Summaries:
Adaptation and Adapters of Regilaul

A History of the Regilaul in the Stage Representation

Helen Kästik

The category of folklore is not fixed and finite, but is rather defined by each era according to its needs. The meanings of specific folklore pieces are likewise continually reinvented and reconstructed. The present article analyzes the concert commentary from the Viljandi Folk Music Festival in which the musicians talk about the *regilaul* pieces they are performing. In these concert talks, their thoughts about the tradition and history of *regilaul* are revealed. I explore this commentary as an orally produced ethnography, as I examine transcribed texts that form a compact, interrelated textual corpus. In this way, I am able to access both conscious manifestations and self-expressions as well as patterns and automatisms which were not consciously articulated by the speaker.

The present article examines the *regilaul* history as it is manifested in concert representation. I look at eras which characterize the *regilaul* through qualitatively separate time periods (e.g. the *regilaul* as a predominant Estonian musical culture; the retreat of the *regilaul* from the cultural limelight and its mediation to archives; the contemporary reperformances of *regilaul* texts). I examine the depiction of the *regilaul's* history on two levels: the narrated history and the "writing" of the history, i.e. compilation including the relevant choices, omissions and emphases. In my analysis of the material, I proceed from a linear conception of history. The stage representation of the *regilaul's* history will be analyzed in conjunction with the emergence of folkloristic thought and disciplinary intellectual history in order to emphasize the peculiarities of knowledge produced under two different truth regimes.

The "golden age" of the *regilaul* is depicted emblematically in the concert representation. For this purpose, one borrows a means of expression from romanticized conventions of depicting primitive or indigenous cultures, and from the conception of folklore as a pre-modern phenomenon. The period of transmission of oral folklore performances into their textual representation in folklore archives is not depicted through the qualitative and ideological changes contained in it. These archived poetic texts become canonized and are referred to as "authentic" originals by contemporary folk musicians. Such a conception contributes towards the traditionalization of contemporary *regilaul* performances. The present is alluded to in covert terms in commentaries, but it is always implicitly there in descriptions of both the "golden age" and of the transmission period.

The festival's concert talk forms an open field of discussion where the verbal text of *regilaul*, the ideology of the cultural heritage, the musicians and the audience meet to construct new meanings. The story narrated to the audience involves cultural Otherness, the construction of differences, pathos, romanticism and mystification. Yet the produced cultural description of the *regilaul* is not about the cultural Other of the past. The *regilaul* is part of an ongoing, dynamic process—although its attributes are derived from the past, the meanings and allusions contained within it are contemporary. The worldview and history of the concert talks have been created from the contemporary perspective and are grounded in the contemporary cultural and political situation.

Melodies Used in the Early 21ˢᵗ Century Spontaneous Regilaul Tradition in Estonia

Taive Särg

The oral tradition of the ancient folk song, the *regilaul* (the Estonian branch of Balto-Finnic runolaul) persisted until the beginning of the 20ᵗʰ century, and it still endures in some peripheral localities (ethnographical areas Setu and Kihnu), being adapted for contemporary performance situations. The Estonian cultural identity has been tightly connected with songs in the *regilaul* style, because *regilaul* is a representation of archaic musical and poetic thinking, local dialects, folk religion, etc. *Regilaul* was usually sung as a group song with a leader and a chorus taking turns. In the older *regilaul* tradition melody was orally transmitted and recalled from memory, rather than consciously composed. Every singer, and in fact, every locality, had a very small number of tunes and so they were used with different lyrics (Särg 2009).

In the 1960–70s, a new tradition of *regilaul* emerged in Estonia along with the folklore movement, including staged performances by folklore groups, arrangements for choirs, folk rock groups, etc, and spontaneous singing tradition. The spontaneous *regilaul* singing tradition exists as a subculture both in casual and institutionalised forms, the latter being called *regilaulutuba* and *-pesa* (*regilaul* room and nest) today.

My research question was: what made the old *regilaul* tunes that were considered too old fashioned already in the 19ᵗʰ century attractive for contemporary singers?

Fieldwork, music analyses and qualitative research were used for collecting and interpreting data on contemporary *regilaul* tradition. The data were collected by means of participant observation, audiovisual recording and interviews carried out by the author and her colleagues from the Estonian Folklore Archives in Viljandi and Tartu.

In the course of analyses, the singers' conceptions of *regilaul* were matched to the melodies in order to find out what kind of tunes in musical terms fitted with the singers' ideas of what should be a good song

for spontaneous singing occasions. The extended discussion was what made those tunes, ideas and contexts attractive for singers.

