

# CONTEXT-RELATED MELODIES IN ORAL CULTURE: AN ATTEMPT TO DESCRIBE WORDS-AND-MUSIC RELATIONSHIPS IN LOCAL SINGING TRADITIONS

TAIVE SÄRG

PhD, Senior Researcher  
Department of Ethnomusicology  
Estonian Literary Museum  
Vanemuise 42, 51003 Tartu, Estonia  
e-mail: taive@folkore.ee

## ABSTRACT

In oral folk song traditions we often find many lyrics, but not nearly as many melodies. The terms “polyfunctionalism”, “group melodies” or “general melodies” have been used by Estonian researchers to indicate the phenomenon that many lyrics were sung to only one, or a small handful, of tunes. The scarcity of melodies is supposed to be one of several related phenomena characteristic to an oral, text-centred singing culture. In this article the Estonian folk song tradition will be analysed against a quantity of melodies and their usage in the following aspects: word-and-melody relationships and context-and-melody relationships in Karksi parish (south Estonia); a singer; and native musical terms and the process of singing and (re)creation.

KEYWORDS: ethnomusicology • *regilaul* • formula melody • folk song improvisation • folk singer

## INTRODUCTION

In this article an attempt will be made to describe and analyse certain aspects of oral singing culture, which appear at first as the abundance of lyrics and scarcity of melodies, causing the same melodies to be sung with many texts. Researchers point this out using various terms. The use of limited musical material characterises (at least partially) several traditional song cultures which are quite different according to their location and music style, e.g. Balto-Finnic, Finno-Ugric and Scandinavian peoples, Central- and East-Asian peoples, and also Western folk music and church music, etc. For example, similar phenomena are described or mentioned as used by the Izhorians (as “the formula principle of melodics”,<sup>1</sup> Gomon 1977: 283), the Votians (one typical melody movement was used in different song genres, Rüütel 1977: 257), the Maris (Cheremisses) (melodies were not “cleaved” to lyrics in some song genres, Gerasimov 1977: 413), the Nanais and Udegais (a singer used just one melody for Nanai songs and another for Udegai songs, Lintrop 1991: 34) and also in Tyva (“In different regions people sing different lyrics on the same melody”, Yat-Kha). Jēkabs Vītoliņš writes about Latvian traditional wedding songs: “In this song group melodies occur that are also known with other lyrics, the absence of a firm connection between lyrics and melody is quite a widespread phenomenon in Latvian folk song” (Vītoliņš 1986: 48). He quotes Latvian

folk singer Anna Dombrova's words about an old wedding song melody: "This tune has been used for all *dainas* (wedding, funeral and satirical songs) – we had this tune in Lizuma" (ibid.: 44). Similar comments are made about the Chinese folk tradition by Dutch ethnomusicologist Antoinet Shimmelpenninck:

In Chinese *shan'ge* singers refer to "their" or "the local" tune, indicating that they have only one tune available. One tune can serve to carry hundreds of different texts. [...] The singers themselves refer to the music of their *shan'ge* as "one tune". (Shimmelpenninck 1997: 130)

Velle Espeland describes the singing of Scandinavian lullabies:

It is obvious that it is possible in such a simple formula melody to sing lyrics of very different kinds. [...] It is however typical that many lullaby lyrics often are sung on the same melody. (Espeland 1995: 253)

In Western church music several melodies have been borrowed from secular songs and it is common to use one melody for different lyrics (Schweitzer 1908), e.g. every song in the Lutheran Hymnal carries an indication of whether the lyrics should be sung to the song's "own melody" or to the melody of another song (KLP 1992). Quite free usage of melodies can be found in contemporary Western folk musics, e.g. in Erie Canal music new lyrics are often composed to pre-existing melodies (ECC).

There is not yet a generally accepted term to denote this kind of uneven relationship between the lyrics and melodies. In Estonian folkloristics the phenomenon is described as the use of "group tunes", "polyfunctional" or "general" tunes (Tampere 1956a: 12; Rüütel 1997: 48). The term "group" denotes here that many different lyrics are sung to one melody.

Every singer, and in fact, every locality, had a very small number of tunes and so they were used with different lyrics. Every tune was an artistic generalisation that expressed thoughts and feelings characteristic to the whole folk song genre (e.g. in work songs and ritual songs) [...]. Group tunes dominate in various satirical songs and "hits" about local events up to the present day. (Tampere 1956a: 12)

In opposition, the term "specific tune" is used to refer to song lyrics with their own melodies.

