Seto polyphonic singing culture, the other cultural phenomena related to Estonia, included in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, are the song and dance celebrations in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the Kihnu cultural space, and the smoke sauna tradition in Võru County.

[3] Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald, who was among the first authors to write about Seto culture, mentions with pride in his 1848 article "Reports on folk songs among Estonians of the Pskov guberniya" that he was one of the first to place his scholarly foot on the surface of this nearby *terra incognita* (Kreutzwald 1953). The 1903 fieldwork in the Seto region, conducted by Jakob Hurt as a stipendiary of the Imperial Geographical Society, resulted in an article on Estonians in the Pskov region or Setos, published in Russian and German (Hurt 1903), and became a seminal text that strongly influenced all subsequent discourses about Setos (see Kalkun 2015).

[4] Seto multipart singing differs from the polyphonic singing known in the neighbouring areas, and the early Seto music features highly rare scales, in which semitone intervals alternate with three semitone intervals (see Pärtlas 2010; Ambrazevičius & Pärtlas 2011; Pärtlas & Oras 2012). This is why Seto music is very different from the neighbouring Estonian or Russian folk music also in objective terms.

[5] Folklorist Kristi Salve, for example, asks: "When we read about the singing of Seto women in Germany or Russia, on the stages of Paris or Helsinki, it inevitably makes one wonder what they actually represent, what they symbolise – the ancient singing culture of their ethnic group or, perhaps, even that of the whole Estonia" (Salve 2000: 55).

[6] In Estonian linguistics Võro and Seto languages have been traditionally considered varieties of the Võru dialect.

[7] It must be noted here that Setos' poor literacy in the nineteenth century does not mean that at that time Seto culture remained unaffected by the written culture, at least to some extent (see Toomeos-Orglaan 2015; Kalkun 2015).

[8] The three choirs of Räpina parish were related to each other and some of the members sung in different choirs at different times. Viido Kiudosk, for example, was the conductor of the Mehikoorma choir, but his plays were performed also by the Tooste choir. At different times, journalists referred to choirs of different compositions by the name "Räpina choir" or "Seto choir", and some choirs, indeed, changed their name in the meantime. The aim of this article is not to determine the precise and detailed relations between the different choirs but to observe the phenomenon in more general terms.

[9] The anthology was titled *Setukeste laulud* ('Seto Folk Songs') but the subtitle (Old Songs of Estonians from Pskov with Songs from Räpina and Vastseliina Parishes) explained that next to the songs of Setos, who are referred to as Estonians from Pskov, it included also folk songs from the Livonian parishes of Räpina and Vastseliina.

[10] Usstav's letter to Kallas, 16.06.1911. It appears that the Seto choir under Usstav's supervision had continued to be active in the 1920s, after Usstav had moved from the Seto region to Antsla in Võru County. In 1921, Usstav writes to Kallas: "In May I planned on going to Finland with the 'Seto choir' but there were obstacles, so that we will only perform in Tallinn (Estonia Concert Hall) on 18 April and in Haapsalu on 20 May" (Usstav's letter to Kallas, 12.05.1921, EKLA, f 186, m 76:8, l 4/5).

[11] In accordance to the customs of the time those heterogenic and probably black-skinned companies were called *neegrid* (Negroes). In newspapers nothing specific about the origin or ethnic makeup of such groups can be found; usually they were just vaguely named "Negroes from Africa", "Negroes from America" or just "Negroes".

[12] Such opinions were in accordance with the general image of Africa in the nineteenth-century Estonia (see Hiiemaa 2009).

[13] The Estonian Cultural History Archives hold the chronicle of the choir from the years 1881–1898, titled "The protocols of the Toosekatsi singing and drama society choir".

[14] The reviewer refers to the conflict between the two figures of the Estonian national movement and editors-in-chief of competing newspapers, Carl Robert Jakobson and Ado Grenzstein, in which the former represented more radical nationalism and the latter a more lenient course (see Raun 1981).

[15] The reviews of the performances of choirs dressed as Setos often stressed the fact that it was Setos' first visit. For example, an 1897 review of a concert in Viljandi, southern Estonia, reads: "The second day of the Viljandi exhibition was a great success. [...] On 8 September, the final day of the exhibition, the people of Viljandi and other guests

were entertained by a Seto choir, led by Mr. Schmalz, with their fascinating Seto songs and dances that were seen here for the first time" (Postimees 1897a: 3 ).

[16] The choir singing programme included, among other music, songs by Estonian composers – *Nüüd üles, vene alamad* ('Arise, you subjects of Russia') by J. V. Jannsen, *Oh laula ja hõiska* ('Oh, sing and rejoice') by Karl August Hermann, and *Mu suurem rõõm on isamaa* ('Fatherland is my greatest joy') by Peter Laredei, on the lyrics of Ado Grenzstein – but also Estonian adaptations of songs by German composers, such as, for example, *Kõla kaugel* ('Sound afar') by Friedrich Wilhelm Sering.

[17] "At the folk festivity one could also bear witness to how the Estonian national costume is held more and more in esteem. Particularly beautiful was the national costume worn by the soprano singer from Aru-Karijärve, and we praise it as a fine example. The maidens of the Seto choir were also wearing very beautiful and unique ethnic costumes." (Postimees 1886b: 2)

[18] "On 17 August this year [1886], the Toosikatsi choir went to the folk festivity in Tartu, where they sung Seto songs that were received with the greatest enthusiasm. They also took part in a singing contest, winning the third prize with the song *Nüüd vennad kärmeste* [Come quick now, brothers!] by Becker, but the sum of the prize is not yet known. The choir has received 15 roubles from the Vanemuine Society for travelling. The master of the Luke manor, M. Johanson, has given the Setos 10 roubles as a token of his gratitude, so all in all they received 25 roubles from Tartu…" (EKLA, f 169, m 152:1, l 13p, 14).

[19] A letter by Viido Kiudosk to the festival organising committee (12 May 1880, EKLA, f 76, m 2:3, l 24/47), see Põldmäe 1976: 190.

[20] H. J. Schmalz's letter to J. Hurt, 28.01.1897.

[21] H. J. Schmalz's letter to J. Hurt, 28.01.1897.

[22] For further information on Schmalz's life, see Aabrams 2013, 2016; Kõivupuu 1999, 2013.

[23] In addition, there is a manuscript of the play in the "Seto language" or its project (EKLA, f 169, m 149:21).

[24] The Estonian Folklore Archives store songs containing the text of Schmalz's Töganitsa Höödo and collected from the Seto region and southern Estonia, e.g., EKRK, Fon 50 B12, Udo Kolk from Nikolai Tirp, 46, Seto, Laossina village (1968); EKRK, Fon 56 A9, Udo Kolk from Leida Tarend, 61, Seto, Matsuri village, originally from Vyporsova village (1969); RKM, Mgn II 3324 (3), Heiki Silvet from Hilda Ilves, b. 1909, Kahkva urban settlement, Räpina Parish (1980); ERA, DAT 23 (4), Anu Korb from Lonni Ilves, b. 1925, Zolotaya Niva village, Okoneshnikovsky District, Omsk Oblast (1995), ERA, CD 32 (31); Ahto Raudoja from Maanu Reino, 74, Kambja parish, originally from Tartu (1997). The entering of the text into oral singing tradition can be explained probably with the clearly oral nature of Schmalz's original text.

[25] *Kilplased* ('Gothamites') are a fictitious people in an allegorical satire by the Estonian author F. R. Kreutzwald (1857, adaptation of the German chapbook *Der Schildbürger* by G. O. Marbach) and their name has been adopted into general use as a synonym of a simplistic or ignorant and stubborn person.

[26] More noteworthy among such simple works of literature were, for example, Peeter Friedrich Kõiv's tale *Kuis Kärekülä seto Pihkvah jesätse kassi prohvusõ peräst parki saasõ* ('How a Seto from Kärekülä village got beaten up in Pskov over a bloody tomcat', 1902) and the plays by Arnold Kõiv that were published somewhat later – *Warga õhwakõ: setu nali ühes vaatuses* ('The bull calf of a thief: A Seto farce in one act', 1931), and *Kooluheng: Ühevaatusline nali* ('Spirit of a dead person: A farce in one act', 192?).

[27] Jaan Vahtra's memoirs entail a passage which confirms that he has read out these texts at the performances of the "Seto choir": "In the next part I took the stage. I read out a funny Seto tale from my collection of Seto tales and then the stories "Jesus travelled along the river, Holy Mary along the shore" and "Toomas ate, Toomas drank" from [Jakob] Hurt's *Setukeste laulud* ('Seto Folk Songs') (Vahtra 1935: 199–205).

[28] Manuscript in the Estonian Cultural History Archives (EKLA, f 151, m 10:5).

[29] Kiudosk's four songs from the play stand out because they are mainly in Estonian (including only a few dialogues in the South-Estonian dialect) (EKLA, f 181, m 9:12).

[30] Since the activity of the choirs of Räpina Parish falls into the period when the first folk songs of the parish were being recorded, it is not entirely certain to which degree the polyphony of Räpina Parish was an "invented" tradition, i.e. to what degree the singing of "Setos" as part of the choir singing tradition of Räpina Parish influenced the local folk tradition. Two three-part songs from Viido Kiudosk's *Martinmas Mummers*, however, have been included in the prestigious edited anthology, *Eesti rahvalaule viisidega* ('Estonian folksongs with melodies'), compiled by Herbert Tampere, as "authentic" examples of the song repertoire sung in Räpina (Tampere 1965: 51, 193).

[31] H. J. Schmalz's letter to J. Hurt, 28.01.1897.

[32] In Finland, similar phenomena of bringing "authentic" folk singers to perform in cities and add an ethnic touch to events occurred at an earlier time (see Knuuttila 1994; Tenhunen 2006: 81ff.).

## ARCHIVAL SOURCES

### Estonian Folklore Archives at the Estonian Literary Museum

EKRK, Fon – sound recordings of the Chair of Literature and Folklore at the University of Tartu
ERA, DAT – digital audio tape recordings of the Estonian Folklore Archives
ERA, CD – CD-collection of digital audio recordings of the Estonian Folklore Archives
RKM, Mgn II – open-reel tape recordings of the State Literary Museum

### Estonian Cultural History Archives at the Estonian Literary Museum

EKLA – manuscript collection of the Estonian Cultural History Archives

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# ON THE RELICT SCALES AND MELODIC STRUCTURES IN THE SETO SHEPHERD TUNE *KAR´AHÄÄL*

*Žanna Pärtlas*

**Abstract:** Our knowledge of the past is inevitably fragmentary, especially if we speak about such an 'immaterial' subject as music. The only possibility to unveil the sounds of the past is to 'excavate' information from contemporary performances, archival sound recordings, and musical transcriptions. Some older musical genres that preserved their ancient features until the era of sound recording provide the best opportunities for the research of the traditional musical thinking, including its deepest roots. The Seto shepherd songs, which are the subject of the analysis in this article, constitute one of such genres.

This research concentrates on two aspects of the musical structure of the Seto shepherd tune *kar´ahääl*: the structure of musical scales and the melodic contours. The material of analysis is the collection by Anu Vissel, *Eesti karjaselaulud I. Setu karjaselaulud* (Estonian Shepherd Songs I. Setu Shepherd Songs, 1982), which consists of transcriptions of 99 shepherd songs; about 90 of them are variants of the same tune type. According to this publication, the intervallic structures of the shepherd tune's scales are extremely various; there are also many different melodic contours. The present research aims to reveal the system behind the various scale structures and melodic contours, and, on this ground, tries to reconstruct the possible processes of formation of the musical scales and melody in this particular tune and make some hypotheses about such processes in early traditional music.

**Keywords:** early traditional music, melodic contours, musical analysis of traditional music, musical scales, musical thinking, Seto song tradition, shepherd songs

Contemporary ethnomusicology,[1] which inherited many of its ideas from musical anthropology, is largely concerned with the present day. The present is both interesting and 'convenient' for ethnomusicological research: interesting because of its actuality and immediacy, and 'convenient' because researchers have every possibility to gather ideal material for their investigations – material that is both full and rich in context. However, though our knowledge of the past is inevitably fragmentary, especially if we speak about such an 'immaterial' subject as music, a fascination with the past is an inherent feature of human nature, and the past history of musical culture is no exception.

What can we know about our musical past and where are the sources of such knowledge? Music archaeology can provide some evidence about the musical practices of the remote past on the basis of material sources such as excavated artefacts, early musical notations, and theoretical writings. Such investigations are not able, however, to discover what was actually played or sung or how the music actually sounded. The only possibility to unveil the sounds of the past is to 'excavate' information from contemporary performances and archival sound recordings and musical transcriptions, which, when appropriately analysed, can provide evidence regarding traditional musical thinking, including its deepest roots. Some older musical genres that preserved their ancient features until the era of sound recording provide the best opportunities for such research. Even today, indeed, musical genres still exist that are real 'portals to the past'. The Seto shepherd songs, which are the subject of the analysis in this article, constitute one of such genres.

The song tradition of the Seto (a small ethnic group of Estonians living in the south-east of Estonia and the adjoining territories of the Pskov region of Russia) provides very valuable source material for the investigation of the musical past. In the Seto song tunes one can find several structural features that point to their very old origin. Among such relics of the ancient musical system, it is the Seto scales that are of the greatest interest. The most intriguing of these is the one-three-semitone mode (Sarv 1980; Pärtlas 1997, 2006a, 2010a) characteristic of the older genres of the Seto multipart songs, but the unusual scales also occur in the solo repertoire such as the shepherd songs. These scales and the pitch organisation of the Seto solo vocal genres in general was not, until now, the object of detailed ethnomusicological research. The purpose of this article is to uncover and to analyse the features of ancient musical thinking in the musical scales and melodic contours of the Seto solo shepherd songs.

It is no surprise that traces of ancient musical thinking manifest themselves especially distinctly in the Seto shepherd songs as this genre demonstrates an archaic musical style in many other traditional cultures. The main reason for this is evidently the strong connection of the shepherd songs to their extra-musical functions, among which the communicative functions (signals, calls) are very important. In general, two types of communication can be found in the shepherd songs: communication with domestic animals, which is usually a phenomenon on the borders of music and onomatopoeia (the imitation of animal sounds), and long-distance communication with other shepherds (the herding calls). The shepherd songs also served as entertainment and consolation during the shepherds' long and lonely days. The abovementioned functions clearly influence the musical structure of the shepherd tunes and the manner of singing. The prolonged notes at the end of the melostrophes and the intensive

singing voice both point to the original calling function of the Seto shepherd tune. However, the texts of the Seto shepherd songs often have a plaintive content and resemble laments – the shepherd complains about the hard and boring job, bad weather, and desolation. In the Seto shepherd songs there is also a musical resemblance with the lament (Vissel 1982: 4), another traditional genre that has preserved well the features of an ancient musical style.

The Seto shepherd songs have been well documented during the whole period of sound recording, from the beginning of the twentieth century up to the present. This research is based on the largest publication of Seto shepherd songs in notation, *Eesti karjaselaulud I: Setu karjaselaulud* (Vissel 1982). According to the statistics made by Anu Vissel herself, the collection consists of transcriptions of 99 shepherd songs performed by 80 different singers from 53 villages, which were recorded by 27 collectors over the period 1912–1979 (ibid.: 3). Some of these notations are aural transcriptions made by different collectors without the use of sound recording techniques, or where the sound recordings were lost or destroyed over time. In many cases the original sound recordings are preserved in various archives (mainly the Estonian Folklore Archives), and the musical transcriptions were made by Anu Vissel and overseen by Vaike Sarv (ibid.).

Although it would have been possible in many cases, I decided not to compare the transcriptions with the original sound recordings to check their reliability, using in my analysis the transcriptions in their published form. The partial control gave me the impression that the notations that were made on the basis of sound recordings generally reflect the actual sound of the songs. The fact that this collection consists of the notations made by several transcribers also allows to assume a sufficient degree of objectivity. However, having had sufficient aural experience with the real sound of the Seto shepherd songs, I am completely aware of the fact that it cannot be precisely conveyed by the Western musical notation, based on the 12TET (12-tone equal temperament) system. It is also obvious that musical perception of the transcribers may be influenced by their musical and educational background and that some ‘human’ mistakes and differences in interpretation are inevitable in the notation of traditional music.

Nevertheless, I believe that musical transcriptions made by our predecessors should not be neglected as a source of information and, being used with due reservation, can provide valuable material for investigation. In the case of my research, the advantage of the use of the written sources offered a possibility to involve in the analysis the large (almost comprehensive) amount of research material. I also proceeded from the conviction that an inevitable approximateness of the transcriptions does not seriously affect the results of the present analysis, as the performance of Seto shepherd songs itself is characterized by some approximateness of intonation, which means that the small pitch deviations

have no significant *emic* value in this tradition. A critical analysis of the sources and acoustical measurements of the sound recordings would certainly be the object of a further investigation; however, in this essay, I would like to use the research potential of the existing written sources.

For my analysis I selected 82 performances, all of which are variants of the same tune type. Some transcriptions from Vissel's publication were rejected as they did not belong to the usual tune type (among the published transcriptions, for example, there are some solo performances of choral herding songs). I carried out a statistical analysis with regard to the use of the musical scales and compared the different scale structures to find logical relations between them. I also compared the melodic variants in order to reveal the underlying model of the tune type and the mechanisms of its realization in various performances (including the formation of the scales).

The analysis of the musical scales may appear, at first sight, to be rather old-fashioned as a formal procedure and way of describing the musical material. This is the reason why this theme, especially at the general theoretical level, was not much investigated in the recent ethnomusicological publications.[2] However, the phenomenon of musical scale is one of the most important universals of human musical thinking, and interesting discoveries can certainly be made in this domain. The most problematic aspect of the conventional analysis of the traditional music scales appears to be the description of the scale structures using the names of the diatonic or chromatic scale notes and the measurement of the intervals between the scale notes in semitones. In fact, there are many musical traditions (especially the older ones) which are not based on the 12TET system, and the Seto ancient song tradition is among them. This problem should necessarily be recognized by the scholars dealing with this topic. All the same, we cannot describe and compare the scales if we do not have a unit of measurement. The vernacular music theories have usually no answer to this question; moreover, there are many musical systems where pitch relations are not proportional (i.e. have no unit in which all melodic and harmonic intervals could be measured).[3] In this situation, some standard unit of measurement needs to be chosen, and the most convenient one seems to be a semitone.[4] For more precise measurements we can also use the cents, but doing so we should not forget that a cent is nothing else than one-hundredth of a semitone; thus, measuring in cents, we still measure in semitones. In accordance with the aforesaid, I will use in my analysis the measurements in semitones, bearing in mind that in this case a semitone is nothing more than a conventional standard unit.

With respect to the musical peculiarities of the Seto shepherd songs, analysis of the scale structures seems to be a highly relevant aspect of research. Speaking more generally about the Seto song tradition, it should be noted that the Seto

musical scales merit close analysis not only because of their unusual intervallic structures, but also because of the coexistence of the different scale types in the same song tradition, the formation of the mixed and transitional scale structures, and, especially, because of the use of different scales within the same tune types. Thus the Seto women can perform the same multipart song with the one-three-semitone, anhemitonic, anhemitonic-diatonic, and purely diatonic scales, not to mention transitional scale forms (for details see Pärtlas 2006b, 2010b). This fact points to an early, dynamic musical system, in which the stability of the pitch organization is not yet achieved.

In the solo shepherd songs this tendency manifests itself even more strongly than in the multipart choral songs. Thus, according to my statistical analysis based on the publication by Anu Vissel, the same tune type was recorded with 15 different repeatedly used scales and a further 19 scales which were used only once; these were differentiated both by the number of scale notes and by the intervals between them. These figures are very large, even in the context of the Seto song tradition. It would be natural to suppose that such a big amount of scale structures found in the transcriptions may be partly explained by the imperfection of the Western notation and the differences in musical perception of the transcribers;[5] however, these data are quite unusual, and it most probably points to both the unusually great variability of the Seto shepherd tune's scales and their significant distinction from the 12TET system. Such exceptional musical material provides the opportunity to examine the formation of the musical scales, a phenomenon which also proves illuminating in terms of the historical processes of musical development.

## ANALYSIS OF THE SCALES AND MELODIC CONTOURS

Before presenting the results of the analysis, the tune type in question should be briefly described. All Seto solo shepherd songs use the same tune type, which is called by the bearers of the tradition *kar´ahääl*. The formal and rhythmic model of this tune type is stable enough for it to be easily recognized. Figure 1 provides a typical example. As can be seen, the melostrophe is composed of two lines, the melody of the second line generally repeating that of the first line. The text is not repeated. One very characteristic feature of the tune is the reduction of the last syllable of the second verse and the prolongation of the previous syllable-note (see the last note of the tune). The use of such long notes, which are sung in a very intensive manner and often with a specific change in vowel colour, creates the effect of a call (the final note in the melostrophes of the Seto songs is usually short). The number of syllables and notes in the lines can vary, but the rhythmic model presented in Figure 1 is the most typical one (Vissel 1982: 6).

7.-8. Suu om - ma vee - reh suu - rõ hai - na, laa - nõ ka vee - reh la - g'a le(he).

*Figure 1. A shepherd song performed by Nati Tarkus (b. 1922) from Mikitamäe village in 1998.[6]*

| Intervals in semitones | The way of notation (*in G*) | The range | The number of performances |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4-3 | Eb-G-Bb | P5 | 7 |
| 3-2 | E-G-A | P4 | 6 |
| 3-3 | E-G-Bb | d5 | 2 |
| 4-1-2 | Eb-G-Ab-Bb | P5 | 8 |
| 1-2-2 | E-F-G-A | P4 | 8 |
| 3-2-1 | E-G-A-Bb | d5 | 8 |
| 4-1-3 | D-F#-G-Bb | m6 | 5 |
| 3-2-2 | E-G-A-B | P5 | 4 |
| 3-1-3 | Eb-F#-G-Bb | P5 | 3 |
| 2-2-1 | F-G-A-Bb | P4 | 3 |
| 1-2-2-1 | E-F-G-A-Bb | d5 | 4 |
| 1-2-2-2 | E-F-G-A-B | P5 | 3 |
| 2-1-2-2 | E-F#-G-A-B | P5 | 3 |
| 2-2-1-2 | Eb-F-G-Ab-Bb | P5 | 3 |
| 2-2-2-1 | Eb-F-G-A-Bb | P5 | 3 |

*Figure 2. Scales occurring repeatedly in the notations from the collection of shepherd songs by Anu Vissel (1982).*

The results of the statistics concerning the use of the different scale structures are presented in the table in Figure 2.[7] In the songs from Vissel's collection, 34 different scales were found. The table contains only the 15 scales that were used repeatedly. The 19 scales used only once each are not included in the table; they are, however, taken into account in the analysis. From the table one can see that three of the repeatedly used scales comprise three notes, seven scales four notes, and five scales five notes. No single scale prevails significantly over the others. However, the overall statistics reveal that most of the scales are 4-note scales, occurring in 46 performances out of 82. 3-note scales occur in 20 performances and 5-note scales in 25 performances. The main tone of the scale (the 'principal tone'), which is also the final note of the tune, is always located in the middle of the scale (the note G in the tables and musical examples), which is also a characteristic of Seto multipart songs. The similarity with the multipart song style also manifests itself in the use of the one-three-semitone scale: the scale 3-1-3 (E♭-F♯-G-B♭) is found three times and the related structure 4-1-3 (D-F♯-G-B♭) five times. The scales in the range of the diminished fifth are even more characteristic, occurring altogether in 13 performances. Among these, the structure 3-2-1 (E-G-A-B♭) is found eight times, while the similar structure 1-2-2-1 (E-F-G-A-B♭), where the 3-semitone interval E-G is filled by the scale note F, occurs four times. The 3-note scale in the range of the diminished fifth (which coincides with the diminished triad E-G-B♭) occurs only twice, but this is still notable and certainly not an accidental fact.

The table reveals, amongst other things, that many scales have intervals between adjacent scale notes that are wider than the major second (these are mostly minor and major thirds, more rarely the perfect fourth). In the discussion below, I will name such intervals 'wide intervals' or 'gaps'. The most notable fact is that the 3-note scales almost always have these wide intervals. Among them, the scales with two wide intervals are especially noteworthy: the structure 4-3 (E♭-G-B♭) occurs seven times, the structure 3-3 (E-G-B♭) twice, and the structure 5-3 (D-G-B♭) once. If there is only one wide interval in the 3-note scale, this is always located in the lower part of the scale, as in the structure 3-2 (E-G-A), which occurs six times, 4-2 (E♭-G-A) and 4-1 (E♭-G-A♭), each of which is found only once.

The majority of the 4-note scales also contain these wide intervals between adjacent scale notes (usually thirds). There are such structures as 4-1-2, 3-2-1, 4-1-3, 3-2-2, as well as others. Here we may note the same pattern as in the 3-note scales: if there is only one wide interval in the scale, it is always in the lower part of the scale; if there are two wide intervals, the lower one is wider than the upper one or, more rarely, they are of the same size. It is possible that this rule is a manifestation of a more general feature of human musical

thinking, an issue to which I shall return below. The 5-note scales are usually, so to speak, 'filled', i.e. they do not contain intervals between adjacent scale notes that are wider than a major second.

The column in the table (Figure 2) that shows the range of the musical scales reveals that the scales with different numbers of notes generally have the same range, most often a perfect fifth. This suggests that the scales with more notes may have developed over time from those with fewer notes by a process of filling the wide intervals in the latter with extra notes. Indeed, an analysis of the melodic contours and a comparison of the melodic variants give the impression that behind many of the variants based on the 4-note and 5-note scales there is a 3-note proto-structure.

This last observation suggests that the most ancient versions of the Seto shepherd tune are those based on the 3-note scales with one or two wide intervals between the scale notes. It would appear that the juxtaposition of three pitch levels – lower, central (middle), and upper – reinforced by the larger-than-usual pitch contrast (in the cases where there are wide intervals between adjacent scale notes) is more important for the Seto traditional singers than the exact intervals between the scale notes. The significant pitch variability and the mutability of the scale notes are illustrated in Figure 3. The upper and lower scale notes can shift in relation to the central scale note to form different intervallic structures. Some of these structures seem to be more stable, as they occur in the notations more frequently. This is the case in two structures: the 4-3 structure, which coincides with the major triad Eb-G-Bb, and the 3-2 structure, which is the anhemitonic trichord E-G-A. However, it is possible that the prevalence of these two structures in the published notations reflects more the transcribers' perceptions of the scales than the actual sound of the performances. The large number of micro-alteration symbols in the notations from Anu Vissel's collection is evidence of the great number of intermediate intervals between scale notes.

It is notable that the pitch of the scale notes varies not only in the performances of different singers, but also in different performances by the same singer and even during the same performance. Figure 4 presents three variants of the shepherd tune performed by the outstanding Seto singer Olga Laanetu (b. 1911) in 1971, 1973, and 1976 (Vissel 1982: 35–39). The first of these is transcribed with the scale Eb-G-Bb (the quasi 'major triad'), the second has the scale in the range of the diminished fifth E-G-Bb (the quasi 'diminished triad'), and the third has the scale E-G-A (i.e. the anhemitonic trichord). From the transcription of the earliest of the three performances we can also see that the pitch of the lower scale note was quite unstable (see the up arrows above the scale note Eb); listening to the sound recording of this performance, I have found that in the second half of the song the lower scale note changed eventually to E natural.
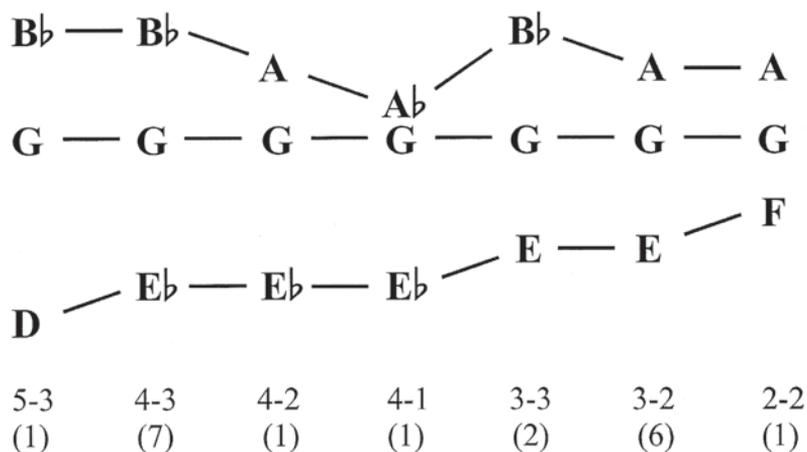
**Figure 3.** *The mutability of the scale notes in the 3-note scales (the number of performances is given in brackets).*



**Figure 4.** *Three performances by Olga Laanetu (b. 1911), Suure-Rõsna village.*

A similar variability in the scale structure may also be noted in the performances based on 4- and 5-note scales. The transcription of the shepherd tune sung by the most famous Seto singer, Anne Vabarna (1877–1964), in 1959 (Vissel 1982: 43–46) provides a good example of the variation of the scale notes during performance. In this notation the transcriber had to change the key signatures four times (the scale variants were as follows: D-E-G-Ab-B, D-E-G-Ab-Bb, D-Eb-

G-A♭-B♭, and D-E♭-G-A♭-B), as well as use a large number of micro-alteration symbols (arrows) above the notes.

A similar variability is also found in the melodic contours of the Seto *kar´ahääl*. This suggests the need to search for the stable elements in the melodic structure, which allow us to recognize the tune type. In this paper, however, the analysis of the melodic contours deals not so much with the description of the tune type, but aims rather to reveal the mechanisms of the scale formation in the concrete realizations of the tune model.[8]

In searching for a method with which to analyse the melodic contours of the Seto shepherd songs, I decided to proceed from the 3-note (or 3-pitch level) model, which I assume to be the deep structure that underlies the majority of the particular variants of the tune irrespective of the number of notes in their scales. The comparison of the tune variants revealed some consistent patterns in the formation of the melodic contours, which will be demonstrated below.

In the present analysis, the melodic contour types are described by the use of three symbols: the letter L for the lower pitch level (the scale notes below the central tone), the letter C for the central tone (the 'principal tone' G), and the letter U for the upper pitch level (the notes above the central tone). Figure 5 provides three examples of the ascending-descending melodic contour LCUCL (the melodic fragments in the examples are the first lines of the melostrophes). Comparing the examples, one can notice that the points where the melody moves from one pitch level to another may be located in different positions with regard to the tune's rhythmic form. For example, in the first variant of the tune the melody moves from the lower level to the central at the fourth syllable-note, in the second variant this happens at the third syllable-note, and in the third variant at the second syllable-note; the melody reaches the upper level in these three variants respectively at the seventh, fifth, and sixth syllable-notes. The musical time for which the melody remains on each level also varies.
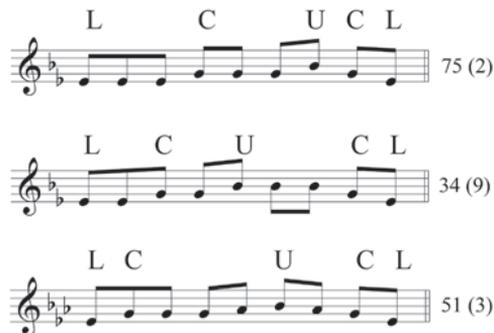


**Figure 5.** *Three examples of the ascending-descending melodic contour LCUCL.*[9]

Using these symbols, the melodic contours were described in all 82 variants of the shepherd tune under analysis. Statistics as to the use of each contour were then compiled, and these revealed a noticeable predominance of one melodic contour – the ascending-descending contour LCUCL which occurs 26 times (this melodic contour is shown in Figure 5). The table in Figure 6 comprises 12 melodic contours found in 70 performances; these are interpreted here as being systematic of the related structures. The melodic contours not included in the table occurred only once and would seem to be less characteristic. The order in which the melodic contours are placed in the table is meant to show the logic of their relationship to each other. Six contours begin at the lower pitch level (these clearly prevail, occurring in 48 performances), three contours begin at the central level (8 performances), and three contours at the upper level (13 performances). The 12 contours can be divided into four groups of three contours each (see the bold lines in the table); in each group the first contour is the most complex, with each subsequent contour differing from its predecessor by the omission of one level. The general logic of the melodic motion is to reach the upper pitch level (from beneath or directly) and then descend through the central level to the lower at the end of the phrase. Thus, all the melodic contours in the table end with the motion UCL, with the last two symbols CL usually corresponding to the last two syllable-notes of the phrase.

|   | The melodic contour of the 1st line | The number of performances |
|---|---|---|
| **L** | LCUCLUCL | 1 |
|   | LCUCUCL | 5 |
|   | LCUCL | 26 |
|   | LUCLUCL | 3 |
|   | LUCUCL | 6 |
|   | LUCL | 7 |
| **C** | CUCLUCL | 1 |
|   | CUCUCL | 2 |
|   | CUCL | 6 |
| **U** | UCLUCL | 7 |
|   | UCUCL | 3 |
|   | UCL | 3 |
|   |   | **70** |

**Figure 6.** *The melodic contours and their relations.*

We may also describe the relationship between the different melodic contours as a process of the gradual simplification of the contours from the most complex to the simplest model. This process is shown in Figure 7, where the model LCUCLUCL is gradually reduced to the model UCL. At every stage of simplification, the omitted (and, consequently, optional) pitch levels are designated by small letters in the scheme and by filled circles in the graphical depiction; the musical examples illustrate the possible melodic realizations of the contours in question. As the notations in Figure 7 show, the most elementary version of the Seto shepherd tune is simply the repetition of the upper scale note which leads to the descending end of the phrase. These musical examples also show how the melodic contours can be realized in the different scales.
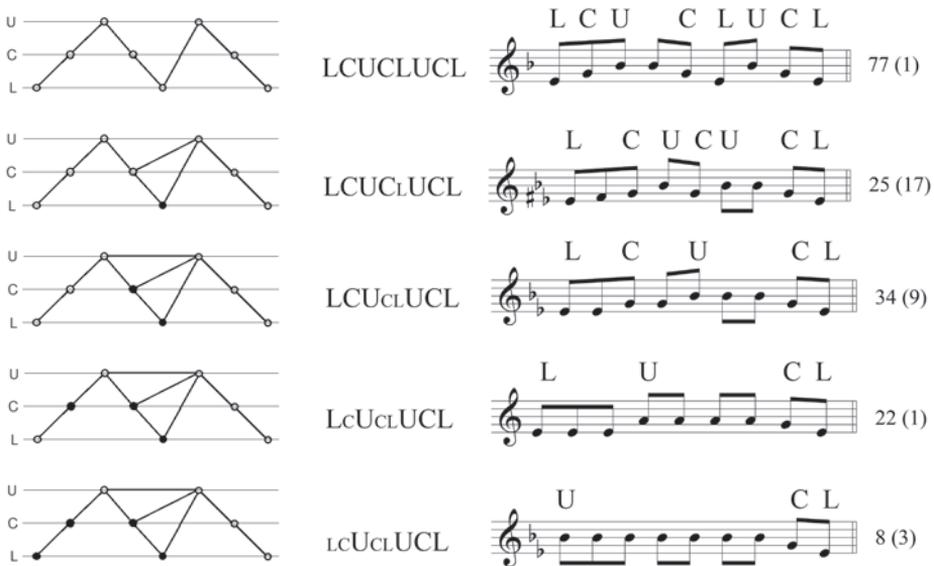


*Figure 7. The process of the gradual simplification of the melodic contour.*

The realization of the melodic models using scales with the different intervallic structures can be most clearly demonstrated by the examples with the same melodic contour. The use of the different scale notes in a similar melodic context is evidence of their interchangeability in the functional system of the mode. Sometimes we cannot even say whether they are actually different scale notes or merely different pitch variants of the same scale note. Some musical examples of this phenomenon are provided in Figures 8a, 8b, and 8c. Figure 8a,

which comprises two variants of the melodic contour LCUCL, demonstrates the interchangeability of the scale notes B♭ and A♭ (the interchangeable notes are indicated by circles); in Figure 8b, which comprises two more variants of the same contour, the key signatures point to the interchangeability of the scale notes E/E♭ and A/A♭. The three examples in Figure 8c are variants of the melodic contour LUCLUCL. Comparing these variants, we can find the notes E♭/E/F♯, A/B♭/B and D/E♭/E in similar melodic contexts.



**Figure 8.** *The interchangeability of the scale notes: a) B♭ = A♭; b) E = E♭, A = A♭; c) E♭ = E = F♯, A = B♭ = B, D = E♭ = E.*

A comparison of the variants based on the same melodic contours also allows us to trace one more aspect of the scale development process – the different ways of increasing the number of notes in the scale. Presuming the 3-note scales to be of older origin than the 4- and 5-note scales, we should take into account two theoretical possibilities as to how the new scale notes could be added to the scales: (1) the extension of the scale in an upward and/or downward direction by adding neighbouring notes; and (2) the filling of the 'gaps' in the scale (by 'gaps' I mean the intervals bigger than the major second). The analysis shows that in the case of the Seto shepherd tune we are dealing mainly with the second manner of development. Figure 9 compares four variants of the first line of the tune. The first variant is based on the 3-note scale, the others on the 4- and 5-note scales. Comparison of the variants reveals that the new scale notes (designated by circles) emerge mainly as 'passing tones' between the scale notes G and B/B♭ and between E/E♭ and G. In the final example, there is also the 'neighbouring tone' C.