Most of the songs used during spontaneous *regilaul* singing occasions were not related to any ritual, but had a lyric or epic plot. The melodies were typical of those genres, i.e. most of them did not represent the archaic narrow ranged speech-style, but belonged to the more modern *regilaul* style with the melodies ranging from the fifth to the seventh. Compared to the most representative publication of Estonian *regilaul* (Tampere 1956–1964), there are currently a greater number of melodies of minor character in existence. The comparison of melody scales of contemporary and traditional *regilaul* singing demonstrated that with the majority of singers, the diatonic scales had replaced older scales even in the melodies with a narrow range.

The melodies were learned using archival sources and from a contemporary oral tradition, which was mostly revived earlier on the basis of the archived material. The criteria for the choice of a tune by singers included both a rational and an emotional component, wherein both the background of the song and the character of the melody were taken into consideration. For example, singers often chose the tunes of their home parish; however, some melodies were rejected as too "boring" or "monotonous". About 10% of tunes had been composed by singers themselves, who described the process of composition as unconscious rather than purposeful activity, using the expressions like "the melody came to me" or relating a story about the melody coming to them in a dream. Most likely, the singers used such discursive phrases to diminish the rational aspect of the choice or creation and emphasize the intuitive side of that process so that they could confirm their close relation to the old oral song tradition.

According to musical analyses, tunes with a range of at least 5 steps and a minor third were the most popular. Most likely, that structure was the best for a long lasting group singing as it is a compromise between monophonic melodies that everybody can accomplish and melodies that are too monotonous and boring.

The structure of the traditional *regilaul* is well suited for group singing as not everybody needs to know the lyrics by heart or possess extraordinary musical abilities. The singing of a *regilaul* with its quite monotonous melodies and lyrics in old dialects is a fascinating musical

activity due to its marked difference from the most common musical habit of today, which is listening to recorded or performed music. The singing requires special skills and devotion, especially from the leaders. Spontaneous *regilaul* singing as a participatory activity is a unique way of experiencing music as a means of group communication, and it also gives singers an opportunity to express themselves as well as to construct a musical artifact of Otherness in their group.

Regilaul with its old and scant melody repertoire has become more widespread as a subculture and is more popular today than it was in the early 20th century. The change has occurred as the contemporary singers 1) have gained new insights into *regilaul* functions, its contexts and values, one of the main functions being to experience traditional way of communal singing; 2) have made their choice from amongst the old melodies and created some new ones; 3) are not any more ashamed, but proud of having a skill to continue an oral singing tradition as a means of building a symbolic ethnic community, crossing time and space.

Netting a Regilaul*: The Reception of* Regilaul *Performances of the Viljandi Folk Music Festival in the Estonian Media in 2000–2010*

Helen Kõmmus

The goal of the present article is to analyze the verbal and visual reception by the Estonian media from 2000-2010, of concerts where traditional and arranged *regilaul* were performed, as well as of spontaneous singing events. This article will examine the ethnomusicological fieldwork possibilities offered by the Internet, runo song conceptions and definitions in the media, discursive and visual descriptions of the runo style singing as well as journalists specializing in folk music and the available media channels, including their importance and influence on public opinion. One concrete subject of research is provided by the Viljandi Folk Music Festival that has been held in Estonia since 1993. This

festival is one of the most relevant events that adapts the old Estonian runo song tradition to contemporary local culture.

During the research process, a database of folk music media receptions was established. The sources of text collection were traditional media, such as newspapers, television, radio and news portals on the Internet. From the database, the decade of 2000–2010 was chosen. It was a decade when the Viljandi festival was actively forming its identity. Traditional as well as modernized runo song performances formed part of the Viljand Folk Music Festival and several times, the runo song was an annual festival theme. From this period 1,514 references were gathered and 152 relevant media reflections were analyzed in a more in-depth manner.

This research project clarified the role of the media and the ways in which the contemporary media affects adaptation of runo song tradition to contemporary musical soundscape. Mass media has contributed towards the spread of information about traditional and arranged folk singing enabling it to transcend the temporal frames of the festival and confined circles. Despite the gradual disappearance of the traditional village community, where runo songs were part of the everyday life, the traditional way of singing has still retained its place in Estonian folk music circles and has been sustainable in an era of new media.