Schimmelpenninck (1997: 129–130) has coined the term "monothematism" for Chinese folk music to describe "one-tune"<sup>2</sup> song areas, where singers perform the bulk of their lyrics to a single musical "theme". Some music folklorists have used the expressions "formulaic melody", "formulaic principle" or "formulism" for simple melodies, based on repetitions, so that they are easily adaptable for different lyrics in oral tradition (Gomon 1977: 283; Espeland 1995: 253; Schimmelpenninck 1997: 287).

Although the usage of "group melodies" is well known, the phenomenon has not been thoroughly studied yet, except for a monograph by Schimmelpenninck<sup>3</sup> about Chinese folk music. She supposes that the reason of this incuriousness can be that "fact is so generally known that it is taken for granted" (Shimmelpenninck 1997: 130). In Estonia the existence of group melodies was clearly stated by Herbert Tampere 1956a. In earlier times the phenomenon had often been described in folklore collecting diaries as lack of melodic variety; the expression "poverty of melodies" occurs in older folk music reviews (Tampere 1935: 14).

There could be a lack of motivation to highlight the scarceness of melodies among researchers, as since the late 1800s folklore had to serve both as a main resource of Estonian national culture and also as the proof of its value. In such an ideological context melodic humdrum might have seem rather a deficiency than an asset of local folklore. The variety of melodies, published in Estonian folk song anthologies, has been compiled from regional singing traditions, usually within the limits of a parish or village, where each singer knew only some of those melodies (Tampere 1956–1965).<sup>4</sup>

Actually, the singing of many texts to only few melodies is an interesting field of research, as it seems to have close connections to oral transmission, the function of singing, the (re)creation of songs, conceptions about music and more generally, to human creativity. Espeland writes about Scandinavian lullabies:

The fact that extensive text material is used with the same melody, makes it easier to sing it a long time, even if the melody is strophic and not as flexible as the formula melody. (Espeland 1995: 253)

There is also an implication that melodic unity is related to text (re)creation in Chinese folk songs:

[T]he flexible structure of the tunes [...] facilitates a free and uninhibited flow of words, and provides the singer with extra time to “think ahead” and recapture his texts. In view of such musical properties, not many different tunes are needed to carry local text repertory. (Schimmelpenninck 1997: 324)

The usage of group melodies is usually expressed in general terms and we have quite little exact data about real words-and-melody relationships and restrictions that ruled the choice of melodies. The present research is based on the Estonian folk song tradition, including alliterative songs with syntactic and semantic parallelism – mainly *regilaul* songs and some other archaic vocal genres. Depending on local tradition, group melodies could be used in different contexts, they were more closely combined with the structure of the text than its content (Rüütel 1997: 48). But some melody types (and melodic styles) depended narrowly on function of a song, so they occurred in only one genre and can be described as “monofunctional”, e.g. melodies of north Estonian swinging songs (Tampere 1956a: 12; Rüütel 1997: 50). Ingrid Rüütel has statistically analysed functions of Votian one-line polyfunctional melodies and found their positive correlation with the more ancient song genres, especially with wedding songs (Rüütel 1977; 1982: 42). It is not an easy task to study this kind of problem today, since we are dealing with a song culture from the past, mainly available via archival sources.

The main material for the present research comes from the Estonian Folklore Archives (referred to as ERA), including old folk songs recorded and transcribed with (unfortunately rare) comments, folklore collecting diaries and memories about singing. The main drawback when seeking the wider picture of old singing traditions is unbalanced, text-centred information: the most extensive material about folk songs is a bulk of lyrics written down without melody or comment. However, there are also plenty of folk songs with both lyrics and melody, although unfortunately they are not recorded in a traditional singing context but usually during an interview at an informant’s home. To get a more diverse picture of melody circulation in oral singing tradition, the archived material is complemented by interviews with contemporary *regilaul* singers who use

folk song in its primary function, i.e. for singing within a group (*versus* its secondary function as staged performing).

In the following, the Estonian folk song tradition will be briefly introduced and then analysed against the quantity of melodies and their usage in five aspects: word-and-melody relationship, and context-and-melody relationship, in Karksi parish (south Estonia), a singer, vernacular musical terms, and the process of singing and recreation. It is probable that by integrating different kinds of materials we can (re)construct a picture of how melodies and lyrics function(ed) in Estonian oral music culture.

## ESTONIAN FOLK SONGS

Estonian old folk songs come from the ancient Balto-Finnic song tradition and their texts are characterised by alliteration and syntactic and semantic parallelism. These songs represent a different song culture, both from Western folk music and more recent Estonian folk music, including end-rhymed strophic songs that spread during the late 1700s and 1800s (in more detail Rüütel 1997).<sup>5</sup> Old Estonian folk songs were transmitted in the last centuries primarily by female singers. According to their function and form, old folk songs fall into two large groups:

(i) The first is a heterogeneous group, often referred with general term “archaic vocal genres”, including incantations, children’s rhymes, herding calls, nature sound imitations, laments, etc. These are usually brief and concise forms and depend closely on the character of a certain activity. Every genre has its own specific means of expression. Archaic vocal genres were performed solo, except wedding laments, which were performed by a group with a leader and a chorus.