*Figure 9. The 'filling' of the 'gaps'.*

According to the author's listening experience, the pitch of the 'passing' and 'neighbouring tones' can be especially unstable, making their notation quite problematic. In this article, however, I proceed from the published transcriptions and from the analytical decisions made by the transcribers. The control of these transcriptions, which could also include their acoustical measurement, is a subject for future research.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

It is interesting now to explore how the results of the analysis carried out in this study correspond to existing hypotheses in the literature on scales and melody in early traditional music.

To begin with the German classification from the era of comparative musicology, which divided the types of archaic melody into *Engmelodik*, *Pendelmelodik*, *Treppenmelodik*, and *Fanfarenmelodik*, one can find features of three of these in the Seto shepherd songs. The tune variants in the range of the perfect fourth (e.g. with the scale E-G-A) can be defined as a narrow-range melody (*Engmelodik*). The tune variants based on the scale that coincides with the major triad (E♭-G-B♭) may at first glance seem to belong to the fanfare type (*Fanfarenmelodik*). At the same time, however, the melodic motion where the melody leaps the interval of a third up and down from the central tone and also the prevalence of the ascending-descending melodic contour may recall the movement of the pendulum (*Pendelmelodik*).

The possibility of finding such different melodic types in the performances of the same song points not only to the great variability of the tune in question, but also to the insufficient reliability of the exterior parameters of the melodic contour as a ground for judgements about the principles of melodic thinking. It is very difficult to reveal these principles on the basis of the individual performances, and thus the researcher should take into account the great number of tune variants and try to understand the inner logic that links them. In the Seto shepherd songs the logical principle behind the melody formation would appear to be the contradistinction of the lower and upper supporting tones with the pivotal central tone (the principal tone of the mode). Such a functional pattern would seem to be the stable feature of the Seto shepherd tune, whereas the archaic way of musical thinking manifests itself in the fact that the intervals between the three main tones of the scale may vary to a considerable extent and that the filling of these intervals by passing tones is optional.

Bruno Nettl, in his book "Music in Primitive Culture" (1956), also suggested his own classification of the types of melodic contour in early traditional music. It seems that in proposing three main types of melodic motion – 'ascending', 'descending', and 'undulating movement' (Nettl 1956: 51) – he proceeded not so much from the specific features of archaic melody, but rather from the logical generalization of the potentially possible melodic situations.[10] Choosing which of these three types corresponds better to the Seto shepherd tune, I would point to the third one – the 'undulating movement' – or even its particular form called the 'pendulum-type melodic movement'. The variants of the tune analysed conform to Nettl's assertion that "both undulating and pendulum-type melodies usually

conclude with a descending progression, as does most primitive music" (Nettl 1956: 52). The ascending-descending melodic contour (LCUCL), which is the most widespread in the Seto shepherd songs, is also mentioned by Nettl as one of the 'specialized types': "A melodic contour that resembles an arc is another specialized type. The melody rises and falls in roughly equal amounts, the curve ascending gradually to a climax and then dropping off" (Nettl 1956: 53).

Another interesting question regarding early traditional music is the interrelation of melodic contour and scale structure. According to the statistics concerning the use of the different scales and melodic contours in the Seto shepherd songs, among the melodic contours one model definitely predominates, whereas among the scale structures there are no strong preferences. This finding is in line with the statement that "frequently the Gestalt of a melody contour is more important than the precise intervals of a melody" (Ambrazevičius & Budrys & Višnevska 2015: 27). A comparison of the melodic variants shows that the same contour can be realized with different scales and melodic intervals. However, the analysis also reveals that the melodic contours may vary within the same tune type, whereas the main functional model of the scale (mode) structure – the three pitch level structure – is constant. Together with the characteristic ascending-descending contour, many other particular contours occur, including the most elementary descending contour (see the last musical example in Figure 7). Though the scheme in Figure 7 demonstrates that every contour can be derived from the descending one, this hardly allows us to assume that the simple descending contour was historically the oldest.

A further attempt to classify the types of early traditional melody is undertaken by Eduard Alekseyev in his book *Early Folklore Intonation: The Pitch Aspect* (1986).[11] This classification seems to be the most convincing of the existing schemes because the author proceeds from the inner logic of the melody formation, describing not so much the particular melodic contours as the principles of their generation. Alekseyev separates three types of early traditional melody building, which he designates by the letters of the Greek alphabet – α-, β-, and γ-melody (Alekseyev 1986: 53). The first two types are especially archaic: the α-melody is based on the contrasting opposition of both the pitch registers and voice registers, where the timbral difference is more important than the intervallic coordination; the β-melody is characterized as the 'primary (initial) glissando' (*pervichnoe glissandirovanie*) (ibid.: 64), where the pitch is "constantly changing – mostly sliding down" (ibid.: 206). The third principle, the γ-melody, according to Alekseyev's description, "better … corresponds with our ideas of definite pitch-levels as the tone-material of singing; yet, in contrast with melody-making in terms of crystallized tonality, the γ-degrees are subject to considerable, though gradual, changes in respect of pitch when a melodic

unit is repeated, so that *different versions of a tone may be integrated into one transformative degree* [emphasis added]" (ibid.).

It seems that the γ-principle best characterizes the pitch organization of the Seto shepherd songs because their intonation is mostly quite definite, although the pitch of the scale notes can vary at different moments in a performance (the degree of the pitch stability of the scale notes depends largely on the individual performer). The unusual diversity of the scale structures in the different performances of the shepherd tune is evidence that its intervallic relations are not yet settled. In this tune, we can speak about the existence of a certain number of scale notes as categories of modal thinking, but the pitch zones of their realization are very wide. This last phenomenon causes some specific problems in the notation of these songs, since the transcriber has to notate the same scale degree using different notes.

At the same time, in the most archaic variants of the Seto shepherd songs (i.e. the performances based on the 3-note scales) we can also find traces of the more ancient α-melody and some small manifestations of the β-melody. According to Alekseyev, these three principles are not mutually exclusive and unrelated; on the contrary, they can be integrated and form different combinations (Alekseyev 1986: 206). In the tune in question, the α-principle manifests itself in the juxtaposition of three pitch levels (the main variable scale notes) mostly with the interval of a third between them. The filling of the thirds with the sliding intermediate tones[12] seems to be a manifestation of the β-principle. Although the third is not a very wide melodic interval, it is wide enough as a step between neighbouring scale notes (especially if there are no seconds in the scale) to create a bigger pitch contrast in the melodic motion than in the case of the, so to speak, 'filled' scales. Developing Alekseyev's ideas further, we may consider the existence of two processes in the gradual comprehension of the pitch dimension in early traditional music: (1) by means of the pitch and timbral contrast of more or less distant tones (the α-principle), which led to the gradual establishment of the basic tones of the modal system; and (2) by means of the vocal glissando (possibly between the basic tones) (the β-principle), which led to the formation of stepwise motion (where a step is the interval of a second). Both processes can lead to the formation of the so-called γ-melody, where the more definite pitch-levels (scale notes) as the musical tone-material exist. In the Seto shepherd songs, we can observe both these processes at work.

As noted above, the analysis of the melodic contours helps us better to understand the processes of scale formation; however, the result of these processes, i.e. the intervallic structure of the scales, is also of a great interest to researchers. Although studies show that in early traditional vocal music the intervallic structure of the scale varies much more than the melodic contour,

the scale structure does not appear to be chaotic and some consistent patterns emerge. Many ideas have been put forward in this field of research, some of which should be mentioned in connection with the Seto shepherd tune. In discussing these, we must take into account the limitations of research based on the analysis of the published musical transcriptions, which can include both accidental and systematic misrepresentations of the pitch relations. In this sense we are merely raising some questions here, more reliable answers to which may be found in the course of future acoustical research.

One of the widespread theories with regard to scale structure in early traditional music is the assumption as to the special role of the perfect consonances as a universal of musical thinking (see, e.g., Nettl 1956: 54). At first glance, the scales of the Seto shepherd songs might seem to confirm this assumption: the majority of the scales have the range of a perfect fifth, while there are also scales with the range of a perfect fourth, and finally there are scales which coincide with the major triad. Nevertheless, in my opinion, neither perfect consonances nor the major triad as acoustical phenomena have a constitutive function in the formation of the shepherd songs' scales. This conclusion is based on the fact that in this tune the principal tone of the mode is located in the middle of the scale, and the intervals that are likely to have any importance for the performers are those between the central tone and the upper or lower supporting tones. The lower and upper scale notes are not directly related; they rather surround the central tone. Thus we can conclude that the most characteristic, supporting intervals in this tune are the thirds, the size of which fluctuates between the minor and major third.

There remains the question of the nature of the 'major triad' in this tune: is this a true 'fanfare' or a 'false' one? On the one hand, the scale E♭-G-B♭ occurs in seven performances recorded by six different singers (see the data in Figure 2), which is sufficient to recognize that this structure is not accidental (for comparison, the minor triad never occurs as a 3-note scale, while the diminished triad is found in only two performances by the same singer). To these seven performances can be added 17 melodic variants based on the partly or entirely 'filled' scales in the range of the perfect fifth, with the scale notes E♭, G, and B♭ as the main tones of the mode. On the other hand, there are 14 performances with the 3-, 4-, and 5-note scales in the range of the diminished fifth and six performances based on the anhemitonic trichord E-G-A, which suggests that there is no strong preference for the 'major triad'. The cases where the scale structure varies during the same performance (see the analytical part of this article) confirm this conclusion.

Why then does the 'major triad' in its 'filled' or 'unfilled' form occur so frequently? It seems that the explanation could be connected with the one-three-

semitone mode, which is characteristic of the older layer of the Seto multipart songs. This scale, which can be transcribed as D-E♭-F♯-G-A♯-B or D-E♭-F♯-G-B♭-C♭, comprises the notes of the major triad – E♭, G and B♭. The 4-note fragment of this scale E♭-F♯-G-B♭ is found in three performances of the shepherd song, which supports the surmise about the relationship between shepherd songs and multipart songs. It would be logical to assume that the structures E♭-F♯-G-B♭ and E♭-G-B♭ might be connected with each other. If this assumption is true, it is a further reason to believe that the 'major triad' in the shepherd tune is merely a coincidence. This opinion is supported by the fact that the harmonic sonority E♭-G-B♭ (A♯) is very rare in the Seto multipart songs, and, in any case, it is not a structural sonority (the structural role in this mode is fulfilled by the 'augmented triads' E♭-G-B and D-F♯-A♯ or, more commonly, the major thirds from these two functional complexes). The perfect fifths and fourths are structurally insignificant in the songs based on the one-three-semitone scale, although we can find such intervals between the scale notes. This mode is built from the trichords in the range of the major third (e.g. F♯-G-A♯ and E♭-F♯-G), and the major third is its most important interval.

All these observations lead us to the conclusion that the 'major triad' in the Seto shepherd songs is in substance a 'false fanfare' and that the principle of consonance did not play a significant role in the formation of the Seto shepherd tune and its scales. However, in the more recent times, the musical thinking of singers might differ from that of their predecessors, and they could give new meanings to the ancient musical structures.

Another interesting question that has been raised in the literature on the scales in traditional music concerns the use of equal or unequal intervals between adjacent scale notes. The most widely accepted theory states that the intervallic structure of the scale should be asymmetrical. But there is also another viewpoint with regard to this question. According to recent research on the scales found in Lithuanian traditional music, "the universal of unequal scale steps, however, seems to be an overestimation, since equidistant scales … are also widely known in different musical cultures all over the world" (Ambrazevičius & Budrys & Višnevska 2015: 22). The acoustical analysis carried out in their book led the authors to the assumption that equidistant (equitonic) scales might be much more widespread in traditional music than might appear in published music transcriptions since the conflict between emic and etic perceptions of the scales can lead to erroneous interpretations (ibid.: 29–31, 169–170). The authors also suppose that the equitonic principle is more ancient than the asymmetrical one (e.g. the well-known diatonic scales): "Most probably, one of the most important and perhaps one of the historically earliest principles is roughly equidistant pitch arrangement" (ibid.: 23; see also 418). This last hypothesis is especially important in the context of the present research.

In the Seto shepherd songs, the question about asymmetrical and equidistant scale structures should be examined under two aspects: on the one hand, in relation to the intervals between the three main scale notes (which may be the only scale notes in the simplest tune variants) and, on the other, in relation to the 'filling' (passing) tones between the three main scale notes. Nettl, in the above-mentioned book on 'primitive music', writes that in the 3-note scales unequal intervals are usually used: "The two intervals are seldom identical; usually a major second is combined with a minor second or a minor third. In the very few known cases where two thirds are used, they are heterogeneous" (Nettl 1956: 48). Thus, Nettl advocates here the opinion as to the preference for an asymmetrical structure in the primary scales. The statistics for the intervallic structure of the 3-note scales in the Seto shepherd songs confirm Nettl's observation: among such scales the combinations of a major third and minor third (E♭-G-B♭) and minor third and major second (E-G-A) prevail, although there are also two cases where the thirds are of equal size (E-G-B♭). However, among the 4- and 5-note scales, the structures with minor thirds between the three main scale notes are not infrequent, which means that, as the frame of the mode, the equidistant structure is quite acceptable.

In relation to the 'filling' notes between the central tone and the upper and lower supporting tones some preferences can be found, but we cannot be sure to whom these preferences belong – whether it is the performers or the transcribers. According to the statistics in Figure 2, the minor third G-B♭ is most often filled by the note A (18 performances); however, the structure G-A♭-B♭ also occurs in 11 performances. The lower minor third E-G is more frequently filled by the note F (15 performances); the structure E-F♯-G occurs only in three cases. The major thirds, both upper and lower, are always filled equitonically by major seconds (except in three performances based on the one-three-semitone scale E♭-F♯-G-B♭). From these statistics, we may note that the seconds above and below the central tone are mostly major. However, the findings of the above-mentioned research by Ambrazevičius, Budrys, and Višnevska make me cautious in drawing conclusions with regard to this topic. Firstly, when using the Western music notation, it is quite difficult to divide the minor third equitonically, and the difference in pitch in comparison with the well-tempered tuning system would be too small to be noticed by the transcribers. Secondly, according to my aural impressions, the passing tones in the Seto shepherd songs are often sung with a sliding intonation, meaning that the transcribers had to make quite difficult decisions when writing down these notes. Clearly, the only way to clarify this issue would be an acoustical analysis of the sound recordings.

A further question with regard to the intervallic structure of the Seto shepherd songs is the location of the wider and narrower intervals in the scale. In

the analytical part of this article, a pattern was detected, according to which the wider intervals are situated lower in the scale than the narrower intervals. This concerns mainly the location and size of the thirds. If there are two different thirds in the scale, the major third is situated under the central tone and the minor third above it. If there is only one third, it is always located in the lower part of the scale. If the thirds are filled by passing tones, the upper third is filled first. This situation may be a latent manifestation of the so-called 'proportional scales', which occur in some archaic traditional music cultures (Alekseyev 1976: 91; Ambrazevičius & Budrys & Višnevska 2015: 13). Some manifestations of 'proportional scales' are also found in the Seto multipart songs (Ambrazevičius & Pärtlas 2011: 14), but this topic requires more detailed investigation.

Taking into account the unusually great diversity of the intervallic structures of the Seto shepherd songs' scales, the question arises as to the extent to which the theoretical differentiation between all these structures is justified. It is obvious that many of these differences may be caused merely by the looseness of intonation and the wide 'realization zones' of the scale notes, both of which are characteristic of many archaic traditional music styles. In this connection, Nettl asserted that the accuracy of the intonation depends on the size of the intervals between the adjacent scale notes: the bigger the intervals, the less precise the intonation (Nettl 1956: 50). Nevertheless, it seems that each performer of the Seto shepherd songs has a more or less definite model of the scale structure, and the singers are quite consistent in the realization of their models. These models may be local or even individual, and the degree of variability in the realization of the model depends on the particular performers and their cultural background, with greater variability obviously characterizing more archaic musical thinking. It is reasonable to assume that these various scale models are not entirely accidental and are therefore worth investigating from the point of view of the processes of scale formation. The individual variability of the tuning could be a topic for future research.

In conclusion, I would propose one further hypothesis as to the possible manner in which the scale development in the Seto shepherd songs took place – one which may have a wider application in the field of early traditional vocal music. To this purpose, I would use the scheme of the perceptual levels of musical scales by Dowling and Harwood (1986) (Figure 10).[13] I borrowed this scheme from the above-cited research by Ambrazevičius, Budrys, and Višnevska (2015: 9), where it is employed as the theoretical basis of the discussion about the scales in traditional music. The difference in my approach is that I try to apply this scheme to the historical process of scale formation.

The scheme describes four levels of perception of the musical scales, beginning with a pitch continuum, which is the first stage of the pitch hierarchy
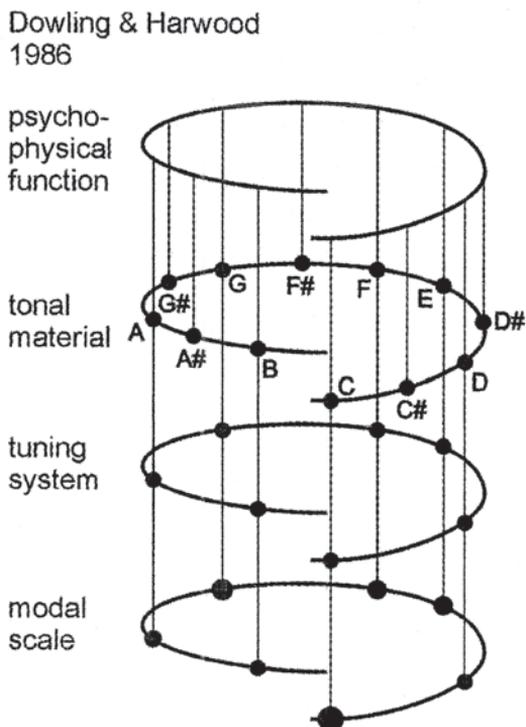
**Figure 10.** *The perceptual levels of musical scales
(based on Dowling and Harwood 1986).*

based on the psychophysical functions, and ending with the developed hierar-
chic system of the mode where each scale note has a certain modal function (in
the scheme, this level is named a 'modal scale'). The intermediate levels are
the establishment of the minimum distance between possible pitch categories
(a 'tonal material') and the formation of the intervallic structure of the scale
(a 'tuning system').

Although from a cognitive viewpoint the perceptual levels of the musical
scales presented in such an order make a logically perfect scheme, we can as-
sume that historically the development of musical thinking hardly proceeded in
this way. Taking these levels as developmental stages we could, on the contrary,
move along this scheme in an ascending direction; the psychophysical level,
however, as the natural basis for pitch perception is fundamental and not part
of the developmental process. This assumption is based on the premise that in
the process of its development the functional structure of the mode does not
need a well-established system of pitch relations.

In the light of the analysis carried out in this paper, it seems that the initial stage of the scale formation might have been the establishment of the small number of the main modal functions, which were embodied in the higher or lower pitch zones without fixing their exact intervallic relation (the level of the 'modal scale' in Figure 10). In the Seto shepherd songs, as we noted above, there are three main functions – the central principal tone and the upper and lower supporting tones. Initially the timbral and pitch contrast of such mutable scale degrees was of greater importance than the exact pitch relations. However, we can imagine that subsequently the intervals between the main scale notes were recognized by the singers more exactly until more or less stable intervallic models were established (the level of the 'tuning system'). After that – or maybe at the same time – there were attempts to fill the intervals between the main scale notes by passing tones. The filling occurred in different ways, and this process can be considered as an intuitive search for the possible pitch categories (the level of the 'tonal material'). The appearance of the less important passing tones made the functional structure of the mode more complex. The intervallic fixation of the additional scale notes and their functioning as units of pitch measurement might have led to the establishment of more stable intervals between the main scale notes.

The hypothetical developmental model presented here is not meant to be the only historical explanation of scale formation; it does, however, fit well with the musical material analysed in this paper and could hopefully have wider application. The three stages described are unlikely to have occurred successively; rather, they probably overlapped each other. Furthermore, in the Seto shepherd songs, this process was never completed, which is why we can speak about archaic musical thinking in this case. However, the various performances of the Seto shepherd songs gathered in Anu Vissel's collection may demonstrate different stages of the scale formation process.

This 'polyphony' of historical layers is characteristic of traditional musical cultures in general; it is an essential feature of traditional musical thinking, and it can appear even in a single artefact. A close analysis of the musical texts, especially when a great number of variants are available, allows us to uncover this layering and sometimes to 'excavate' evidence about the very ancient structures of musical thinking that are present in them.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## NOTES

[1] Under 'contemporary ethnomusicology' I here mean the predominant mainstream English-language ethnomusicological tradition.

[2] Among the rare exceptions is the recent thorough monograph on musical scales in Lithuanian traditional music: Ambrazevičius & Budrys & Višnevska 2015. The theoretical questions of the musical modality were also developed in the works by Timo Leisiö (2002a, b).

[3] Such modal systems may probably be defined as 'additive tonal systems' (see Jouste & Niemi 2002: 254–257).

[4] One of the reasons why a semitone is preferable as a standard unit of intervals' measurement is its connection with the much criticized but still the only readable system of musical notation broadly used in ethnomusicology.

[5] For instance, it is noticed that the scale notes that significantly disagree with the 12TET system are often perceived by the transcribers as more unstable than others (Ambrazevičius 2005).

[6] The sound-recording of this performance is available on the CD *Helmine: Mikitamäe leelokoor* (1999).

[7] I here speak about the scales as they were notated by the transcribers. This circumstance lowers to some extent the value of the exact figures, but I still believe that the general conclusions made as a result of the analysis are also valid for actual song performances.

[8] Bruno Nettl, in his book *Music in Primitive Culture*, pointed to the need for the analysis of the melodic movement to gain a better understanding of the scale formation: "Melodic movement is a particularly significant factor in scale analysis, one which has been somewhat neglected in favor of the study of scales" (Nettl 1956: 51).

[9] All examples of the melodic contours (the first lines of the melostrophes) in this and the following figures originate from Vissel's collection. The numbers beside the examples refer to the numbers of the transcriptions in this publication; the numbers in the brackets show the numbers of the melostrophes. In the short musical examples and schemes, the melody is presented without the text for two reasons: firstly, in the Seto shepherd songs the verbal text generally influences neither the structure of the musical scales nor the melodic contour; secondly, the schemes are easier to follow if they are not overcharged with redundant information.

[10] Such an approach explains the fact that, as Nettl himself noticed, the first of these three types of melodic contour actually occurs very seldom in a 'primitive' melody.

[11] This is a literal translation of the book's title (*Rannefol'klornoe intonirovanie*). In the English summary of the book, the free rendering is preferred – "The Pitch Nature of Primitive Singing" (Alekseyev 1986: 203).

[12] This observation is founded on my aural impressions, and it should be checked by the aid of an acoustical analysis.

[13] It is important to emphasize that I use this scheme here mainly as a 'source of inspiration', being aware of the differences between the original conception and my developments: firstly, the scheme by Dowling and Harwood was designed for the diatonic scale of the Western tonal system, whereas I apply it to the scales of traditional music; secondly, this scheme originally depicts the final result of scale development, whereas I interpret the levels of the scheme as the stages in the process of development of the modal system.

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# HISTORICAL SKOLT SAMI MUSIC AND TWO TYPES OF MELODIC STRUCTURES IN *LEU'DD* TRADITION

*Marko Jouste*

**Abstract:** The Sami are an indigenous people living in Scandinavia, northern Fennoscandia, and the Kola Peninsula. The land of the Sami is located on the territories of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Due to the fact that the Skolt Sami have always lived in a multicultural environment, their musical tradition is inherently multi-layered and the Skolt Sami have adopted a significant amount of shared traditions from the northeast of Russia into their own musical culture. However, the Skolt Sami have an indigenous musical genre called *leu'dd*, which is used to describe and comment on Skolt Sami life, both as 'history' and 'present', so that the *leu'dds* form a bank of shared memories of the Skolt Sami society. In my analysis I have presented an idea that there are two different types of melody structures in the historical material found from the archives. The model of fragmentary phrase structure explains many of the features found in the 'old type' *leu'dd* melodies, while the 'new type' can be understood through the idea that Russian and Karelian song melodies were used as the model for *leu'dds*.

**Keywords:** genres, *leu'dd* tradition, musical analysis, northeast Russia, oral history, phrase structure, Skolt Sami, traditional music

## THE EASTERN SAMI IN FINLAND AND RUSSIA

The Sami are an indigenous people living in Scandinavia, northern Fennoscandia, and the Kola Peninsula. The land of the Sami is located on the territories of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. During the Middle Ages the Sami inhabited wide areas as compared to the present situation, covering considerably larger areas of modern Scandinavia and parts of north-western Russia. In historical sources, the Sami are often referred to as Phinnoi, Scrithifinoi, or Lapps. The current number of the Sami is estimated to be about 60,000–100,000 people. However, due to many centuries of forced assimilation in the abovementioned four countries, it is difficult to estimate the exact number of the Sami. In the Nordic countries there are national Sami Parliaments, which have a representative role in the administration of the Sami areas. In these countries there is also a system of schooling and higher education for the Sami (Lehtola 2015: 10; Sammallahti 2004: 168; Carpelan 1985: 36; 2002: 10).

Historically, the Sami can be divided into several different groups according to language, source of livelihood, and the degree to which local environmental characteristics have influenced their cultures. In a historical and cultural sense, there is a pronounced difference between the Western and Eastern Sami. The Western Sami have had connections with Scandinavian and Finnish cultures and with the Lutheran Church. The eastern group, to which the Skolt Sami belong, is strongly influenced by Russian and Karelian cultures as well as the Orthodox Church. The Eastern Sami cultures in Russia can be divided into three main groups by the language and characteristics of culture. However, due to the radical cultural and social changes in this area especially during the Soviet era, definitions used here refer mainly to the cultural situation in the first half of the twentieth century. The traditional Ter Sami areas are located in the easternmost part of the Kola Peninsula. Kildin and Akkala Sami have inhabited the central part and Skolt Sami the westernmost part in the border area of Russia, Finland, and Norway. In Finland there are also the Aanaar Sami people, belonging to the Eastern Sami group (see Mustonen & Mustonen 2011: 29–52; Jouste 2014: 361–362).

The Skolt Sami society was organised through the system of *sijdds* (Sami villages). A *sijdd* consisted of the inhabitants of a village and the area owned by them. There were some local and specific cultural characteristics in various *sijdds*. For example, the people of Suõ′nn′jel *sijdd* lived in an inland forest area, made their living by reindeer herding and lake-fishing, and had close contacts with the people of Inari. The neighbouring Peäccam *sijdd* was located on the mountainous shore of the Arctic Ocean and therefore sea-fishing was a natural source of income that supported reindeer herding. There was also a strong Russian element in their local culture, manifesting the influence of the Russian monastery nearby. There were seven *sijdds* in the Skolt Sami land in the early twentieth century. The farthest *sijdd* to the west was Njauddâm. It was the first to be separated from others when its area became a part of Norway in 1826, while Suõ′nn′jel, Paččjokk, Peäccam, Njuõ′ttjäu′rr, Mue′tǩǩ, and Sââ′rves were governed by Russia (Mustonen & Mustonen 2011: 24–25; Linkola & Linkola 2000: 130; Linkola & Sammallahti 1995: 39–51; Jouste 2014: 361–362).

The early twentieth century Skolt Sami culture can be seen as essentially Skolt Sami but in the analysis one must take under consideration also the strong effect of the shared traditions of the neighbouring Karelian, Russian, Norwegian, and Finnish cultures since the traditional living areas of the Skolt Sami are located in a cultural melting pot of various northern peoples (Jouste 2014: 362–363; Laitinen 1977: 12–14; Pentikäinen 1971: 142). However, this multicultural environment, which had existed in this area for centuries, broke down during the twentieth century. Based on the Treaty of Tartu, the Skolt

Sami territories were divided by the border between Finland and Russia in 1920. Saami village areas Paččjokk, Peäccam, and Suõ'nn'jel were incorporated into Finland and the area was named Petsamo. During the same period, the inhabitants of Njuõ'ttjäu'rr, Mue'tǩǩ, and Sââ'rves became Soviet citizens and they were forced to move elsewhere from their home areas during the 1930s. The contacts across the border began to decline and ceased to exist completely during and after the Second World War, when the Petsamo area was ceded to the Soviet Union. As Finnish citizens, the Skolt Sami of Petsamo decided to move to Finland permanently. The re-settling of the traditional living areas, which were now a part of the Soviet Union, would have been impossible. People were relocated to the new home areas of Njeä'llem and Če'vetjä'urr in Inari district (Linkola & Linkola 2000: 158–167; Mustonen & Mustonen 2011: 220–241). Today there are about 500 Skolt Sami in Finland and 1000 in Russia. The traditional culture of the Skolt Sami has suffered from forced migration during and after the Second World War. However, the Skolt Sami have been able to keep the traditional musical culture alive at least to some extent. Lately there has been a considerable local cultural revitalisation within the Aanaar Sami and Skolt Sami communities.

## GENRES OF THE TRADITIONAL SKOLT SAMI MUSIC

Due to the fact that the Skolt Sami have always lived in a multicultural environment, their musical tradition is inherently multi-layered. Multiculturalism and influences from different musical traditions are visible in the diversity of musical genres described in the earlier research (see Laitinen 1977: 27–65; Saastamoinen 2000: 588–590; Jouste 2008: 24–28; 2011: 54). They are also found in the vast collection of archival material, gathered from the Skolt Sami during the twentieth century and preserved in archives in Finland, Russia, Sweden, Norway, and Estonia (see Jouste 2011: 54; Saastamoinen 2000: 96–97; 1998: 588–590). Furthermore, the researchers who visited the Skolt Sami area during the first decades of the twentieth century often made remarks about Karelian and Russian impact on the Skolt Sami culture. One of the most striking utterances was given by Armas Launis in 1922:

> *When I came to the Skolt Sami in the Petsamo region, I thought I would be visiting the same nomadic group of people who live in these areas. However, I did not find the Sami; I noticed that I had ended up in a place where people were Karelians. What else are the Skolt Sami than Karelians and especially brothers of Viena Karelians, both being descendants of ancient rich and mighty people of Perm.* (Launis 1922: 28)[1]

There are various models for the Skolt Sami musical genre classification formulated in former research (Jouste 2006: 295–301; Saastamoinen 1998: 102–104; Laitinen 1977; 1981: 194–197; Paulaharju 1921: 194). The model presented here is based on the earlier ones as well as on my own research on the Skolt Sami archival material (see below).

In the centre of the Skolt Sami musical tradition is the genre of vocally performed individual song called *leu'dd*, which is essentially Skolt Sami. Sometimes there are *leu'dds* and songs (not connected with known members of the community) in fairy tales. A special genre found in the archival material is the use of voice in various signals, calling shouts for animals and imitations of the sounds that animals make. Other forms of musical expression belong to a group of traditions shared with north-western Russia. Many Skolt Sami songs from the early twentieth century have their stylistic origin in the neighbouring Russian or Karelian song traditions. This group includes secular songs (e.g. Karelian and Russian folk and dance songs), and Christian songs taken over from the Orthodox Church. Laments are found in the Eastern Sami musical traditions as well as those of Karelians and Russians, but not among the Sami living in Scandinavia. Skolt Sami lullabies often have *baju-baju*-syllables reflecting the link to Karelian and Russian lullaby tradition. There was instrumental dance music performed on accordions and harmonicas, as well as the vivid tradition of Karelian and Russian dances, e.g. the quadrille, *sestjerkka*, *okkoldona*, *obsikruug*, *korobuska*, *oira*, *vintjorkka*, *vosmjorkka*, *krakoviacia*, *kerenski*, and *gemigorad* (on Russian and Karelian impact see, e.g., Jouste 2013: 39–67; Häkämies 1978: 18–19; Nickul 1948: 57; Laitinen 1981: 195).

The main genres of the Skolt Sami musical tradition in the first half of the twentieth century are as follows:

1) *Leu'dd* tradition
   a) *Leu'dds* of people
   b) *Leu'dds* of nature and animals
   c) Improvised *leu'dds*
2) Laments
3) Songs
   a) Lullabies
   b) Christian songs and hymns
   c) Russian songs
4) Dance music
   a) Dance songs
   b) Instrumental music
   (i.e. harmonica, accordion, gramophone)

    5) Songs and *leu'dds* in fairy tales
    6) Other expressions by voice
        a) Signals
        b) Calling shouts for animals
        c) Imitations of animal sounds

It is notable that singers vary songs and combine elements of different 'ideal' genres, and it is this process that creates new meanings in performances, and it is a central way of communication. The singers have knowledge of the functions of genres, they are aware of the genre system, which is further accompanied by a cultural code that directs the use of tradition. This kind of system articulated by performers in the Northern Sami yoik tradition is well documented but the conventions of the Skolt Sami musical tradition are far less known.

## *LEU'DD* AS A PART OF THE ORAL HISTORY
## OF THE SKOLT SAMI

*Leu'dd* is a genre of unaccompanied Skolt Sami songs, and as a genre it has equivalents in other Eastern Sami individual song traditions, such as Kildin Sami *luvvjt* and Aanaar Sami *livde*. It is notable that the *leu'dd* tradition differs significantly from the Northern Sami *luohti* 'yoik', which is the most commonly known form of Sami music in the scientific literature. The Skolt Sami never use the term yoik when they refer to *leu'dds* although this kind of use of the term can occur in some older sources, when *leu'dd* is incorrectly translated into other languages.

    With *leu'dds* singers refer to actual people, their life stories, and other historical events, and these can be studied in the broader context of local oral tradition. It can be defined as 'a history told by people's own voices' since *leu'dds* have preserved oral history over generations. In this way, the traditional Sami song differs also conceptually from the Western song tradition, in which the song texts often reflect more general subjects. Skolt Sami singers also comment on the various aspects of life inside the local community, and for this reason, *leu'dds* and the musical tradition in general are a valuable source of information about the Skolt Sami life and experience. Within this material it is possible to obtain a historical Skolt Sami perspective on their own history and individual and collective worldview (Jouste 2006; Jouste & Mosnikoff & Sivertsen 2007: 13–14).

    During the performance of an individual song, the performer recalls the characteristics of a person and often his or her story. According to the cultural

code, the song is 'owned' by its object and often also named after the latter. The performer leads the telling of the story by making allusions to the character of the subject or to some important events in his or her life. It is not often necessary to reveal everything about the character of the person, because it is expected that the participants or other listeners in the Sami society are acquainted with the person. According to Va′ss Semenoja, a Skolt Sami tradition bearer and performer, the "*leu′dd* is a description of the way someone has lived" (Jouste & Mosnikoff & Sivertsen 2007: 13).

Especially in the earlier times it was common that people knew each other's melodies. However, there was a rule that Skolt Sami singers did not perform a *leu′dd* when the object was present, avoiding a possible insult (Mosnikoff 2002; Itkonen 1991: 104). In addition to individual songs with specific people as a subject, there are many traditional songs of animals, nature, places, social events, etc., or songs referring more generally to various elements of the Skolt Sami society.

The first text example, O′lssee Piâtt *leu′dd* (see below), shows the way that a performer refers, with the text of a *leu′dd*, to the oral tradition and the historical events known in the Skolt Sami society. O′lssee Piâtt *leu′dd* was performed by Näskk Moshnikoff (neé Sverloff, 1893–1984) and during her visit in Helsinki in 1955 it was recorded by Erkki Ala-Könni. The text of the *leu′dd* refers to the story of how the Moshnikoff family became a member of the Suõ′nn′jel *sijdd*. The object of the *leu′dd*, O′lssee Piâtt Moshnikoff (1848–1909), was born into the Moshnikoff family in the Njuõ′ttjäu′rr *sijdd* in the middle of the nineteenth century. His father died when he was young, and he was adopted by his godfather Åls Gavriloff, who lived in the Suõ′nn′jel *sijdd* around the 1860s. As Åls Gavriloff did not have any children of his own, O′lssee Piâtt inherited the fortune and the traditional living area of Åls Gavriloff's family located in the Suõ′nn′jel *sijdd*. The words of the *leu′dd* describe the days of O′lssee Piâtt's youth. O′lssee Piâtt is the father of Peâtt-Huâttar, Peätt-Medrei, and Peätt-Kiurel, who was the second husband of the performer Näskk Moshnikoff. The children of O′lssee Piâtt were born between 1877 and 1885, and his mother and grandmother are also mentioned in the text. There is also a tragic side to this story. O′lssee Piâtt died accidentally when he drove into open water on the ice of Lake Vuõlljääur in the spring of 1909. In the same accident died Näskk Moshnikoff's first husband, Karppa-Kiurel's son Huâttar (Gavriloff), whom she had married just a few months earlier (Nickul 1948: 36–37; Mosnikoff 2002; Jouste & Mosnikoff & Sivertsen 2007: 36).

| 1. | *Kuäss mij-a vet jiâlažiim da* | At those times we lived, |
|----|----|----|
| 2. | *Sââdd-a-žan O'lssee go källsaž.* | My father O'lsse |
| 3. | *Njeeǯǯaž-am Feäđat nijdd.* | And my mother, Feäđat's daughter. |
| 4. | *Pue'rr leäi-i, hää'sǩ jeä'll-e-ded* | Life was good |
| 5. | *Õllgšjääu'r ääkka-laa.* | On the shore of Õll'šjääu'r. |
| | | |
| 6. | *Kuäss leäi Anisiag ääkka-laž.* | There was grandmother Anisiag. |
| 7. | *kuäss leäi â'lǧǧ, hää'sǩes piârr-a-až* | There were boys, there was a nice family. |
| 8. | *nijdd-a leäi vie'rpes piârr-agaž.* | There were daughters, a lively family. |
| 9. | *Dohattõõssâž ä'ldd čiõkk-â-raž.* | There was a herd of a thousand reindeer. |
| 10. | *Juuggadiim, poradiim* | We had good food |
| 11. | *oocciisǩ eânai poottâlbeä'l.* | And sometimes we drank half a bottle. |

(AK/0871; text transcription by Elias Mosnikoff and Seija Sivertsen)

## TWO TYPES OF MELODIC STRUCTURES
## IN *LEU'DD* TRADITION

### Type 1: Fragmentary phrase structure

During my research, I tentatively defined two different groups of melody types used in *leu'dds*. In the first type, the one-phrase or two-phrase melody is repeated iteratively throughout the performance, and each time the melody is performed with a new text line. However, the variants of different melody lines can differ so significantly from the melody line presented at the beginning of a *leu'dd* that in many cases it is difficult to define the 'original melody' and its variants as the same melody. This brings out the question of whether there are some rules for the variation or it is just free improvisation.