Creating Communities
with Song Competitions

Venla Sykäri

As a form of singing, poetic contests are known all over the world. In the Baltic-Finnic cultural sphere, the wedding celebration has been one of the central context of competitive singing; however, verbal duels have also been part of various singing practices more broadly (see Salminen 1917; Anttonen 1987; Laitinen 2010). A number of contemporary singing cultures in Europe emblematically involve poetic contests. In this

paper, I focus on the structure of singing contests and the interactions therein. As an example, I will use Finnish *freestyle rap*, a new register of oral improvisation that has been developing in Finland from the end of the 1990s, and the freestyle rap *battle* as a form of organized poetic contest. The analysis is also motivated by my earlier field experience in Crete (Sykäri 2011).

More broadly, a poetic contest is an organized singing event where two singers perform in front of an audience, exchanging utterances dialogically and creating their arguments on the basis of an established poetic register. The winner is determined by an external jury or the audience. (See e.g. Miner 1993; Pagliai 2009) In local singing cultures, however, verbal duels are not limited to organized events, but may also take place in any argumentative singing or speech context by virtue of the use of poetic register. The poetic models that are currently popular (or were until recent years) in dueling are short compact couplets and quatrains, as well as stanzas of eight or ten lines, although in the latter case the length of the utterance created and sung at a time can also be one couplet (see e.g. Sykäri 2011: 28–33; Armistead & Zuleika 2005; Egaña 2007; Zedda 2009; Yaqub 2007)

These contests are characterized especially by improvised argumentation. In improvised argumentation the singers' competence is based on a thorough knowledge of the linguistic, performative and expressive conventions of the poetic register, as well as on their inventiveness, sociolinguistic skills and ability to articulate the situation-specific perceptions in poetic verses on the spur of the moment. Since the arguments in a verbal duel are created as a dialogue, the singers must also respond to the rival's arguments.

Finnish improvised freestyle rap emerged at the turn of the 21st century as part of the hip hop culture adopted earlier from the United States, and the related, world-wide development of rap-music as a musical and performative genre. As an oral register, Finnish freestyle rap was quickly adapted to local linguistic and poetic requirements, as well as to the local social realm. The Finnish battle performance culture conforms to the dissing and boasting rhetoric typical of the poetic contests in many cultures, and the current themes are a domesticated version of the American model. In a freestyle rap battle, an utterance delivered at a time is fairly long, often between 16 and 22 verses, and the tempo is

very quick. This results in fewer highly compact arguments and punch-lines with regard to the more or less universally applied material. For mnemonic reasons the arguments directly reflecting the rival's verses are often situated at the beginning of the utterance. Performers appreciate inventiveness, quick-wittedness, dialogic skills, personal style and performative energy, and point out that although the competitive mode is taken seriously, the performer's attitude and mental state should also be relaxed at the same time. Interaction with the audience is part of the show, and all performers underline that the performance should always be entertaining to the audience.

As a result, one of the crucial characteristics of the poetic contest can be recognized in the possibility of extracting high levels of performative energy in a controlled, rule-governed setting. Performers can lean on their performative roles and make art out of the restrictions of the poetic meter, the rule-governed setting and the real or staged antitheses in argumentation. Yet the performance is primarily interaction and cooperation between the performers, and between performers and the audience. Beyond the stage, performers create a loyal community with a shared interest in practicing and developing this shared way of communicating.

Folk Song Mentality in Uku Masing's Poetry of the 1930s: The Use of Parallelism to Shape the Poetic Language and Self-Perception

Külliki Kuusk

This article discusses the artistic principles of the poetry of the Estonian poet Uku Masing (1909–1985) and its links with older Estonian folk songs. The study proceeds from two hypotheses: first, that parallelism can be considered to be the core characteristic of Masing's poetic language which connects his poetry with the older Estonian folk song

tradition; second, it is assumed that the archaic quality of Masing's poetic self-perception finds expression in his poetics.

The study is divided into three parts. The first gives an overview of the cultural context of Masing's poetry, while in the second and the third, I examine the application of the principle of parallelism in his poems by describing it from two angles: Masing's perception of language and his poetic self-perception. In both parts, the theoretical discussion is illustrated by a textual analysis of Masing's ecstatic poems, "Love lõikuskuu ööl" and "Taanduja palve".

When introducing the cultural context of Masing's poetry, I draw attention to the fact that parallelism is not a regular stylistic occurrence in Masing's poetry. There are no direct imitations of runo song parallelism in the structure of Masing's texts. Neither is it possible to approach Masing's texts without considering their context, separately from their (song) cultural context. Parallelism, in Masing's poetry, is a universal mental phenomenon.