(ii) The second group is *regilaul* song, (earlier often translated as “runic song” or “runo song”). Many *regilaul* songs accompany specific activities, like farm work, games, weddings, although there are also songs that can be performed in variable situations, quite irrespective of song content: e.g. as a leisure pastime, handcraft, or while carrying out all kinds of domestic chores.<sup>6</sup> Due to the homogenous meter of all *regilaul* lyrics they are easily adaptable to an arbitrary *regilaul* melody. It was typical for Estonian traditional songs to use only one melody (or two/three melodies) for a long-lasting activity, e.g. a wedding or calendar ritual. These songs were usually performed by a group with a leader and a chorus.<sup>7</sup>

Both song groups have relatively “simple” melodies: the tunes are short, they have a narrow ambitus and stepwise melodic movements; often the pitches are realised in a “loose” and approximate way in performance. The text is the primary aspect and the music mainly follows the build-up of the text in *regilaul* tradition. Songs were performed without any instrumental accompaniment.

Melodies are generally classified by their structure, which is based on text structure and usually correlated with other musical features (ambitus, timbre, method of intonation/singing, etc.). The most important structural constituent of the older folk songs is one line. A regular song line contains 8 syllables and 8 melody notes, each melody note corresponding to one syllable. Normally, a *regilaul* melody extends over one or two verse lines, so the short tune is repeated with every line (one-line melody) or with pair

of lines or line and its repetition (two-line melody),<sup>8</sup> as shown in Examples 1–4. Short refrains may be added to each line in south Estonia (Example 2).

melody line melody line

...mi-na oi - a mem-me ut - tu, mi - na kait-se taa - di kar-ja...

verse 5 verse 6

Example 1. One-line melody. A fragment from a game song *Lambamäng* (Sheep Game), sung by Kadri Kukk (1893–1976) from Karksi parish.<sup>9</sup>

melody line refrain melody line refrain

Lõp-pe, lõp-pe, li - na-ke-ne, ü - les, kui ei lõp-pe, jä-tän sii-a, ü - les...

verse 1 verse 2

Example 2. One-line refrained melody. A fragment from a flax harvesting song, sung by Elena Jõgi (1889–1982) from Karksi parish.<sup>10</sup>

LEADER CHORUS

melody line 1 melody line 2

E - mä-kõi-ne, en - ne-kõi-ne, e - mä-kõi-ne, en - ne-kõi-ne...

verse 1 repetition of verse 1

Example 3. Two-line melody. A fragment from a lyrical song *Ära müü möldrile* (Do not Sell Me to a Miller), sung by Greete Jents (1884–1985) from Karksi parish.<sup>11</sup>

More specifically *regilaul* melodies can be distinguished by their contours (Example 5). In this work melody contour is used to characterise the whole melody movement in the case of one-line melodies, and the first melody line in case of two-line melodies, as the second melody line is a typical descending movement or a variation of the first line in most cases. As refrains can vary, they are not considered an essential constituent of melody contour.

An unitary Estonian national culture did not exist until the late 1800s, but rather each region had its dialect and specific melodies (or melody types). Therefore the research material will be restricted to one historical parish, Karksi in south Estonia, for this study.<sup>12</sup> This parish was remarkable for hosting a singing tradition that continued up to the 1960s, but then became virtually extinct. Karksi has an area of 322 km<sup>2</sup> today. The population diminished during the last century from 7,500 inhabitants in 1881 to 4,300 inhabitants in 2008.

The study focused on 700 folk song melodies, performed by 65 informants, which constitute the greater part of the folk tune material collected from Karksi parish (from 1865 until 1975, supplemented with a few recordings of my own, made in 1995–96). Those 700 melody variants include 275 written notations<sup>13</sup> and 425 sound recordings, made on different kinds of media, including phonograms, gramophone records, audio tapes, digital records and video. Written notations have one or several lyrics attached to them;<sup>14</sup> singers on sound recordings often sing along with the same melody. To analyse word-and-melody relationships, it is necessary to define what a “melody” and a “text” are in oral song tradition.

The *regilaul* songs are usually not completely fixed entities. Texts and melodies, once sung together, might have no tight one-to-one connections, so melodies could be sung with different lyrics or be loaned from one lyric to another, within some restrictions. Furthermore, both tunes and texts varied in oral transmission, often making it difficult for the researcher to distinguish one entity from another. For the present study, melody and text are defined as a melody type and a text type, insofar as a “type” can be an equivalent of a “piece or entity” in oral tradition. Textual and melodic variants of similar content and structure are grouped together as text types and melody types.