The fact is that the Skolt Sami tradition holders do recognize different *leu'dds* by their melodic features, and hence it cannot be a question of profoundly free musical expression. My suggestion is that many *leu'dd* melodies are modified in a special manner. I have defined this as a model of fragmentary phrase structure. The phrase itself is constructed out of several different melodic segments and an ending cadence, where the phrase always ends on the basic tone. It is typical that a *leu'dd* singer does not perform the whole melody on every repeat but

chooses only some fragments of it before ending the phrase in a cadence. In the next repeat the singer may choose different melodic segments or even repeat some. The melody might occur in its full length a few times in a performance, but in most parts of the performance it is possible to hear only fragments of the full melody. With a paradigmatic structural analysis (see Niemi & Jouste 2013) it is easy to visualize this full melody with all the possible melodic segments used in a particular *leu'dd* performance.



**Figure 1.** *O'lssee Piâtt* leu'dd. *Performed by Näskk Moshnikoff in Helsinki in 1955. Folklife Archives, University of Tampere (AK / 0871). Text transcription by Elias Mosnikoff and Seija Sivertsen. Musical transcription by Marko Jouste.*

The melody of Näskk Moshnikoffs O'lssee Piâtt *leu'dd* is performed with a fragmentary phrase structure. There are eleven melody lines and they differ from each other to some extent. The transcription of the whole performance is shown in Figure 1.

The melody of O'lssee Piâtt *leu'dd* consists of one phrase, which is repeated throughout the performance. Each time the melody is performed with a new text line, causing a different variation. It is important to notice that the rhythm of the melody is determined mainly by the rhythm of the text since *leu'dds* are unaccompanied and we can only occasionally hear a steady pulse in the performance. In order to clarify the analysis, it is better to distinguish the melodic and rhythmic layers and treat them separately in the analysis. In Figure 2, I have excluded the rhythm of the melody and analysed only the pitches of the melody and coded them by the numbers of their melodic degrees (1 equals basic tone, b3 equals minor third, etc.). The melodic segments found in the melody are marked with letters a, b, and c.

| Lines | Melodic segments | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **a** | **b** | | | | **c** |
| **1.** | 4 - 7 - 5 | | | 5 - b3 | 4 - b3 | b3 - 1 |
| **2.** | 5 - 6 - 5 | | | 4 - b3 | 4 - b3 | b3 - 1 |
| **3.** | 5 | b3 | | | 4 - b3 | b3 - 1 |
| **4.** | 5 - b6 | b3 | | 4 - b3 | 4 - b3 | b3 - 1 |
| **5.** | | b3 | | 4 - b3 | 4 - b3 | b3 - 1 |
| **6.** | 5 - 6 - 5 | b3 | | 4 - b3 | 4 - b3 | b3 - 1 |
| **7.** | 5 - 6 - 5 | b3 | | 4 - b3 | 4 - b3 | b3 - 1 |
| **8.** | 5 - b6 - 5 | b3 | | 4 - b3 | 4 - b3 | b3 - 1 |
| **9.** | 5 | b3 | | 4 - b3 | 4 - b3 | b3 - 1 |
| **10.** | | b3 | | 4 - b3 | 4 - b3 | b3 - 1 |
| **11.** | | b3 | 4 - b3 | 4 - b3 | 4 - b3 | b3 - 1 |

**Figure 2.** *The analysis of the phrase structure of the melody in O'lssee Piâtt* leu'dd. *The pitches are coded by the numbers of their melodic degrees; the melodic segments are marked with letters a, b, and c.*

The analysis shows that every line is different from the others. A melodic segment can be repeated (see segment b in lines 1–2 and 8–9) or varied, and

sometimes a segment is left totally out (see segment a in lines 5, 10, and 11). The basic 'rule' of creating a *leu'dd* melody in this manner could be summarized so that the first one begins from the upper part of the melody (here melodic segment a) and then descends slowly (here melodic segments b and c) to the basic tone, which is manifested by a cadenza (here melodic segment c). However, one cannot go back on the melody line; for example, you would not perform melodic segment a after melodic segment b.

The fragmentary phrase structure can be found both in one-phrase and two-phrase melodies. It is notable that among the Sami this kind of structure is found mainly in Eastern Sami music and especially in the Skolt Sami tradition. For example, the melodic structures of the Northern Sami *luohti*-tradition are clearly different (Laitinen 1981: 194; for comparative examples see Jouste 2006). There are also some interesting similarities between the fragmentary phrase structure of Skolt Sami *leu'dds* and some Viena Karelian *joiku* melodies (see, e.g., Kallberg 2004), but this topic requires further research.

## Type 2: *Leu'dds* with song-like melodies

In the second type of *leu'dds* the overall idea is that many of the song-like melodies might have a melodic model taken from the song traditions of the neighbouring peoples (for more examples see Jouste 2013). This can be seen in the next example of the *leu'dd Miklai da Täđjjan*. It was performed by Va'ss Semenoja in Kirakkajoki, during a field recording organised by the Finnish Broadcasting Company in 1961. Since the performance is rather long, lasting 4:45 minutes, I only present here an excerpt of the melody. The melody consists of three phrases and the phrase structure is abb. This is repeated throughout the performance but so that all melody lines clearly resemble each other. The basic melody does not vary in a manner that it would if it were an example of the fragmentary phrase structure. There is some variation also in this type, especially in the rhythm, caused by different words in different text lines.



**Figure 3**. *An excerpt of* Miklai da Täđjjan *performed by Va'ss Semenoja in 1961. University of Tampere, Folklife Archives, AK/0563. Text transcription by Elias Mosnikoff and Seija Sivertsen. Musical transcription by Marko Jouste.*

The melodic model for this *leu'dd* comes from a Russian sailor's song called *Iablochko* ('small apple'), which was pointed to me by a Russian musicologist Mikhail Lobanov. He transcribed the following melody from memory after having heard the recording. The *Iablochko* melody is also known as a Russian sailors' dance, and it became widely known during the First World War (Zemtsovsky 2001: 9; Jouste 2013: 59–57; http://worldorch.pbworks.com/w/page/15428653/Russian%20Sailor%27s%20Dance). The *Iablochko* melody also has abb-structure, with the first phrase moving in the upper register, followed by a descending phrase repeated twice. One can easily notice the similarity between these two examples (see Fig. 4).



Ekh, Iab-loch-ko, ku-da ty ko-tish'-sia? Ko mne vrot po-pa-desh',ne vo-ro-tish'-sia. Ko mne vrot po-pa-desh', ne vo-ro-tish'sia.

**Figure 4.** Iablochko *melody. Transcription from memory by M. Lobanov in possession of the author.*

An interesting question is whether there are any clues of how and when these song melodies were incorporated into the *leu'dd* tradition of the Skolt Sami. Naturally, there is the general notion of multiculturalism and influences from different musical traditions in the cultural melting pot in the western part of the Kola Peninsula. There is also well-documented historical data of how Skolt Sami men, who were recruited into the Russian army during the First World War, learned songs during their service and when they returned, the new songs and melodies became a new fashionable part of the Skolt Sami music (Launis 1922: 30). One of the most famous Skolt Sami life stories including the war period is that of Jääkk Sverloff, who became the head of the Skolt Sami community during post-war decades (see Ingold 1976: 235–253; Linkola 1985: 99). Among the present Skolt Sami, Jääkk Sverloff and also Olli Gauriloff have the reputation of introducing many of these Russian musical influences and new dances to the people of the Suõ'nn'jel *sijdd* after they returned from the war in the early 1920s (SKNA, 09842/a).

These influences can be heard also in other Skolt Sami musical genres. For example, a variant of the same *Iablochko*-melody is found in a quadrille dance song *Mâid kuulak-a niõd-e ju určči juugg-u-de-ja?* ('What are you youngsters running for?'), performed by Jääkk Sverloff. In this variation the repeated b-phrase is shortened as compared to the previous example of the *Iablochko*-melody (see Figs. 4 & 5).

**Figure 5**. Mâid kuulak-a niõđ-e ju určči juugg-u-de-ja? *('What are you youngsters running for?'). Performed by Jääkk Sverloff. University of Tampere, Folklife Archives, AK/0568. Text transcription by Elias Mosnikoff and Seija Sivertsen. Musical transcription by Marko Jouste.*

Finally, it is also interesting to mention that Finnish researcher Armas Launis, who undertook fieldwork in the Skolt Sami area in 1922, also mentions two separate styles of *leu'dds* during his visit. Launis gathered altogether 60 wax cylinder recordings and transcribed 173 melodies from the Skolt Sami of Suõ'nn'jel and Paččjokk. He wrote about two *leu'dd* singers with different styles, who both lived in the Paččjokk *sijdd*. Launis described these styles, though his views contain evaluations somehow typical of the early twentieth century musicology, and also connected with Launis' own 'literate' or 'sophisticated' musical taste. According to Launis, Evvan Råmman (Romman Ofanasief, 1852–) used the old melody type and his style differed from the more popular style of the 1920s. His melodies were simple, non-ornamented, monotonic, and robust, composed in the old-fashion Sami style. However, his repertoire of this kind of melodies was notable. The other *leu'dd* singer was Mihkel-Vää'sǩ O'nddri (in the original: Mihkel-Vask Ondrei, 1854–) and he was known as a composer of *leu'dds* in the new style. Launis described that his melodies sounded richer with broader and modern motifs, and possessed a different tempo, so they sounded interesting to him as compared to Evvan Råmmans' melodies. Launis also writes that it is no wonder that the Skolt Sami prefer these melodies and that this is why they have spread all over the area where Finnish Skolt Sami live (Launis 1922: 30, 35–36).

## CONCLUSION

In all the periods from which we have historical sources, we can see that there have been cultural contacts between different peoples in the northeast of Russia and Scandinavia. It is notable that the Skolt Sami have adopted a significant amount of shared traditions from the northeast of Russia into their own musical culture and also into culture on a more general level. These Russian, Karelian, Norwegian, and Finnish songs were performed in their original form, but sometimes melodies and other musical features were incorporated into traditional music, resulting in a unique, diverse, and multi-layered musical culture.

The *leuʹdd* tradition was used to describe and comment on Skolt Sami life, both as 'history' and 'present', so that the *leuʹdds* form a bank of shared memories of the Skolt Sami society. In my analysis I have presented the idea that there are two different types of melody structures in the historical material found from the archives. The model of fragmentary phrase structure explains many of the features found in the 'old type' *leuʹdd* melodies, while the 'new type' can be understood through the idea that Russian and Karelian song melodies were used as the model for *leuʹdds*. The study of historical Skolt Sami musical culture shows how a strong local culture can also take influences from other cultures without losing its own characteristics and identity.

## NOTES

[1]  Translated by the author.

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# STAR BRIDE MARRIES A COOK: THE CHANGING PROCESSES IN THE ORAL SINGING TRADITION AND IN FOLK SONG COLLECTING ON THE WESTERN ESTONIAN ISLAND OF HIIUMAA. II

*Helen Kõmmus, Taive Särg*

**Abstract:** This article is the second part of a longer writing about Hiiumaa older folk songs. Relying on the critical analysis of the folk song collections, which represent the heritage of the second biggest island in Estonia, Hiiumaa[1], as well as on manifold background information, the character of the singing tradition in the changing social and cultural context is drafted. The first part of the study was published in the previous, 67th volume of *Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore*. It focused on the history of folk song collecting in Hiiumaa (from 1832 to 1979) and analyzed the representativeness of the collected material.

The present article highlights the specific features of Hiiumaa older folk songs, which represent the historical styles of Baltic-Finnic alliterative songs: *regilaul*, transitional song, and archaic vocal genres. The settlement history of Hiiumaa is studied and related to the putative processes in folk song tradition. The analysis reveals regional western Estonian features and the process of historical changing, especially a pervasive impact of bagpipe music in Hiiumaa songs. The singing tradition has been influenced mainly by cultural contacts with the Estonian and Swedish population on Estonian islands and the western coast, and also by the contacts of local sailors.

**Keywords:** Estonian Swedes, folklore collection, Hiiumaa, *regilaul*, traditional music

## INTRODUCTION

The collection and study of older folk songs has been one of the main fields of interest in European and Estonian folkloristics since the nineteenth century. Despite this, Hiiumaa older folk song tradition has not attracted much attention until now. The present study, published in two consecutive volumes of *Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore*, is an early bird in this field. Our work is based on the folklore collections that are mostly stored in the Estonian Folklore Archives (EFA), but also partly in other archives as well as published in books. As it was proved in the first part of the study (Kõmmus & Särg 2017),

the folk song collections contain not extensive, but still representative material from Hiiumaa folk song tradition (altogether about 1430 variants of older folk song lyrics and 280 melodies) since around the mid-nineteenth century. The diminishing percentage of *regilaul* recordings over the last 150 years reflects the disappearing of this tradition, while the numbers for other older song genres (transitional songs and archaic vocal genres) in the folklore collections are more dependent on the collection goals.

The main goal of the present article, which forms the second part of our study, is to analyze the specific local stylistic features of Hiiumaa older folk songs and the putative ways of their development against the background of local settlement history and cultural contacts. The article also contributes to the discussion about why there are no big collections of Hiiumaa old folk songs, especially *regilaul* songs. A closer analysis of the song texts, melodies, and contextual information was carried out in order to understand whether *regilaul* as a style had died out in the nineteenth century or had never properly spread or developed in Hiiumaa – perhaps because of the cultural impact of the local Swedish community or other ideological, historical or cultural factors. The results of the study may shed light upon the regional developments of the Baltic-Finnic folk song tradition and the more extensive cultural processes in the Baltic Sea area.

## BETWEEN OLDER ALLITERATIVE FOLK SONG STYLES AND MORE MODERN, END-RHYMED STANZAIC FOLK SONG

The song styles and genres as well as the ties between them are characterized below in order to draft an overall picture of the changing Hiiumaa singing tradition. The only earlier attempt to study Hiiumaa folk songs, Harri Otsa's manuscript *Hiiumaa uus rahvalaul* ('The modern folk song of Hiiumaa', 2001) focuses on the newer tradition, which overlaps the border areas of our research material and questions. Despite the problems with the methods, Otsa's work contains good observations and brings out the essential about Hiiumaa tradition – a vivid modernization process around the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and especially the development of male repertoire from *regilaul* style to newer "polka-rhythmic song" (ETMM, M 221: 1/15: 41, etc.).

### *Regilaul*

Hiiumaa belongs to the bigger western Estonian dialectal and cultural region. According to comparative metrical analyses made by Mari Sarv for the twelve

Estonian *regilaul* areas, the western Estonian[2] *regilaul* has a syllabic-accentual meter rather than a quantitative Kalevala-meter. As compared to the other eleven areas, Hiiumaa *regilaul* has the most striking features of the syllabic-accentual meter – the least number of broken verses (5%); the second biggest number of "accentual verses" (in which, contrarily to Kalevala-meter, a word initial short syllable fills a strong position, 34%); the biggest number of both shorter verses (with unfilled last verse position, 34%) and verses with two syllables in one position (36%) (Sarv 2008: 26–27, 39).

**Lyrical songs.** The lyrical songs tend to have modernized features in Hiiumaa, as is represented in Example 2. This *regilaul* has the following formal poetic features that occur in both – *regilaul* and transitional style:

1) some verses are shortened for the use of shortened contemporary words, instead of archaic *regilaul* word forms, so a syllable is dropped (e.g. in verse 21: *mees < meesi*),[3] or the verse is already built according to the shortened structure (49, 50);

2) two syllables often occur in one position (preferably in the first two positions, but also in others) if there is a need to fit more than eight syllables in a verse and/or match word stresses to metrical stresses (verses 2, 5, 6, etc.);

3) syllable quantity has not been relevant for singers at recreating the verses, although some verses might reflect the earlier quantitative system (e.g. remnants of the placement of a word initial short syllable on the metrically weak 6th position might be seen in some verses, such as 19);

4) several two-line parallelism groups, resembling an end-rhymed couplet, while the end-rhymes are rarely perfect (49–50 *kukuta-lukuta*), but often impure (1–2 *minna-panna*, 6–7 *põllalt-kallalt*) or identical (25–26 *poolt*); the difference from a consistent end-rhymed form is that couplets occur irregularly (5 is a single verse, 46–48 is a three-verse group with an identical rhyme *pääle* or a parallelism group) and the content of a verse pair resembles a parallel structure, i.e., it expresses and complements the same poetic motive (e.g. 3–4, 6–7, etc.);

5) alliteration (marked in bold in verses 1–3); also a tendency to have the same vowels in the stressed syllables.

Example 2 is a Hiiumaa men's song about the conflict between a manor overseer and a serf. The text contains stereotypic *regilaul* formulas and motives, the main plot belongs to the well-known *regilaul* type *Kubjas ja teomees* ('The overseer and the serf'), represented in the EFA by several variants from Hiiumaa and

other regions (Tedre 1969–1974, type No. 1413). Due to the use of alliteration, parallelism, 8-positional verse, and the formulaic language and typical plot of the *regilaul*, the song variant has been classified as a *regilaul* – despite certain modernized poetic means – both by the authors of this research and an anonymous EFA archivist.

### Example 2.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Uidut-tuidut teule minna,* | Uidut-tuidut, to go to the manor work, |
| *ei pole pasteld jalga panna,* | no leather shoes to put on, |
| *vanad pastlid paikamata,* | the old leather shoes have not been patched, |
| *uued nahad parkimata.* | the new skins have not been tanned yet. |
| [5] *Läksin aga hobusid otsima.* | [5] I went to look for the horses. |
| *Musta sain mina Moore põllalt,* | I got the black one from the Moore field, |
| *halli kaaranaabri kallalt,* | I got the grey one at the oat stack, |
| *ise aga astusin halli selga,* | I mounted the grey one, |
| *musta vetsin kää kõrva,* | I took the black one by the reins, |
| [10] *siis läksin mõisa teutoa ede.* [---] | [10] then I went to the manor office. [---] |
| *Hakkasin kubjast paluma:* | I began to plead with the overseer: |
| [20] *"Anna mulle veikene liivatükk!"* | [20] 'Give me a little piece of sand [to plough]!' |
| *Kubjas oli kuri kurat mees,* | The overseer was an evil devil man, |
| *mõõtis moole suure souetüki,* | he measured me a large piece of clay, |
| *seda mina kündsin loupe õhta,* | I ploughed it on Saturday night, |
| *loupe õhta eige hilja.* | on Saturday very late at night. |
| [25] *Junkur tuleb turu poolt* | [25] A junker came from the market |
| *ja kubjas Kiimu kõrtsi poolt.* [---] | and the overseer from Kiimu tavern. [---] |
| [45] *Junkur aga hakkas jooksema:* | [45] The junker started running, though: |
| *jõlk jähi maha sülla pääle,* | a trace left behind on the bridge, |
| *teine turu trummi pääle,* | the second left on the market culvert, |
| *kolmas koja trepi pääle;* | the third on the entrance stairs; |
| *siis sai tuba kukuta,* | and then he could fall into the room, |
| [50] *ja ukse kinni lukuta.* | [50] and lock the door. |

H II 41, 10/2 (3) < Reigi p. – Peeter Reikmann (1889)

Social antagonism has been a prolific topic in the whole Estonian *regilaul* tradition. We can suggest that song types represented by numerous and manifold variants of mixed stylistic features were in the process of changing, and were popular in the folklore collecting period or somewhat earlier. They were often sung and so, step by step, were modernized according to the changing taste. As peasants kept working on manors in Hiiumaa until the late nineteenth century,[4] the songs were likely in active use until that time. Other popular topics in Hiiumaa lyrical songs are village life and the relationships between maidens and young men.

The lyrical *regilaul* songs were usually sung to newer two-line melodies, their ambitus ranged from sixth to octave or more, and they had an even-numbered meter without noticeable deviances. The transcription No. 120 in Example 3 represents a typical men's song melody; its lyrics have quite a regular *regilaul* form.

> ***Example 3.*** The manuscript of Peeter Süda, EÜS II 822 (1905); No. 120 *regilaul Halb naine* ('The bad wife'); No. 121 waltz *Ilus tüdruk* ('The pretty girl'); No. 122 *labajalg*[5] dances of a wedding ritual played on bagpipes, the last one with singing. I. *Pruudi sisse kutsumine* ('Asking the bride in'), II. *Waka jägamise lugu* ('The piece for distributing the bride's gifts'), III. *Pulma lõpp* ('The end of the wedding').[6]

**Lyroepic songs.** A manifold but not rich collection of lyroepic songs (56 vari-
ants)[7] includes some poetic and wholesome examples, such as *Tähemõrsja* ('The
star's bride'), *Venna sõjalugu* ('The brother's war tale'), *Peiu laev* ('The groom's
ship'), *Lunastatav neiu* ('The maiden for ransom'), and other songs. This tradi-
tion, however, bears signs of decline because several song types are represented
just as fragments in contaminations, for example, a variant of *Suur tamm* ('The
big oak') has been added to a song about village life (Example 1 in part 1), and
the variants of *Hobuse otsimine* ('Searching for the horse') occur only as a motif
of *Kubjas ja teomees* ('The overseer and the serf') (Example 2). Some songs fea-
ture a new humorous attitude; for example, in *Tähemõrsja* ('The star's bride')
the star in the role of a groom has been replaced by a young chef:

> ### Example 4.
>
> | [---] *Ta läks kokapoisile.* | She married a young chef. |
> | *Sääl sai pehmet rooga süüa,* | There [she] got soft food to eat, |
> | *kuldsest katlast kohvi juua.* | to drink coffee from a golden kettle. |
>
> EÜS II 977/8 (131) < Reigi p. – Peeter Süda, Voldemar Quarnström
> < Andrus Mann, 65 (1905)

Several oldest Hiiumaa examples of lyroepic songs, published by Gottlund
(1832) and Lönnbohm (alias Mustonen) (Lönnbohm 1893) contain a smaller
amount of transitional features. Example 5, *Kass kaevus* ('The cat in the well'),
has western Estonian accentual-syllabic *regilaul* meter with typical features:
plenty of divided positions (verses 1–3, 5–14, etc.), but not many empty 8th
positions after shortened word forms (e.g. 13 *kuijemast < kuijemasta*). The quite
regular 8-positional structure and the prolonged vowel instead of a disappeared
ending (9 *kuijemaa < kuijemaie*) refer probably to a recent drop of the final
syllable. The tendency to form end-rhymed verse pairs, perhaps suggested by
a two-line melody, is to a certain extent reflected in two-line parallel groups
(1–2 *mieste–koirukeste,* 5–6 *maata,* etc.).

> ### Example 5.
>
> | *Oli mina muista nuoru mieste.* | I was a young man ages ago. |
> | *Oli mull kolmu koirukeste:* | I had three dogs: |
> | *yks oli Irvi, teno Erve,* | one was Irvi, another Erve, |
> | *kolmas Muru, musta litsi.* | the third was Muru, a black slut. |

5 *Niet söitset mole suota-maata,*     5 They were running the boggy
                                          land for me,

  *ma isse marsi sen määtä-maata.*     I myself was marching along
                                          the tufty ground.

  *Ne töi mull tuhat tui lintu,*     They brought me a thousand
                                          doves,

  *sata santti jäneksä-poika.*     a hundred crippled young hares.
  *Ma pani lihat kuijemaa,*     I set meats to dry,
10 *ma pani maut mautlemaa.*     10 I set sausages to lie.
  *Vanna kass oli kiimas silma,*     An old cat had lusty eyes,
  *vanna kass oli laija kämmä.*     an old cat had large paws.
  *Söi minun lihat kuijemast,*     It ate my meats that were drying,
  *söi minun maut mautlemast.*     it ate my sausages that were lying.
  [---]     [---]

(Gottlund 1832: 184–187)

The variants of lyroepic songs are quite rare and fragmentary in newer collections (from the twelve variants collected after 1906, only four are longer than ten verses; no variant has been added after 1939). A single melody, noted with a lyroepic text,[8] is a four-line tune of functional-harmonic dimension, probably simultaneously used for newer end-rhymed songs of stanzaic structure. So lyroepic songs declined earlier, perhaps around the mid-nineteenth century.

**Ritual songs. Wedding songs.** The existence of ritual *regilaul* songs might be essential to answer the question whether the vivid *regilaul* tradition once existed in Hiiumaa. The ritual songs are connected to the context and activity, so it was not likely that many of them spread out via casual contacts. From that point of view, it is interesting to recognize the ample remnants of wedding song tradition. There are at least 75 variants (five with melodies) of wedding songs, including even longer cycles, which reflect the course of the ritual,[9] mainly from eastern Hiiumaa – the small Kassari Island and its surroundings.[10]

    It was surprising that wedding descriptions, as far as we managed to read them, did not mention *regilaul* singing, but only dance songs and church chorals as a part of ritual and entertainment. Singing in weddings likely disappeared in the mid-nineteenth century, but the songs survived longer in people's memories. All the song examples were collected between 1877 and 1939,[11] the oldest singer whose year of birth was known was born in 1817, the youngest in 1896.

The *regilaul* wedding songs are in quite a traditional style, so they perhaps disappeared from active use before the transitional features became more fashionable in *regilaul*. Example 6b represents the dialogue between groom's and bride's singers at the arrival at the bride's home: *Tare teretus* (verses 1–3) / *Neiut pole kodus* (4–8) / *Imemaa* (9–23) / *Kust teadsid siia tulla?* (24–27) / *Sirgujäljed* (28–32) / *Kas on hobust neidu viia?* (33–35) / *Kosjahobu söötmine* (36–60) ('The greeting of the house' / 'The maiden is not at home' / 'Wonderland' / 'How did you know to come here?' / 'Bird's footprints' / 'Have you got a horse to take the maiden?' / 'The feeding of a wooing horse'). The lyrics have a western Estonian syllabic-accentual *regilaul* meter with some typical shorter lines (5, 10, etc.), doubled syllables (3, 7–9, etc.), and even some archaic unshortened words with an ancient infinitive ending *-maie* (13–16).

The archaic variable melody (Example 6a) of speech-like intonation, short one-line structure and a narrow ambitus, recorded in three wedding song variants from Kassari (in 1905, 1933), belongs to the ancient northern Estonian wedding song tradition. There is no prolongation at the verse ends, characteristic of the old northern Estonian melodies known also in Muhu and Saaremaa (Oras 2001; Rüütel 2015a, 2015b). One two-line wedding song melody resembles a typical Mustjala tune from Saaremaa,[12] another has a newer unusual structure.[13]

> **Example 6.** Wedding song cycle, sung when the groom's party is arriving at the bride's home: a) some verses, phonographed from Leena Elmi in 1933; b) fragments of lyrics, written down from Ann Maripuu in 1925. Both singers lived on the small island of Kassari, eastern Hiiumaa.

*a)*



Saa- ja- nai- ne, nai- su- ke,     teil vä- ga pi- si- ke ka- ku- ke. [---]

Kust tei- e o- sa- si- te sii- a tul- la [---] sii- a pee- nes- se pe- res- se? [---]

ERA, Fon 378 e < Pühalepa p., Kassari – Herbert Tampere < Leena Elmi, b. 1864 (1933)

*b)*

| *Sajanaine laulab:* | The best woman sings: |
|---|---|
| *Tere Jumal siia tuppa,* | Welcome, God, in this room, |
| *Maarja siia majasse!* | Maria in this house! |
| *Püharist siia põrandale!* | The holy cross on this floor! |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Tüdrukud laulsid vastu:* | The maidens replied singing: |
| *Sajanaine, naisukene,* | Best woman, dear woman, |
| [5] *mis te meile otsite?* | [5] what are you searching for? |
| *Meie neiut pole kodus,* | Our maiden is not at home, |
| *neiu läks kaevust vetta tooma.* | she went to take water from the |
| [---] | well. [---] |
| *Sajanaine naisukane,* | Best woman, dear woman, |
| [25] *kus sa osasid siia tulla,* | [25] how did you know the way here, |
| *siia suuresse sugusse,* | to the big family, |
| *siia laiasse lautsisse?* | to the large in-laws' tribe? |
| *Sajanaine:* | The best woman: |
| *Siit aga tulid siili jäljed,* | The hedgehog's footprints came from here, |
| *kaudu kaske kassi jäljed,* | the cat's footprints [came] through the birches, |
| [30] *üle umbaid hunda jäljed,* | [30] the wolf's footprints over the yard, |
| *üle niidi nirgi jäljed,* | the weasel's footprints over the meadow, |
| *üle põllu põdra jäljed.* | the moose's footprints over the field. |
| *Tüdrukud:* | The girls: |
| *Sajanaine naisukene,* | Best woman, dear woman, |
| *kas sul seda hoosta õues,* | have you got a horse in the yard, |
| [35] *kes sulle neiu ära veab?* | [35] which can take the maiden away? |
| *Sajanaine:* | The best woman: |
| *Nägin neidu kasvavat,* | I saw the maiden growing up, |
| *maast kui marja tõusevat.* | rising like a berry from the ground. |
| *Hakkasin hoosta hoidema* | I started to take care of the horse |
| [---] | [---] |

E, StK 30, 80/3 (69) < Käina p., Kassari – Selma Perv < Ann Maripuu, 83 (1925)

## Archaic vocal genres

Hiiumaa is represented in the EFA with 381 text variants (95 of them are sound-recorded and 6 are provided with melody transcriptions) of various archaic vocal genres: mostly imitations of different sounds (114 variants, dance songs

*labajalg* excluded), incantations (89),[14] chain songs (59), and older children's songs (82), but also rarities, for example, some threshing songs. The newer versions of the same genres are featured mainly by new verses of different styles or end-rhymes or singing to triple meter, which have been classified as transitional songs.

The most elementary sound imitations are the onomatopoetic formulas that add emotionality and perceptibility to speech. They occur in talks about music (e.g. songs are called *umpa-umpad*,[15] a hand harmonica sound is character-ized as *horr-horr-horr-horr…*[16]) and in song lyrics. The *hiiu* waltz is described through sounds: "…[it meant] a quite silent moving; it was done this way: *sauhh-sauhh-sauhh, sauhh-sauhh-sauhh*".[17] Although concise expressions, they have a musical character, for instance, the previous quotation lets us recog-nize the dance of rustling feet in triple meter. Sometimes some nature sound imitations might have an essential role in a folktale; for instance, the sound of cutting, followed by the fall of a tree, forms a humorous final point: *litt-löterdi, litt-löterdi, laatsti!*[18]

It is difficult to specify starting from where such a musical expression can be considered as a folktale song – a special genre known by many cultures (Rüütel 1998). Fairy tale songs occur in the function of emotional speech in Seto fairy tales (Salve & Sarv 1987). The only Hiiumaa folk song that matches a certain fairy tale type (ATU 720) and a *regilaul* type is *Vaeslaps käoks* ('The orphan turns into a cuckoo'). A variant of the song[19] has been transcribed with a cuckoo's sound imitation in the refrain from Gustav Lauri in 1905 (see Example 7).

### Example 7.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Kuku, kuku, kiga, käga, kaga, kägu.* | Refrain: Cuckoo, cuckoo, kiga, käga, kaga, kägu [cuckoo]. |
| *Isa suri mul ära.* | My father died. |
| *Ema suri mul ära.* | My mother died. |
| *Kuku, kuku, kiga, käga, käga, kägu. (2 x)* | Refrain: Cuckoo… |
| *Konnad koristas'd mu kondid kollase lõnga peale kokku.* | Frogs collected my bones onto the yellow yarn. |
| *Kuku, kuku kiga, käga, käga kägu.* | Refrain: Cuckoo… |

EÜS II 878 (23) (text); EÜS II 789 (20) (melody) < Pühalepa p., Kõpu v. – Peeter Süda, Gustav Lauri < Gustav Lauri, 25 (1905)

A characteristic fact about changes in folk song tradition is that in 1979 Lauri's daughter, Elli Küttim, sang the same long refrain to a French herding song, which has been published in the form of a canon with a refrain *'kuku'* in several songbooks. Küttim claimed she learned the song from her father.[20] So the long cuckoo's sound imitation as a refrain was taken over for another song.

The bagpipe sound imitations, often combined with other poetic elements, were distinguished as a specific subgenre of transitional style because they functioned mainly as the *labajalg* dance songs with triple meter (cf. Rüütel 2012: 130).

The archaic children's song is, on the one hand, a stable genre due to its timeless function, and, on the other hand, a changing genre for being sung alone, less dependent on the group. Children's songs have accentual verse with a basic structure of 6–8 positions, the last case resembling *regilaul*. Here we once again have to admit to a slight subjectivity as some children's songs could be classified as *regilaul*. Incantations include mainly short magic texts for various tasks, like facilitating work, curing diseases, etc. There are also some magic texts that contain end-rhymes together with alliteration.

The first sound-recordings of Hiiumaa archaic genres were again made from Leena Elmi (b. 1864) in 1933; many of them were recorded in 1962 and 1979. So it became evident that the songs were persistently performed in their traditional way – by a single person in a rhythmic speech-like manner, while one melody was used for several songs of a similar function, for example, in Juuli Küttim's repertoire.[21]

## The transitional song styles

**The transitional songs of lyrical and lyroepic character** share some poetic features of the *regilaul*. They are likely new creations or adaptations that tell stories about the events in village life, such as wooing trips, girls' affairs, as well as about sailors' and soldiers' life, and do not match any traditional *regilaul* type. Example 8 about sailors' life tends to have even fewer end-rhymes and contains more parallelism groups (4–10, 15–17)[22] than some songs based on a certain *regilaul* type (cf. Example 2), but its meter, motives, topic, and vocabulary resemble *regilaul* to a smaller extent (1 is a stereotypic beginning verse, 11 resembles a verse from a transitional circle game *Palgamaksmine* ('Paying wages')). Its main plot can be divided into the parts titled *Laevatöö* (1–21) / *Palju laevu* (22–34) / *Suure tuulega merel* (35–62) / *Laevahukk* (63–79) ('Ship work' / 'Many ships' / 'On the sea with a strong wind' / 'Shipwreck'), the last two being the types of *regilaul*. So we have classified the song as a transitional one.

### Example 8.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Noored mehed, hellad vennad,* | Young men, dear brothers, |
| *kellel noored poisimehed:* | who have got bachelors, |
| *ärgega olge vastased.* | don't be averse. |
| *Küll teid pandaks tähele,* | You will be noticed, |
| 5 *sunnitaks teid sadamasse,* | 5 forced to the port, |
| *ametit sääl antakse.* | given a job. |
| *Saega puuse pannakse,* | Set you with a saw into wood, |
| *haambrevarte vaadatakse,* | a hammer's handle will be found for you, |
| *laevateed*[23] *sul õpetakse,* | ship work will be taught to you, |
| 10 *laeva külge pandaks käed.* | 10 your hands will be put at the ship. |
| *Kui pole rahul sellega,* | If you won't be pleased with it, |
| *küllap siis soovitaks kroonule,* | perhaps you will be suggested for the military service, |
| *kroonu hirm on kuri kange.* | the army's coercion is evil, strong. |
| *Viiaks kroonu süllale,* | You will be taken to the army's road, |
| 15 *püss ja mõõk sul antaks kätte,* | 15 you will be given a sword and a riffle, |
| *pannaks vahi putka ette;* | you will be set in front of the sentry box, |
| *püssil pannaks paijun otsa.* [---] | the bayonet will be set on top of the riffle. [---] |
| *Kliibri vallid leiate,* | You will find jib's halyards, |
| *ja taagli vallid leiate;* | and you will find rig's halyards; |
| *teeme terveks ruulirattad,* | we will repair steer-wheels, |
| *võtame sisse linalasti,* | take in the linen-load, |
| 75 *linalasti, kanebilasti;* | 75 linen-load, cannabin-load; |
| *läävad sis laevad Liisapunti,* | the ships will go to Liisapunt then, |
| *Liisapuntist Leegerpungi,* | from Liisapunt to Leegerpung, |
| *Leegerpungist Portugali,* | from Leegerpung to Portugal, |
| *Portugalist Portugüüsi.* | from Portugal to Portugüüs.[24] |

H II 6, 235/8 (12) < Hiiumaa – Gustav Seen, Peeter Saul (1890)

**The dance songs *labajalg* (or *labajalavalss*).** Bagpipe music has had a strong impact on the western and northern Estonian singing tradition. The

dance songs in triple meter, mainly sung to bagpipe pieces by the musician and/or dancers, have been very popular in Hiiumaa at least since the nineteenth century: the earliest documentation of this was made in 1877 by Mustonen. The folklore expedition of the EFA to Hiiumaa in 1979 recorded more than 40 variants and proved that this song genre was still widely known. Our data contain 265 variants of *labajalg* song lyrics (included asemantic texts), 67 of them with a melody (41 sound recordings), and 3 melody transcriptions without lyrics. The local dance version is called *(hiiu) waltz*.