In Estonian poetry, Masing is not by any means the only one whose poetic language is influenced by folk songs; however, what is clearly unique about him is his author's or observer's position. By denoting his artistic consciousness with the term "another self", he intentionally burrowed from the archaic Finno-Ugric belief and thereby also anchored his poetic self-perception to it. The specific mentality-centered essence of parallelism in his poetry is first defined through Masing's attitude towards language, according to which language is first of all a means of cognition. In his poetry, this is manifested in the cognitive aspect of parallelism, which involves its "oral origin" as well as more broadly, the aspect of orality or the performativity of his poetry. Orality is associated with Masing's mode of writing using a humming voice. Second, I also highlight the influence of the living tradition which was the cultural ambiance surrounding Masing in his childhood.

In my discussion of the application of principles of parallelism in Masing's poetry, I first examine the cognitive relation of parallelism to the folk song. Drawing upon Lotman's description of modelling systems, I approach parallelism as *an encoded use of language*: I show how parallelism is associated with certain visionary techniques in Masing's poetry, as a result of which the mental pictures of "I" are realized in the poeticised text as *loci*. On the textual level, these can be regarded as

semiotic spatial constructions that are conveyed by formulas of parallelism on the levels of both the form and the content. In the description of spatial constructions, I employ the concept of *mental text* (the visualised reality behind the text) suggested by Lauri Honko. In the pragmatic analysis of these spatial constructions, I use Lotman's notion of *text within a text*. In these semiotic spaces, the "I" functions as a figure of speech, in other words it has the characteristics of the textual "I".

Second, I examine the textual role of parallelism by describing parallelism as *an encoded message carrier*. I highlight parallelism as a sentence figure operating on the verse level where for Masing, it is the generator of a linguistic and stylistic unity of expression, and at the same time it is also a semantic organiser of the mental images of the "I". It is alliteration and assonance in interplay with parallelism that create the lexical cohesion of the verse. Thereby the archaic figurativeness of Masing's poetry can come to the fore and convey a peculiarly Estonian way of rationalizing or reflecting reality. Just as in a runo song verse, the parallelism of analogy broadens the range of possibilities of expression, so in his poetry, Masing has sought to achieve the same effect by using metonymy. In turn, the use of archaic language forms (or dialect language in relation to formal literary language) supports the use of alliteration.

On the verse level, the encoded content of parallelism relies upon the obscurity of expression and allegory. It is also connected to the ecstatic perception of the "I" and certain visionary techniques of the creation process. When elucidating the visionary basis of parallelism in the text, I will show the semiotic character of meaning construction. A paradigm of certain signs reveals itself in the state of verse's organisation and in the structural articulation of the text. Given the "text within a text" condition of Masing's poetry, I discern the speech figures of the "real" space and those of the non-real space that are associated either with the author's experience of the everyday or with his artistic consciousness.

Masing's relationship to tradition was quite inclusive. Thus he also freely utilized the formal elements of runo song poetics in his poetry. Parallelism both carries Masing's archaic world perception and shapes it, and this gives it a special pragmatic role in his poetry.

Runolaul maotapmisest.
Algupära ja transformatsioonid

Matej Goršič

Viena Karjala ja Lääne-Ingeri "Maotapmiseks" nimetatud runolaulude kobaras leiduvaid müütilisi pilte saab rekonstrueerida indoeuroopa müütilise piksetormi kujutuse transformatsioonina, kasutades runolaulude tüpoloogilist analüüsi ja erinevate kultuuride mütoloogiate võrdlemist. Lähimad vasted "Maotapmise" pildistikule leiduvad Vana-India "Rigveedas" ja slaavi folklooris.