To specify text types I predominantly used the Estonian folk song text typology, published by Ülo Tedre (1969–1974), in which song lyrics are classified according their function and content.

To specify melody types I used the methodology developed by Ingrid Rüütel (Rüütel, Haugas 1990). This method has been successfully applied by researchers working at the Department of Ethnomusicology of the Estonian Literary Museum.

The material on which the research was based was hardly very unified in kind. For example, I found myself comparing transcriptions of single verse lines from the 1800s to longer sound tracks from the 1900s. To make any comparison possible, a common form of notation had to be adopted. Consequently, all the songs were transcribed and transposed to a common basic tone. If the melody of any particular song varied during the performance, its most frequently occurring regular form was selected for analysis.

A melody type is a model representing a group of melody variants that are similar in structure and contour. Melodies with different structures (one-line and two-line melodies) are compared separately.

The rhythm is not a relevant feature in Estonian *regilaul* melody typology as there are very few rhythmic patterns; most of the songs have the same rhythmic pattern of 8 approximately isochronic metrical units.

The tunes are classified according to the melodic patterns derived from the melodic context, considering the basic tones and the similarities in melody movement. Basic

tones are the most stable tones that do not vary (or vary least) during the process of singing. The final criterion for distinguishing melody types come from specificity of material.<sup>15</sup> To find whether a musical typology makes sense it will be tested against singing tradition. If a typology brings into focus some logic in the usage of tunes, then it is useful (e.g. we can find a correlation between melody types and any other features of the singing tradition).

In the case of the Karksi songs I found that a melody type as an analytical category works best if it is formed of tunes with the same basic tones and at least 6 overlapping tones in their regular form for one-line tunes, and at least 8 overlapping tones for two-line tunes. Table 1 demonstrates that there are correlations between melody types and song functions.

### WORDS-AND-MUSIC RELATIONSHIPS

Among 700 melody variants there were 96 different melody types in the Karksi song material. Lyrics, sung on sound recordings or written down in manuscripts with those melodies, form 781 different text types.<sup>16</sup> It makes on average approximately 8 texts per tune, if the melodic material is spread evenly over the texts. However, the majority of the texts was performed to only a few melody types. In fact, 47 of the 96 melody types occurred only in combination with one text, while 4 melodies featured with no less than 50 different text types. Thus, we can divide melodies into two categories, as one can see in Figure 1. Approximately half of the melodies were combined with 6 per cent of the texts (1st column) while the other half of the music was used with 94 per cent of the texts (2nd column). This second category of songs reveals the phenomenon that a few melodies are used with many different lyrics.

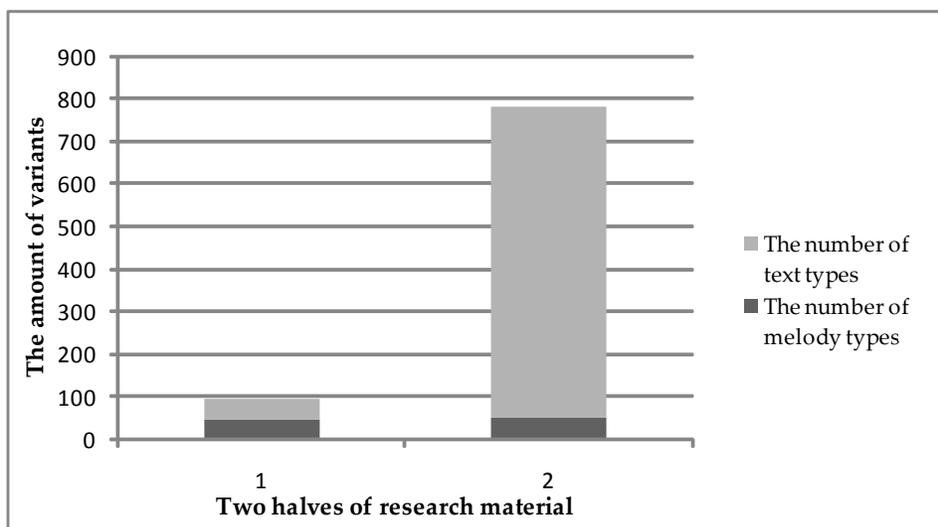


Figure 1. Text-melody relationships in old folk songs from Karksi. Approximately one half of the melodies were combined with 6 per cent of the texts (1st column), while the other half of the music was used with 94 per cent of the texts (2nd column).