Several facts prove the existence of a close link between the bagpipe music and the abovementioned dance songs. Mustonen called the bagpipe songs "the remnants of the songs that are being trolled to the dance pieces instead of instrumental music or in addition to it …" (Lönnbohm 1893: 2, 5) and he titled the chapter about dance song lyrics *Pilliloud* ('Instrumental music'; ibid.: 85–88) – although no melodies were published. In Süda's collection the instrumental piece is titled with the first verse of a dance song, and some violin and bagpipe pieces have been added to the song texts (see Example 3).[25]

The *labajalg* song verses contain 3–6 syllables with 3 main stresses according to characteristic triple meter with several subdivisions. The poetic means might include both parallelism groups and end-rhymes, asemantic and semantic onomatopoetic bagpipe sound imitations as well as many weird words and repetitions. (The songs with triple meter that have consistent end-rhymes and stanzaic structures are not included here.) The large number of sound-recordings makes it possible to better understand the role of sound imitations; for instance, the seemingly pointless words like *küliluu* as well as the rest of the text is performed with different speed and timbres, matching the different devices of a bagpipe (Examples 9–10).

> ***Examples 9–10.*** The dance songs *labajalg*, containing onomatopoetic syllables that imitate bagpipe sounds.[26]

*9)*

**10)**



Krimp - sii - ga - di, kramp - saa - ga - di, krimp - sii - ga - di, kramp - saa - ga - di,
Üks  ühe ta - ga,  teine teise ta - ga,  Mats Mare ta - ga,  kivi - vare ta - ga,

krimp - sii - ga - di,  mei Mart, Mart,  kee - ra ü - le Kree - du,  kämp, kämp, kämp.
Pihla kõrtsi ta - ga,  kivi - vare taga,

a - jas An - ne ma - ha,  pa - ni kel - la ta - ha,  ai, ti - bu - ni - bu,  ril - lo!

The *labajalg* style has often strikingly frivolous lyrics (Example 10); for instance, Mustonen (Lönnbohm 1893: 2) writes that several songs are quite "frisky and wanton" (*vallattomia ja hurjamaisia*); Süda asks whether to write down obscene songs in 1905 (Kõmmus & Särg 2017: 103); Jansi blames Hiiumaa "amoral" folklore in 1922 (ibid.: 106–107); and Otsa (ETMM, M 221: 1/15: 64) does not publish the "improper" lyrics of two dance songs, written down in 1969 and 1973 respectively. The humorous and often erotic content is likely related to the songs' function as a part of weddings and entertainment.

The bagpipe songs well known all over Estonia are also represented in Hiiumaa; for instance, the joking *Hiir hüppas* ('The mouse jumped', Example 11b), but there is a rich choice of other songs, such as *Ühe lae pealt teise lae peale* ('From one ceiling to another ceiling'), *Eht iidlane, ihu vaenlane* ('A real Hiiumaa man, an enemy of his flesh'), and many others.

Bagpipe music also had its own purpose in rituals and at work. The *labajalg* dances and songs with bagpipe were essential at some stages of the wedding, such as giving thanks to the cook (*Supimoori tant*s 'Soup woman's dance'), collecting money (*Kotipoisi tants* 'Sack boy's dance'), asking the bride in, the bride's dance, the end of the wedding (Example 3, No. 122), not to mention dancing as part of the party. The autumn calendar rituals *mardisandid* (Martinmas mummers) and *kadrisandid* (St. Catherine's Day mummers) are represented mainly with short fragmentary dance songs in Hiiumaa, while, conversely, the long cycle of this custom is the most numerously represented *regilaul* song type in the EFA from the rest of Estonia. Bagpipe music with short texts was also used in Hiiumaa to stimulate people when they worked in the field.[27]

**Children's songs.** Beginning in the eighteenth century, the modernization of children's songs probably ran side by side with similar processes concerned with other folk music genres in Hiiumaa. Both archaic and transitional versions of children's songs were in use during the twentieth century and were sound-recorded. While the lyrics were usually very short, the melodies gave valuable information about the singing styles of transitional children's songs – mainly in triple *labajalg* meter and in double meter.

The great number of children's songs in triple meter gives evidence of the pervasive impact of bagpipe music. As the children's songs had accentual meter and were related to movement, they fit well to dance rhythms; for example, the verses for bouncing a child on a knee, *Sõit-sõit-sõit linna* ('Go-go-go to town'), or for imitating baking, *Tee pätsi!* ('Make a loaf!'). Juuli Küttim has one descending melody with a triple meter for transitional children's songs and *labajalg* dances (Example 11).

> **Example 11.** Children's song repertoire in 1979, recorded from Juuli Küttim: a) a children's amusement song *Tee pätsi* ('Make a loaf'), an archaic vocal genre that is adapted to a well known dance song melody, represented in the same example; b) a well known labajalg song *Hiir hüppas* ('The mouse jumped') with modernized humorous lyrics.[28]

*a)*



*b)*



In summary, it could be said that the Hiiumaa song representations in the EFA collections show the changing processes in the vivid singing tradition during the last one and a half centuries. By its poetic features Hiiumaa *regilaul* belongs

to the wider western Estonian tradition. The examples of lyroepic songs and wedding songs suggest that the tradition of older *regilaul* faded away around the mid-nineteenth century. Special for Hiiumaa was that a large part of the repertoire was modernized and (re)created locally, maybe in Hiiumaa or in the neighboring islands: the lyrical and lyroepic songs about village life, the soldiers' and sailors' lives, were rooted in *regilaul*. Many archaic vocal genres persisted in their traditional form. The strong impact of bagpipe music is reflected in a wide variety of dance songs and their important role in rituals and entertainments, as well as in many children's songs in triple meter.

## THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF HIIUMAA

In order to better understand the processes in Hiiumaa folk culture, the ethnic background of its inhabitants, the settlement history and the cultural contacts are discussed below.

### Between Estonian and Swedish cultures

The existence of mixed Estonian and Swedish population over a long period was special for the ethnic history of Hiiumaa: for hundreds of years these two equal and relatively big communities lived there side by side.

Geographically isolated and climatically harsh island conditions elicited normal dependence and active interaction between the two different ethnic groups. While other strong Swedish communities lived separately in Vormsi, Ruhnu, and Pakri, and tried to preserve their cultural uniqueness and personal rights, Hiiumaa Swedes assimilated slowly during 500 years and integrated the local Estonians as well. In most Hiiumaa families there are memories or legends about Swedish ancestors. Swedish families lived in Hiiumaa until the Second World War. On the western coast and the islands of Saaremaa and Muhu Swedish communities were smaller and became assimilated much more quickly than their compatriots in Hiiumaa.

The Swedes arrived at the Estonian coast and islands probably in the second half of the thirteenth century. They were first officially mentioned in 1470, when the German Teutonic order master Johann Wolthusen von Herse freed the Swedish commune in Hiiumaa from serfdom for a compensation of 20 Riga marks a year per village commune and issued them a freedom certificate. This document also contains hints about earlier agreements concerning the Swed-

ish settlement in Hiiumaa (Hedman 2015: 801–802). The majority of Swedish inhabitants settled in Reigi Parish and the surroundings of what is now the town of Kärdla in northern Hiiumaa.

At the end of the fifteenth century, Hiiumaa was still named on geographical maps as *insula deserta*, an empty island. Data about the Estonian settlement in Hiiumaa was scarce and random until the mid-sixteenth century. The first official taxpaying statistics are from 1564 and permit an estimate of the permanent population at ca 2500–4500 people. The Estonian peasants originated mainly from the neighboring islands of Saaremaa and Muhumaa and the western coast of Estonia. Hiiumaa's population rose tenaciously despite the repercussions of famine and pests, and was at its highest – ca 16,000 people – at the end of the nineteenth century. Throughout this period, the proportion of Swedes has generally been 10% of the population of Hiiumaa (Kaskor 2015: 787–797).

Owing to the Swede's active demands to protect their ancient rights as free peasants, they fell out of favor with the local German landlords. On the 20th of August 1781, the majority of the community, around 1000 Swedes from Kõrgessaare in Reigi Parish, were forced to leave their homes and were deported to Ukraine, where they established Gammalsvenskby village. Around 450 Swedes still stayed in Hiiumaa, in Reigi and Kärdla areas (Hedman 2015: 807–810).

According to German-Estonian historian Carl Rußwurm, the Swedes in Hiiumaa were bilingual already by the 1640s. They spoke their mother tongue only at home and their folk traditions as well as national costumes differed very little from those of local Estonian peasants in the 1830s (Rußwurm 2015 [1855]: 137). Kaskor (2015: 794) claims that by that time the Swedish peasants had assimilated into the Estonian population.

The background of a bigger wave of Estonian settlers who emigrated to Hiiumaa from different parts of the western Estonian coast and islands during the sixteenth century was relatively heterogenic. People spoke various dialects and had different habits. Contacts between Estonian serfs, who had been forced by German landlords to move to unpopulated areas, were infrequent owing to geography – small villages were scattered along the long sea coast. Surviving and adapting to uninhabited landscapes were major problems for the newcomers. Because of different locational backgrounds and geographical dispersion, the common local identity of the Estonian population in Hiiumaa formed slowly. Musical culture was naturally brought along from the previous home. Locally specific songs formed during a longer domestication period, which could take two or three generations.

The people of the Swedish community were indigenes in Hiiumaa from whom new settlers learned how to survive. Swedes as free peasants were probably highly respected among Estonian serfs and this prestige might have empowered their influence on Estonian folk culture. Swedish culture left its imprint on local folk costumes, handicraft, buildings, wedding and calendar customs and terms, folk music and language, etc.

Foreign impacts on folk songs are sometimes difficult to discover due to the difference in language. Mari Sarv has suggested, relying on the works about Estonian settlement and language history, that the language of Swedes or of the assimilated communities could have influenced the change in *regilaul* towards a more modern language and syllabic-accentual meter in Saare, Hiiu, and Lääne counties. In all these regions the more ancient song tradition has been maintained further away from Swedish communities (Sarv 2008: 85, 86; 2011). Our study proves that the oldest song tradition has survived in the eastern coastal regions of Hiiumaa and on Kassari Island.

Modernization processes similar to those in Estonian folk music also occurred in Swedish folk music where newer songs were borrowed from Finnish and Swedish seamen or learned from printed books in the mid-nineteenth century (Rußwurm 2015 [1855]: 462–463). The putative Swedish impact might have accelerated the musical change from Estonian older to newer songs in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The direct footprints of the Swedish language occur in some children's songs, such as a type of *Mutter keetis moosi* ('*Mutter* [Mother] boiled jam'), or the fully Swedish song *Komm, komm, Papa* (Sw. 'Come, come, Daddy').[29] Also the ornamented folk hymn singing likely follows the Swedish model.[30]

The Estonians in Hiiumaa used the same musical instruments that are listed as Swedish ones (bagpipe, bowed harp, violin, accordion, Jew's harp, *simbel-kantele*[31], and horns) by Rußwurm (2015 [1855]: 453–473). The Swedes who settled on the western Estonian coast brought a bagpipe and a bowed harp (Sw. *talharpa*, Est. *hiiurootsi kannel*) with them, and the latter became popular especially among the Swedes on Vormsi Island. People still recall that the bowed harp was played both by Swedes and Estonians in Hiiumaa. Hiiumaa also had the longest vivid bagpipe tradition. Aleksander Maaker, an offspring of the last Estonian traditional bagpipe family, was an active musician in Hiiumaa until the 1960s.

Ancient bagpipe tunes with triple meter and specific rhythmic patterns, discussed above, developed mainly in Swedish contact areas in northern and western Estonia. Some asemantic words in lyrics imitated, besides bagpipe sounds, words in Swedish (Rüütel 1983). Melodies close to Estonian bagpipe

tunes and dance songs were likely known by Hiiumaa Swedes, because they had been collected from areas in Estonia inhabited by Swedes, mostly by Cyrillus Kreek from Vormsi Swedes in the 1920s (Kõlar 2010).

As Rüütel has proved, the popular *labajalg* type dance song *Hiir hüppas* ('The mouse jumped'), Examples 11b, 12) might date back to the seventeenth century or even earlier: the song was published already in the late eighteenth century, and its text had roots in a sixteenth-century Swedish song that spread both in Finland and Estonia. The melody of the *Hiir hüppas* type is related to a well known bagpipe tune family that spread in northern Estonia and on the islands (Rüütel 2012: 119–127). The song was known at least by some Estonian Swedes, as Rußwurm had notated an example of this song type from the Swedes in Vihterpalu, on the western coast of Estonia, in 1855.

> **Example 12.**
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | *Iir üppas, kass kargas,* | A mouse was jumping, a cat was bouncing, |
> | *vana karu lõi trummi,* | an old bear was drumming, |
> | *kerp aknast välja,* | flea, get out the window, |
> | *nahk-püksid jalga.* | and put leather trousers on! |
>
> ERA II 254, 209 (2) < Emmaste p., Muda v. – Enda Ennist < Anna Kuru, b. 1863 (1939)
>
> *Katten slår uba tumman,*
> *fjŷra missar danssar,*
> *brämsen springar,*
> *hela werden dyndar!*
>
> (Rußwurm 2015 [1855]: 467)

## Saaremaa and Muhu islands

Some parallels can be drawn between the song traditions of Hiiumaa and the neighboring Saaremaa and Muhu islands. The Swedish population lived in Saaremaa and on the western coast mainly during the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries and became assimilated earlier than the Swedes in Hiiumaa.

Changes in the formal features of the *regilaul* meter, such as the dropping of the 8th syllable at the end of a line or ignoring the syllable length, as well as the abundance of transitional songs at different stages of development, are

described by the researchers as the features typical of the whole western Estonian song area, where the changes were more vivid as compared to the northern Estonian area (Rüütel 2012; Sarv 1998). While Hiiumaa *regilaul* has the most striking features of modernized syllabic-accentual *regilaul* meter, the next one in this top-list is its neighbor, Saaremaa Island (Sarv 2008: 26, 27, 39).

The vivid modernization process that Hiiumaa folk songs revealed to us occurred in a similar way in Saaremaa. Typical of the western coast tradition, Mustjala songs showed an abundance of transitional features: the syllabic-accentual meter and the end-rhymed verse pairs in regilaul and its successors. "The transitional forms between regilaul and end-rhymed song can be observed in very different developmental stages in Saaremaa" (Tampere & Tampere 1985: 8–9). In Saaremaa and Hiiumaa older lyroepic songs disappeared during the same period, most probably in the mid-nineteenth century. Parallels can be drawn between the wedding songs: in eastern Hiiumaa and eastern Saaremaa the festive ritual style was known until the 1870s–1880s; more joking wedding songs and singers' contests occurred in western Saaremaa in the twentieth century and some examples thereof were observed in Hiiumaa (about Saaremaa see Rüütel 2015b: 23–29; Tampere & Tampere 1985).

The neighboring Muhu Island represents a special song area (together with Pöide region in Saaremaa and some western continental parishes) with a different *regilaul* tradition in the western Estonian context. Although Muhu *regilaul* was already influenced by accentual-syllabic meter, the songs were closer to Kalevala-meter for their mostly 8-syllable verses, old word forms and use of the quantity principle (Oras 2001; Sarv 2008: 32, 35, 78). Muhu *regilaul* tradition was relatively extensive and the songs were performed during a longer period of time. The more modern Muhu songs with rhymed stanzas also contain features of alliterative songs (Rüütel 2015b: 8; 2016: 31–40).

On all the three islands the extensive male repertoire related to local life was popular as well as the bagpipe music and *labajalg* dance songs in triple meter, often used with frivolous texts (see Rüütel 2012: 130–138, maps 1–3; about Saaremaa and Muhu songs see Rüütel 2015a, 2015b, 2016). The common feature of Muhu and Mustjala children's songs is the abundance of *labajalg* dance music (Oras 1988; Tampere & Tampere 1985), and the same can be said about Hiiumaa.

## Other cultural contacts and influences

Besides the direct impact of close neighbors, culture is definitely also indirectly influenced. These impacts can be mediated by neighbors, travelers, and sailors, printed sources, and other factors. Hiiumaa had direct overseas contacts with Finland and Scandinavia. Ingrid Rüütel suggests that dance songs *labajalg* represent a style of instrumental music from the Early Middle Ages, with an area of distribution extending from Estonia to Scandinavia and up to Ireland (Rüütel 1998: 66).

One reason for changes in the old traditions can be sailors' overseas contacts. In foreign harbors they heard and brought home new Western European song lore as well modern instruments. The hand harmonica had a great impact on the development of more modern songs with functional harmony. The instrument was played in Hiiumaa already in the 1890s by the men of Kerema village in Pühalepa parish (ETMM, M 221: 1/15, 10). Harri Otsa has mentioned: "The role of folk singers diminishes while the more modern song style emerges and develops, and will be replaced by an image of the singer-instrumentalist" (ETMM, M 221: 1/15, 3). Folk songs also received influences from printed sources. The folklore collections and diaries testify that the newer repertoire spread fast, and the round game songs and dances of newer styles dominated in young people's festivities in the early 1900s (cf. Rüütel 1980, 1983, 2015a, 2015b, 2016)[32].

Another factor to produce musical change was pietistic movements (Brethren, Herrnhuters, Heaven Travelers, etc.), which were gaining popularity already in the early eighteenth century, especially in Lääne and Hiiu counties. The pietistic culture spread largely in these regions during the 1880s and Hiiumaa remained one of the centers of the Brethren movement in Estonia during the nineteenth century (Põldmäe 1988: 68). In these congregations pietistic songs were sung that rooted in the German and Swedish traditions. This musical style became popular and prestigious as it was close to local, already familiar, more modern folk songs (e.g. seamen's repertoire) and supported the quicker modernization of old folk songs (Plaat 2001: 393–407).

The folk song collectors, especially Enda Ennist, complained that fanatic Christians did not know or speak about old heritage, and had an overall hostile attitude towards the guests (ERA II 189, 61/2).[33] Ingrid Rüütel also stresses that pietistic movement consciously displaced old traditions and discouraged *regilaul* from active use (Rüütel 2014). But conversely, over time, Christian music – for example Lutheran chorales – also adopted folk music features, folklorized, and developed melismatically variegated melodies (Lippus 2006: 45–46).

## FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The present study observed Hiiumaa older folk song tradition and its changing processes in local historical and cultural context, as well as analyzed the representability of written and sound-recorded folklore material available mainly in the Estonian Folklore Archives, the Estonian Theatre and Music Museum, and in some publications. The analysis was provoked by the question why Hiiumaa has a reputation of a poor *regilaul* area in the Estonian context. The reasons for the relatively small number of archived songs were searched in the history of folklore collecting and folk song tradition.

Hiiumaa is the second largest island off the western coast of Estonia, 22 km from the mainland. It had Swedish settlement from the thirteenth century and the heterogeneous settlement of Estonians, who had come from the neighboring western coastal regions and islands mainly in the sixteenth century. Because of the slow and peaceful assimilation of the two ethnic groups over a long period, their music traditions mutually influenced each other.

As a statistical survey on Hiiumaa older folk songs proves, the total amount of older folk songs (archaic vocal genres, *regilaul*, and older transitional songs) is relatively modest in the folklore sources – about 1430 song lyrics, about 280 of them with melodies. The folk song collections, with the first two examples dating from 1832 and more material from 1877 and up to 1979, are quite representative, except for the proportions of different song styles. By means of a formal comparative analysis of songs and contextual information from fieldwork diaries, the history of singing tradition was outlined back to the early 1800s. The history of folk song collecting started in Hiiumaa with Finnish scholar Carl A. Gottlund in 1832 and was continued by his countryman Oskar A. F. Mustonen (orthonym Lönnbohm) in 1877. The first Estonian collector in Hiiumaa was Madis Liedenberg in 1882, who was followed by a few correspondents after Hurt's appeal in 1888. The first large collection of folk songs with melodies was recorded by Peeter Süda and his colleagues in 1905–1906. The first sound recordings of Hiiumaa instrumental music were made in 1908 and those of folk songs in 1921. Extensive material was written down in the 1920s–1930s. Several older and more modern songs were sound-recorded and written down during the Estonian Folklore Archives' expedition in 1979.

Interest in folklore was aroused and influenced mainly by national ideology; therefore it was preferred to record the older song tradition, especially *regilaul*. The collections reflect a somewhat earlier period than the "collector's present". Due to the value judgments and the availability of *regilaul* lyrics in Hiiumaa in

the nineteenth century, they form 75% of the entire older song material of that period. The percentage of *regilaul* among older folk songs decreased abruptly, constituting only 41% in the first half and 8% in the second half of the twentieth century. The take of transitional songs and especially archaic vocal genres, the latter not being considered as the object of folkloristic interest until the early 1900s, proportionally increased over time. The overall amount of Hiiumaa song variants is quite small due to the shortage of folklore collectors working on the island. The possible reasons for rare fieldwork and the small number of local correspondents were the location of Hiiumaa overseas, far from Tartu, the centre of the intelligentsia, and maybe lack of good examples of *regilaul* with formal features of Kalevala-metric poetry.

The folklore collections demonstrate the manifold singing tradition in the process of changing in Hiiumaa during the last one and a half centuries. The old and new song traditions, partly representing the different worldviews and opposite stylistic means, were known in Hiiumaa in the late nineteenth century: archaic magic spells, natural sound imitations, mythological *regilaul* songs, various children's joking songs existed side by side with modern ballads, waggish village chronicles, international seamen's songs, "improper" bagpipe songs, and soulful folk chorals.

*Regilaul* was somewhat modernized and had an accentual-syllabic meter likewise in the wider western Estonian area, from where the Hiiumaa inhabitants originated and with which they still had contacts. *Regilaul* was losing its prestigious position and function in the public sphere probably in the mid-nineteenth century and was forgotten among the younger generation by the 1920s. Parallels can be drawn between, on the one hand, the more archaic folk song areas in Muhu and in the eastern parts of Hiiumaa and Saaremaa and, on the other hand, the more modernized western parts of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa with the Swedish population.

In the changing folk tradition transitional songs emerged – the new lyrical and narrative songs about local events, soldiers' and sailors' life, as well as several children's rhymes, which still partly used the same poetic means as older alliterative songs.

The local Swedish impact might have accelerated the changes in poetic means. The Swedish influence is especially manifest in Estonians' instrumental music (bagpipe and bowed harp tradition) and *labajalg* dance songs with humorous and obscene texts, which were sung to bagpipe pieces with various functions. The large number of *labajalg* dance songs and children's songs in triple meter reflects the pervasive impact of bagpipe music. The other factors

for the faster adaption of more modern folk music in Hiiumaa could be international overseas contacts and the popularity of religious movements with their own music and contempt for earlier folk music.

In final conclusion, it can be said that the reasons why Hiiumaa is not represented by very numerous examples of older folk songs, especially *regilaul*, lie both in the history of folklore collecting and the processes that took place in the singing tradition. Hiiumaa *regilaul* song was declining, but still available in the late nineteenth century, when only a few collections were compiled on this remote island. Other older folk song styles did not belong to the collectors' sphere of interest because of the national-romantic bias in early folkloristics. So the slight interest in archaic vocal genres and transitional songs in the earlier periods of folklore collection, the lack of *regilaul* since the mid-twentieth century, the remote location of Hiiumaa, and the lack of local intelligentsia shaped the Hiiumaa folk song collections. The existing examples, if treated source-critically, still give an overall dynamic picture about the Hiiumaa folk song tradition in the process of stylistic and contextual changes.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## NOTES

[1]  989 km$^2$, 9348 inhabitants as of January 2016. http://www.stat.ee/ppe-44780, last accessed on April 26, 2017.

[2]  Sarv has constructed the areas on the basis of counties. The bigger western Estonian region is meant here; it comprises Lääne (Western) and Pärnu counties, and the islands of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa.

[3]  This kind of shortening is supported by the singer's need to draw breath after the verse or some verses if there does not exist archaic group singing with a lead singer and a chorus any more, in which the lead singer can draw breath during the verse repetition by the choir.

⁴ Serfdom was abolished in northern Estonia in 1816 and in southern Estonia in 1819, but peasants kept working on manors if they could not afford to buy the land.

⁵ Flat foot waltz.

⁶ Text translations: No. 120: If it was said to me in a dream / given to know while dozing / that I should get a nasty wife / trouble for a bad spouse. No. 122, III: The instrument [bagpipe] says / the party is over, dear host. [---] EÜS II 822 (120, 121, 122) < Reigi p., Pihlaka v. – Peeter Süda, Voldemar Quarnström < Juhan Teebak, 75 (1905).

⁷ The number of Hiiumaa lyroepic song types would be bigger if we had followed the classification of songs composed for Mustjala Parish, Saaremaa Island, by Tampere. The well-known songs of both islands, such as *Kass kaevus* ('The cat in the well'), *Kubjas ja teomees* ('The overseer and the serf'), and some more, are classified as lyroepic songs in Tampere & Tampere (1985), but as lyrical songs by Tedre (1969–1974); the latter also served as a basis for our research.

⁸ *Lunastatav neiu* ('The maiden for ransom'). EÜS III 693 (3) (melody), EÜS III 713 (6) (lyrics) < Pühalepa p., Kassari v. – P. Süda, A. Sakkeus, K. Lember < Liisu Mets, 68 (1906).

⁹ The wedding song cycles, represented as one unit by a folklore collector, are not divided by the authors. Also some lyrical song types that might have occurred in a wedding ritual or outside it have not been added to the wedding songs, such as: *Tule mulle* ('Marry me'), *Tare teretus* ('The greeting of the house'), etc. They occur loosely outside the wedding cycle and are not commented on as wedding songs. If the folklore material was analyzed otherwise, the number of wedding songs would be bigger.

¹⁰ 35 songs are from Kassari Island, which is divided between Pühalepa and Käina parishes; 13 from eastern Hiiumaa coastal areas in the same parishes. All the 5 melody variants are also from the same area. Only 9 examples are from Emmaste Parish, none from Reigi Parish, and seven are of unknown origin.

¹¹ One exceptional fragment originates from 1979. RKM II 339, 323/8 < Käina p. – Erna Tampere < Amalie Onno, b. 1909 (1979).

¹² EÜS II 841 (175) < Käina p. – Peeter Süda < Toomas Jõekald, 54 (1905).

¹³ EÜS III 694 (5) < Pühalepa p., Allika v. – Peeter Süda < Tiiu Kruusimägi (1906).

¹⁴ The number of imitations and incantations is approximate because the border between a linguistic phraseological unit and a sound imitation as a genre of vocal music, as well as the border between a magic formula and an incantation, is not clearly fixed, and because all the narratives and song lyrics have not been searched through in order to find them.

¹⁵ RKM, Mgn II 3124 (10b) < Pühalepa p., Tubala v. – Anne Tael, Sirje Sarapuu < Helene Põldver, b. 1900 (1979).

¹⁶ RKM, Mgn II 3698 (18) < Pühalepa p., Kärdla town – Einar Sinijärv < Ella Erk, b. 1924 (1979).

[17] RKM, Mgn II 3163 (12) < Emmaste p., Viiri v. – Erna Tampere < Alma Vesmes, b. 1906 (1979).

[18] RKM, Mgn II 3129 (6) < Reigi p., Kaleste v. – Anu Zirk, Edna Lips < Eduard Pihel, 76 (1979).

[19] Another short variant without the refrain is in H II 41, 146 (4) < Pühalepa p. – Gustav Tikerpuu (1888).

[20] RKM, Mgn II 3133 (35) < Pühalepa p., Kõpu v. – Anu Zirk, Edna Lips < Elli Küttim, b. 1909 (1979). The printed text begins: *"Vaat kaugel laias laanes ju kägu kukub sääl…"* ('A cuckoo is cuckooing afar in a large woodland…') The song was first published in a monthly *Laulu ja mängu leht* ('Newsletter of singing and music') in 1888, and later in several songbooks, for example, Riho Päts' *Lemmiklaulik* ('Favorite song book') in 1937.

[21] 13 sound-recordings made from Juuli Küttim in 1962 were published on a CD in 2007 (Saard 2007).

[22] Kristi Salve (1997: 478) has found similar long parallelism groups, containing also many place names, in Vepsian alliterative songs without Kalevala-meter, and posed the question whether these can be pre-*regilaul* structures. The problem cannot be solved in the present study.

[23] There is a vowel in Hiiumaa dialects which is in between Estonian /ö/ and /e/; the collector has transcribed it as 'e'. Therefore, the written word looks like *tee* 'road, way', but its more logical meaning according the context is *töö* 'work'.

[24] Liisapunt – Lisbon. Leegerpung (Le Grand Port) and Portugal – two harbors side by side on the coast of western France (Päll 1999). Portugüüs – Português (a harbor in France).

[25] The dance song *Leerimetsa Vahi-Peeter*, played by Jüri Koid on *kannel* (zither), EÜS II 817 (101 A); violin pieces, played by Gustav Alas, EÜS III 699 (19, 23, 24) (melodies); EÜS III 723 (14) (lyrics).

[26] Translations of the semantic parts of lyrics: Ex. 9. Missus, missus, / shinbone, shinbone. / One missus, other shinbone, / one felt mitten, other [knitted] mitten. Ex. 10. Our Mart, turn yourself over Kreet. / One behind another, / Mats behind Mare, / behind a heap of stones, / behind Pihla inn. / Pushed Anne down, put the bell behind (RKM, Mgn II 3133 (7a, 6) < Reigi p., Kõpu v. – Anu Zirk, Edna Lips < Elli Küttim, b. 1909 (1979)).

[27] Today the dance songs tradition in Hiiumaa is being kept alive and popular by a folk group *Iiukala Bänd*, who has learned many pieces from the sound recordings of Elli Küttim, Aare Elend, etc. (Iiukala 2013). See https://iiukalaband.wordpress.com/ tutvustus/, last accessed on April 28, 2017.

[28] Translation: a) Pat a loaf, smear butter on it! b) A mouse was jumping, / a cat was bouncing, / an old bear was drumming, / it broke the drum, / and had to pay a fine of 100 rubles. RKM, Mgn II 3135 (9a, b; 6) < Reigi p., Mägipe v. – Erna Tampere < Juuli Küttim, b. 1909 (1979).

[29] ERA II 189, 69 (63) < Emmaste p. – Enda Ennist < Siim Muda, b. 1863 (1938), called a lullaby by the singer.

[30] Urve Lippus has compared the Estonian and Estonian Swedish folk hymn repertoires and analyzed Cyrillus Kreek's and Peeter Süda's folk hymn collections (Lippus 2006: 41).

[31] Simbel – newer bigger diatonic kantele.

[32] A few of the Hiiumaa songs in folklore collections are related to printed sources: a dance song *Vaat lupsadi* (H III 5, 147 (10) < Pühalepa p., Kärdla town – A. C. F. G. (1888)), and two songs recorded in 1979: *Kiigu, liigu, laevukene* ('Swing, sway, dear ship') (RKM, Mgn II 3127 (5) < Pühalepa p., Valipe v. – Erna Tampere, Mart Jallai, Jaak Elling < Marie Tülp, 80 (1979); RKM, Mgn II 3133 (25) < Pühalepa p., Kõpu v. – Anu Zirk, Edna Lips < Elli Küttim, b. 1909 (1979)), and a cuckoo's song imitation, added as a refrain to a French canon (published in 1888).

[33] Enda Ennist, fieldwork diary, 1939.

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ERA – manuscript collection of the Estonian Folklore Archives (1927–1944)
ERA, Fon – wax cylinders collection of the Estonian Folklore Archives (1912–1948)
EÜS – manuscript collection of the Estonian Students Society (1875–1917)
H – manuscript collection of Jakob Hurt (1860–1906)
RKM – manuscript collection of the Estonian State Literary Museum (1945–1996)
RKM, Mgn – collection of open-reel tape recordings of the Estonian State Literary Museum (1945–1996)

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# WHERE DO SONGS COME FROM?
# AN ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN SOME VERSES
# OF *REGILAUL*

*Aado Lintrop*

**Abstract:** The Estonian earlier folk song, *regilaul*, about the singer indicates that the singer had a special position in the community, but the singing skill had rather just become attached to them, and was not acquired voluntarily (similarly to the knowledge of the Tibetan singers that usually comes about on its own, irrespective of the will of the humans). The songs indicate that one learnt to sing when attending weddings, working or being in contact with nature. Occasionally the talent for singing was acquired magically. Interesting are *regilaul* texts in which the singer says that she cannot sing because of lack of some objects, e.g. *laululeht*, *sõnasõlg* (a sheet of song, a brooch of words), etc. In some cultures singers of long epic texts believed in the help of supernatural beings and also used some helping devices like a bronze mirror, a sheet of paper, etc. for better concentration. In the article I try to point out that some formulas of Estonian *regilaul* like *a sheet of song*, *a brooch of words*, and *the quill of the mouth* may be distant memories of the singers who needed actual helping devices, believing in which aided them in a better recreation of their texts.

**Keywords:** oral tradition, *regilaul*, shamanism, singers of epic, text reconstruction

## FOLKLORE AS AN ENDLESS PROCESS

My starting point for the topic is that folklore is in a constant change in time. This would not have to be repeated if, even up to this day, folklore scholarship and the related spheres did not operate with judgemental notions, such as 'original', 'primal', 'authentic', 'genuine', etc. If we presume a constant change in folklore, we have to accept that the roots of the 'original' or 'primal' go back to the time when humans first became separated from the animal kingdom. One phenomenon would provide fertile ground for another and this continued for thousands of times. Thus we shall never learn what the ultimate beginning was like. Secondly, when speaking about cultural phenomena, we should bear in mind that their content usually changes more rapidly than their structure. Both of the aspects have been repeated recently by a Danish historian of religion, Jens

Peter Schjødt (2014: 44–47). Our everyday language provides us with telling examples of a changed content (or meaning) as we still use phrases such as *meelt lahutama* (to entertain, literally 'dissolve the mind'), *hinge (tagasi) tõmbama* (to take a break, lit. 'draw (back) the soul'), *leiba luusse laskma* (to rest after a meal, 'let the bread into the bones'), and say that *päiv läts jumalihe* ('the Sun went to the Creator' in south-Estonian dialect). Some of us even 'have bird-deception' in the morning when they have an early breakfast before going out.[1]

## SOME MOTIFS OF *REGILAUL* ARE OLDER THAN SONGS THEMSELVES

I have observed *regilaul* from similar vantage points also earlier, and I thus presume that it is constantly changing while alive and that its constituent parts last longer than the whole. I also think that some of them are older than *regilaul* itself. I have not attempted to find the starting point for *regilaul*, for I believe that it did not exist during a clear-cut period anyway. Still, I do believe that spells and dirges allow us to glance into the world preceding the *regilaul*, as do the runo songs from Finland and Karelia, for we can find many building blocks of the Estonian *regilaul* in them. Departing from my own interests, I have been looking for such components of *regilaul* that at a time in the past (I emphasise that this does not mean 'originally') could have been related to some activities or understandings belonging to the realm of religion. As a researcher of north-Eurasian shamanism and religions of eastern Finno-Ugric peoples I have collected a plethora of different examples of creating and performing long epic songs, and therefore I often tend to compare such *regilaul* parts with traditions of other peoples. Looking for shamanic parallels is not a new attempt for me. In 2006 my paper about distant reflections of Mongolian Monkh Khokh Tenger ('eternal blue sky') in *regilaul* was published (Lintrop 2006). Some years ago I also studied aspects of ritual storytelling and riddling (Lintrop 2012) to point at the connections between religion and performing, especially in the belief of special spirit helpers of storytelling or singing and in the credence of entertaining supernatural visitors of critical times with stories and riddles.