Kalju lõhestamisele ja mao pea maharaiumisele Väinämöise poolt leidub lähedane paralleel "Rigveeda" episoodis. Seal purustab piksejumal Indra pilve, mida on kujutatud kui mäge või madu (*Vrtra*). Väinämöise sädelev mõõk vastab indo-euroopa piksejumala välgunoolele, mida on sageli kirjeldatud särava ja terava relvana. Põder, kes "Maotapmise" laulus joob järve tühjaks ja tapab seejärel mao, vastab kõige enam Indrale. Viimast kujutatakse "Rigveedas" korduvalt kui härga, kes joob tühjaks Soma järved ja tapab seejärel mao Vrtra. Leegitsev jõgi, mis "Maotapmise" laulus voolab välja tapetud maost, seostub enim leegitseva verega, mis voolab indoeuroopa päritoluga mordva piksemüüdis välja piksejumala poolt tapetud kuratliku mao seest. Maotapmise laulule iseloomulikule lüpsmise teemale ning võtme ja anuma piltidele leidub vasteid piksetormi kujutustes: piim on vihma metafoor ("Rigveedas" ja slaavi mütoloogias), lüpsja ("Rigveedas" ja slaavi mütoloogias) ja võti (slaavi mütoloogias) piksenoole metafoorid ning anum pilve metafoor ("Rigveedas").

Kunagi kaugemas ajaloos tõlgendasid laulikud tõenäoliselt "Maotapja" varemmainitud kujutluspilte kui piksetormi metafoore. "Maotapja" muud kujutluspildid on tõenäoliselt muutunud ja kokku sulanud eri laadi laulumotiividest: (1) pildid, mida on algselt tõlgendatud kui piksetormi metafoore ning (2) pildid muudest runolauludest, mis pole algselt piksetormi kujutamisega seotud. Kivile märgi joonistamise vormel on tõenäoliselt transformatsioon välgu kivisse löömise vormel-

ist. Väinämöise kivilõhestav sõrm seostub piksejumala sõrmeküünega, mida on tarvitatud kui välgunoole metafoori; viimane on ilmselt arenenud antropomorfse piksejumala ja tema ornitomorfse vaste (sõrm(eküüs) ja küünis) segunemisel. Kujutluspilt kaljul õlut joovast maost on seotud piima imeva maoga slaavi mütoloogias, kus seda on kasutatud pikselöögi metafoorina (välgulöök kui vihmavee imemine pilvest). Mõned verbid ja pildid, mis on seotud põdraga "Maotapmises", vihjavad tugevale "Hiiepõdra" mõjule. Põleva tamme teema "Maotapmises" on laenatud laulust "Suur tamm". Tuliseid nooli laskev Piru "Rabanduse sünnis" (runolaul, mis on kõige lähemalt seotud "Suure tammega") vihjab, et (põlevat) suurt tamme tõlgendasid runolaulikud algselt kui veel üht metafoori pilve kohta, mille purustas piksejumal.

Selles artiklis välja pakutud "Maotapmise" tõlgendust ei tule võtta kui ainust ja kõikeseletavat. See on vaid üks võimalik müütiliste kujutluste algupärale keskenduv tõlgendus – lisaks minevikus tehtud ning võimalikele tulevastele tõlgendustele. Inimvaim oma tõlgendava potentsiaaliga naudib tõlgendusprotsessi ja jätkab võitlust *ad infinitum*.

The Woman's Voice and Body in the Epic: Gendered Motifs in Anne Vabarna's Peko

Andreas Kalkun

Anne Vabarna's (1877–1964) Seto epic *Peko* includes many fairly realistic descriptions of Seto women's everyday life, women's work, customs, family relations, etc. Here we see not only reflections of relationships within an extended family, as well as between a husband and wife, but also small dramas of a woman's everyday life: worrying for food and the hungry, giving birth and recovering from it, caring for the sick, taking care of the dying and the dead, maintaining family traditions and religious customs. When *Peko* is read more carefully, one notices small, but significant everyday traumatic experiences from women's lives, the echo of suppressed feelings and melodramatic micro-motifs inserted

into the text by Anne Vabarna. Although one part of the plot of *Peko* was suggested by Paulopriit Voolaine, the voice that echoes from the epic the loudest is that of Vabarna, we can see her aesthetic choices and images. Images and motifs that at first seem gender neutral appear as references to feminine experiences and *realia* when examined more closely.

In the article, the gendered motifs found in Anna Vabarna's Seto epic *Peko* are analysed. In addition to the narrative telling of the life of the male hero, the motifs regarding eating, the refusal to eat or the offering of food, and the aspect of the female body or its control deserve mention. These scenes do not communicate the main plot, they are often related to minor characters of the epic and slow down the narrative, but at the same time they clearly have an artistic purpose and meaning. I consider these motifs, present in the liminal parts of the epic, to be the dominant symbols of the epic where the author's feminine world is being exposed. Observing these motifs of Peko in the context of Seto religious worldview, the life of Anne Vabarna and the social position of Seto women, the symbols become eloquent and informative. Anne Vabarna's epic Peko can be forced into the frame of a masculine heroic epic, but undoubtedly there are other, more suitable frames for the text. A less vehement and coercive viewpoint, which shows more respect to the creative author, takes into account her gender and aesthetic preferences, and displays the epic in a different light. "Boring" and "unimportant" parts take the central position and become vehicles of the ideology of the epic.