CONTEXT-AND-MUSIC RELATIONSHIPS

It is quite clear from the previous section that some melodies had been used with several lyrics in the Estonian singing tradition. In the 19th century different local singing traditions existed in Estonia, with every locality having its own subtly different ways to attach melodies to lyrics. To outline some trends of regional singing traditions, reciprocal correlations between melodies and texts were found at the boundaries of parishes. In addition to computing correlations between text types and melody types,<sup>17</sup> correlations were computed for more general subdivisions made on the basis of melodic features (melody structure and contour) on the one hand and functional song genres (categorised on two levels) on the other, at the boundaries of Karksi parish (Table 1, for more details see Särg 2000).

Table 1. Correlation indexes (r) were computed for melody types, melody structures and melody contours on the one hand, and song genres on the other. Correlation indexes of more than 1 let us suppose that features are conditional on each other, while an index close to 1 let us suppose that features are conditional on each other. Only correlations above 0.75 are written into the table, so empty cells indicate a correlation index less than 0.75.

genre / function		melody contour	r	melody structure	r	melody type	r
archaic vocal genres							
	incantations	0	1.09				
	nursery rhymes	0	0.76	1-line	0.86	1(2)	1.06
	lullabies						
	reciprocal herding calls	1	1.48			1(1) 1(4)	1.48 1.09
<i>regilaul</i> songs for specific activities							
	harvest songs			x-line+R	0.99		
	wedding songs	5	0.89	1-line+R	0.89	5R(1) 6R(1)	0.99 0.84
	calendar songs incl.			x-line+R	0.78		
	mumming songs			2-line+R	1.31	1R(2) 10R(2) 11R(2)	1.14 0.97 1.39
	other			1-line+R	1.08		
<i>regilaul</i> songs in various situations							
		4 7	0.85 0.89	2-line	1.38	4.2(2) 4.3(2) 5(2) 7(2)	0.85 0.92 0.99 1.07
	(lyro)epics			2-line	0.83		
	lyrics	4 7	0.78 0.80	2-line	1.26	4.2(2) 4.3(2) 5(2) 7(2)	0.79 0.88 0.78 0.95

As we can see from the Table 1, functional context influences the choice of melodic features. For example, harvest songs, some calendar songs, wedding songs, etc., favour one (or some) specific melody type(s). Both *regilaul* genres that do not directly depend on activity, i.e. lyrics and lyroepics, to some extent use the same melody types and

structures. The songs, associated with specific works and rituals, have old one-line refrained melodies (Example 2); the songs not connected to any specific activity (lyroepic and lyric songs) have two-line refrainless melodies (Examples 3 and 4), characterised by more modern melodic features compared to one-line melodies. This result is in good accordance with earlier investigations on south Estonian folk tune structures that affirm the *regilaul* songs associated with specific works and rituals are very old by their function, content and tune (Tampere 1956b; 1964; Rüütel 1997). Traditional ritual context probably helped to maintain archaic features through the 1800s.

Some melody contours (marked with 1, 4, 5) pervade different melodic structures and serve as basic musical themes. Reciprocal herding calls (*helletused*) have a high correlation to specific descending contour 1 ( $r=1.48$ , Table 1), forming different structures. The same contour is recognisable in some incantations and children’s songs.<sup>18</sup> This kind of melodic unity can be interpreted as “monothematism” in Schimmelpenninck’s (1997) terms.

To provide an example, let us look at two specific melody types, marked 4R(1) and 4.2(2) in Table 1 above, which represent the major distinction in melodic structures found in old south Estonian folk songs.

Melody type 4R(1) and the first melody line of type 4.2(2) have a similar melodic pitch contour, but different structure, indicated by a number in brackets. Melody contour, marked with figure 4, refers to a single ascending-descending melodic curve with culmination on the 3rd note (Example 5).

The melody 4R(1) has the length of a single line (Example 2). Every line is followed by a refrain that usually consists of one or two words. Type 4R(1) is one of the most frequently occurring melody types in Karksi. In the archived material, we found 54 song variants for this melody, sung by 12 performers. In 47 instances these melodies here are associated with specific seasonal group activities – the melody appears 19 times in harvest songs and 28 times in calendar ritual songs. Songs of this kind may have had magical connotations, but they also served as entertainment.

g<sup>1</sup>=fis<sup>1</sup> Oh sa ve-li, vi-ker-kaa-ri, oh sa sõ-sar, sõst-ra-sil-ma,  
g<sup>1</sup>=g<sup>1</sup> ei ole e-sät, ei ole e-mät, ei ole en-dis-ta ha-se-da,  
e-gä kul-las-ta ko-du-da, e-gä kul-las-ta ko-du-da...