## PERFORMERS OF GESAR EPIC

The tradition of the Epic of King Gesar that was included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List in the same year (2009) as the Seto song tradition *leelo* originating in the southeast of Estonia is remarkable because the performing of the epic is tightly united with religious rites and meditation. In today's Tibet there are approximately a hundred singers who can perform texts consisting of tens of thousands of lines by heart. Some of them (*bab sgrung*) claim that the epic was revealed to them in long dreams (they wear a special head covering when singing); others (*dag snang sgrung*) learn parts of the epic during short revelations that resemble flashes of light; a third category (*dgongs gten*) excavate the epic from within themselves; the fourth group (*gter don*) find it somewhere in the vicinity like a hidden treasure; the fifth set (*pra phab*) claims that they can see the text in a bronze mirror while singing and cannot perform the epic without the mirror (Zhambei 2001: 280–285). The latter is an extremely widespread helping device of the shaman in Tibet, Mongolia, Buryatia, Tyva, Altay, etc. The *pra phab* technique derives from the *Bön* religion (ibid.: 284) where it was used to make predictions. Although as of 1977 the *Bön* has had the same rights as the Buddhist schools, its roots are deep in the shamanistic soil. The singers who are considered the best, those who have had revelations in their dreams, have been able to remember unbelievably long texts. Thus 600,000 lines of the epic have been recorded from a Tibetan singer, Thrapa, while another old singer, Samthrub, has provided 700,000 verses (ibid.: 281). All of the *bab sgrung* saw meaningful dreams at 9–16 years of age. Some were shown extensive scenes from the epic in which they themselves participated, others would meet gods who told them to start singing, and some read thousands of manually recorded pages of the epic in their dreams (Yang 1998: 432).

In the context of this article it is important to accentuate once again that Tibetan Buddhism and shamanism are closely related. In his classical study about Tamang[2] shamans, Larry Peters writes:

> *The two major types of Tamang religious specialists are* lama *(priests) and* bombo *(shamans).* [---] Lama *and* bombo *fulfill different social functions in the community. As mentioned earlier, the* lama's *primary responsibility is officiation at funeral ceremonies. The* bombo's *main duty is to perform healing rituals.* (Peters 2007 [1998]: 55)

Next he presents a Tamang legend of how Guru Rinpoche himself made this distinction. Tibetan shamans (*lhapas*) also refer to Padmasambhava (Tibetan *pad ma 'byung gnas*) (see Sarah C. Cifers' documentary "Fate of the Lhapa",

2007). Researcher of Changpa[3] nomads' shamanism, Ina Rösing, writes about the situation in Ladakh (Jammu and Kashmir, India):

> *The Buddhist clergy does not believe there is any contradiction between shamanic practice and Buddhist faith, but quite clearly assigns to shamanism its rightful place* [---]. *What is also quite plain to see is that the one Buddhist dignitary of Ladakh, who today plays the most important role as a key figure in shamanic calling – Stakna Rinpoche – does see shamanism very favourably.* (Rösing 2006: 155)[4]

In the area of Tibetan Buddhism we can found *lamas* and shamans acting side by side everywhere. It enables me to compare performances of the Tibetan Gesar epic with Khakas epic songs and even with the songs of Siberian shamans and Ob-Ugrian bear feast.

## SINGERS OF KHAKAS EPIC SONGS

The singers of the Khakas epic stories *khai* (*khaiji*), who believed that they had received their gift from specific spirits *khai eezi*, were convinced that after the spirit had entered them and the spirits of the characters in the story had been evoked during the storytelling, the performance must not be broken off, but the characters were to be sent to rest by telling the tale to the end. If a pause was desired during the long performance, a moment when the characters were partying had to be chosen for this purpose. If the story was left unfinished so that the heroes did not overcome the evil beings featured in it, the latter would start to cause harm to people. The heroes of the tale, when left to their own devices, could even kill the singer in revenge. The *khaiji* of the Khakas were (and still are) shaman-like characters who went through an initiation during which they got in touch with spirits with the help of the mountain spirits *tag eezi*. They have described performing a song as follows: "I close my eyes and see scenes unrolling, which I then describe" (Van Deusen 2004: 78).

## SHAMAN SONGS AND KHANTY BEAR FEAST SINGERS

Next we can mention a shaman song in the form in which it has been preserved in several places in northern Eurasia. This is closely related to the idea that it is not their own text that the shamans perform during rituals, but their spirit helpers' text that they can see or live through simultaneously. In such cases, the shamans themselves identify with the main active being in the text.

The singers at a Khanty bear feast wear special headgear and smocks while presenting songs about the life of the bear. The long songs that can last for a couple of hours are delivered with the singers' eyes closed as if they would thus better see the events being sung about. The songs are special; they must not be broken off in the middle as they describe the emergence of the world order, the functions and living places of deities, and the gifts that the supernatural beings attending the feast are bringing to humans. An important place belongs to the song staff or song tree on which the host of the feast makes a knife mark for each performed song.

These are but a few examples of the specifics of performing epics in the wide world.

## SOME REMARKS ABOUT THE *REGILAUL* TRADITION

The Estonian *regilaul* about the singer indicates that the singer had a special position in the community, but the singing skill had rather just become attached to them, and was not acquired voluntarily (similarly to the knowledge or shamanic gift of the Tibetan singers that usually comes about on its own, irrespective of the will of the humans). According to the songs, one learnt to sing when attending weddings, working or being in contact with nature. Occasionally the talent for singing was acquired magically, for instance, when drinking out of the singer's piggin or eating a crane's throat. Heritage as a phenomenon to be consciously acquired, maintained, and transmitted did not exist at the time when *regilaul* was recorded. People would just live and do their things as they had always been living and doing, and songs were a part of the mode of living that had been continuing for generations. Even the concept of *regilaul* was not used before the newer folk songs started to spread. It may have been simply a 'song', or 'our song' and 'singing in our way' versus a strange or different song, and singing in a different (Latvian, Russian, etc. way). Ingrid Rüütel has written on this topic:

> *The old Baltic-Finnic word* laulu, laulemahan *was originally used first and foremost about the runo song, and was later transferred to other, newer phenomena (newer folk songs, hymns, school songs, and choir songs). The word occurs with all Baltic-Finnic peoples who had runo songs (resp.* regilaul*) as well as Livonians. Special signifiers for the old folk song are different in case of different peoples as well as different regions of the same country; they are usually of foreign origin and apparently have emerged later in order to differentiate between old folk songs and any newer songs.* (Rüütel 1999: 91)

The missing of the heritage concept did not mean that the ancestors' wisdom was not cherished or passed down from generation to generation. What were involved here were pieces of wisdom that were expected to be of help when trying to manage in different situations. And folklore itself contained several control mechanisms that had to guarantee its continuation. Thus there were tales that contained warning examples of what would happen when old customs were not observed, and there may have been talk about what might come about when spells, dirges, and songs were used improperly or left unused. Only a few examples of this kind, mostly concerned with forwarding words of magic, the harm of excessive lamenting, and singing and merry-making at a forbidden time, have been passed down to us. However, considering the example of other peoples, we might presume the existence of the kind of texts, the task of which was to emphasize the dire necessity of singing at particular moments and in certain situations.

## ABOUT THE ESTONIAN EPIC SONGS

The heritage that has survived until this day shows that songs were closely related to people's daily life (the layer of working songs and songs of tradition). At the same time, some lengthy narrative songs and elements shared with Karelian and Finnish epic songs indicate that songs were sung not only in the field, when making hay, or when engaged in handicraft at home, during weddings and funerals, in inns and at village dances, but also on other occasions. It can be assumed that during Estonians' night-long singing and dancing before the battle on Öland Island in 1170, described in *Gesta Danorum* (book XIV), mostly war songs (heroic epics) were sung. These have not reached us at all (although one of the older epic songs, "The Brother's War Tale", might include single elements from these). The heroic epics, or rather, their scarcity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when the majority of Estonian folklore collections were formed, serve as a good example of how songs that lose their function when circumstances change fade away. At the same time, the abundance of songs of tradition points at the significance of customs in heritage maintenance.

Maybe long epic songs were specially performed to be listened to during long winter evenings? During the very time that later would become connected with riddle-making and storytelling? Maybe this was related to the idea that singing entertains supernatural beings, the way that many cultures have felt about storytelling (see Lintrop 2012: 396–412). There may have even been beliefs that singing not only entertains different gods and spirits, but also shows them that people are familiar with the order and rules that they have

imposed, the way expressed in the songs of the Ob-Ugrians' bear feasts (see Lintrop 2014: 147). There are some things that we shall never know for certain, which will always remain dependent on the theory in the light of which they are viewed. Yet I believe that we may still presume one thing: once, the proportion of narrative songs was higher than at the time when *regilaul* was 'hewn into books'. Although I have used the formula from the parallel verses *kõik ma panin paberisse / raiusin ma raamatusse* (I put everything into paper / I hewed everything into a book) as a figure for collecting (recording) *regilaul*, these verses certainly do not indicate the literacy of the performer or the author of the song, but rather show the attitude of the illiterate singer towards the recorded text as a magical object.

## PERFORMING OF THE LONG EPIC SONGS: SOME PERFORMANCE TOOLS IN TIBET

Long songs (that often contain mythology) demand a good memory and an ability to recall/create the text on the part of the singer, which an onlooker may find to be so special that it is considered to be supernatural. The impression may be strengthened by the conviction that, in addition to people, the performance can also be heard by gods or the characters with whom the singing is concerned. Even more natural is the presumption of supernatural help in case the singer is believed to deliver the words of gods or supernatural heroes. Today we can speak of altered states of consciousness (or trance-like states) that the singers reach by shutting their eyes, controlled breathing, and the singing itself, as states that can help access the information stored in memory. However, the old interpretation thereof was probably a supernatural one. In addition, also other devices may have been employed: fixing one's glance on fire or on gleaming objects or both combined, for example, light reflecting from silver. Such devices have been used in several places to reach a trance-like state. Again, I resort to some examples concerning Tibetan singers.

> *Even a piece of paper can become a performance tool. Young artist Grags pa seng ge says that when he holds a piece of paper in his hand and looks into it, the epic appears in his head and smooths* [sic] *his performance. Since Grags pa seng ge is illiterate, the paper provides him no aidememoire; indeed, a blank sheet or a newspaper will serve the purpose.* (Yang 1998: 430)

The same singer is introduced as an example by John Miles Foley in his book titled *How to Read an Oral Poem* (a picture of the singer adorns the cover of the book). Foley adds: "In other words, what is the text for us is for him a talisman, a symbolic piece of his singing equipment" (Foley 2002: 3). Still, sheets of paper are not the only symbolic helping devices in Tibet. Many performers of the Gesar epics would wear a special headgear without which the performance was impossible. The use of the bronze mirror is described in the following excerpt:

> *Another Tibetan artist, Kha tsha pra pa nyag dbang rgya mtsho, uses many tools before beginning a song. First, he must set up a sacred altar, stand a bronze mirror in a bronze plate containing barley, place a crystal in front of the mirror, light incense on the side, place a butter lamp in front of the plate and two tall bronze glasses on each side of the plate.* (Yang 1998: 430)

## POSSIBLE PERFORMANCE TOOLS NAMED IN *REGILAUL*

Could the parallel pair of words in our *regilaul*, 'the sheet of song / the brooch of words' and 'the clink of the tongue / the quill of the mouth' be a distant reflection of something similar – distant memories of the singers needing actual helping devices, believing in which aided them in a better recreation of their text?

> *Siis ma vele Riiga virota*
> *Tõsõ saada Saarõmaale*
> *Säält lasõ tuvva laulu lehe*
> *Laulu lehe sõna sõle.*
> (EÜS IX 1501/2 (91) < Räpina 1912)

> Then I'll cast my brother to Riga,
> Send the other to Saaremaa,
> Let them fetch a sheet of song,
> A sheet of song, a brooch of words.

In addition, singers can also complain of an inability to sing as long as they have no quill of the mouth:

> *Mul jäi koju suuda sulge,*
> *Laua peale laulu lehte,*
> *Kirstu nurka keele kõlks.*
> (EÜS I 1047 (46) < Vändra 1904)

I left the quill of the mouth at home,
The sheet of song upon the table,
The clink of the tongue in the chest corner.

It can come to one's mind that the quill of the mouth in this song may show the attempts made to let oral heritage seem more elevated with the help of literacy skills. By the way, as an aside it can be said that several Tibetan singers who claimed to have learnt their text from a manuscript they had found, actually first wrote down their stories, then hid them, and dug them out in the presence of witnesses (Zhambei 2001: 285).

Still, there are no unambiguous explanations when it comes to *regilaul*. Let us observe song versions of the types "On Mother's Grave", "Proud Maiden", and "Husband-Killer":

*Ann oli Harju neitsikene,*
*Tantsis Tarvasti mäele;*
*Sulg oli suus, pärg oli pääs,*
*Hõbe õuna tal peosse.*
*Läks tema kurni kukutama.*
(EÜS IV 1652/3 (132) < Pilistvere 1907)

Ann was a maiden from Harju,
Went dancing up the hill of Tarvasti,
A quill in her mouth, a wreath on her head,
A silver apple in her hand.
She went to let the pins fall.

*Mari oli muru madala*
*Angerpikk ja peenike'*
*Kõndis ta seal Tõnnismäel,*
*Sulg oli suus ja pärg oli peas,*
(EÜS V 1146 (194) < Risti 1908)

Mari was lowly like the grass,
Long like an eel and slim,
She was walking on Tõnnismägi hill,
A quill in her mouth and a wreath on her head.

*Mai oli maias neitsikene,*
*Sulg oli suus ja pärg oli pääs,*
*Haava leht oli hambaassa,*
*Jürgi soiti tieda müöda,*
*Hakas Maije kutsumaie.*
(H II 34, 215/7 (94) < Kuusalu 1892)

Mai the maid had a sweet tooth,
A quill in her mouth and a wreath on her head,
An aspen leaf between her teeth,
Jürgi was driving on the road,
Started to call Mai.

The fixed formula in all these is the verse *sulg oli suus ja pärg oli pääs* ('a quill
in her mouth and a wreath on her head'), which as if expresses the pride or
nobility of the maiden. The wreath does that, but why the quill? It is certainly
not referring to the literal culture nor was the quill a part of Estonian maiden's
national costume. With many peoples we can find a simple wind instrument
made of a bird's feather (usually that of a goose). It could be suspected that
the above examples may refer to this. A proud maiden is dancing and blowing
an instrument as an accompanying rhythm. Couldn't this have been an old
method of bringing about a state of trance as a background? Several versions
of the song deal with death and the other side. In 1989 an instrument made
of a goose feather was demonstrated by Dulsimyaku, the son of a Nganasan
shaman I knew. I asked Igor Tõnurist, an Estonian scholar of folk music, if
there were reports from Estonia on instruments made of feathers, and this is
the answer I received:

> *All descriptions indicate that it was certainly an instrument like the*
> *clarinet, i.e. at the one end of the length of the goose feather tube an oblong*
> *reed is cut, just like in an ordinary reed instrument or an instrument*
> *made of a rye stalk. It seems to have been a simple device for creating*
> *sounds, which was apparently used as a children's toy, or else was put in*
> *the upper part of the chanter of a bagpipe as a reed making sounds like*
> *an ordinary cane reed.* (Tõnurist 2013)

What is notable, though, is that some texts still speak of a brooch instead of
a quill. True, these versions are few:

*Ann oli hakki neitsikene,*
*Tantsis Tarvastu mäella,*

*Minu valge venna kõrvas,*
*Punapea poisi kõrvas,*
*Sõlg oli rinnas, pärg oli peas,*
*Korda põlle varviessa,*
*Kolm oli küinalta käessa.*
*Ühes oli tuli punane,*
*Teises oli tuli sinine,*
*Kolmandas tuli kollane.*
(E, A 175/8 (3) < Põltsamaa 1893)

Ann was an eager maiden.
Danced on Tarvastu hill.
Side by side with my white brother,
Side by side with the read-headed boy,
A brooch on her breast, a wreath on her head,
Crinkles in her apron.
She had three candles in her hand,
One had a red light,
The other had a blue light,
The third one had a yellow light.

The above excerpt is unusual with its three coloured candles, directing the thoughts towards the red goose in the rainbow or a cloud on whose tail there is a bed and in it three or four maidens (or some other mythological characters) who determine human fates:

*Vikerkaaris purjed suured,*
*Purjes on hani punane,*
*Hane saba on sinine.*
*Saba peal on saksa sängi,*
*Mis seal sängide seessa?*
*Neli noorta neitsikesta ...*
(H II 10, 34/6 (25) < Kadrina 1889)

In the rainbow the big sails,
In the sail a red goose,
The goose's tail is blue.
On the goose's tail is a fine bed,
What is inside the bed?
Four young maidens...

It could be guessed that the quill of the mouth is in a way more 'original', and the brooch a more recent interpretation, which arose due to alliteration, but the brooch emerges as important in connection with singing also elsewhere. I have observed that the motif of making the brooch row may have been related to foretelling the future (Lintrop 2008: 248–249), but it may have been connected with songs accompanying other magic-related activities as well:

> *Võtsin sõle rinnasta,*
> *lehe laia kaelasta,*
> *panin sõle sõudema,*
> *lehe laia lendama:*
> *"Sõua, sõlge, lenda, lehte!"*
> (Haljala (ER 1926: 203))

> I took the brooch from my breast,
> The broad sheet from my neck,
> I made the brooch row,
> The broad sheet fly:
> "Row, my broach, fly, my sheet!"

We shall certainly never learn how the brooch would row. Was it used as a pendulum and moved across some objects? It is possible. Or else, was the light reflecting from the silver that was observed? This is also possible. We only know that the Sami have used a horseshoe brooch as the pointer of the drum (Zachrisson 1991: 89, 93), and that the Udmurt sages have been divining by looking at silver (see, e.g., Bogayevsky 1890: 124–125). The only thing that is certain is that the brooch is an object that has a magical meaning and this is felt even today. For instance, in Setomaa region the motif of taking words from (or below) the brooch has been used even in more recent songs:

> *Sõlõ päält ma sõna võti,*
> *tele päält ma laulu teie.*
> (Veera Pähnapuu. The song went through Setomaa, created in 1977 (Sarv 1995: 55–58))

> I took words from the brooch,
> Made the song from the axis [of brooch].

Another place where words are put and from where they are received is the sieve (also an old aiding device when it comes to divination). For instance, a men's song from Setomaa says:

> *Sõna-ks sõnaq miq küll võti vaie sõgla-ks sõgla päältä,*
> *laulu-ks laulu võti viie vaie lavva-ks lavva päältä.*
> (Personal song repertoire of Aado Lintrop, learnt from Urmas Kalla in
> Seto Men's Choir *Liinats'uraq*.)

> Words, well, words I did take from the sieve,
> Song, well the song I took from the table.

The quill, the brooch, the song sheet, the song table, etc. are probably not particularly new additions in *regilaul*, but are rather connected with some imaginary concepts that have been forgotten by now. One is tempted to suggest which the most 'original' helping devices for recalling the song texts are, yet I shall not do this. Based on the examples from among other peoples it can be admitted that such helping devices that induced a belief in one's abilities were required and that occasionally these devices were also used in divination.

## WHERE DO SONGS COME FROM?

Finally, I come to the title of the article and pose the question if the snakes, fish, and birds in *regilaul* from whom singing is learnt ('I took the tale from the mouth of the burbot'; 'The snake sang from the turf / the lizard from within the ground / the rat from the tussock', etc.) could be a remnant of something similar. In this regard, the beings who do not sing in reality are of special interest, for it is not particularly surprising that birds teach someone to sing ('The duck had many words / the lark songs in excess'). But a snake, a lizard, a rat, a burbot or a pike are no singers. At the same time, those mentioned first are popular spirit helpers of the shaman, while the great shaman of the Finns, Väinamöinen, made the first kantele from the jawbone of a pike.

What should certainly not be forgotten in interpreting *regilaul* is the creative role of alliteration. The variation-filled answer to the question whence the songs have been acquired can always be interpreted as meaning that a talented person can make a song out of anything.

> *Lu'ud ma võtsin lutsu suusta,*
> *Laulud lattika ninasta,*
> *Kõned kiissa keele pealta,*
> *Aru havi ammastesta.*
> (H II 27, 532/4 (1) < Palamuse 1889)

> The tales I took from the mouth of the burbot,
> The songs from the nose of the bream,
> The speeches from the tongue of the ruffe,
> The meaning from the teeth of the pike.

I still think that similarly to shamanic rituals, singing and storytelling at certain times had the function of guaranteeing the welfare of the community; not only did the songs and the stories create social groups (us vs. these who eat, dress, speak, and sing in a wrong manner and thus are no proper people), but they would also keep them functioning. And in such cases, certainly hints may have been made that the words and the music came to the singer or the storyteller in a supernatural manner.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## NOTES

[1] It is connected with the belief that soul has the shape of a bird. So going outside without giving it some food may cause a situation when birds lure the hungry soul with them.

[2] The Tamang are Tibeto-Burmese speaking Buddhist people in Nepal.

[3] Nomadic people in Tibet and Ladakh, living on the Changtang high altitude plateau.

[4] Rösing explains that included in Stakna Rinpoche's duties "is the task of taking care of people who are brought to him because they are 'mad' and who want to know whether the 'madness' might be a symptom of a *lha/de* struggle, with a calling to become a shaman" (Rösing 2006: 152).

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# HOW OLD IS RUNOSONG? DATING THE MOTIFS OF BURIAL-RELATED FOLK SONGS BY USING ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL

*Pikne Kama*

**Abstract:** The aim of this article is to compare Estonian burial-related runosongs (*regilaul*) to archaeological information. I introduce the runosong as a potential source of information about burials to archaeologists and give folklorists a new perspective by addressing the age and practises behind the motifs of runosongs. One runosong may contain elements from different time periods, and for this reason I have concentrated on dating the elements of storylines. However, I have also tried to match the idea of a whole song-type with one or another time period. The five biggest analysed song-types are as follows: "Daughter on her mother's grave", "Mother and loves", "The burial of a boy and a girl", "Open graves", and "A coffin made of stones", altogether 1654 songs. Two of them, "Daughter on her mother's grave", and "A coffin made of stones", consist of a considerable amount of prehistoric elements (from the Iron Age, before 1225), which should prove the prehistoric origin of these song-types. Especially notable is the description of the land of the dead, rooted in prehistory, still preserved in songs collected in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At the same time, the overall amount of prehistoric elements in the whole corpus is small, and most of the datable elements refer to historical burial customs.

**Keywords:** afterlife, archaeology and folklore, death culture, Estonian burial customs, runosong

## INTRODUCTION

How old are the songs constructed in a special way, called runosongs (known also as runic songs, *regilaul* or Kalevala-metric poetry), traditionally sung among the Baltic Finns? It has been claimed that some storylines are "really old" or even "ancient" (Tedre 1998: 549). As archaeologists' main interest is past human culture, it would be great to use runosongs, in addition to archaeological information, to get a better understanding about the past. At the same time, it is hard to use material considered to be old or ancient without more precise dates. So, first of all, when studying runosongs from an archaeological perspective, the main question is how old these songs are.

There are two different aspects to be dated in runosongs. The first question is: When did people start to sing this way, meaning, how old is the form of the runosong? Another and quite different question is how old is the content of the runosong. The manner of singing is said to have evolved more than 2000 years ago, as a result of an interaction between the Baltic Finns and the Proto-Balts (Tedre 1998: 548) or from the beginning of the first millennium AD (Merilai 2006: 16). Although such attempts to date the form of the runosong are interesting, they do not tell us which time period the runosong describes. The present study focuses on the second question; namely, how old are the motifs of the runosong.

Lines of the runosong contain descriptions of past material and intangible culture (e.g. beliefs, emotions, rituals). Archaeologists study the past material culture, and the archaeological material could be the best way to place lines of the runosong in the original context and, by doing so, we can date the motifs of the songs.

There have been previous attempts to date some individual elements of the runosong. Maybe the most famous is Lennart Meri's interpretation that the motif 'Saaremaa on fire' is a reflection of the fall of the Kaali meteorite on the island of Saaremaa (Meri 2008: 115–123). Kaali meteorite craters are dated to 1530–1450 BC (Losiak et al. 2016), which would mean that these lines of the runosong originate from the Early Bronze Age. Some folklorists have used archaeological material in the interpretation of the runosong (e.g. Arukask 2011), and archaeologists have found the lines of the runosong helpful in understanding the belief system behind archaeological finds (e.g. Valk 1992: 139; 2004: 272–273). Using runosongs and other folklore material definitely gives more possibilities for the interpretation of archaeological record.

## CURRENT APPROACH TOWARDS THE RUNOSONG

Although the elements of the runosong have been dated previously, my research provides a systematic analysis of one theme in runosongs – burials. In comparison with some previous studies, I have explored more material than just selected interesting examples and my data is not limited to one song-type only; therefore I hope to present a more general understanding about the age of the content of burial-related runosongs.

I have analysed runosongs describing burials or the situation that follows (revisiting graves by relatives). This topic was chosen for dating because there is a considerable amount of archaeological information about burial customs (compared to other past practices). Graves can be considered as the most thoroughly examined type of prehistoric relics (Jonuks 2005: 43). Death culture

has changed remarkably in time, which makes it easier to connect motifs of songs with one or another time period. The biggest change in burial customs about which we have more record was caused by the Livonian Crusades in the thirteenth century, which in Estonia is also the borderline between prehistory and historical times. In this article, by prehistoric elements I mean elements from the Estonian Late Iron Age (550–1225 AD). Archaeologists have a good knowledge of cremation burials in stone graves from the Late Iron Age. However, upon Christianisation, old burial places were in most cases abandoned and the majority of society had inhumation burials (Valk 2001: 87–88; Mägi 2003: 91).

My approach may at first seem strange to archaeologists, as they usually use material culture to make assumptions about intangible culture (e.g. religion). In my study, I may use intangible culture (runosongs) to make assumptions about material culture. This may certainly be problematic because all details in poetic texts need not be expressed or be visible in material culture. But we encounter the same problem when interpreting archaeological data because the scale of meanings of archaeological finds also varies in intangible culture. For example, every ornament did not necessarily symbolise something and its purpose could have been only decorative (Wilson 2001: 47). In most cases I do not use runosongs for making assumptions about material culture, but try to connect material and intangible culture. The main question is whether these connections are reasonable. The study focuses on two aspects. Firstly, it describes the characteristic motifs of five major burial-related runosong types. Secondly, the study contains interpretations of these motifs and their connections to archaeological data. The first part, the description of the content of the songs, is quite reliable. The interpretative part is definitely more subjective, and there is room for future reinterpretations. It aims at addressing songs on the basis of past practises that are mostly visible in archaeological records; other possible ways of interpretation are not in the focus of the study.

Runosongs are said to be like Lego because they are constructed by using different building blocks (Lintrop 2001: 299–300). These elements or building pieces can originate from different time periods. Dating one element does not mean that a song as a whole is from that time period. It is logical that songs, when passed on orally from one generation to another, have been modified. Each element in a song is important to support an idea or a storyline of the song (Arukask 2000: 66). So, when passing on the storyline, the singer could have used new elements to express older ideas (or, conversely, the singer could have used older song lines to construct new storylines). Therefore the study focuses on dating the motifs combined into the runosong. At the same time I try to connect the overall idea of a song-type with the worldview or the social context of one or another time period. Also, one might assume that a considerable number of older elements testify to the older origin of the song-type.

Runosongs have their characteristic form, which distinguishes them from other folk songs. I will shortly introduce three main poetic features of these songs. They use alliteration (words in one line start with the same initial sound; see, e.g., Lehiste & Ross 2001: 13). This can affect also the content of the runosong – some words may have been used because they fitted in with alliteration and not because they were the best choices to express the overall idea of the song. At the same time this factor has made the runosong conservative as it is difficult to change words in song-lines. The second characteristic element is parallelism, which means that successive lines repeat the same or a similar meaning (ibid.: 14). The third structural principle is that runosongs are in specific trochaic metre, known as the Estonian version of Kalevala-metre (Sarv 2015). The examples of runosong lines in this article are translated by the author. In order to render the exact meaning of the song-lines, I have not used formal poetic features in the translations.

The studied songs were collected mostly at the end of the nineteenth or the beginning of the twentieth century, when the tradition itself was slowly dying out. My study area is limited to Estonia, but the runosong tradition spread also among other Baltic Finns, except for the Livs and Vepsians (Tedre 1998: 548). As a rule, the Estonian runosong tradition reflects society from the perspective of a peasant woman (Tedre 1998: 554–555). As runosongs were created in community-centred culture, in the process of communication, we may argue that they do not express rare or individual habits and beliefs. Still, runosong lines describe diverse understandings or opinions, and the texts express cultural diversity. The runosong has preserved parallel elements from different ages, which may explain the diversity in the songs. When runosongs were collected, the original singing situation was usually not registered. There are some notes accompanying the texts, and it is also possible to make some assumptions based on their content. According to the limited records, some studied song-types were sung during burial rites or when visiting graves (Fig. 1). However, there are also notes about singing them in other situations, such as swinging, working, or when putting a child to sleep. It is unknown whether in the more distant past these songs were sung in everyday life situations, or whether these notes reflect the fading of runosong culture, when songs could have lost their traditional function and meaning.

This article is largely based on my earlier studies (Kama 2010, 2012) but, in addition, some new material has been reviewed. I have studied all the burial-related runosong texts in Estonia that I have found.[1] The choice of the elements that I kept track of when examining songs is somewhat subjective. It was mainly affected by the construction of the songs themselves; at the same time my focus was on the elements which could be compared with archaeological material.

**Figure 1.** *Visiting graves after burials was when burial-related songs were sung. Illustrative picture of women lamenting a dead person in Obinitsa graveyard. Photograph by Armas Otto Väisanen 1922 (ERM Fk 350:214).*

Next I am going to introduce and analyse five biggest burial-related types of the runosong, bring out characteristic elements, and try to match these with actual burial traditions. I also give approximate time periods when a song-type may have emerged. The most numerous song-type is "Daughter on her mother's grave" (1001 songs), followed by "Mother and loves" (200), "The burial of a boy and a girl" (181), "Open graves" (143), and "A coffin made of stones" (129).[2] All of these song-types have spread across Estonia. Also, there are 21 minor song-types about burials, which altogether consist of 110 songs. I am not going to introduce and analyse the minor song-types, but sometimes I use their elements in comparison with the major song-types.

## THE SONG-TYPE "MOTHER AND LOVES"

The main element that distinguishes the song-type "Mother and loves" (*Ema ja armud*) is the description of the movement of the dead person's love/mercy, mostly used in the plural form. I use the word 'loves' in translation, which is questionable because the meaning of the word *armud* is uncertain in the songs. In contemporary Estonian the word *arm* is not used in plural form.

The song-type describes how a dead person (usually a mother) is taken from home to the cemetery and how her 'loves' move with her. They travel together with the mother's body, but their routes are different. The 'loves' can go through a window, beneath a fence, and along treetops, but when they reach the cemetery, they are buried with the deceased:[3]

| | |
|---|---|
| *Imä ära koolenessa;* | Mother died; |
| *armu ära lõpenessa.* | loves ended. |
| *Imä viidi lävesta;* | Mother was taken over the sill; |
| *armu pajasta pagesi.* | loves escaped from the window. |
| *Imä viidi värjist;* | Mother was taken from the gate; |
| *armu lasti laidist.* | loves were made to go from the top. |
| *Ima viidi teeda mööda;* | Mother was taken along the road; |
| *armu lasti laanta mööda.* | loves were made to go along the forest. |
| *Imä hauda kaivanessä;* | Mother's grave was dug; |
| *arm ol´l haua veere pääl.* | love was on the edge of the grave. |
| *Ima hauda pandenessa;* | Mother was put in the grave; |
| *armu ala lammenessa.* | loves lay beneath. |

J. Wäggi from Vana-Piigaste municipality, Kanepi Parish, 1891 (H III 11, 474 (7))

A dead body is handled by others and the actions are described with the words 'taken', 'put', 'carried'. At the same time the 'loves' move independently and their actions are highly varied. 'Loves' can, for example, 'step', 'run', 'beg', 'cry', 'fall', 'fly', even 'march' or 'wrestle'. Probably their specific actions are not so significant, but the overall idea of these song-lines is the opposition of a passive body and the active 'loves'.

The simplest interpretation of this storyline and 'loves' is that it is a poetic depiction of how the loss of a parent meant also the end of her or his love and care for the child. This interpretation is supported by the songs in which 'loves' in parallel song-lines correspond to the mother's warm words. At the same time

there are cases where 'loves' have been described as connected with the singer's own burial or a child burial:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Latsel hauda kaivettii;* | A child's grave was dug; |
| *arm ümber kareli.* | the love hopped around. |
| *Last hauda panti;* | The child was put into the grave; |
| *arm ala lamõsi.* | the love lay beneath. |

(EÜS X 893 (88))

It shows that everybody can have 'loves', and hints that 'loves' once may have had a more complex meaning than just parent's love.

The ability of 'loves' to fit into small places, move through small openings, or fly seems to be coherent with what are traditionally thought to be characteristic elements of a non-material soul. In my interpretation 'loves' are soul-like beings. The plural form could express the idea about the plurality of souls. Examples of the belief system in which humans have more than one soul are known among many northern Eurasian indigenous peoples (Paulson 1958), and signs of the plurality are also evident in Estonian folklore (Loorits 1990 [1948]: 33). The plurality of a soul is rooted in prehistoric religion, but regrettably this possibility has been used only in the interpretation of the belief system of the Estonian Stone Age (Kulmar 1992a, 1992b, 1992c). Although most of the songs use 'loves' in the plural, these beings act in the same way. Also the movement of the 'loves' is closely connected with the course of the deceased body and in the end they are all buried with the dead. This may mean that when this song-type was formed, the concept of multiple souls had lost its independence and was in the middle of transformation into the concept of a single soul.

## THE SONG-TYPE "OPEN GRAVES"

The burial-related song-type "Open graves" (*Avanenud hauad*) describes how an orphan goes to play with a round object and it rolls to a graveyard. The round object breaks the 'doors' of a grave and the orphan sees his or her dead relatives doing handicraft inside. When asked for whom they are making these things, the dead family members claim that they are intended for his or her because he or she was left without care as a child. These songs reflect the belief that the dead can have an impact on this world and may help the living:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Läks tema kurni kukutama;* | She went to drop the skittles; |
| *hõbe õuna veeretama.* | to roll a silver apple. |
| *Kurn kukkus kiriku aeda;* | The skittles fell into the churchyard; |
| *hõbe õuna haua peale.* | the silver apple on the grave. |
| *Haua uksed lahti läksid;* | The grave doors opened; |
| *haua uksed, kalmu kaaned.* | the grave doors, mound caps. |
| *Nägin oma memmekesta.* | I saw my mom. |
| *Memme kangast ju kuduvat;* | Mom was weaving a fabric; |
| *hõbe lõnga lõksutavat;* | a silver yarn popped; |
| *kuldi niisi nikutavat.* | a golden thread was picked. |
| *Mina mõistsin, kohe kostsin:* | I understood, asked straight away: |
| *"Hellakene, memmekene.* | 'Dear mother. |
| *Kell sa kangast ju kujuksid?"* | For whom are you weaving the fabric?' |
| *"Sull ikka, sull ikka, tütar noori.* | 'For you, for you, young daughter. |
| *Sa jäid helmita elama;* | You had to live without beads; |
| *kaelarahata kasuma."* | grew up without neck coins.' |

M. Saar and H. Siimer from Anna Liiver, 59. Village of Maalaste, Pilist-vere Parish, 1907 (EÜS IV 1652/3 (132))

Playing with a round object is characteristic of most of the songs. Usually, the round object is skittles or, in parallel lines, a 'silver apple'. The play of skittles is a traditional Estonian game, where skittles (round wooden blocks) were knocked down by throwing sticks (Kalamees 2007: 38), although song-lines may derive from some other traditional game involving a round object (Annus & Sarv 2015). On the basis of these songs it is possible to claim that the play of skittles could have had a ritual meaning and may have been performed pur-posely in order to establish contact with the dead (Lintrop 2001: 306). Children's folklore (including games) has preserved many activities that once had a ritual or magical meaning (Vissel 2004: 37). Unfortunately, there might not be any archaeological records about rituals that took place on the grave after burials. Clay balls that have been interpreted as gaming pieces have been found from the Reinberg rural cemetery in Järve village (Virumaa County) in connection with seventeenth-century burials (Schmiedehelm 1946a: 13, 30–34; 1946b: 16). The actions described in songs may give us some hints about why these toys were found there.

In the song-type "Open graves", the churchyard is a popular burial place (in ~76% of the songs) where an orphan meets his or her dead relatives. 'Grave doors' are often mentioned, which may refer to a coffin lid or a gate of a burial chamber. However, burial chambers were not used by Estonian peasants, who

were the singers of these songs. Grave doors could be a symbol of an overall idea that the grave is a house for the dead (a grave as a house is also mentioned in the song-type "Daughter on her mother's grave"; see below). Grave doors may be a symbolic border between the worlds of the living and the dead, and by breaking them the orphan can see and communicate with his or her relatives.

The activities of the dead in graves are described in about 73% of the songs. The most popular ones are the song-lines representing a dead mother or sister making clothes; a dead father or brother is usually doing some woodwork. Also, sometimes counting and making coins or doing metalwork in the grave is mentioned. The making of clothes and woodwork seems to be, in most cases, connected with the preparation of a dowry. This shows that these songs were probably sung during wedding rituals as it has been described in the case of the song-type "Daughter on her mother's grave" (see below).