Gender Variations on a Folk Tune Theme: Seto Song Tunes in Men's and Women's Performance

Žanna Pärtlas

In the Western art music tradition, women's musical activities are usually perceived as a special phenomenon that deserves studying from the point of view of its gender specificity. With traditional vocal music the situation is often just the opposite. The substantial predominance of women's vocal practices that characterizes many traditional societies of agrarian Europe compels researchers to consider men's songs as a specific part of a song tradition and by extension directs our attention to gender issues.

A significant prevalence of women's singing is also typical of the musical culture of the Seto – an ethnic group living in southeast Estonia. Seto men's songs became an object of attention for ethnomusicologists only in the second half of the 20th century, when a living tradition of male singing still existed in a couple of villages only. The present article attempts to examine Seto men's singing as a form of gendered music making, to connect it with the social life of the traditional Seto village, and to characterize the distinctions and similarities between Seto men's and women's multipart singing styles.

The gender specificity of the Seto men's songs manifests itself in the contexts of singing, in the song texts and tune types, in the musical style (including the structure of the polyphony) and in the manner of singing. In this article, the characteristic features of the Seto male singing style are described using an example of the most specific male song genre called *Vel´okõsõ'* (this kind of songs are sung while walking in a group around the village and during various festive situations). There are several musical features that distinguish the Seto male song style from the female one, among them are: the more complex multipart texture (a three-part singing), the wider harmonic and melodic intervals (parallel perfect fifths in harmony), the specific musical scale (E-F-G-A-H-C),

the co-called "masculine cadence" with the reduction of the last syllable of the verse, the characteristic caesura in the middle of the chorus' part of the strophe, the very intensive and loud manner of singing, the slow tempo, and the strong accentuation of every syllable-note. The comparison of the men's and women's performances of the same tune types shows that men not only sing the songs in a masculine manner but also transform the tunes so that they become structurally similar to the *Vel´okõsõ'* tune type.

In conclusion, it should also be mentioned that there is a difference between men's and women's attitude toward singing. It seems that Seto men are more interested in music and singing itself, while women concentrate more on the verbal text. Underlying this, there are such emotional values that can be respectively named "fusion in singing" and "communication in singing" and that express the predominantly collective social identity of the Seto men and the more individual identity of the women. The psychological tendency according to which men "sing" songs and women "narrate" them may be considered to be one of the manifestations of gendered music making.

Levels of Melodic Variability of the Seto leelo

Liisi Laanemets

In this article I examine the melodic variability of the Seto *leelo*, or how one melody can be presented differently. Melodic variability is a specific feature of the musical tradition of oral transmission and its occurrence in the tradition of folk singing may be due to several factors. First, it may be related to the complexity of the melodies. The structure of archaic melodies is usually simpler. Although from the musical point of view Seto songs have a somewhat more complex structure than other Estonian runic songs, they are still characterized by asceticism: a shortness of the melody and a small number of divided syllables. Thus it would be natural to expect relatively little variation. Second, melodic variability depends on the stability of the structure of the verse. There

is less variability in songs that have a fixed structure of verse, but in songs, where the structure of verse is variable – e.g. Seto laments – the melodies may also vary more. Third, variability may depend on the vitality of the tradition. In a vital tradition, there are more singers who interpret melodies differently and therefore there is a greater number of melodic variants.

Melodic variability can be examined in the framework of one song performance or of one melodic type. In the first case variability depends largely on the individual singers, whereas in the second case it is more of an indicator of general tendencies. In this article, I focus on the variants within a melodic type, which means the comparison of the permanent melodic variant of one song performance with the permanent melodic variant of another song performance. In this case, variability may involve many aspects, e.g. melodic (that is to say it occurs in the melodic contour of the parts of the lead singer, *killõ* and *torrõ*) or rhythmic variability.

Using the recordings of the valued Seto singer Anne Vabarna (1877–1964), I will also try to answer the question of whether the different subtypes (that arise from the different rhythmic forms) of the melodic types of the melodic typology are characteristic of Vabarna only, or do they exist as persistent versions in the repertoire of other singers as well. This means that I am looking for an answer to the question of whether the different subtypes have individual or collective origins.