Example 4. Two-line melody. A fragment from a lyrical song *Vara vaeslapseks* about an orphan’s life, sung by Ann Jõeste (1882–1968) from Karksi parish.<sup>19</sup>

The other melody type 4.2(2) has a different structure: it consists of two different melody lines extending to two verse lines (Example 4), but the first melody line has a characteristic ascending-descending curve. This melody has been documented by 19 texts

from 11 informants. The majority of these texts (16 items) have no specific connection with ritual activities; primarily they reflect the life of women and girls, which is hardly surprising, because at the time when these songs were recorded, most singers of Estonian *regilaul* songs were women. Five of the texts are about the act of singing, while four texts consider the relationship between girls and boys and marriage.



Example 5. Widespread melody contour in Karksi, marked in tune typology with number 4 (cf. Examples 2 and 4).

Both mono- and polyfunctional tune types can be described as context related, i.e. the choice of melody strongly depends on the character of people’s activity. A lyroepic song *Venna sõjalugu* (The Brother’s War Tale) is usually sung with a two-line melody in Karksi. However, if the same text is used for prolongation of a game song *Telu tegemine* (Making *Telu*), it is sung to one-line refrained game song melody.<sup>20</sup> “Specific” melodies, connected to only one (or some specific) lyrics, differ from “polyfunctional” and “monofunctional” melodies. “Specific” melodies are text related, as the choice of melody depends first on lyrics and does not change with context.<sup>21</sup> Those songs belong to the more recent singing tradition.

#### SINGER

Estonian folklore collectors write that singers know many verses, but sing them to very few melodies. Folk music collector, Juhan Aavik, who would later go on to become a composer, has written:

Here is a good “harvest” of the firsts [=lyrics] – but few of the seconds [=melodies], because *regiverses* for wedding, horse herding, pasturing, etc., have almost the same tunes – excluding variants. (Tampere 1935: 14)

Another collector, August Kiiss wrote in 1908 in his diary:

The host of Lapardi farmstead who sang us a lot of lyrics, used principally one tune. (EÜS V 180)

There were no professional singers in the Estonian rural community. Most of them were farmers, and rather poor people. Some singers were considered to be better than others and they were often asked to sing at communal events, especially at weddings. *Regilaul* singers used a few of melodies for their entire repertoire, usually one or two local melodies for each function, learned from their relatives and village people. Estonian peasants lived for a long time as sedentary people, so they got little information from outside their communities.

The most ancient characteristics of a good *regilaul* singer are found in song lyrics. Several text types are about singing.<sup>22</sup> There is no direct notion about musical abilities (e.g. about singing complicated melodies, carrying a tune well, creating melodies,

knowing many melodies), but a singer's skill to (re)create lyrics, her/his large repertoire of words, magical power and a good (loud, resounding) voice are pointed to in lyrics.

A wonderful voice is often described as *hele* (bright, magnisonant), *kume* (resounding), *hõbedane* (silvery), while good singing is characterised with onomatopoeic words *laksuma* (to slap),<sup>23</sup> *kukkuma* (to cuckoo),<sup>24</sup> *paukuma* (to bang) (Tedre 1969: 100, 105, 116, 123, 125). Very typical are verses in which a singer vaunts that everybody will listen to her, the war will stop, the sea changes into the earth, etc.

<i>Laulan ma mere mäeksa,</i> <i>merekivi killingaks!</i> <i>Ärä ma seie-ks lõo lõõri,</i> <i>ärä seie kure kurgu –</i> <i>selle mul eks mul hääle heledäp,</i> <i>kurk selle kumedap.</i>	I will sing a sea into a mountain, A sea stone into a shilling! I ate up a lark's warbling, I ate up a crane's throat – Therefore my voice is brighter My throat is more resounding.
---	---

Text type *Ma laulan mere maaksi* (I will Sing the Sea into the Earth), Hargla parish. (Tedre 1969: 115)

Singers boast about their great repertoire and can even offer to lend words to other singers.

<i>Nõnda on minul sõnuda,</i> <i>kui neid uusida ubeda,</i> <i>keedetuida herne'eida,</i> <i>lülituida pähkelaida.</i> <i>Koju jätsin kotitäie,</i> <i>maha matsin matitäie,</i> <i>kivi alla kerstutäie,</i> <i>ahjule halli vaiba täie,</i> <i>parsile palakatäie.</i> <i>Koasa tõin ma karbitäie,</i> <i>koasa karbikoanetäie.</i>	I have so many words As new beans, As boiled grean peas, As hulled hazelnuts. I left home a sackful [of words], Buried a matful, Under the stone a chestful, On the oven a grey-rugful, On the ceiling boards a sheetful. I took with me a boxful, A box-coverful.
---	--

Text type *Palju sõnu* (Many Words), Väike-Maarja parish. (Tedre 1969: 119)

The opposite is true of melodies, about which very little is said, and if it happens, then it is probably caused by poetic language. Namely, when "song" (*laul*) is used in a main verse line, then "tune" (*viis*) often appears in a parallel lines as a poetic synonym for a song. It also might be that "song" mainly means lyrics, and "tune" means melodies, to combine to produce a consistent picture of a whole song.