Also, archaeological finds reflect the belief in working in one's afterlife as tools were popular grave goods in the past. It is most reasonable to connect these song-lines with less distant burial practices from the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age. Small tools, such as knives, needles, and thimbles were popular grave goods, and even spindle whorls, axes, and drawknives have been found in graves (Valk 1992: 129, 133–136). The belief system behind these finds has already been previously illustrated by the song-type "Open graves" (ibid.: 139). The archaeological material from historical times does not provide evidence about the belief in metalworking in graves, and the closest rare examples of smith's tools from graves date back to the eleventh–twelfth centuries (e.g. Lavi 1999: 49–51). Activities with coins described in songs could be connected with the real coin finds from cemeteries. Coins were the most common grave goods in historical times (Valk 2001: 76), but rather rare in prehistoric graves, where they were used mainly as jewellery in necklaces. In the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age, coins were manufactured in local towns (Leimus 1996: 50, 69–74), which seems to reflect the description of hammering and sawing the coins in songs. It is known from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that one of the reasons why coin offerings occur in burial rites is because they brought luck or money for those who were left behind (Valk 1992: 150). These explanations seem similar to the song-lines in which money is counted or made for a living relative.

A few descriptions of dead parents sitting on a chair in graves are exceptional:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Messe esa havvan teie?* | What was father doing in the grave? |
| *Esa iste tooli pääla;* | Father was sitting on a chair; |
| *ema tooli veere pääla.* | mother on the edge of the chair. |

(H III 10, 109/10 (16))

This may be connected with a real body placement during burials. One burial in the sitting position was found at Kuremäe barrow-cemetery which dates to the twelfth–thirteenth centuries (Ligi 1993: 31), but there are also some notes in archives describing skeletons in the sitting or standing position, which have been found accidentally (Valk 1992: 76–77). The tradition of placing a dead body in a sitting position used to be more widespread among the Votes on the Izhorian plateau in the twelfth–thirteenth centuries, and was occasionally practised up to the beginning of the fifteenth century (Valk 1992: 76–77 and the sources cited therein).

An interesting element in songs is the description of the clothing of the dead. Among these are the rare song-lines about colourful burial clothes:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Mis sääl hauas nähtanessa?* | What was seen in the grave? |
| *Isa üsna uusi kuube;* | Father's quite new coat; |
| *ema lillene liinikas;* | mother's flowery doily; |
| *sõsara sõba sinine;* | sister had a blue shawl; |
| *venda kullane kübara.* | brother a golden hat/helmet[4]. |

(EKS 8°1, 232/4 (21))

Colourful burial clothes were used until the mid-fifteenth century when they were replaced by clothes of mainly white colour (Valk 1992: 123). The song-lines describing the clothes of a dead person as golden or tinsel may reflect the tradition of decorating textiles with bronze spirals or tin studs. Decorations of bronze spirals have mainly been found from the Final Iron Age inhumation burials, but in some cases from the burial context up to the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries (Rammo 2005: 18). In the fourteenth–fifteenth centuries, the tradition of decorating clothes with bronze spirals started to fade and tin decorations became dominant (Värv 2008: 280). In the sixteenth century linen textiles started to be commonly used for grave clothes (Valk 1992: 123; Rammo 2014), which probably gives the time boundary for frequently mentioned linen garments.

## THE SONG-TYPE "A COFFIN MADE OF STONES"

The song-type "A coffin made of stones" (*Kivine kirst*) differs from other song-types as it represents the singer's wishes connected with his or her own burial. The most important wish is to have a special coffin (in 96% of the songs). Wood as the most common coffin material in real life is not suitable. The singer asks for a coffin made of stones (68 mentions) or tin (48 mentions). The most desir-

able materials for different details of a coffin are bone (59 mentions) or copper (40 mentions).

| *Kui mina ükskord ära suren.* | When I once die. |
|---|---|
| *Ärge mul tehke kuusest kerstu;* | Don't make me a coffin of spruce; |
| *kuust on kuri kõmmeldama.* | spruce is evil to bend. |
| *Ärge mul tehke männast kerstu;* | Don't make me a coffin of pine; |
| *mänd on kuri mädanema.* | pine is evil to rot. |
| … | … |
| *Tehke mulle kivist kerstu;* | Make me a coffin of stones; |
| *kivist kerstu rauda risti.* | a stone coffin, an iron cross. |
| *Hundi luusta lukud ette;* | Locks in the front from wolf bones; |
| *karu luusta kaaned pääle;* | caps on the top from bear bones; |
| *põdra luusta põõnad pääle.* | belts on the top from elk bones. |
| *Ärge mind viige vankeriga.* | Don't take me by cart. |
| *Vanker oli kuri vapustama.* | A cart is evil to shake. |
| *Ärge mind viige reega.* | Don't take me by sledge. |
| *Regi oli kuri viitama.* | A sledge is evil to drift. |
| *Viige mind viie sõrmega;* | Take me by five fingers; |
| *kandke mind kahe käega.* | carry me with two hands. |

G. J. Treumann from Harju-Madise Parish, 1876 (H I 4, 164 (7))

Based on archaeological record, pine and spruce were the most common materials for coffins in historical times (e.g. Valk 1992: 105; Tiirmaa 1997: 73), but in songs these are among the most despised types of wood. It seems that the expected burials are not traditional for common people, but the singer's wishes reflect the burial customs of the elite. The wish for a coffin made of stones is probably connected with the tradition of stone plates on graves, stone sarcophagi, or burial chambers. If one does not interpret the word 'coffin' directly, this wish may originate from the prehistoric stone grave tradition. The situation in the Final Iron Age, when the pagan tradition of stone graves and inhumation burials in wooden coffins competed with each other, may explain why wood is regarded as the opposite of stone. It must be kept in mind that stone graves were also burial places for selected members of society (Lang 2011). The changing burial traditions of the elite due to the spread of Christianity and in later times also affected the expected burial in songs. Roughly half of the songs mention a church or a chapel and the wish for a special cross. Also, the popular request for a coffin made of tin seems to be a more recent element added in historical times. Although the burial customs of the elite had changed

considerably, stone remained a prestigious material, which has helped to preserve the older song-lines.

The lines about the desire to have coffin details from the bones of wild animals also seem to belong to the older layer of elements. The most popular bones were those of elk, roe[5], wolf, and bear. Some bear calf finds from stone graves (e.g. Maldre 2003: 272) have served as evidence for the interpretation that a dead person could have been cremated in a bear fur shroud (Jonuks 2009: 281). This custom may have inspired these song-lines. Wild animals were also part of the elite lifestyle in the Middle Ages, when hunting and eating wild animal meat was a privilege of the higher social class (Mänd 2004: 298).

In ten songs there is a wish not to be left on the ground for birds to eat or not to be buried under the ground for worms to eat. The singers ask to be taken to a church or a cellar, which is likely connected with the tradition of grave chambers built for the nobility. But some songs also mention *Viru vitsik* as a desired destination. It is not fully clear what is meant by this phrase (*vitsik* means 'bushes'), but this is more likely a name for a burial place in nature. It must be mentioned that also cremation burials in stone graves seem to be coherent with the plea not to be left on the ground and not to be buried; burning a body precludes eating it and stone graves are not underground; nor are human remains left in the open air.

There is a request in five songs that a hole be left in the coffin, so that wind, smells, or the soul could move:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Vellekene, noorekene.* | Brother, young. |
| *Kui läät auda kaivamaie.* | If you go to dig a grave. |
| *Jätä pilu päävä poole;* | Leave a slit towards the sun; |
| *akan ao tõsengude.* | a window for the dawn rise. |
| *Õimu tulla,* | For the kin to come; |
| *õimu minnä;* | for the kin to go; |
| *sugu võsal suu anda.* | kindred to kiss. |

(H II 28, 311/2 (11))

This wish may also correspond with the stone graves, where there are natural holes between stones. The other possibility is that the song-lines are about the tradition that has not left any archaeological record. Some analogy could be found in the Ob-Ugric burial tradition, where symbolic houses were built on the grave (which may have contained the remains of a dead body) with holes or windows (Ksenofontov 1988: 338–340). These holes are opened when relatives come to the grave so that the soul of the dead can join the ritual meal in the graveyard (ibid.: 340). Similar grave structures are also known much closer to

Estonia, in the area of the runosong tradition. In Karelian burial places there have been similar buildings on graves with holes or windows made in the side of the sunrise (Kemppinen 1981: 268). This is similar to the song-lines mentioning that a hole in the grave should be towards the sunrise. One possibility is that these lines may have been transferred within the runosong culture, and some Estonian song-lines may represent Karelian burial customs. At the same time, it is more likely that the tradition of buildings on graves with holes may once have been more widespread among the Baltic Finns, and these song-lines do represent local or regional burial customs.

About 38% of the songs mention a wish not to be taken to a burial place in a vehicle but rather to be carried there. This kind of action may reflect the situation up to the beginning of the eighteenth century when burial places were often near homes. Another possibility is to connect these lines with private burial places of landowners near their mansions. Songs scorn taking the deceased to the cemetery by brougham or carriage (which was used by the elite) and therefore these song-lines do not seem to reflect the lifestyle of landowners.

## THE SONG-TYPE "THE BURIAL OF A BOY AND A GIRL"

The song-type "The burial of a boy and a girl" (*Poisi ja neiu matus*) describes the boy's dishonourable burial as opposed to the girl's prestigious burial. Unlike other song-types, this seems to have been a mocking song. The burial place of a boy is most often a swamp (89 mentions) or a forest (82 mentions), but a girl is usually buried in a nice churchyard (124 mentions). The mourners of a boy are often wild animals, such as a wolf (95 mentions) or a bear (88 mentions). At the same time the girl's mourners constitute the elite of the society: for example, lords, landowners, kings. Some songs also mention the girl's family members as mourners. On the boy's grave such unpleasant plants as nettles or thistles grow; by contrast, different flowers usually grow on the girl's grave.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Kui see poissi sureksida.* | When this boy dies. |
| *Kes on teda saatemassa?* | Who will accompany him? |
| *Siga on teda saatemassa;* | A pig will accompany him; |
| *emised on ehitamas;* | sows will prepare the attire; |
| *vana kult on kuulamassa.* | a boar is watching. |
| *Kus see poissi maetakse?* | Where will this boy be buried? |
| *Soosse, porimaasse;* | In a swamp, muddy ground; |
| *vanaraba mättaasse.* | in an old bog tussock. |
| *Mis kasvab poisi haua peala?* | What is growing on the boy's grave? |

| *Mõned harvad angervaksad;* | Some rare dropwort; |
|---|---|
| *vanad nurjatud nõeksed.* | old wicked nettles. |
| *Kui see neidu sureksida.* | When this girl dies. |
| *Kes on teda saatemassa?* | Who will accompany her? |
| *Saksad teda saatemassa;* | Lords will accompany her; |
| *emandad on ehitamas;* | ladies will prepare the attire; |
| *kuningad on kuulamassa.* | kings are watching. |
| *Kus see neidu maetakse?* | Where will this girl be buried? |
| *Kirikusse, kirratusse;* | In a church, colourful; |
| *kabelisse, karratusse.* | in a chapel, tinselly. |
| *Mis kasvab neiu haua peale?* | What will be growing on the girl's grave? |
| *Angervaksad, hallid topid;* | Dropwort, grey wisps; |
| *sinililled, siidi topid;* | liverleaves, silken wisps; |
| *kullerkupud, kulla topid.* | globeflowers, golden wisps. |

H. Siimer and W. Rosenstrauch from Luise Mumme, 35. Village of Rohu, Simuna Parish, 1908 (EÜS V 950/1 (217))

Probably the most interesting element for archaeologists is the frequent mentioning of mire as the burial place for a boy. The first reference that comes to one's mind is the famous bog bodies in northern and north-western Europe. Nearly 1800 bodies have been found from the bogs in Denmark, England, Sweden, Ireland, Norway, etc. (Parker Pearson 2008 [1999]: 67). What is more, sometimes the song-lines describe wood around the body:

| *Kui nee peiju koolenesse.* | When those grooms will die. |
|---|---|
| *Kohes neid matetas?* | Where will they be buried? |
| *Suurte suo mätta hala.* | In a big swamp, under a tussock. |
| *Mis neile ümbre pandas?* | What will they put around them? |
| *Ragask hala, ragask pääle.* | Logs down, logs on top. |

(H II 51, 316 (6))

This seems to match the archaeological record where bog bodies have been found with wood, which is used to drown a body or is placed there for protective magic (Wessman 2009: 88). However, because the song-lines and finds of bog bodies are generally separated by a huge difference in time and space, I would not make a direct connection between them. However, there is an example which may give some evidence about practices behind the song-lines. One archaeologically documented mummified body, dated to the end of the seventeenth or to the beginning of the eighteenth century, has been found in a bog in Estonia (Jonuks & Oras 2012: 21–22). The Rabivere bog body was found by peat diggers and the position and good condition of the deceased woman's body indicate that

the woman had not drowned but had been buried into the peat (ibid.). Songs may indicate that such finds are more common, and it could well be that we may not have found the other bog bodies in Estonia yet. Also, a seventeenth-century written source mentions the regulation that people who do not go to church or take part in communion cannot be buried in the churchyard, and their bodies have to be thrown into swamps (Kahk 1980: 676). The songs from south-eastern Estonia mention that the burial place of both the boy and the girl is a mire, which shows that mire is not only a metaphor for a negative burial place. In a minor song-type, "A silent burial place" (*Vaikne matusepaik*), the singer's own wish is to be buried in a bog:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Viige mind raba kaldasse.* | Take me into the edge of a bog. |
| *Kus ma ei kuule kukke häält;* | Where I cannot hear the rooster crow; |
| *vie venna laulamist;* | singing of five brothers; |
| *ei kahe õe karjumist.* | no screams of two sisters. |

(H, R 1, 206 (2))

Another popular burial site for a boy is the forest. This may refer to the prehistoric burial places that after falling into disuse could be regarded as belonging to the wild sphere of nature. In rare cases prehistoric graves were used also in historical times (Jonuks 2009: 272), which shows that people were aware of their existence and used them in specific situations. Another possibility is that the lines refer to rural cemeteries of historical times. Rural cemeteries were probably covered with trees (Valk 2001: 23), and the use thereof could be seen as burying into a forest.

A girl's burial place was in most cases connected to a church or a church-yard. It must be kept in mind that the archaeological record does not show any significant difference between the number of women and men buried in churchyards. A church is often described as golden and silvery, which could be a description of Catholic-period churches before the Lutheran period since the late sixteenth or the early seventeenth centuries. This song-type shows that at least one part of the society admired Christian Germanic culture of the elite. It was sometimes even stated that a girl was buried under an altar which is the most sacred burial place in churches.

## THE SONG-TYPE "DAUGHTER ON HER MOTHER'S GRAVE"

This popular song-type describes how orphans go to the graves of their dead parents and ask them to wake up and help them. Mother and father answer that different things keep them in the grave – most commonly plants and trees

have grown on the grave, the soil covers their bodies, or they smell of death. The orphan promises to perform different actions to remove these obstacles, such as to cut down the grass and trees, dig up the grave, or wash off the smell of death. Usually dead parents still cannot awake and give the child advice to seek help from living people or from the heavenly forces. Although this song-type is named "Daughter on her mother's grave" (*Ema haual*), visiting the graves of both one's mother and father is common. The most general wish is that the deceased could help with the preparation of a wedding chest. The question of an acceptable dowry may have been very important to orphans. There are short notes indicating that these songs have been sung during weddings or that a bride has sung it on her mother's grave (S 11189/90 (25); ERA II 159, 667/8 (67); H II 32, 82/4 (72)).

| | |
|---|---|
| *Õli kaksi vaesta lasta.* | There were two orphans. |
| *Menid Jaanipää keriku.* | Went to church on Midsummer's Day. |
| *Nuttu rättikud käessa;* | Crying kerchiefs in hands; |
| *nuttu kirjad rättikussa.* | crying patterns in the kerchief. |
| *Tõine pühkis tõise silmi.* | Wiping each other's eyes. |
| … | … |
| *Nüüd läksid ema haua pääle:* | Now they went to the mother's grave: |
| *"Tõise üles emakene;* | 'Rise up mother; |
| *tõise vakka valmistama;* | rise to make the wedding chest; |
| *ja siis sukki sooritama;* | rise to prepare the stockings; |
| *kirstu kaantta kinnitama."* | to close the chest lid.' |
| … | … |
| *"Ei sa tulla tüttar noori.* | 'Can't come, daughter young. |
| *Silmil on sinine liiva;* | On my eyes is blue sand; |
| *kulmul on kulu punane;* | on my brow is hay red; |
| *jalul on jalaka metsa;* | on my legs is elm forest; |
| *pea pääl on pärna metsa.* | on top of my head is a lime-tree forest. |
| *Too siula siulu liiva;* | Bring a sieve, sift the sand; |
| *too kirves raiju metsa.* | bring an axe, chop the forest. |
| *Siis tulen vakka valmistama;* | Then I will come to make a dowry; |
| *kirstu kaandta kinnitama."* | to close the chest lid.' |

Marie Treuberg from Leena Selli. Kurtna municipality, Vaivara Parish, 1891 (H II 37, 67/8 (1))

While most of the songs end with the dead staying in the grave, there are also cases where the situation remains unresolved or the dead parents promise to rise (as in the previous example). Two songs even depict what could happen if the dead actually woke up:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Viiksin koiduksi kojuje;* | Would bring home for dawn; |
| *ämarikusi äraje.* | in duskiness away. |
| *Kole on kojugi viia;* | Horrific even to bring home; |
| *jäle on järile panna;* | disgusting to put on a bench; |
| *ile pinki istutada.* | terrifying to plant onto a stool. |
| *Kuhu pian pallaka panema;* | Where will I put the naked body; |
| *ihulise istutama?* | plant the flesh? |
| *Paljaks taab palju maada;* | Naked needs lots of ground; |
| *ihuline ilma ruumi.* | flesh needs a world of space. |
| *Panen parsile magama;* | Put it to sleep on the perch; |
| *sialt ta kohe kukutelle;* | from there it fell right down; |
| *üle kaela üpitelle.* | over the neck hopped. |
| *Ja saab otsa ometigi.* | And dies nevertheless. |

(H I 1, 74 (38))

In about 40% of the songs a church or a chapel is named in connection with visiting a grave. Church mostly occurs in descriptions of visiting one's parents' grave on Midsummer's Day. This is coherent with ethnographical notes describing that Midsummer's Day has been a very important holiday of the deceased (Hiiemäe 1985: 37–40). One song can mention a church, but at the same time there are descriptions of a forest or stones on a grave, which does not fit in with the appearance of a churchyard. This shows again that a song can reveal coexisting heterogeneous elements from different time periods. Although the songs do not specify what kind of burial site they describe in archaeological terms, there are some interesting details. For example, the songs of south-eastern Estonia mention the "white sand hill", which reminds of the appearance of round barrows:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Karjah käväh löüse ma.* | During herding I found. |
| *Kos ole imä mattõdu.* | Where mother is buried. |
| *Valgõ liiva mäe sisse;* | In a white sand hill; |
| *halja haina mättä ala.* | under a green hay sod. |

(H III 30, 827/8 (5))

Round barrows from the Final Iron Age were occasionally used in the eastern part of south-eastern Estonia (Valk 1992: 38), and their distribution area seems to generally match the spread of the motif of the 'white sand hill'. It is hard to say whether these lines originally reflected the round barrow tradition because medieval and post-medieval rural cemeteries were also often situated on sandy hills. At least churchyards can be excluded as these lines describe a burial place near one's home in nature because an orphan finds it when herding.

The north-eastern Estonian songs describe a grave as a house:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Läksin eide aua pääle;* | Went to mother's grave; |
| *auduja südämä pääle;* | to the hatcher's heart; |
| *tuojani tua laele;* | on the carrier's room's ceiling; |
| *kandajani katusselle.* | on the bearer's roof. |

(H II 1, 606 (784))

The view of the burial place as a house is probably an old belief, and many types of prehistoric burial structures have been interpreted as symbolic or real houses (see, e.g., Vassar 1943: 160; Mägi 2004). In the songs an orphan goes onto the roof of a grave and therefore it seems that these song-lines rather describe a symbolic house. It is possible that also traditional earth graves could have been seen as houses of the dead.

In most of the songs parents cannot rise due to plants that have grown on the grave. Descriptions of blue hepaticas growing on the eyes and golden globeflowers on the eyebrows of the dead are frequent. Also, a blue forest, blue soil or blue sand, and red hay or red flowers occur in the same context than hepaticas and globeflowers. It shows that it was important to express the blue and red or golden colour in connection with the eyes of the dead. It is difficult to specify what these colours symbolize in this context, but in general 'blue' and 'red' are characteristic of the descriptions of liminal situations (e.g. giving birth, weddings, death) in the runosong tradition (Jaago 1997). The most common action against the plants growing on a grave was feeding them to domestic animals, mainly cattle. Bringing a herd to a burial place was frequent in the songs, but also cutting hay with a scythe was mentioned. Grazing a burial place does not seem to reflect actions possible in a churchyard, which was usually far away from home and surrounded by a stone wall. These lines most likely describe rural cemeteries, which date to the thirteenth–eighteenth centuries (Valk 2001: 87–90); however, the prehistoric background of this element cannot be excluded either.

Sometimes it is mentioned that herbs growing on a grave give power to animals:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Lase aga mullikad murule;* | Let heifers on the grass; |
| *härjad aru heinamaale;* | oxen to the fescue meadow; |
| *lehmad sinililledele.* | cows on liverleaves. |
| *Mullikad murul tugevad;* | Heifers are strong on the grass; |
| *aru heinal härjad suured;* | on the fescue hay are oxen big; |
| *sinilillel lehmad lajad.* | on liverleaves are cows broad. |

(H I 2, 695/6 (33))

This is one way how the dead can actually help the living. At the same time some songs describe an opposite situation, in which grass from a grave draws life force from animals. These two elements may show different attitudes towards herding in burial places. In some areas or even inside one community, not all people may have approved it. However, it seems more acceptable to use a burial place for herding. In many songs trees grow on graves. Songs describe cutting down the trees, shooting animals and birds in trees, and two songs even mention ploughing in a burial place. These actions were probably not common in burial sites, but the song-lines express anger against the obstacles that hold the parents in graves. At the same time song-lines probably show that behaviour in burial places has not been so limited, for example, in comparison with natural holy places where even breaking off a branch was strictly forbidden (see Kütt 2007: 187–200).

A common reason why the dead cannot leave the grave is because they have a bad smell:

> *Mul om jo man maa hais;*      I have with me the earth smell;
> *suu man surma hais;*      near my mouth the death smell;
> *käte man kääpä hais;*      on hands the mound smell;
> *muijal kõik mulla hais.*      everywhere else the soil smell.

(H II 45, 266/7 (9))

An orphan promises to bring a special soap or lye to the grave or heat a special sauna where the parent's body would be washed:

> *Viin siis kondid vihtlemaie;*      Then I will carry your bones to whisking with birch twigs;
>
> *sooja sauna suitsumaie.*      into a warm sauna to smoke.
> *Andma viha virdeella;*      Give some whisking water;
> *paistma päikse paisteella.*      show in the sun glow.
> *Siis mulle kasvab kaunis ema;*      Then will grow me a beautiful mother;
> *armuline isa naene.*      gracious father's wife.

(Leoke 1, 79/82 (4))

It must be mentioned that in traditional burials the body of the deceased was kept in the sauna before funerals and always washed. By performing these actions again, an orphan may have hoped to reverse the rituals and therewith also the death. This element is hard to date, but the smell of death seems to be related to inhumation burials where the body of the dead started to rot. At the same time only bones could be the subject of washing (like in the previous example), and the origin of the motif can be connected with multi-staged burials in prehistory.

Bringing a sieve to the grave was often mentioned. In most cases it was used to sift the grave soil in order to awake the dead parent. Some descriptions are rather intriguing:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Oleks mullast võtemine;* | If there was taking from the ground; |
| *kirikusta kiskumine;* | tearing from a church; |
| *hauasta arutamine.* | ripping up from the grave. |
| *Tooks linnast liiva sõela;* | I would bring a sieve from town; |
| *alevista arva sõela.* | from hamlet a large sieve. |
| *Miska sõeluksin sõmera.* | With this I would sift through the soil. |

(H II 9, 178/9 (13))

The ethnographic records show that the sieve had a special meaning: it has been used for healing, predicting the future, and in other magical activities (Valk 2004: 253–271), which may explain why a sieve is frequently mentioned in songs. The sieve was significant already in the Iron Age as there are pendants symbolizing the sieve, mainly found in burials (ibid.: 234–250). Heiki Valk has suggested that sieves may have been used in different stages of cremation burial rituals, mainly for collecting cremated bones by sifting through the remains of a pyre (ibid.: 273). The runosong lines may give indirect evidence for this hypothesis as it is sometimes mentioned that the sieve is fiery, red-hot, or grimy, which may refer to cremation burial. In songs sifting through the remains of the dead could again be performed to reverse death. In the minor song-type "Good girl dead" (*Hää neiu surnud*) sifting through a funeral place is mentioned in most of the songs with the purpose of getting hold of the bones of the deceased:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Soklu läbi linna liiva;* | Sift through the town sand; |
| *kae läbi kalmu liiva.* | look through the grave sand. |
| *Ehk saad näta näiu luida;* | Maybe you can see the girl's bones; |
| *näda näiu sõrme luida;* | see the girl's finger bones; |
| *kaia neiu kaala luida.* | see the girl's neck bones. |

(EÜS XII 1291 (55))

It is hard to guess whether those song-lines refer to real manipulation of the remains of the dead. There is no record of such manipulation from historical times and in the case of prehistoric cremation burials it is really hard to say if the burned bones were touched after placing them into the burial place. However, there are some examples of Final Iron Age inhumation burials where graves have been reopened and the position of bones modified (Jonuks 2009: 276–277 and the sources therein). These actions are usually interpreted as the result of grave robbery or baptism of the dead (ibid.). Runosongs provide a new

interpretation of the disturbed graves. It is possible that, in order to establish the closest connection to the dead, the remains of the dead were examined, touched, or used.

Keeping in mind archaeological record about prehistoric burial customs, I followed the mentions of fire that could indicate cremation burials. The cremation tradition did not fully end at the beginning of historical times (Valk 1993), and it is possible that not all the cases in the runosong originate from the prehistoric period. The runosong does not reveal any direct descriptions of cremation burials, but there are a few examples where cremation may explain the song-lines. Most interesting are the following lines:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Tuli nakkas mul peäle tulema;* | Fire started to come on me; |
| *palav nakkas mulle peäle paistma;* | heat started to shine on me; |
| *kibena peale karatellema.* | sparks started to hop on me. |
| *Külma oles lännu kalmu kabukene.* | I would have gone to the grave, maiden. |
| *Vasta mul kahetsi kalmulise;* | Stared back at me the deceased; |
| *vasta mul kahetsi ilmulise.* | stared back at me the earthly beings. |
| *Seda ei ole kalmun kasunu;* | This has not grown in the grave; |
| *seda om ilma istotu.* | this is planted on the earth. |
| *Kohe istotu elava.* | Where the living are planted. |

(H II 62, 675/6, 719 (29))

One might think that the description of fire in this song-text is a poetic description of the hard life of the orphan. For me, the detailed description of the person catching fire, after which she could go to grave, opens the way for a more intriguing explanation. It may be that the orphan tries to reach the otherworld through fire, which may be consistent with cremation burials, in which the dead disappeared through fire and moved to the afterlife. In south-eastern Estonian songs an orphan asks the parents to rise from the oven's fire, which may also indicate that in case the dead parents disappeared into the fire, they can also reappear from it. Fire is mentioned also on the way to and in the land of the dead (see below).

The descriptions of stones in connection with the dead could indicate the prehistoric stone grave tradition. Although burials with stones did not come to an end with prehistory (see, e.g., Valk 1992: 64–69), a stone construction on graves was untypical in historical times. Stones on the grave were mentioned in 85 songs (5.6% of total). More than one stone or even a stone heap was mentioned in 56 songs. A single stone on the grave may refer to the tradition of placing a bigger stone in the grave filling. This custom was recorded in Siksälä cemetery from the thirteenth–fifteenth centuries (one burial was also dated to the eighteenth century) and is interpreted as prevention against the

dead returning home as revenants (Laul & Valk 2007: 41). This interpretation fits in with the songs in which a stone is the reason why the dead cannot rise. Descriptions of more than one stone in a burial site seem to reflect the appearance of stone graves quite well, for example:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Paas on all ja paas on pial;* | Limestone is beneath and limestone is above; |
| *mina paade vahela;* | I am between the limestone; |
| *kivi rink mull rinde pial.* | a stone heap on my chest. |

(H IV 2, 516/8 (2))

or

| | |
|---|---|
| *Eite pandi haudajani.* | Mother was put into the grave. |
| *Armud jäid haua kaldasse.* | Loves were left on the grave bank. |
| *Seal on armu lapsekestel.* | There is love for children. |
| *Kivi ääres tuule varju;* | Nearby a stone are their shelters from the wind; |
| *kivi varede vahela.* | between stone heaps. |
| *Tunnikeseks tuule varju;* | For an hour they get cover from the wind; |
| *päevakeseks päeva armu.* | for a day love from the sun. |

(EÜS VII 1594/5 (114))

Actually, it is logical that there are almost no descriptions of cremation burials in this song-type; yet many descriptions of stone graves. This song-type does not usually describe funeral practices but rather the situation after burial. What is more, the stones support the overall storyline as they constitute an obstacle that keeps the dead in the grave.

There are two songs in which the stones are said to be an orphan's dowry. Stone graves are believed to have marked the ownership of land (e.g. Lang 1996: 510–512), and therefore the original meaning of these song-lines may have been that although the orphan's parents are dead, their family still own the land where their burial place is situated.

The songs describe also coffins and crosses. Unlike fire and stones, the mentioning of these refers to burial customs of later periods. Although coffins were used already in the Final Iron Age (see, e.g., Selirand 1974: 80), it was probably not until the seventeenth century that burying in coffins evolved into a common practice among peasants (Valk 1992: 103). A cross can be yet another reason why a parent cannot wake. It is not known when the cross became widespread as a grave mark. Coffins are mentioned in 5.6% of songs and crosses in 9% of songs. Some songs describe an iron cross on a grave, which peasants started to use at the end of the eighteenth century (Kõuts & Valk 1998: 10). Thus, the iron cross is one of the latest datable elements in songs.

**Figure 2.** *Contemporary appearance of a stone grave with stones and trees in Karula Parish. Illustrative photograph by Pikne Kama 2014.*

In the song-type "Daughter on her mother's grave" the dead are usually in their graves; they can communicate, but otherwise their activities are quite limited. Some songs depict the dead as more active, for example:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Ema vaat varemelta;* | Mother was looking out from the ruins; |
| *sinilillede seasta.* | amongst liverleaves. |
| *Tüdard noorda naidetes.* | How her young daughter was getting married. |

(H II 24, 460/2 (247))

In rare songs parents can return home as a bug or a bird:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Kodo tiä õks lindas liblikah;* | Home she flew as a butterfly; |
| *kodo tiä õks käü kärbläseh.* | home she is going as a fly. |
| *Miä um õks tuvi tulba otsah;* | Why is a dove on the stake; |
| *haugas tare harä pääl?* | why is a hawk on the crest? |
| *Tuu um õks mino imäkane;* | This is my mother; |
| *kabu um õks kats vanembad.* | two parents of the maiden. |

(H II 32, 226/7 (2))

or:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Kui ei mahu maista tulla.* | If you cannot come from the ground. |
| *Tule luike lunta mööda;* | Come as a swan on the snow; |
| *tule kajakas kivisid mööda;* | come as a seagull over stones; |
| *vesi lindu vetta mööda.* | as a water bird along water. |

(E, A 740/1)

This image is similar to folktales where human souls can leave their bodies in the shape of a bug, and in Setumaa, south-eastern Estonia, there is a belief about a soul butterfly who leaves the body after death (Loorits 1990 [1948]: 36–38). A few songs describe an orphan who has to look for her parents at home because they are hidden somewhere on the farm. It remains unclear whether it refers to a parent's soul or the psychical remains.

The song-type mentions different deities or mythical beings. When dead parents cannot help an orphan, they sometimes advise them to seek help from heavenly forces. The songs often mention *jumal* (God), but also *Mari / Maarja* (St. Mary), or *looja* (Creator). When singers used such words as 'god' or 'creator' within the time period when songs were collected, they probably meant the Christian God. In earlier times the word *jumal* denoted a prehistoric deity (see Vainik 2014) and these song-lines may not originally refer to the Christian God.

Mythical beings appear in a situation different than heavenly forces as they may constitute another obstacle that prevents the dead from awaking. Tooni/ Toonis are often mentioned in some areas:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Ei ma lää, tütarlaits.* | I cannot go, daughter. |
| *Mul om kolmi hoitijata.* | I have three holders. |
| *Tooni poiga pähitsella;* | Tooni's son on my head; |
| *Tooni tütar jalutsella;* | Tooni's daughter on my feet; |
| *vana Tooni keskeella.* | old Tooni in the middle. |

(H II 44, 513/5 (19))

Also, some songs mention Tooni's wives:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Ei või minna tütarenni;* | Cannot go to the daughter; |
| *ei või astu armas latsi.* | cannot step, dear child. |
| *Vasta kaitsva kalmu naise;* | Against are the protecting mound wives; |
| *tõrõlõsõ Tooninaise.* | scolding Tooni's wives: |
| *"Mis sa maine maalõ astud;* | 'Why do you, earthly, step on the ground; |
| *kabo käüma kääbäjille?"* | maiden, walking to the grave?' |

(H, Mapp 621 (40))

The Toonis (old Tooni, Tooni's son, Tooni's daughter, Tooni's wives) are connected with the prehistoric land of the dead called Toonela, and their field of activity is connected with death, which distinguishes them from the forces of heaven. In historical Tartumaa and Mulgimaa, instead of the Toonis, Mary's rooster and the Creator's hound are mentioned:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Mul o manna katsi vahki;* | I have with me two guards; |
| *katsi vahki, kolmi vahki.* | two guards, three guards. |
| *Looja hurda jalutsinna;* | Creator's hound on my feet; |
| *Maarja kikas päetsinna.* | Mary's rooster on my head. |
| *Johus jalga liiguteme.* | Happen to move my leg. |
| *Looja hurta haugateme.* | Creator's hound barks. |
| *Johus pääda liiguteme.* | Happen to move my head. |
| *Maarja kikas kiuksateme.* | Mary's rooster crows. |

(EÜS V 312/5 (10))

One can agree with Aado Lintrop who claims that Mary's rooster and Creator's hound took over the position of the Toonis in songs (Lintrop 2001: 307). It would be interesting to know when this replacement occurred. While the mentioning of Maarja (St. Mary) may refer to the Middle Ages, a dog in the context of the guardian of the dead can be older. Dog burials have been found in western Estonian stone graves dating to the Viking Age (Jonuks 2006: 32–34). The interpretation of this widespread tradition argues that dogs used to be the guardians of the otherworld in European mythology, although a similar interpretation of Estonian dog burials has been considered implausible (ibid.: 40, and the sources therein). However, at least in this Estonian song-type, dogs seem to have a meaning similar to that in European mythology. Whenever Mary's rooster and Creator's hound took the place of the Toonis, both alternative versions have been preserved in songs.

In 38 songs (3.8% of the songs) the land of the dead was mentioned. Most often it was named as Toonela or House of Tooni, but also Iiela, Manala, House of Maraliste, Hell, and once also the Creator's chamber. It is remarkable that the songs did not mention that the dead parents would be in Heaven or in Paradise. Ülo Valk has suggested that the overall idea of the song-type that the dead could rise comes from Christianity where resurrection of the flesh is possible (Valk 2000: 259–260). Aado Lintrop has shown how a similar idea is expressed in songs of unbaptised Finno-Ugric peoples (Lintrop 2001: 301). Connecting the origin of the idea with Christianity in songs seems unlikely also to me as the described afterlife reveals very few Christian aspects. For example, Heaven, Purgatory, the devil, or angels are not mentioned in connection with the dead.

Hell occurs in parallel lines with Toonela, and it seems that because of Christianity, the previous otherworld was equalized with Hell. In reality an orphan probably did not believe that the loved parent would be in Hell.[6] Toonela, Iiela, Manala, and the House of Maraliste probably originate from the prehistoric belief system. It is difficult to say if these names have marked different lands of the dead or they are synonymous. It seems more likely that in prehistory there may have existed more than one land of the dead and in runosongs these have survived only as names. Iiela seems to connect with the word *hiis*, which is a popular name for natural sacred places; also, mythical beings living in these sites are called *iied* (see: Loorits 1990 [1948]: 67–69).