In order to discuss the melodic variability of Seto *leelo*, melodies should be classified on the basis of musical characteristics. Every researcher prepares his or her own typology of melodies on the basis of the investigations's problem, and as a result, the same material can be typologised differently. For the typologisation of Estonian runo melodies, the method of finding the basic system of melody based on the logic of melody, which was pioneered by Ingrid Rüütel (Rüütel 1977, 1980) is used. For Seto polyphonic singing it seems more effective to use the method based on the logic of the rhythmic and harmonic pattern. Few researchers have as yet typologised Seto melodies. In order to distinguish different melodies, I employ the method of determining the harmonic rhythm by Žanna Pärtlas (Pärtlas 2001; 2006). I also take other characteristics into account.

In my analysis, I compared the four melodic types found in Anne Vabarna's repertoire which contain subtypes, together with the published notations of corresponding melodic types. The classification of the melodic types Vabarna used is based on the recordings of Anne Vabarna located in the Estonian Folklore Archives (Laanemets 2007). I have used folk names to term these four melodic types: *käsikivimäng*, *järve-ääl*, *hällü-ääl* and *kaasitamine*. These names are conditional, since the same melodic types are also used in other song types. The reference material comes from Herbert Tampere's compilations "Eesti rahvalaule viisidega" and from a CD of the *leelo*choir Helmine from Mikitamäe. I analyzed the notations available. We should be cautious about overestimating the relevance of the material in the Tampere compilation, because most of the Seto songs there were notated in the course of fieldwork, so the accuracy of the notations can not be verified anymore.

I looked at the songs' affiliation of genre and analysed the musical parameters – the rhythmic pattern of the lead singer and the choir as well as the harmonic pattern of the choir part. The genralised rhythmic patterns combine the melodic rhythm (that is to say the subsequence of musical durations), rhythm of the syllable (that is to say the rhythm of the alteration of the syllables), rhythm of the meter and the form of the melody (cf. Pärtlas 2001). In Seto songs the melodic rhythm and the rhythm of the syllable are quite close, because there are few divisions of syllables. I looked at the part of the lead singer and at the part of the choir separately due to the fact that the former has a more varied structure. Harmonic rhythm, which seems to be the most important feature in determining the melodic types, is the rhythm of the alteration of harmonic functions. The prerequisite for this is that there are functional complexes of pitch in the mode system of the melodies. There can be a binary system where one complex falls on the alternate steps of the scale. I also examined the modes of the scales. There are four main scales in Seto songs: the semitone and three semitone scale, the anhemitonic, the anhemitonic-diatonic and the diatonic scale. In addition, of course, there are a number of intermediate scales. I consider the regional origin of the melody to be also an essential feature, and use it to find out the connection between the locality and the various shapes of the melodic types.

On the basis of the analyzed material it seems that the subtypes of the melodic types *käsikivimäng* and *järve-ääl* used by Anne Vabarna are more collective in origin than the subtypes of *hällü-ääl* and *kaasita-mine*. Thus the subtypes of the melodic types *käsikivimäng* and *järve-ääl* could be termed versions, or sustained melodic shapes that have spread out and developed over a long period of time (Rüütel 1969:103).

Although the questions about the distribution of melodic shapes within the melodic types require more of an in-depth investigation based on more voluminous material, my analysis showed some tendencies of both persistent and non-persistent subtypes / versions of the melodic types. Generally, it can be concluded that the different versions of melodic types are mostly related to specific song types and sound scales (although inside the subtype / version the variability of sound scales is possible). Due to the scant amount of material, a definitive link between the regions and subtypes / version did not emerge. Indirectly, however, my analysis also showed that the harmonic rhythm and the rhythm pattern of the lead singer and choir should be considered as the most secure methods of determining the melodic types.

Stars of "Vana Kannel": Sohvi Sepp

Liina Saarlo

Sohvi Sepp (1871–1959) was one of the most recorded runo-song singers of Kodavere parish. From 1937 to 1955, she was interviewed and recorded nine times. Her repertoire was very broad; written samples of it include 155 songs (including 120 runo-songs), 63 narratives (local tales, belief legends and memorates, fabulates etc.), 94 belief and custom accounts, 31 magic spells etc. 141 of her runo-versed songs and magic spells have been published in the academic runo-song publication "Vana Kannel XI".