<i>Küll om laulu, kui ma lasen,</i> <i>küll viisi, kui veeretan!</i>	There is much singing, when I let it go, There is much melody, when I let it roll!
---	---

Text type *Palju laulu* (Many Songs), Viljandi parish. (Tedre 1969: 121)

But sometimes a singer really can talk about having many melodies, as in the next example. Each district had their own melodies (sometimes overlapping) and a singer who had roamed around a little and visited different parishes really could have more tunes.

*Minul on viie valla viisid,  
kuue valla kuultised,  
seitsme valla seisatused.  
Küll mul laulu, kui laulaksin,  
küll mul viisi, kui viitsiksin [...].*

I have the melodies of five parishes,  
The hearings of six parishes,  
Standings of seven parishes.  
I'd have much song, if I'd sing,  
Much tune, if I'd want [...].

Text type *Palju sõnu* (Many Words), Kihelkonna parish. (Tedre 1969: 119)

Usually the number of melodies depended on the number of song genres that a singer used. For example, the singer Greete Jents (1893–1975) from Karksi parish, who had learned singing tradition mainly from her grandmother and mother, both known as great singers, had a limited number of melodies. There are 71 old folk song variants recorded from her in the Estonian Folklore Archives, including repetitive recordings of some songs. Greete Jents uses approximately 12 separate melody types and 31 separate text types; 12 melody types include 5 group melodies and 7 special melodies. She uses group melodies for the following song groups (one melody type for each point): (1) lyroepic and lyric songs, also herding songs of lyrical character, (2) older calendar songs (Shrove Tuesday, swinging, St. John's game) and a harvest song, (3) wedding songs, (4) game songs, (5) children's songs, (6) speech-like intonations: incantations, imitations of birdsong.<sup>25</sup> Greete Jents uses special melodies for the following songs: (7) a local herding call (*helletus*), (8) a more recent melody for the St. Martin's Day mumming, (9–12) four different songs (a flax plucking song, a lyric song and two lyroepic songs).<sup>26</sup>

Greete Jents sings 25 variants from 10 text types (i.e. approximately one third of her recordings) to her favourite melody type (see Example 3). She says about those songs: "They all have the same tone".<sup>27</sup> Two of her melody types (points 7, 8) can also be called monofunctional in Karksi.<sup>28</sup> Special tunes, sung by Greete Jents, have also been recorded by other singers who use the same melody. They have more recent melodic character and were probably adapted from Estonian neighbours in the last centuries.<sup>29</sup>

## TUNE DEVELOPMENT

In the older *regilaul* tradition melody was orally transmitted and called to mind by memory, rather than consciously composed. Folk singers do not talk about creating melodies but explain changes in tune traditions as the "emerging" or "coming" of a new melody. For example, Peeter Sild from Karksi parish said that a more modern melody for mumming songs came in about 1895 from Peraküla village, close to the Latvian border.<sup>30</sup> Composing melodies was also rare in the later end-rhymed song tradition. We can suppose that some new melodies developed through subtle changes in existing tunes, and that some of them had been borrowed or adapted from neighbours. South Estonian refrained *regilaul* melodies refer to a southern influence, as similar structures are much used in Slavic and Baltic folk songs, although neither in north Estonian nor Finnish-Karelian songs.

When a singer needed a new melody she/he obviously adapted it from another song. If there is talk about composing, it is merely about song lyrics. For example, folk singer Elena Animägi was once asked to make a song for the anniversary of a local collective farm named "Karksi". Elena told a folklore collector: "The chairman left, I started to

cook porridge, while stirring porridge with a wooden spoon I thought up song lyrics.”<sup>31</sup> (Särg 2008: 91) Elena did not create a melody, but used a traditional folk dance *polka* tune. Another example relates to the innovation of an old incantation by folk singer Anna Evert. Incantations were traditionally performed with speech-like intonation and rigid rhythm, but Anna Evert probably did not like that archaic method of intonation. She had adapted a weather incantation *Tule välja, Päevakene!* (Sun, Come Out!), to two different melodies: to a wedding tune and to a *helletus*, a special herding tune (ibid.: 97). The function of melody is obvious by its contour and function-related refrain *kaske*, in the case of wedding songs, and characteristic melody type in the case of a *helletus*.