Only Toonela is described in greater detail. It is situated somewhere above, far away, or is equalized with a burial place. On the way to see a dead parent, fire and water are mentioned:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Läbi lääse ma eädse jõe;* | I would cross an icy river; |
| *läbi tulitse tungelde;* | go through fiery torches; |
| *üle lääse ma sõru uiboost.* | cross a burnt field of apple-trees. |
| *Oles saasi ma nättä imä armo;* | If I could feel mother's love; |
| *kaija imä kassumist.* | witness mother growing up. |

(H, Jagomann 276/9 (13))

Fire and water are also depicted in Toonela:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Tooni tuli on turbeline;* | Tooni's fire is soddy; |
| *kalmu vesi verine.* | mound water bloody. |

(H II 62, 671, 718/9 (26))

Afterlife in Toonela is similar to life in this world: usually mother and father are responsible for farm work, for example, scything, sweeping, ploughing, or taking care of Tooni's animals. Probably the tools found in the graves reflect the same belief of working in Toonela. Some songs express anger against Toonela:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Olõs ma tiidünü Tooni tarõ;* | If I had known the House of Tooni; |
| *vai kül Tooni tarõ läve.* | or even the threshold of the House of Tooni. |
| *Ma olõs kirvõ kätte võtnu;* | I would have taken an axe in my hands; |
| *käsikabla kainladõ.* | a rope under my armpit. |
| *Üles ma olõs lännü nulka müüdä;* | I would have gone along a corner; |
| *maha saanu saina müüdä.* | got down along a wall. |
| *Maha olõs tõukanu Tooni ussõ;* | I would have pushed down Tooni's doors; |
| *põrutõnu põrgu värjä.* | banged at the hell's gates. |

> *Ussõ ma iks toonu uma imä;*     I would have brought out my mother;
> *uma kalli kasvataija.*             my dear mother who brought me up.

(H II 32, 61/3 (45))

These descriptions may not show the usual attitude towards the land of the dead as in songs it constitutes another obstacle that prevents the dead from rising.

## DISCUSSION

Although comparing the runosong with archaeological data is definitely an interesting task, there are also many difficulties that have to be kept in mind. First of all, the archaeological material is fragmentary and has a tendency to become even more fragmentary when moving back in time. Only a part of the past material culture has survived until today, and archaeologists have studied but a small amount of it. As was noted above, archaeological material about burials is abundant and it is one of the most extensively studied topics in archaeology. Nevertheless, Valter Lang has pointed out that we know how only about 20% of people were buried in Estonia in the Final Iron Age (Lang 2011: 112). When looking for older elements in burial-related runosongs, there is no reason to think that the older elements reflect only the customs of those 20% of people whose burial customs are familiar to us. For example, the minor song-type "Birds will bury" (*Linnud matavad*) describes how a dead body is eaten by birds. Leaving a deceased body on the ground will most likely not leave behind any archaeological traces. If we do not have any archaeological material, it is more difficult to find traces of these actions also in runosongs. For example, if there had not been any knowledge of the tradition of the stone graves, their descriptions in songs would probably have been overlooked. At the same time, when the archaeological material (maybe also with the help of runosongs) becomes less fragmentary, the gap between different sources about the past should become smaller.

Moreover, runosongs are not ethnographical descriptions; some customs have not been mentioned in songs at all, but some details may be described in many parallel lines. For example, in south-eastern Estonia there is a tradition of cutting a cross on a tree on the way to the graveyard, which was more widespread in the past (Torp-Kõivupuu 2003: 103–105). Although the song-type "Mother and loves" describes how a dead person is taken from home to the cemetery, the tradition of cutting a cross on a tree is not mentioned. Another example is the ritual eating on graves that is believed to have been common in the past all

over Estonia (Valk 1992: 158), but is uncommon in Estonian runosongs. The custom of taking food to the grave is mentioned only in the minor song-type "Not afraid of death" (*Ei karda surma*). Thus, on the basis of non-occurrence of elements it is hard to draw conclusions about the real behaviour in the past.

I have presented different percentages in my analysis to illustrate the occurrence of elements and variability between the song-types. At the same time, the meaning of these numbers calls for interpretation. For example, the possible description of stone graves occurred in 5.6%, and the prehistoric land of the dead was mentioned in 3% of the songs belonging to the type "Daughter on her mother's grave". These numbers do not mean that 3–5.6% of elements in the runosong are of prehistoric origin. It is clear that in some areas songs contain older elements than in others. One song may reveal elements from different time periods, but generally older elements occur together. Songs that belong to the same song-type but contain elements from different time periods prove once again how the motifs may have been modernized, but the overall idea or the storyline has survived.

If there had been runosong lines describing the tradition of inhumation burials in the Final Iron Age, these elements would probably have had a much bigger chance to be preserved when inhumation burials became widespread. Henry's Chronicle of Livonia describes how in the thirteenth century Estonians practised cremation burials with traditional wailing and drinking (HCL 2003: XII, 6). It is reasonable to think that the described wailing is the singing of burial-related folk songs and the songs they sang may have described cremation burials. However, when the cremation burial tradition died out, the lines or even the song-types may have also vanished. It is possible that when the burial rites changed, the song-lines that did not make sense anymore were reframed and understood as poetic expressions that preserved some of these relics in later periods. In reality, only those elements of the runosong are datable that describe the part of culture that has changed over time. The song-lines describing more static things (e.g. death of a parent, emotions involved, description of nature) were relevant and understandable during longer time periods – there was no need to change these. It means that the overall age of the song elements may be older than shown in the present study.

The runosong lines about intangible culture seem to be more stable as they were not so strictly connected with behavioural culture. On the basis of runosongs one might claim that prehistoric deities and beliefs about afterlife lasted long after Christianisation by comparison with the prehistoric burial traditions, which usually faded rather quickly. It is also important for archaeologists to bear in mind that there might be a gap between practices and beliefs. For example,
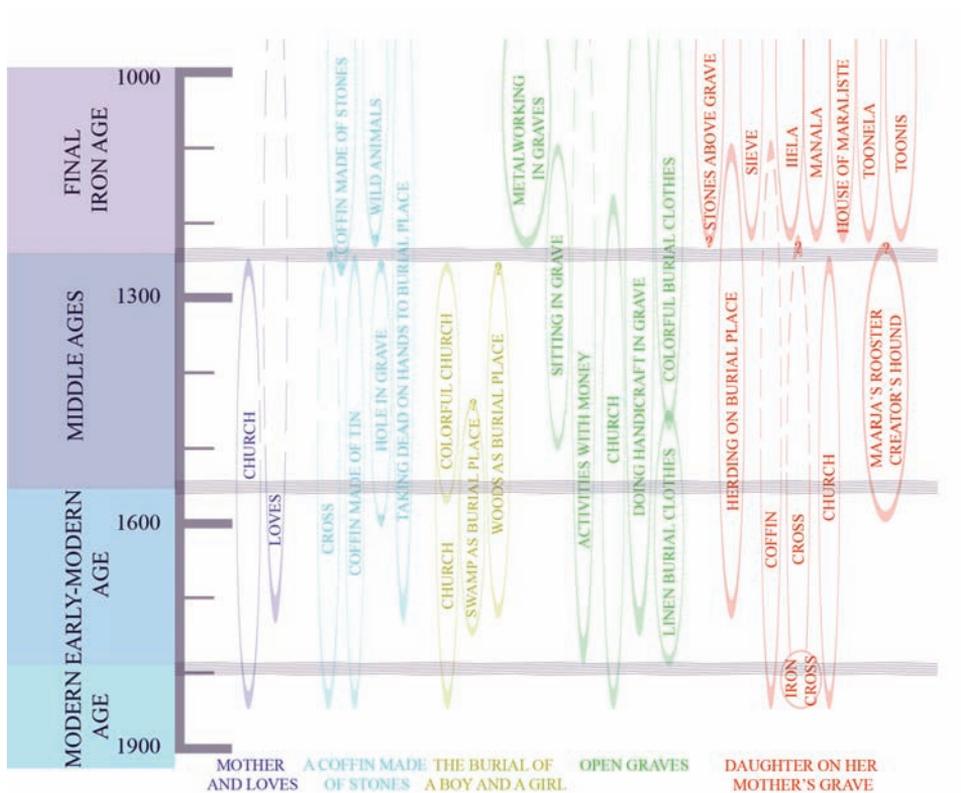
*Figure 3. Analysed motifs of burial-related runosongs and the possible temporal context of their origin.*

when studying burials from the Middle Ages, in which the dead were buried according to Christian tradition, we might find that the belief system behind the burials does not reflect Christianity.

The present analysis shows considerable variation in the age of elements in the song-types (Fig. 3). Different song-types seem to have been formed in different time periods. The overall storyline in the song-type "Mother and loves" is rather short, with only few datable elements. The mentions of a coffin, graveyard, or church seem to reflect traditional burials in Estonian peasant society. As these songs spread all over Estonia, the song-type could have emerged before the Great Northern War (1700–1721) or maybe in the seventeenth century, when the fight against pagan beliefs was active and the understanding that a human being had many souls could have started to disappear. It seems most

likely that the song-type "Open graves" emerged in the Middle Ages (due to frequent mentioning of church and the dead doing handicraft in graves), but as the song-type contains elements from many time periods, it is hard to say something for certain. The song-type "A coffin made of stones" could be rooted in prehistory, when inhumation burials with coffins in earth graves competed with the stone grave tradition. The main idea of the song-type "The burial of a boy and a girl" is to contrast positive and negative burials: boys' burials in songs are probably affected by pagan traditions and those of girls describe the desired Christian burials. One possibility is that this song-type evolved in the seventeenth century when the Lutheran Church fought actively against pagan traditions. A few older elements may refer to an older age of this song-type, suggesting it might have emerged at the beginning of the Middle Ages when old burial places were abandoned and Christianity became widespread among common people. It may also be that the older elements or stereotypical lines were taken over from other runosongs because the general atmosphere in the song-type under discussion seems to fit mainly with the situation in the seventeenth century. The notable occurrence of prehistoric elements in the song-type "Daughter on her mother's grave" should prove its origin in the Late Iron Age, but, like other song-types, it has been strongly influenced by burial customs of later periods.

These song-types represent a variety of ideas that may have coexisted in the past; also, these concepts may originate from different time periods and may have coexisted only in the runosong tradition. Based on the decrease of grave goods during historical times, Heiki Valk suggested that the end of prehistory witnessed the beginning of a process when the dead became passive and un-sociable (Valk 1992: 167–170). Beliefs about afterlife became blurred and the activities of the dead became more and more limited (ibid.). Runosongs may support Heiki Valk's hypothesis. The understanding that parents work in the land of the dead comes from prehistory. In the Middle Ages the belief about the otherworld could have started to disappear and people may have believed that the dead were staying in their graves, where they practised handicraft as expressed in the song-type "Open graves". The time period featuring the disappearance of grave goods could be reflected in the song lines in "Daughter on her mother's grave", where the dead cannot move or help the living. Some songs say that the dead cannot even communicate with the living, which is the main motif of this song-type. The Christian understanding that the dead could be in Heaven is not expressed in the songs that I have analysed, although this understanding is widespread in other folk beliefs related to burial and afterlife (see, e.g., Valk 1992: 148–150) and also in some other types of the runosong.

I believe that on a wider scale Heiki Valk's generalization is true, but the actual situation has been more complicated. For example, descriptions of the prehistoric deities, Toonis, who held the dead in their graves, show that the activities of the dead could probably have been quite limited already in the Late Iron Age. Nor is it clear how to connect the belief with the described process that a dead person can come home as a bug or a bird.

Finally, as the age of the elements in burial-related song-types varies considerably, the present study does not allow us to make a generalization about the age of other motifs of runosongs, which have not been similarly analysed. A similar study should give more answers about other groups of runosongs, but at the same time it may be hard to find archaeological or other information for comparison.

**CONCLUSION**

There is no simple answer to the question of how old the motifs of the runosong are. The analysis of burial-related songs showed that they combine elements possible to date to the end of the eighteenth century and extending back at least to the Final Iron Age. As numerous variations of the song-types showed, the elements could have been updated due to the changes in the surrounding culture, but the idea of songs has been more stable. A conservative dating of the storylines of major song-types shows that at least two of these may have a prehistoric background ("Daughter on her mother's grave" and "A coffin made of stones"), although these have been greatly affected by the traditions of historical times. The other three song-types seem to originate from the belief system of the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age. Although the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age belong to historical times, only few written sources describe burial traditions of this period. Thus, runosongs reflecting these time periods are also invaluable. As noted, the present analysis covers only datable elements and, for example, song-lines describing grief or other emotions may be much older. Although the present approach to the runosong may not always give straight facts, it could still be the best way to say something about the age of the song elements.

I think that runosongs have much to offer to archaeologists studying later time periods. At least burial-related songs provide a human perspective on archaeological material that otherwise does not have a voice. Song narratives give a much wider overview of burials that we may otherwise forget or overlook. This wider picture may raise some questions and give ideas for searching for new archaeological evidence.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## NOTES

[1]  I have examined runosongs in the typologically arranged texts of songs at the Estonian Folklore Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum, and the database of Estonian runic songs, http://www.folklore.ee/regilaul, last accessed on February 23, 2017. There might also be some laments among my data if these were catalogued under the song-types of runosongs. However, if this is the case, it shows that the content of these laments is quite similar to that of runosongs (see also Salve 1993).

[2]  The typology in this article is based on the one used at the Estonian Folklore Archives.

[3]  In the cited runosong lines, the verses are divided by a semicolon in the case of parallel verses and by a full stop in other cases.

[4]  The word *kübar* means a hat, but in older times it was also used as a synonym for a helmet.

[5]  The popular mentioning of *sikk* may also mean a domestic animal, coat, but in songs it occurs as a synonym for a roe.

[6]  The other possibility is that the Hell (*põrgu*) is also a prehistoric element and originally not connected with its meaning in Christianity.

## ARCHIVAL SOURCES

### Estonian Folklore Archives at the Estonian Literary Museum

E – manuscript collection of Matthias Johann Eisen
EKS – manuscript collection of the Estonian Literary Society
ERA – manuscript collection of the Estonian Folklore Archives

EÜS – manuscript collection of the Estonian Students' Society
H – manuscript collection of Jakob Hurt
Leoke – manuscript collection of Hans and Jaan Leoke
S – manuscript collection of Samuel Sommer

## Estonian National Museum

ERM Fk – photographic collection

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# FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

# THE MOTIF OF APPLE IN DIFFERENT CULTURES AND ITS USAGE IN ANATOLIAN FOLK SONGS[1]

*Ahmet Emre Dağtaşoğlu*

**Abstract:** Every culture employs some motifs that are peculiar to its semantic world. These motifs have a vital importance for understanding some issues within the cultures in which they function as their codes. Some of these motifs that emerge in different cultures and eras have, surprisingly, very common meanings despite their varieties in time and place. One of these motifs frequently encountered in different times and cultures is 'apple'. In this study, the motif of apple is discussed by pointing out its meanings in different cultures, and then the Abrahamic religions are examined in this context. Finally, this motif is analyzed in the context of Anatolian folk songs. In this way, the meanings that cannot be understood in a folk song text by means of ordinary reading are clarified, and the relations of this motif in Anatolian folk songs and other cultures are introduced.

**Keywords:** Abrahamic religions, Anatolian folk songs, apple, cultural motifs, mythology

## INTRODUCTION

Every culture has a system of symbols that occurs in the context of the semantic horizons of these cultures. Some of these symbols are rarely used as motifs both in folktales and artworks. One of them, which has a widespread usage in a great deal of cultures, is the motif of apple. In this paper, the common meanings of apple in different cultures are pointed out by discussing its various usages. Then, the motif of apple is studied in the context of Anatolian folk songs by referring to the texts of these songs.

For this purpose, the study includes examples from Europe, Middle East, and some parts of Asia since they encircle Anatolia both geographically and culturally. In addition to that, factors like wars, migrations, and trade relations provide continuous connection and cultural transitivity between these regions (Hentsch 2008: 15, 66–67). Besides, the consideration of apple in Abrahamic religions is put on the agenda by virtue of their dominant influence on the cultural structure of Anatolia. A wide time span is also taken into consideration

in this study for the reason that cultural values not only have permanence both in time and geography (place) but they also emerge in different periods of time with meanings close to their old usages, i.e. in similar forms. Thus, common points in the considerations of apple in different cultures are determined and a general framework is suggested about the reception of apple by these cultures. Then, the usage of the motif of apple in Anatolian folk songs is discussed through a hermeneutical reading, and, depending on this, the similarities between Anatolian folk songs and artifacts of other cultures in the usage of apple as a motif are stressed. As a result, it is possible to clearly see the common usage of apple in different cultures and to figure out some obscure issues about the texts of Anatolian folk songs on the basis of this historical background.

## THE USAGE OF APPLE AS A MOTIF IN DIFFERENT CULTURES

An overview of the history of culture shows that the motif of apple has varied meanings and functions, such as abundance, fertility, peace, wealth, and proliferation; for this reason it is considered as a valuable gift. For instance, according to the Chinese it is "an acceptable gift, especially since the apple (ping) can stand as a symbol for 'peace' (ping)" (Eberhard 1986: 16). Besides, "in China wild apple blossom denotes female beauty" (Hall 1996: 142). Apart from being a symbol of beauty, it also has a therapeutic property in many cultures, since it is thought to be a magical fruit which can cure all the diseases. For example, the Celts believe that apple is an excellent medicine and it can cure most diseases (Macbain 1885: 72). By the way, "some Irish legends speak of a food that, when eaten by the gods, kept them young and hale" (Monaghan 2004: 257). There are some suggestions about this food, but the strongest one among them says that this food is apple, and it comes from the other world (ibid.). Again, according to a belief in Irish mythology, Cormac mac Airt "had a silver branch that bore three golden apples and that made music to soothe the sick" (Coleman 2007: 240). In the Norse myths, however, there are apples of Braghi which can cure all sorts of illnesses and provide immortality to gods (Coleman 2007: 164; see also Jordan 2004 [1993]: 53). As well as this myth, in Norway there is also a myth about Gna, the wife of Rerir, who gave birth to a boy after eating an apple (Coleman 2007: 875, 419, 1086).

The therapeutic property of apple is prevalent not only in Western cultures, but it is a frequently encountered motif in Eastern cultures as well. In *The Arabian Nights* there is an apple which can cure illnesses. In the tale "Prince Ahmad and the Fairy Peri-Banu", the scent of a magical apple bought from Samarkand by Prince Ahmad cures patients, and he cures Princess Nur

Al-Nihar by the agency of this magical apple (Book 1887: 434, 439). It is well known that the Turks also believe in the therapeutic property of apple just like many other nations. For example, "apple is the symbol of abundance, fertility, proliferation, treatment, and communication in Anatolia" (Altun 2008: 263; see also Sever 2004: 97; Keskin 2001: 43; Tozlu 2011: 359). In a number of folktales, the treatment of patients, especially infertile women, is possible by the agency of apple (Aça 2005: 13). Moreover, it is not only in Anatolia that apple is considered in this manner; it has similar meanings also in central Asia. For instance, in the *Epic of Manas*, Aydar Khan's daughter cannot give birth to children and, according to her husband, one of the important reasons is her carelessness about wallowing in the apple garden (Radloff 1995: 10–25). The following is a passage from Jean-Paul Roux:

> *In the epic of Manas, Jakip sends his wife to see an apple tree in the environs of a holy well for the purpose of remediating her infertility. Infertile Kazak women roll on the ground at the bottom of an apple tree to become pregnant. Turks in Turkey expect the visit of an old man while they are bivouacking at the bottom of a tree.* (Roux 2002: 181)

Plenty of different examples can be found in this context but my aim is not to examine the motif of apple in all its aspects. Thus, the overview about the motif of apple given above seems to be sufficient for my purpose as this study specifically focuses on a more common meaning of this motif in different cultures by disregarding its other meanings. Although this specific common meaning of apple is related to others, it has a more extensive and significant horizon than the other ones. According to this horizon of meaning, apple indicates both emotional and sexual relations between men and women. In connection with this, it functions as a communication tool. We can trace clear evidence of this usage of apple from ancient Greece to the modern era. Almost all of the apple motifs in ancient Greece indicate, either directly or indirectly, some aspects of relations between men and women. Depending on its usage, apple might mean communication between men and women, a proposal to the lover, or marriage.

The first example of this motif in this context is the golden apples in the Garden of the Hesperides, which are given to Hera and Zeus as a wedding gift by Gaia (Gaea).[2] In this myth, apple is significant as it is a gift and it also symbolizes the beginning of man and woman's union because it is given as a wedding gift. It can be suggested that Gaia's wedding gift to Zeus and Hera seems to be the prototype of a custom in Greece, since, giving an apple or a pomegranate to brides in Greece is one of the most important practices during the wedding ceremony. For this reason, "in Greece, apples and even lemons were not disdained to show love" (Trumpf 1960: 16). Moreover, this custom is not restricted to the

ancient times, but it also extends to the modern era, for in Greece "throwing an apple is [still] used as a sign to express love or to make a proposal of marriage" (Tozer 1869: 331; see also Nardo 2002: 23; Roman & Roman 2010: 89). Here I would like to refer to Lesley Bolton's following sentences about this issue.

> *Gaia's wedding gift to Hera was a tree of golden apples. The tree was planted in the Garden of the Hesperides and protected by the nymphs. This first ceremony became the standard for sacred marriage throughout Greece. … It became tradition in Athens for the brides to be given apples and pomegranates, which were favorites of Hera.* (Bolton 2002: 75)

"The Judgment of Paris" is a more interesting and more famous myth concerned with the current topic. According to this myth, which is also known as the "apple discord", goddess Eris throws a golden apple among the gods during the wedding ceremony of Thetis and Peleus, with a note reading "for the fairest", since she is not invited to the wedding ceremony by the gods. Unsurprisingly, each of the goddesses claims that the note written on that golden apple is for them. Because of the discussion between the goddesses, someone must make a judgment on this issue. However, in any case, two of them would be angry, so Zeus does not want to wrangle with them and sends them to Paris for the judgment of this difficult case. Each of them promises various things to Paris to influence his judgment. Paris gives the apple to Aphrodite who promises him the love of the most beautiful woman of that time. This judgment launches a terrible problem, which causes the Trojan War, because the most beautiful woman of that time is Helen, the wife of the Spartan King Menelaus. So, the cause of the Trojan War, described by Homer in the *Iliad*, is Helen being kept and taken to Troy by Paris (Morford & Lenardon 2003 [1971]: 483, 765).

In this tale, the motif of apple is involved in the events with a few different aspects. First of all, an apple is given to a woman as a token of her beauty. Secondly, the instigator of this judgment about beauty is also a woman, namely Helen; thus apple symbolizes both the beauty of a woman and love between woman and man. This myth is important because the main meanings of apple in this myth are, as can be seen in the examples below, valid in many other cultures and apple is not only a symbol of good wishes but also a token of love.

The role of apple in ancient Greece was not restricted only to these myths; on the contrary, there are myths like those of Atalanta and Acontius, in which the motif of apple is used in the same meaning. For example, according to the myth of Atalanta, she stipulates a footrace for the men who want to marry her, and she also declares that the ones who lose the race will be executed as a punishment. Plenty of men are executed according to the deal because they cannot win the race. But Milanion (or Hippomenes) wins the race and mar-

ries Atalanta with the help of three golden apples which are given to him by Aphrodite. During the race, Milanion drops these golden apples one by one. As Atalanta stops to take a look at the apples, Milanion manages to win the footrace. Once again the motif of apple has a function symbolizing both the relations between man and woman and the wedding. Furthermore, it can be suggested that the golden apples in this myth are also wedding gifts. In this context, one of the sixth-century poets, Arabius Scholasticus, "considers that the apples which Hippomenes threw near Atalanta were not only a device whereby he could win the race, but also a wedding present" (Littlewood 1968: 156). One of the points that support this comment is that Greeks use the apple both as a gift and as a symbol of wedding. By the way, it can be suggested that there is a connection between apples and Aphrodite, since we encounter Aphrodite once again in regard to golden apples in this myth (Trumpf 1960: 18–19; see also Foster 1899: 42, 44–45).

Another distinctive example for the usage of apple in the same context is the myth of Acontius and Cydippe. According to this myth, Acontius loves Cydippe in spite of the difference between their social classes. Because of this, Acontius puts an apple on Cydippe's path with a note saying, "I swear to Artemis to marry none but Acontius". When Cydippe finds this apple, she reads the note aloud and this way she swears allegiance. When her parents try to make her marry a suitable man, she gets sick and cannot do it. Eventually, her accidental promise is revealed and Cydippe marries Acontius (Morford & Lenardon 2003 [1971]: 616; see also Roman & Roman 2010: 10). In this myth apple appears once again in connection with marriage, namely the relationship between man and woman. In addition to this, the note which is written on the apple reminds that this fruit can be used also for communication. "As elsewhere in Greece, throwing an apple to the lover expresses love and the desire for a union, even if sometimes that apple is an already bitten one" (Trumpf 1960: 16; see also Foster 1899: 50).

These properties of apple are not a specificity of the Greeks as the same usage of apple within similar contexts can be found also in other cultures. For example, in Irish mythology, Cathal mac Fionghuine, who is the king of Ulster, constantly sends apples to his beloved, Liogach, as a gift. In Norse mythology, the motif of apple appears as a symbol of a proposal and a gift as we can see in the tale of Gerda and Frey. In this tale Frey makes a proposal with apples and a ring in order to win his beloved goddess Gerda's heart (Coleman 2007: 197, 408). In a Polish legend, however, the hero rescues the princess from the castle where she is kept, by gathering golden apples just like in the tale of the Garden of the Hesperides (Folkard 1884: 223). We can find yet another example from Scotland:

> *In Lowland Scotland, there is an old charm still practiced by village maidens on Halloween. It is to go alone into a room, and eat an Apple in front of a looking-glass, when the face of the future husband will appear looking over the maid's shoulder.* (Folkard 1884: 220)

It is obvious that this belief is also related to marriage and the relationship between lovers.

The Germans also frequently use the motif of apple in their folktales. For example, in almost every folktale collected by the Brothers Grimm, we encounter the apple as an important motif. Especially in the tales "The White Snake" and "Iron Hans" the motif of apple is obviously used in order to indicate marriage. In "The White Snake" a young man brings a golden apple from the tree of life to the princess in order to marry her. In "Iron Hans" the son of a gardener deserves to marry the king's daughter by catching the golden apples which are thrown by the princess at random times on three days (Grimm & Grimm 1909: 201, 324–325).

As far as we know, apple has similar functions also in the Balkans. For example, "in Serbia, when a maiden accepts from her lover an Apple [sic], she is engaged. In Hungary, a betrothed maiden, after having received from her lover the 'engaged' [sic] ring, presents him with an Apple [sic], the special symbol of all nuptial gifts" (Folkard 1884: 221). And "in Sicily, when a young man is in love, he presents the object of his affections with a love Apple [sic]" (ibid.: 222).

Many more examples of the motif of apple in the same context can be found in Eastern cultures as well. One of the most famous examples concerned with this issue is *The Arabian Nights*. Many stories in this anonymous book include the motif of apple. One of these stories is "Uns Al-Wujud and the Wazir's Daughter Alward Fi'l-Akmam or Rose-In-Hood", in which the daughter of the vizier not only attracts the attention of her favorite young man by throwing an apple towards him but also helps her sister recognize him among others (Book 1885: 33). We encounter the same theme in the "Story of the Three Princes and the Genius Morhagian and His Daughters"; namely, in this story the princess points out the hero whose name is Badialzaman by throwing an apple towards him (Book 1888: 367).

These aspects of apple are very conspicuous in the culture of Turks as well, since it is widely used in wedding ceremonies, and also as a tool for proposing and communication. "We know from various sources that Kirghiz women hit men with an apple and Uzbek women throw an apple at men to choose their prospective husbands; among Bashkir Turks, however, girls offer an apple to the chosen young men as bridegroom candidate" (Üstünova 2011: 150). Similar practices are ongoing in many regions of Anatolia even today. For example, "in Tunceli, the family of the bridegroom invite the people of surrounding villages

to the wedding ceremony by sending them an apple which is named 'mum' (candle)" (Üstünova 2011: 150; see also Çoruhlu 2006: 11; Öztoprak 2006: 577). Here we can recall the evidence gathered by Işıl Altun during her field research.

> *Nubile girls in Artvin think that if they strip the peel off an apple without damaging it as a whole and put it under their pillows, they can see their future husband in their dreams. The people of Gürün in Sivas believe that seeing himself or herself while eating an apple in his or her dream is an indication of marriage for that person.* (Altun 2008: 264)

It is possible to find many other examples in this context, as well as to elaborate on the examples above. However, it can be asserted that these examples alone should suffice to show that the motif of apple is really common in many cultures and it is in most cases used both to indicate the relationship between man and woman and to make the communication between lovers possible.

## ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS AND THE MOTIF OF APPLE

The motif of apple was on the agenda not only in ancient times, but it was also a common one in Abrahamic religions throughout the Middle Ages. Moreover, there are really important similarities between ancient cultures and Abrahamic religions in the usage of this motif. We even have strong evidence for suggesting that the deliberations in Abrahamic religions on this issue are the continuation of the ancient ones, as in the Abrahamic religions the apple symbolizes the relationship between man and woman just like in the ancient times. Apart from this fact, its other meanings have been forgotten while this meaning of apple is becoming more emphatic. So, to see the continuation of deliberations about the motif of apple we must also discuss the Abrahamic religions and their deliberations about this issue.

Although Abrahamic religions contain verses about the forbidden tree in the paradise and its fruit, neither the Bible nor the Quran speaks about apple. For example, in the *Old Testament* we can read about the tree and its fruit as follows:

> *The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will certainly die'.* (Genesis 2/15–17)

But it is not clear which fruit it is. Although in Christianity the 'original sin' has an important place, there is no hint in the basic texts about the fruit that

causes this original sin. There are verses about the forbidden tree in the Quran too, but again we cannot find anything about the fruit of this tree. In the following verse, it is mentioned only as a forbidden tree:

> *And we said: 'O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise and eat both of you freely with pleasure and delight, of things therein as wherever you will, but come not near this tree or you both will be of the Zâlimûn (wrong-doers)'.* (Al-Baqarah 2/35; see also Al-A'raf 7/19)

This means that the Bible and the Quran do not explain the fruit of the forbidden tree in plain and precise terms. It is not clear whether this explanation about the forbidden tree is metaphorical or not. Despite this obscurity, some opinions of this issue occur in oral traditions of these religions and the fruits like grape, fig, palm, and apple are considered as the fruit of the forbidden tree. Some commentators think that both the fruit and the tree are only metaphors for indicating sexual relations between Adam and Eve (see Folkard 1884: 217; Aça 2005: 15). One of the bases for this assertion is the verses that speak about their sexual organs, sexual relation being visible after having eaten the forbidden fruit and the emergence of the need to cover them (Genesis 3/1–8; see also Al-A'raf 7/20).[3] Another opinion in the Islamic literature is related to the idea that the fruit of the forbidden tree makes eternality possible for the humankind, since one of the methods for being eternal is continuation of the progeny, which stipulates sexual relations. For this reason, Devil deceives Eve and then Adam by means of this argument, so we can think that the meaning of fruit is both sexual relations and children (Iqbal 1934 [1930]: 81–83).

We can leave aside these discussions because they constitute another aspect of this topic. According to this background it can be inferred that the most widely accepted fruit of the forbidden tree is apple, although there are different considerations about this issue. And there are a few different reasons for choosing apple as the fruit of the forbidden tree. Firstly, one can dwell on a linguistic viewpoint that the translation of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" from Hebrew to Latin changes the meaning of this expression to a certain extent, because "someone asserts that in the vulgate translation of the old testament from Hebrew to Latin 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil' is translated as 'malûm'" (Aydar 2006: 104). In the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* the concept of 'mālum' is defined as "a term covering orig. most soft-skinned tree-fruit, but later normally specifying an apple. … a fruit tree" (Glare 1968: 1069). However, the concept of 'malum', which is written a little differently from 'malûm', means "trouble, distress, pain, hardship, to make trouble for, harm … a misfortune, Evil doing, harm, damage" (ibid.: 1068–1069). As a result, in the translation from Hebrew into Latin, the expression of "the tree of the knowledge of good

and evil" is defined with the concept of 'malum', which means trouble, evil, distress or, owing to a little spelling difference, a tree, and fruit. "The person who reads and spreads this translation prefers the meaning of 'apple tree' for that concept. Thus, the consideration about the forbidden fruit that was eaten by Adam and Eve is widely accepted as being apple" (Aydar 2006: 104).

Another probable ground for considering the apple as the reason for the mankind having been expelled from the paradise is the traditions that originate in ancient times. For example, the golden apple trees in the Garden of the Hesperides remind us of the apple tree in the paradise, which is forbidden. In this respect, "this image, well-known in Roman times, may be the source of the tradition that the tree in the Garden of Eden was an apple" (Hall 1974: 150). Additionally, as it is mentioned above, apple implies a sexual relationship between women and men, so we can understand the reason why the apple is considered as a fruit that causes the fall of humankind from heaven, and why it is chosen over other fruits.

The motif of apple is used very rarely in the Christian art. For example, in general, Christ is described with an apple in his hand. This means the redemption of the sinful mankind with the help of Christ, because he is holding the apple which is the reason of the mankind's fall; namely, he picks it up (in this context both the apple and the mankind) from the place where it has fallen. As James Hall says, "the apple, usually held in the infant's hand, is traditionally the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge and therefore alludes to him as the future Redeemer of mankind from Original Sin" (Hall 1974: 330; see also Hall 1996: 129, 142).

One may ask why, although the apple implies a sexual relationship between man and woman and it is also considered as the symbol of health due to its properties, it is considered to be the cause of the humankind's fall. How can this fruit simultaneously carry these contradictory meanings? It can be asserted that this is not a contradiction at all, since when we think about it for a while we can easily notice that all of these different meanings are part of the same system and they are a complement for the missing parts of the paradigm. Then, the healthy relationship between men and women is the basis for a happy life both in private and social contexts. If this relationship cannot be developed in a proper manner, it causes distress and collapse. Thus, those different meanings of the motif of apple which are implying the relationship between women and men cause both collapse (or fall from the paradise) and happiness; moreover, if we consider the meanings of this motif that are discussed above in this context, its different but related aspects will be clearer to us and we will be able to understand all the aspects in a proper way.

The issue of the forbidden fruit and other related problems have crucial aspects in Abrahamic religions. However, it may be asserted that the issues emphasized above are both proper and sufficient for the purposes of this article. Thus, without discussing details anymore, I will now try to examine the usage of this motif in the folk songs of Anatolia, depending on this background.

## THE MOTIF OF APPLE IN ANATOLIAN FOLK SONGS

The motif of apple is frequently used in Anatolian folk songs in the same way as in other cultures, since its meanings related to health, treatment, beauty, communication, proposal, and sexual relationship between men and women are completely similar to those in other cultures in Anatolia. The most prominent one of these properties is communication and proposal. This meaning of apple can be encountered almost everywhere from Central Asia to Anatolia, especially in the context of the ritual of throwing an apple. "Offering an apple to someone shows the desire of marriage or commitment in Asia and Anatolia" (Çoruhlu 2006: 11). This ritual can be applied mutually; namely, it means the proposal of a girl to a boy and vice versa. In both situations, it directly implies marriage or at least a relationship between men and women. For example, "the young Karakalpak girls and boys throw each other apples on Nawruz" (Üstünova 2011: 149). As we have already seen above, there are also similar rituals in Kirghiz, Uzbek, and Bashkir Turks.

The same practice has survived in Anatolia through some rituals. For example, "an Ottoman miniature from the 1600s, which is in the British Library now, can be demonstrated as evidence to this. In this miniature a young woman is pictured, holding an apple in her hand" (Çoruhlu 2006: 11–12). Moreover, we know that in some regions in Anatolia this ritual is performed even today. For example, "in some villages around Kars, a young man leaves an apple in front of his beloved's door and he understands whether or not she is interested in him through her decision about receiving or rejecting the apple; as we see, the apple is a 'communication tool' in this custom" (Gölpınarlı & Boratav 1991: 53–54). Our resources that contain plenty of narratives show that this usage of the apple motif has been widespread in Turkish culture from the ancient times to the present day both in central Asia and in Anatolia (Akmataliyev 2001: 16; see also Ergun & İbrahimov 1996: 75–81; Altun 2008: 268). If we consider the motif of apple in this context, most of the folk song texts that seem meaningless at first glance turn out to be meaningful. We can mention the following folk song from Elazığ, eastern Anatolia, titled *Al Almayı Daldan Al* ('Pick the red apple from the branch'), as an example collected by Neriman Tüfekçi from Vasfi Akyol.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Al almayı daldan al* | Pick the red apple from the branch |
| *Daldan alma benden al* | Don't pick it from the branch, rather take it from me |
| *Duydum gelin olisin* | I heard that you will be bride |
| *Dur ben ölüm ondan al* | Wait till I die, then take it [apple] from him |
| | |
| *Al alma dört olaydı* | There would be four red apples |
| *Yiyene dert olaydı* | They would trouble whomever eats them |
| *Bu almanın sahabı* | The owner of this apple |
| *Sözüne merd olaydı* | Would abide by her promise |
| | |
| *Al alma kızıl alma* | Red apple, ruby apple |
| *Irafa dizil alma* | Line up on the shelf |
| *O yar bize gelende* | When that beloved comes to us |
| *Cebine süzül alma* | Get into her pocket quietly |
| (TRT 2006: 22) | |

It is very clear that the motif of apple is used in this folk song as a tool for both communication and proposal. When the poet says, "take the apple from me, rather than a branch of tree" in the first two lines, he wishes that his proposal would be accepted by his lover. But the next verse reading, "the owner of this apple would abide by her promise", means that after she accepted the proposal, she went back on her promise. And with the last verse of the last quatrain he implies that he still hopes for her love and tries to send a message to her through the apple. In the following folk song, *Pınarın Başında* ('By the river'), collected by Ünsal Doğan, the motif of apple is used again as a medium of proposal.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Pınarın başına da bir güvercin kondu* | A pigeon has landed by the river |
| *Sallanma sevdiğim aklım zay oldu* | Don't amble my darling, I've lost my mind |
| *Çıkardı cebinden bir elma verdi* | She gave me an apple out of her pocket |
| *Sandım yalan dünya hep benim oldu* | I thought that the whole world belongs to me.[4] |

We encounter the motif of apple in other folk songs in the same way. For example, in a folk song from Diyarbakır, southeastern Turkey, collected by Muzaffer Sarısözen from Selahattin Mazlumoğlu, the verse lines "*o kızın gönlü de sevmiş / bana alma göndermiş*" ('that girl has fallen in love with me / and she has sent an apple to me')" (TRT 2006: 209) are not only a sign of love, but also

a forerunner to a proposal. This proposal can be made both by a man to a woman and by a woman to a man. The verse lines reading "*elmayı top top yapalım / kızlara bahşiş atalım*" ('let's roll the apple as a ball / and send it as a tip to the girls') (TRT 2006: 315), collected from Ziya Bulut by Muzaffer Sarısözen, mean that the apple is a gift for girls and it is also a proposal to girls by boys. Except for this, these verse lines make us recall the corresponding scene in the "tradition of throwing an apple", which is emphasized above.