Sohvi Sepp made a deep impression on visiting folklorists by being a practicing healer as well as a runo-singer, which was rare already in the 1950s. In their field-work diaries, folklore collectors Udo Mägi (in

1947) and Ottilie Niinemägi (in 1955) described colorfully her personality and her performance style. Thanks to these descriptions, Sohvi Sepp becomes a vivid personality rather than a mere half-anonymous "singer", or just a name on the paper.

It becomes apparent from the analysis of folklore-texts collected from Sohvi Sepp that she had a broad knowledge of oral traditions. Besides folk narratives and traditional healing skills, she knew a number of runo-songs that matched her temperament and were about subjects close to her heart. Although performing runo-songs was already out-dated at that time, she still performed them, not as a memoir of memories but as a living tradition.

Contemporary Erzya Mordvin Laments

Natalia Ermakov

The traditions and roots of lament songs can be traced far back in time. Laments express wisdom that has been accumulated through the ages, as well as an individual's strong ties with nature, and they can also reflect groundbreaking changes in the life of an individual. Laments belong to the ritualistic genre of folk poetry that is quite common among both Erzya and other Finno-Ugric peoples.

The tradition of Mordvins, like that of many other peoples, includes death laments, bridal laments and laments of recruits. In traditional Mordvin culture, a lament (in Erzya Mordvin лайшема, урнема, авардема) is a monologue addressed to someone, and it expresses sorrow, grief and mourning. It is a traditional woman's singing-recitative improvisation which is sung during the performance of rituals (funerals, wedding, the sending off of young men to military service, various calamities, unfortunate events in the family or the society). In the Mordvin tradition, the term "лайшемат" is used for funeral laments, for recruits' laments and for situational laments, while wedding laments are denoted by separate terms of "урнемат" or "авварькшнемат". This monologue is mostly performed in the second singular and the first plural, and verbs are used

in the imperative. Laments are constructed with traditional formulae and set phrases.

Around the middle of the previous century, significant changes occurred in the lamenting tradition. Wedding laments gradually began disappearing and now, only older women can remember them. The dying out of the tradition is connected to changes in the wedding rituals as well as the changing of the status of the bride who sings the laments. As for funeral laments, they have not lost their meaning and uniqueness to quite the same extent. In village areas, funeral and mourning rituals have been preserved to a far greater degree than other rituals since they are carried by elderly people, who preserve folk customs. In addition, old people, for the most part, request to be buried in the way their ancestors were, or "in accordance with the law". Burial rites are ritualistic and follow conventions, and are strictly adhere to by people.

Bridal laments which in the past were a mandatory component of a wedding ritual are wonderful and exquisite works of folk poetry. In the wedding ritual of the Ardatovsky District, the following stages have been preserved: *чиямо* (wooing), *баславамо* (benediction), *кузонь наряжамо* (the decoration of the spruce), *той* (atonement), *симема* (liquor for the health), the bride's prenuptial *sauna* bathing and in some villages of the Ardatovsky District, the casting off of maidenhood during the Pentecost (all women who have gotten married during the year throw their garlands into the pond at the Pentecost, whereupon they are considered married women). Instead of traditional laments and songs, Russian and Erzya songs are performed now and people dance to foreign music. There are no laments sung during contemporary wedding ceremonies, but there are incantations. Thus the Erzya Mordvin wedding ritual has been transfigured and many customs have become similar to Russian rituals. Wedding laments are sung only in theatres and on concert stages.

The laments of recruits (war laments) are rarely performed. Contemporary war laments have come into being largely die to the wars in Afganistan (1979–1997) and Chechnya (1992–1997) which brought along the renaissance of the lamenting culture. In those difficult times, when Erzya mothers were commanded by the state to send their sons into war in Afganistan and Chechnya where young men often lost their lives, these young men departed from home lamenting, just as in the old,

Tsarist times. The function of laments had long been forgotten, but at times of mass deportations this tradition was resurrected. Based on the above, it may be concluded that the laments of recruits and war laments are sung only in crisis situations. Nowadays when a young man is sent to the army, benedictory church and folkloric incantations are used (in addresses to the house spirit) that are believed to protect the young man.

In conclusion it may be said that beginning from the 19th century to the present, laments and their related customs have significantly changed, receded and partly even disappeared. This is also due to the spread of Christianity and World War II (1941–1945) which contributed to a large extent to the dying out of customs and their simplification. At the moment, there is only the tradition of death laments in circulation in villages and old customs are observed only because it was done by the people before.