In one of the Neşet Ertaş's folk songs titled *Ayva Turunç Narım Var* ('I have a quince, a sour orange, and a pomegranate') the motif of apple is used very strikingly. The usage of the apple and quince together in the verse lines "*al almayı ver narı / ağlarım zarı zarı*" ('take the apple then give the quince / otherwise I will bawl and cry') (TRT 2006: 92) is really significant, since in this context the apple refers to the proposal and the quince to the desired result, which comes after the acceptance of the proposal. Even if the apple has meanings like prosperity, fertility, health, beauty, and progeny (descendant, posterity), it stands out with the meanings of offer and communication. Although the quince has a usage similar to that of the apple, its meaning related to semination and progeny is more common in Anatolia than the other ones. Neşet Ertaş employs these motifs parallel to his cultural background by attributing the meanings of 'proposal' and 'progeny'.

In another folk song titled *Elma Attım Nar Geldi* ('I threw an apple then a quince came'), which was collected from Menküze Gedik by the staff members of Ankara State Conservatory, these motifs are used in the same manner as we can see in the verse lines "*elma attım nar geldi / dar sokaktan yar geldi*" ('I threw an apple then a quince came / my darling came along the narrow street') (TRT 2006: 312). Hereby I would like to quote Mustafa Duman's statements on this issue.

> *The usages of the pomegranate in the folk songs of Kırşehir make parallel references to the current beliefs. Although the pomegranate is used exactly in the same meaning as the apple in some contexts, it refers mostly to having a baby and continuation of genealogy, namely to semination. In this way, the pomegranate implies the next stage of the symbolic meaning of the apple.* (Duman 2013: 802)

*İp Attım Ucu Kaldı* ('I knotted a rope except its end') is also a folk song from Kırıkkale, central Anatolia, which refers to the proposal and the relation of woman and man through the motif of apple. One can easily notice that the text has a really dramatic structure. The song describes a woman who is weaving a carpet in front of a loom by giving the details of the story. The verse lines

"*almayı yüke koydun / ağzını büke koydun*" ('you put the apple into the jug bag /
and twisted its open side') imply that she will never accept an apple, namely
a proposal, from the man she loves. The following verses of this folk song even
strengthen this meaning.

| | |
|---|---|
| *İp attım ucu kaldı* | I knotted the rope except its end |
| *Tarakta gücü kaldı* | The rope of the loom stayed on the reed |
| *Ben sevdim eller aldı* | I loved but another one got his hand |
| *Yürekte acı kaldı* | So, stayed only pain in heart |
| | |
| *Almayı yüke koydun* | You put the apple into the jug bag |
| *Ağzını büke koydun* | And twisted its open side |
| *Aldın yari elimden* | You stripped me of my darling |
| *Boynumu büke koydun* | And made me sad |
| (Duman 2013: 799) | |

If and only if one knows the historical background of the apple motif, the text
of the folk song will be meaningful; otherwise this text would be considered as
nonsense, with the only aim to rhyme. But we can show some other examples,
such as *Al Alma Gönül Alma* ('Red apple captures the heart'), where the motif
of apple is used not implicitly, but, on the contrary, explicitly. The text of this
Kars folk song, collected by Ali Ekber Çiçek from Kurbani Kılıç, is as follows.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Al alma gönül alma* | Red apple captures the heart |
| *Allanıp yenil alma* | It is eaten when it turns red |
| *Seni yare yolladım* | I sent you to my darling |
| *Kazandım gönül alma* | I captured his/her heart |
| | |
| *Ağaçta sallanırsan* | You swing on a tree and |
| *Sallanıp ballanırsan* | Sweeten while you are swinging |
| *Bazen emanet olup* | Sometimes as a trust |
| *O yare yollanırsan* | You are sent to that darling |
| (TRT 2006: 22) | |

It is possible to give more examples of this topic both from anonymous texts
and from troubadours; in addition to this, some examples can be found from
contemporary poets who are using this motif in the same contexts (see, e.g.,
Şehriyâr 1990: 25; Uyar 2008 [2002]: 17). But it can be assumed that the
examples discussed above will suffice for the purpose of this article. Below I will
present some specifics about this topic, which depend on the information above.

**CONCLUSION**

We encounter the motif of apple in a great deal of cultures and in every era. Although there are some nuances in the usage of this motif, its meaning and importance is, however, common in the cultures that are discussed in this article. In addition, this motif occupies an important position in the oral traditions of Abrahamic religions. As a result, it is not an overlooked motif in the history of culture; on the contrary, it is a common motif both in the history of art and in daily life. The main properties of this motif, which is practically common to all cultures, are its direct or indirect implication to the relationship between man and woman, and its usage as a tool of communication or proposal.

We can suggest that this motif is used in Anatolian folk songs in the same context as in the history of culture, since plenty of texts that are exemplified above show that there is serious parallelism in this topic between Anatolian folk songs and other cultural traditions, which comes through antiquity. There are two important aspects of knowing the historical background of these motifs. First of all, unless we study some common motifs of the history of culture, the meaning of these cultural texts will stay hidden to us as some of these folk songs are culturally coded and they must be decoded through a hermeneutical approach. As Gadamer (1994 [1975]: 303) asserts, "If we fail to transpose ourselves into the historical horizon from which the traditionary text speaks, we will misunderstand the significance of what it has to say to us". And we can suggest that one of the methods for transposing ourselves into the historical horizon is to learn both the meaning and historical background of cultural motifs.

As a result, one must learn some symbols and motifs to understand the cultural issues. If one tries to learn some of these motifs, plenty of folk songs open themselves to the reader (or to the listener). Moreover, when one understands the usage of some cultural motifs in different regions, he or she can expand his or her horizon about art and also see continuity in the history of culture. In addition to this, one of the methods to grasp the cultural transitivity is to notice these common issues and the continuity of cultural elements. If we consider the motif of apple in this context, we can understand both the meanings of Anatolian folk songs that contain this motif, and the place of Anatolian folk songs in the history of culture. Namely, as we have seen throughout this paper, Anatolian folk songs bear the traces of enclosing cultures. But the elements of these enclosing cultures are used in an original manner and new folk art works are synthesized. Because of this, to understand the Anatolian folk songs through a hermeneutical approach makes it possible to see the cultural continuity in the history of culture.

**NOTES**

[1] This article is a reviewed and extended version of my speech at the 5th European Conference on Social and Behavioral Sciences in St Petersburg, on September 11–14, 2014.

[2] The concept of "μηλον" ('melon') which means 'apple' in ancient Greek is not used only to express apple, since Liddell, Scott, and Jones define it as "apple or (generally) any tree fruit" (see Liddell & Scott & Jones 1996 [1843]: 1127). This means that the fruits that are called melon in ancient Greece are probably round fruits like apples, oranges, lemons, and pomegranates. But linguistic and etymological debates on this concept are not the main topic of this article, so they are not discussed in detail (see also McCartney 1925: 73).

[3] The themes like "forbidden fruit", "to be expelled from the paradise", and "the relation between fruit and the other world" are also common in different cultures. For example, the concept of the otherworld in the Celtic culture is embodied by Avalon, namely Island of Apples (see Monaghan 2004: 28).

[4] This folk song cannot be found in a printed book or article, because it has been collected nowadays by Ünsal Doğan. So, the text can be found in his album titled *Erenler Yadigarı* ('Saints' Memento', 2013).

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# NEWS IN BRIEF

## THE 10TH COLLOQUIUM ON PROVERBS

On November 6–13, 2016, the 10th Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs (ICP16) was celebrated as the colloquium jubilee in Tavira, Portugal. Ten years ago nobody would have guessed that this could be possible. However, the colloquium has proved the need for this kind of common conference that brings together paremiologists, paremiographers, and other people.

This 10th colloquium took place under the heading "In honorem Arvo Krikmann". We are advantaged to have had him with us in these colloquiums. His papers were always worth listening and many of his articles published in the proceedings during these past ten years were published for the first time in English. He also introduced some issues that had not yet been known to other paremiologists before. So it was self-evident for the participants of the colloquium and members of the association behind it that it was time to honour him and his role in the colloquiums during the first ten years. Nobody could have guessed it was also the last possibility to do so, as Arvo Krikmann passed away on February 27, 2017.

During this decade not only the colloquium has changed and established its position among conferences. Something has also happened to the participants. Today many of the participants who come to Tavira year after year have become friends. I prefer to call them friends instead of family as a Finnish proverb says *Ystävät voi valita, sukulaisiaan ei* ('One can choose one's friends but not relatives'). We have learnt to follow the northern European concept of time during the conference and we have learnt to eat often, much, and late in the evenings in the southern European way. We have also learnt to hold discussions with each other; most often the subjects are related to proverbs and paremiology. It is not an exaggeration to talk about "our Tavira community memories" as Outi Lauhakangas and Rui J.B. Soares write in the introduction to the booklet of abstracts. We have even learnt to make lists in alphabetical order using first names! However, the most important impact on the lives of the participants is the professional one: for each of us the papers presented at the colloquiums have given new perspectives to proverbs, possibilities to exchange ideas and ask questions, possibilities to evolve into a more widely recognised paremiologist by sharing the results of the research we have carried out.

Wolfgang Mieder from the University of Vermont (USA) started the scientific programme with proverbs from Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, a subject that every now and then is present at colloquiums. Next morning the first speaker was Mieder's former student Elene Carter from the Institute of International Relations (Russia). She gave a paper discussing the use of English proverbs in foreign-language pedagogical practices. Databases were the subject in José Enrique Gargallo Gil's (Spain) presentation. This year many of the first-in-the-morning presentations given by invited lecturers focused on literature, pedagogy, and databases. Altogether we heard about 60 presentations with many various starting points.

*Visiting the fortress of Sagres which, according to our guide, is situated
in the centre of the world. Photograph by Erkki Herranen.*

Every year the organisers of the colloquium offer the participants a possibility to go on excursions, exhibitions, and concerts. For this we are grateful to the municipality of Tavira and other municipalities in Algarve region, the people of Tavira, entrepreneurs in Tavira and Algarve, different institutions, etc. Without their support we would not be able to immerse ourselves in our papers and conversations on proverbs and research thereof.

Liisa Granbom-Herranen

## ORAL AND WRITTEN IN CULTURE: CONNECTIONS AND COLLISIONS

On December 12 and 13, 2016, the annual conference of the Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies (CEES) and the 60th Kreutzwald Days conference were held at the Estonian Literary Museum. The event focused on the relationship between oral and written information in the Baltic cultures both historically and in the present time, when literary culture seems to be completely dominant. This was the third CEES gen-

eral conference, organised by the working group of literary culture and literary studies of the Centre of Excellence, and aimed at instigating dialogue between viewpoints of different disciplines, proceeding from the ideas formulated by the working group. In the historical field, the deep gap that had for long existed between oral and written language use due to the colonisation of the Baltic countries needed explaining. Interest centred, for instance, on the attempts of the creators of Estonian and Latvian literary languages to describe local languages on the basis of foreign language models, and the emergence of an 'interlanguage', which influenced both the oral and written language use; multilingualism and the circulation of language elements from oral to written form and vice versa; the increasing prestige of culture in the evolution and persistence of literary language; oral and written culture and their intermediate forms; written folklore genres and those in oral form related to the written world; the transitional field between the oral and written worlds – folk literacy; oral forms in the heyday of literary culture; elements of oral speech as an integral system; studying of oral forms in writing; methods of oral language increasingly used in fiction from the beginning of the 20th century. Research topics and spheres of activities were introduced in Estonian, English, German, and Russian by speakers from the universities of Latvia, Bulgaria, Iceland, Estonia, and Germany.

The following is a cursory look into the diversity of presentations and topics, with many of them unmentioned, as due to parallel sections it was possible to listen to only a part of them.

The first speaker was Andris Levans, historian from the University of Latvia, who in his presentation "Das Wort ist mein Gesicht. Überlegnungen zum Verhältnis von Mündlichkeit, Schriftlichkeit und Gedächtnis im Mittelalterichen Livland" focused on the relationship between oral and written texts in medieval Livonia, where literacy was an elitist skill, as most people (including the nobility) were illiterate. In Livonia oral discourse persisted as the primary form of communication until the end of the 15th century, as there were only few centres that would have fostered the rapid spread of textual culture. The topic of medieval Livonia was continued by Gustavs Strenga, who introduced the guild account books of mainly Latvian-origin artisans.

The intertwinement and collision of the oral and written as well as collective and personal memory is topical also in today's cultural studies – this became evident in the second presentation by Terry Gunnell, professor of folkloristics from the University of Iceland, who focused on legends and sagas, beliefs and holidays related to the cultural history of Iceland, folkloric drama and performance art. His scholarly field is extensive: Scandinavian, Icelandic, and Celtic traditional cultures, traditional games and holidays, and, besides folkloristic topics also literature: medieval drama, Shakespeare, Ibsen, Strindberg, theatre of the absurd, performance art, etc. All these were merged in his presentation titled "Performance and Audience, Time and Space, Sound and Vision: The Uses of the Performance Studies Approach for the Study of Folklore Past and Present". Gunnell explained how much of the oral text gets lost when 'translated' into written form – the elements perceived with different senses and therefore also the human experience of the live presentation and participation in it. He also pointed out that, similar to people, objects also present themselves and tell stories.

Anneli Saro from the University of Tartu spoke about the relationship between an experienced event and the read text in modern theatrical art or "the emancipation of

theatre from fiction". Does post-dramatic theatre mark the final emancipation of thea-
tre from fiction or is it inevitable to observe classical rules of dramaturgy at least in
the drama theatre? For the time being the question remained unanswered; the answer
depends on what comes after post-dramatic theatre. Eduard Parhomenko (University
of Tartu), who discussed the rhetoric of philosophy in Tõnu Luik's lectures, added an
interesting shade into the comparison of reading and listening and watching the speaker:
at lectures you have to listen to yourself, let yourself be carried away by thinking. Ulrike
Plath discussed a genre in the transitional space between oral and written – sermons –
on the example of those given by Karl Gottlob Sonntag, the general-superintendent of
Livonia at the beginning of the 19th century. Although these sermons were meant for
oral presentation, Sonntag also had them printed, this way making them available for
research.

Several of the presentations were dedicated to the relationship between the oral and
the written. Aivar Põldvee discussed the formation of literary language in connection to
school teaching and the spread of reading skills in the 17th century. While the earliest
variant of the literary language emerged on the theoretical example of a foreign language,
at the end of the century attention focused more on the speaker of the language. Helle
Metslang and Külli Habicht defined the Estonian literary language of the 17th–18th
centuries as an interlanguage developed on the basis of Low, High, or Baltic German,
the more marked features of which started to recede only in the 19th century. The pres-
entation focused mainly on the materials of the 19th-century Estonian-origin literary
language developers, including those of Fr.R. Kreutzwald. Reet Bender's presentation
gave an overview of the five stages in the development of Baltic German oral language
during 150 years: Low German with elements of High German; Low German; a mixed
version of Low and High German with predominant Low German elements; Low-High
German with predominant High German elements, and finally the so-called Baltic
German – High German with Low German relics. Liina Lindström's presentation on
dialecticism was initiated by the question whether some dialectal phenomena are just
special features used in oral speech or certain dialectal features of a region that have
not made their way to the literary language.

The folkloristic point of view was represented by Tiiu Jaago, who discussed the
process of oral tradition becoming part of literary culture as well as changes in the
folkloristic viewpoint in describing this process. Kärri Toomeos-Orglaan spoke about
Seto narrative tradition. On the example of Brothers Grimm's legends and fairytales,
Liina Lukas showed how written text moves to oral lore and vice versa. The Grimms'
fairytales, which started to be translated into Estonian in the mid-19th century, quickly
found their way into folklore. The influence of the Grimms' legends (*Deutsche Sagen*,
1816–1818), however, was more indirect, exerting an impact rather on the formal means
of story-telling (genre, way of telling).

In addition to history topics, the conference also discussed several phenomena of
modern culture, which remain on the borderline between oral and written: interview
(Triinu Ojamaa), diary (Leena Kurvet-Käosaar), dream diary (Mare Kõiva), life story
(Tiina Ann Kirss), *online* commentaries (Ell Vahtramäe). Hille Pajupuu and Rene
Altrov spoke about how it is possible to record and scientifically describe such an oral
phenomenon as human voice.

This topic arouses interest also in the international arena; this was proved by Linda Kaljundi, who introduced a related project of the Finnish Literature Society, "Letters and Songs", which is aimed at crossing the borders of modern nations and scholarly traditions, focusing on the materials on the crossroads of different social networks, expressive registers, belief systems, and smaller traditions. The research objects are connections between high and low cultures, ecclesiastical and secular, oral and written. The project is divided into four smaller research topics: social and religious correspondence; hymnals, manuscripts, and networks as linkages between socio-cultural strata; changes in local singing cultures; poetic registers in the junction of oral and written cultures. The idea of the project is to reassess the earlier Finnish poetics as well as social and cultural history.

Peeter Tinits, Oleg Sobchuk and Artjom Shelaya introduced the cultural evolution seminar, which analyses cultural processes, digital humanities, cognitive research, and their related fields. Liina Lukas and Leena Kurvet-Käosaar introduced the special issue of *Methis: Studia Humaniora Estonica* (17/18), which is dedicated to comparative literature. Kanni Labi, language editor of *Methis*, spoke about the yearbook of the Estonian Literary Museum. Heinike Heinsoo opened an exhibition "Researchers of the Finnic Languages and Cultures I: Enn Ernits".

<div align="right">Hegely Klaus</div>

## SOME THOUGHTS EVOKED BY READING REET HIIEMÄE'S DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

On January 4, 2017, Reet Hiiemäe defended her doctoral dissertation titled "Folklore as a tool of psychological self-defence: About the pragmatics of belief traditions" at the University of Tartu. The dissertation discussing Estonian folk belief is comprised of a detailed introduction and four articles, the first of which was published already in 2004, and the latest is yet to be published.

Hiiemäe boldly integrates tools of different disciplines with folkloristics: various trends in psychology, narrative studies, narrative medicine, human geography, and communication studies. Interdisciplinary attempts may result in a dead end situation in case the approaches used in them cannot be connected due to their too different geneses, objectives, or theoretical baggage. Even one humanitarian discipline has no general matrix for all possible approaches and methods to be systematically arranged, not to mention a common matrix for the humanities and social sciences, in which everything could be combined with everything. It is an arduous process to search for and find compatible approaches, but if it is successful, it may result in the discovery of phenomena and regularities not noticed before, creating through this new and interesting information about the world.

In her articles Hiiemäe merges different disciplines, above all, psychology, with folkloristics. The main emphasis of the dissertation is on folkloristics – a field of humanities studying culture and its expressions. Psychology – the basic principle of which is that the psyche is similar for the whole humankind – considers culture (cultural differences)

as second-rate. (Although the fields of psychology also involve cultural psychology, its importance is marginal and its basic principles contradict other trends in psychology.) So Hiiemäe has to cope with a difficult task: how to integrate the approaches, one of which deals with a human being whose psyche is seen as universal, and the other with culture different across different regions and ethnoses.

In order to merge different disciplines, Hiiemäe has taken into use the terms "mental self-defence" and "belief-based defence mechanisms". She admits that a psychologist's interest in these terms is somewhat different than that of a folklorist and a researcher of religion: "in psychology, when describing defence mechanisms, one proceeds from their general validity, yet in the case of belief-based defence mechanisms the main character-istic is rather the fact that they can be inherent in a smaller of bigger group and more or less changing in time by their forms of appearance" (Introduction, p. 42). The use of the term "defence strategy" or "defence mechanism" in a treatment with folkloristic em-phasis is novel and necessary for making the dissertation a coherent whole, although my personal opinion is that instead of "defence" the author could have used "management", which can occasionally also be encountered in the dissertation. Anyway, it is positive that with the help of these concepts Hiiemäe is able to point out cross-time parallels in disease lore, which result from the universal traits of the human soul and behaviour. As usually researchers of legend fail to pay attention to the universals resulting from human psyche, but rather focus on cultural and historic features (Metsvahi 2013: 66), Hiiemäe's approach is relevant and eye-opening.

Yet, we should ask if such an approach to the subject matter does not diminish the depth of analysis. In order for the worldview basis of the approach not to diverge from that dominant among psychologists, Hiiemäe cannot apply the most innovative approaches in the humanities and social sciences, but has to resort to the more traditional ones. So she postulates, as the starting point of her work, the objective world outside the experiencer's consciousness, which is common for everyone. I consider the clear split between the objective and subjective worlds as a factor inhibiting in-depth analysis. This approach reveals in several places that one thing (the objective one) is real life, and the other (the subjective one) is the belief world. These two as if do not originally and intrinsically belong together but rather meet at certain points and in certain ways. This is similar to Lauri Honko's approach in the introduction to his classical work *Geis-terglaube in Ingermanland* (1962); he has also made an attempt to merge psychology (more exactly, social and perceptual psychology) with folkloristics and religious studies. (As a negative point, it could be mentioned here that Hiiemäe, when presenting ideas similar to Honko's, in most cases fails to refer to his works.) So Hiiemäe's approach ensues from the worldview similar to that of a medical worker or an acting psychologist rather than emerges from contemplating ontological questions or the newest theories of religious studies.

From this starting point, Hiiemäe's ambitions to improve the world become more understandable. It is a correct and significant observation that human fears are chan-nelled into narratives; yet, it remains unsolved how, knowing these channelling pro-cesses, it is possible to predict people's and groups' future behaviour and decrease social stress (see Introduction, p. 9; Article 1, p. 79). The possibility to predict the future is also eliminated by Hiiemäe's own observation that individual's belief images are not stable and change when new circumstances and experiences occur (see Introduction,

*Reet Hiiemäe at autumn doctoral school "Dialogues with Subcultures" at Jäneda in 2016.*
*Photograph by Astrid Tuisk.*

pp. 34, 31, 14; Article 4), whereas often the individual fails to formulate all the religious concepts in words (see pp. 42–43). Instead of thinking about immediate usefulness (see Pärn 2014: 30), scholars in the humanities should focus their attention on the analysis of verbal expressions in the multi-layered relationship between the individual and the environment (see Kivari 2016: 70).

I certainly cannot claim that Hiiemäe has failed to do the latter in her dissertation. On the contrary, most of her work is imbued with it, and her valiance in attempting and combining different approaches is remarkable. However, the author deserves to be reproached for adapting the theory in case it is incompatible with her subject matter, sometimes also exaggerating with it. So, for example, the communication theory initially taken as the basis for analysis in the third article, has been distorted into a theory of "nonverbal event", and in places it is difficult for the reader to understand whether this theory is applied in the story world or world of narration. Excessive adaptation of the subject matter could be mentioned in connection with the second article, in which problems in the analytical part result from the fact that there is a too wide temporal distance between the spread of the plague and the collection of plague legends, so that in the case of these narratives one could hardly speak about mental danger maps in the literal meaning (see Article 2, p. 32ff.).

Hiiemäe is not interested in how a certain belief image emerged; nor does she make attempts to reduce to elements the relations between a human being, his or her psyche, narratives, and the environment. In her research she postulates a ready-made world with action mechanisms explained by scholars, which from the very beginning involves

something negative that one needs to be protected from. Where did this negative come from and how? Have belief images and narratives or even warning legends played a certain role in the formation of fears? Do fears constitute, independently of culture, an intrinsic part of each society and individual? These are the questions that remain unanswered in Hiiemäe's work. From her point of view, narratives do not create worlds or define who we are and what we feel and experience, but rather merely influence our emotions and us as we are.

In order not to deviate too much from the content of Hiiemäe's thesis, I would like to highlight the strong points of her research. One of them is definitely the usage of relevant and diverse source material. It can be clearly seen that Hiiemäe has good knowledge of both the old archival materials and today's ordinary and social media texts. She herself has also created new sources, conducting face-to-face interviews and using question-naires. The latter has also yielded surprisingly good results, as due to the sensitivity of the topic, Hiiemäe has preserved the respondents' anonymity. The fourth article reveals that in the cases when the topic is clearly related to the respondent's experience, which so far has not been sufficiently formulated, the respondent may open up even in such an impersonal manner, writing down long and fascinating answers.

In summary, I would like to say that Hiiemäe has made some brave combining at-tempts and written a thought-provoking dissertation. She has convincingly explained how belief-based behaviour and belief narratives help people manage in the world. In an exciting way the research also highlights the continuity of old and new folk stories and past and present belief-based behaviour. A parallel approach to the past and present material has enabled the author to make interesting juxtapositions and place today's phenomena in a wider context. It is most welcome that the author has not contradis-tinguished Christianity with folk belief, and that she has highlighted the common fea-tures of belief-based and non-belief-based behaviour. Although the expression 'defence mechanisms' made me think in different directions, several of which remain outside the borders of Hiiemäe's dissertation, it is actually a resourceful term which in this research successfully connects the domains of psychology and folkloristics.

Merili Metsvahi

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# BOOK REVIEWS

## A JUNGIAN INTERPRETATION OF THE PHENOMENON
## OF HEAVY METAL

**Ana Stefanova. *Khevi Met"l Kulturata: Izsledvane po ana-litichnopsikhologicheska antropologiia*. Ruse: GAIANA book&art studio, 2017. 360 pp. In Bulgarian.**

The book titled *Khevi Met"l Kulturata: Izsledvane po analitichnopsikhologicheska antropologiia* (Heavy Metal Culture: A Research into Analytical Psychology and Anthropology) is another Bulgarian step in the field of Jungian studies and cultural anthropology. Here the Jungian theory and some of its key psychological terms (archetypes, individuation, collective unconscious, introversion, projection, Shadow, etc.) meet the reality of a phenomenon very challenging for impartial analysis – Heavy Metal culture. In this sense the research intervenes in the world of Heavy Metal with a psychological and anthropological approach and directs the reader to think about Heavy Metal as a social phenomenon with a specific and universal structure and dynamics, which have their own rules.

I would start with the words of Ana Stefanova, written at the end of the book, which reveal her committed and deep interest in the phenomenon, as well as the meaningfulness of the deep analytical psychological approach, through which the phenomenon is read and interpreted: "Metal seems to be loud, but in fact it is too quiet, introverted, and tolerant to be noticed easily as an important factor in the social and cultural evolution of the contemporary times" (p. 336).

Is this statement true? Is it a proper interpretation that the dark side of Metal is more connected to its introversy, introspection, and Romanticism than to harmful activities? Is it true that Metal is a very tolerant human-centred culture, that respects the personality? Is it really true that Metal has archetypal introverted nature and authenticity? Which are the main reasons for the arousal of interest towards Heavy Metal culture? Why does Metal have so intense impact? Why do the fans love this music? May Heavy Metal culture be considered as aggressive or dangerous for the society and individuals? Is it possible for Metal to be vivid, melancholic, and aggressive, to search for the borders of whatnot and at the same time to be contemplative?

Is it reasonable to state that Metal subculture emphasises the sacred reality, the symbolic perspective, and is not related with the material standard of life and prosperity? Is it convincing that Metal is not an ideology of evil and of doing harm, but a symbolic system of art creations, which are gates for experiences; that it is a worldview, but not a set of prescriptions and instigations? Is it true that Metal is exciting, but not happy? What is a Metal concert and how is it connected with some archaic and traditional rituals? What kind of similarities does Heavy Metal culture have with traditional culture and

in what way is Metal related to folklore, Romanticism, and classics? Answers of these and some other questions can be found, to a different extent, in the content of the book.

The research is innovative with respect to the chosen material: the author's attention focuses on challenging, controversial, popular, and exciting, yet poorly studied phenomenon in Bulgaria – the Heavy Metal culture. The book is an intriguing and worthy response to this challenge.

With its observations and psychological interpretations of the archetypal and cultural expressions of Heavy Metal, read as an "inner sacred territory, which is the source and purpose of the soul" (p. 273), the book provokes thoughts while it touches the reader's heart and helps to understand this subculture on a deep psychological level.

Last but not least, I would like to add that with this intriguing and exciting book full of ideas, observations, and details, with its well chosen original way of conceptualisation of the researched material, Ana Stefanova has proved herself once again as a leading and productive Bulgarian researcher and expert in the field of the Jungian (analytical) psychology and folklore studies.

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Lozanka Peycheva

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum

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## THE HISTORY OF METAPHORS?
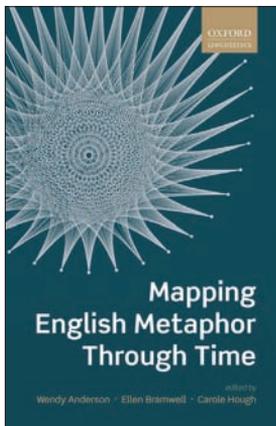
**Wendy Anderson & Ellen Bramwell & Carole Hough (eds.)** *Mapping English Metaphor Through Time*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. 321 pp.

Why might metaphors be of interest to readers of this journal? Because "folk beliefs … are often more influential than "real world" knowledge in determining the metaphors associated with particular animals and the ways in which these can be named" (Allen 2008: 145, cited here on p. 33). This observation holds true not just for folk beliefs about animals, but also for folk beliefs and concepts about plants, the weather, and the emotions, to name just three fields. The book under review derives from a project entitled 'Mapping Metaphor', which has now finished, but is survived by this book, and by an associated website, http://mappingmetaphor. arts.gla.ac.uk/, containing "the single largest database of conceptual metaphors ever" (p. 6). This project in turn grew out of the *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English*

*Dictionary (HTOED)*. Christian Kay, one of the editors of that thesaurus remarks in the book under review that, in assembling the *HTOED*, the editors aimed to produce "a folk taxonomy", generated from "the intelligent average individual's view of the world, based on pre-scientific general concepts made available by language" (p. 67). This is remarkably similar to the descriptions the people behind the Polish ethnolinguistic dictionary gave to their own work: Jerzy Bartminski also speaks of documenting the naïve "picture of the world suggested … by language" (Glaz & Danaher & Lozowksi 2013: 14). Clearly, folklorists need to address themselves to the recurrent metaphors in their material.

Following the introduction penned by Andrew Prescott, the book is divided into three sections containing a total of 16 chapters, a division that mirrors the division of the *HTOED*, namely into 1) The External World, 2) The Mental World, 3) The Social World. An appendix at the end of the book delineates what lies in each of these categories. For example, The Mental World consists of A) Mental Capacity, B) Attention and Judgement, C) Goodness and Badness, D) Emotion, E) Will, F) Possession, and G) Language. These categories are divided yet further, e.g. E) Will consists of 01 Will and personal choice, 02 Necessity and inclination, 03 Willingness and desire, 04 Intention and planning, 05 Decision making, and 06 Motivation, demotivation and persuasion.

Almost every other page of this book features an observation about the language that makes one stop to think. How did one not notice, until it was pointed out, that, when used figuratively, both 'uphill' and 'downhill' have negative senses? Or that descriptions of death tend to be euphemistic, while descriptions of killing tend to be hyperbolic? Or that while 'seethe' was first used in literal senses, it is now used only in figurative senses (no "seething pots"), whereas 'burn' was used both literally and figuratively in the Old English period, as it still is today? While the title describes mapping "through time", the chapters often have more of a synchronic than diachronic character than might be expected, even though the synchrony discussed may be in the Old English period rather than in the recent past. But in fact that focus is not problematic. The book's title, though, might have been 'Mapping English Metaphor Using Historical Data'.

Two minor points which occur in reading the chapters are the following. Firstly, might the reference to the wen's 'head' in the Old English 'Wen charm', which diPaolo Healey (p. 177) suggests is the tip of the wen on the patient, refer rather to the 'body' of the wen as a mythological character on an imaginary journey? And secondly, could the term "priest's crown" for the Common Dandelion which Biggam (p. 48) suggests describes the 'tonsure' evoked by the few remaining seeds on a seed-head after the majority have been dispersed refer rather to the closed flower head (e.g. at night or before flowering) with the 'tonsure' being evoked by the flower's bracts? If nothing else, these two questions illustrate the enduring difficulty that faces researchers in pinning down the referents of metaphor researchers.

If I have a misgiving with this fascinating book, it is with its frequent dependence on Lakoff and Johnson's theory of metaphor, which is just one among several, and which may yet be superseded. Some of the most convincing chapters, such as Carole Biggam on metaphors for hats and other headgear in plant names and Marc Alexander on metaphors of power and authority, hardly use Lakoff and Johnson-type shorthand at all, and are none the worse for it. At other times, it seems that the handling of metaphor is a little too neat: the beauty of metaphors is that they are *wrong* – the feeling you get from a live metaphor is like the sensation you get from seeing green on red. Nevertheless, the book

is full of remarkable detail, and it will be interesting to see how future research in the invigorated field of the study of metaphor will deal with historical data.

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Jonathan Roper
University of Tartu

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# OUR AUTHORS

**Andreas Kalkun** works as researcher at the Estonian Folklore Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia, and has a PhD in folkloristics from the University of Tartu. He has explored the history of Estonian folklore studies, focusing on the problems of representations of the Setos and their folklore, mainly folk songs and vernacular religion. Kalkun has conducted extensive fieldwork in the historical Seto habitat in Estonia and Russia. He is participating in the research project "Embodied Religion. Changing Meanings of Body and Gender in Contemporary Forms of Religious Identity in Finland", led by Elina Vuola, professor of the Finnish Academy.

andreas@folklore.ee

**Žanna Pärtlas** is Senior Researcher at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, Tallinn, Estonia. She studied musicology at the Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory, St. Petersburg, where she received her PhD in 1992. Her research projects centre mostly on analytical approaches to traditional music and to general theoretical questions of traditional multipart singing. Since 1981 she has undertaken fieldwork in Russia (Pskov and Smolensk regions and Mordovia), Belarus, and Estonia (Setomaa).

zhanna@ema.edu.ee

**Marko Jouste** is an ethnomusicologist and musician. He works at the Giellagas Institute at University of Oulu, Finland, as a researcher, teacher, and developer of the Saami Culture Archives. Jouste has worked in the field of Saami musical traditions in Finland and received his PhD degree in this field in 2011.

marko.jouste@oulu.fi

**Helen Kõmmus** is researcher of folklore and ethnomusicology at the Estonian Folklore Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia, and a PhD student of ethnomusicology at the University of Tampere. Her main research interests are local oral heritage of western Estonian islands, Estonian older folk instruments, especially the historical development and playing traditions of the kantele, traditional and folk music festivals of Finno-Ugric peoples.

helen@folklore.ee

**Taive Särg**, PhD in Estonian and comparative folklore (University of Tartu, 2005), is a senior research fellow at the Estonian Folklore Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia. Her research into native Estonians focuses mainly on folk songs (text, music, performance) as well as on identity questions.

taive@folklore.ee

**Aado Lintrop** (PhD in Estonian and comparative folklore) is senior researcher at the Estonian Folklore Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia. His research topics are religions of eastern Finno-Ugric peoples, North Eurasian shamanism, and mythological background of Estonian older folk songs (*regilaul*).

aado@folklore.ee

**Pikne Kama** defended his doctoral dissertation at the Department of Archaeology, Institute of History and Archaeology, University of Tartu, Estonia, in 2017. He is also head of the Valga Museum. His research involves interdisciplinary use of archaeological and folkloristic sources, and recently the main focus has been on the information dealing with human remains in wetlands.

pikne.kama@gmail.com

**Ahmet Emre Dağtaşoğlu** works as Assistant Professor at the University of Trakya, Turkey. His main field of research is philosophy of Immanuel Kant and Plato in the context of epistemology. In addition to this, his studies focus on culture, hermeneutics, and philosophy of music.

edagtasoglu@gmail.com

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Elli Küttim (left), a folk singer and storyteller from Kõpu village, Reigi Parish, Hiiumaa Island, with Erna Tampere from the Estonian Folklore Archives.
Photograph by Ellen Liiv 1979 (ERA, Foto 12436).

On the cover: "Seto choir". Photograph by Heinrich Tiidermann (Estonian History Museum, F 11684:136).