The way of acquiring songs is discussed in *regilaul* lyrics, especially in certain song types.<sup>32</sup> According to *regilaul* lyrics, song texts can be composed by different people (e.g. children, boys), and also figuratively forged by a smith (ibid.: 137).

Characteristic are questions and assumptions about the method of a song’s acquisition, followed by the singer’s answers. One of the main logical assumptions is that the songstress has been to different counties to learn many songs. However, the latter usually answers that she got the songs at a wedding, at work or even learned them from birds (see examples below). This figurative speech indirectly refers to (re)creation. Again, melodies are mentioned in parallel lines as synonyms for songs or lyrics, and tunes.

[...] see käind Arjus õppimasse,  
Virus viisi võttemas.

[...] ma’p käind Arjus õppimasse,  
Virus viisi võttemas.

Ära mina ütlen selle koha,  
kus ma need lood luges(in),  
kus ma viisid veeretäsin  
ja kus mõtted mõlgutas –  
arus eina niitessagi,  
luhas loogu võttessag(i),  
kurus kuhja luuessagi,  
kodo kangasta kudud.

[...] She gadded about learning them in Harju,  
She got those tunes in Viru.

[...] I did not gad about learning songs in Harju,  
Nor did I get those tunes in Viru.

I will tell you that place,  
Where I read those stories,  
Where I rolled those tunes,  
And mulled those thoughts –  
In the pasture mowing hay,  
In the meadow raking it up,  
In the shed piling it high,  
At home weaving cloth.

Text type *Kust laulud saadud*. (From Where Songs Came), Kuusalu parish. (Tampere et al. 2003: 144)

In some song variants the opinion that the melody existed beforehand, and a singer acquired the lyrics, is expressed.

[Eit/taat viis mind pulma,]  
juot mind laulige kabasta,  
pillipuhuja piekerista –  
sield mina laulule ladusin,  
sanad viisile vedäsin.  
Lu’ud mina luuasta arutin,  
sanad haui hambaasta.

[Mother/father took me to weddings,]  
Gave me drink from the singer’s mug,  
From the bagpiper’s beaker –  
From there I heaped up my song,  
Drew words to a melody.  
I untied my yarns from a broom,  
I got my words from a pike’s tooth.

Text type *Pulmades laulikuks saanud* (I Became a Singer at Weddings), Kuusalu parish. (Tampere 1938: 121)

*Kust aga laps nee laulud saanud,  
sanad aga viisile vedänud?*

Where has this child got these songs from,  
Drawn words to the melody?

Text type *Kust laulud saadud* (From Where Songs Came), Kuusalu parish. (Rüütel 1994: 6)

In following example “words” in the main verse line is juxtaposed with “tunes” in the parallel line, to give a wider picture of the song. The expression *meel motles* “mind thought” can mean various mental processes in Estonian, including creation, recreation and recollection.

[...] *suu mul säedles sõnuda,  
meel mul motles viisikesi.*

[...] My mouth set words,  
My mind thought tunes.

Text type *Kust laulud saadud* (From Where Songs Came), Viljandi parish. (Tedre 1969: 107)

*Regilaul* persistently changed in oral tradition and can jointly represent fragments of archaic and modern thinking. In the late 1800s the first Estonian composers started to compose choir songs, therefore some lyrics can represent quite recent creative input into music creation.

## TERMS

*Regilaul* melodies are designated by the native terms *toon* (tone, tune), *viis* (tune), (*h*)*ääl* (voice), *mõnu* (joy), etc. (see Tampere 1956a: 12; Rüütel 1999: 92). Both *toon* and *viis* are probably loans from Middle High German (*tōn, dōn; wīse*) and also mean the way of acting, intoning (Duden 1989); *viis* is more often used for more modern end-rhymed folk song layers. *Hääl* sometimes occurs in *regilaul* texts as a parallel word for “lyrics”, and as “words/tune” form a typical word pair, “tune” can be merged to some extent there.

[*Kui me hakkame laulma, pole karta,*  
*et meil sõnu puudunesse,*  
*ääli ärä lõpenes,*  
*kurgust kurja üteldes,*  
*äälest või äbü tetänes.*

[If we begin singing, it could not happen,]  
That we lack words  
Or we run out of voice,  
So that men can run down our throat,  
Or shame our voice.

Text type *Lauljaid otsitakse* (Searching For Singers), Karksi parish. (Tampere 1941: 144)

Vernacular terms for certain types of melodies are usually generic terms, referring to a song’s function, e.g. *kiigetoon* (swinging tune) and *karjatoon* (herding tune) in north Estonia. The folklore collector Gustav Vilberg (Vilbaste) recorded in his diary from Kuusalu parish in 1911 that in addition to functional genres there are also special men’s tunes. This could refer to the fact that other song genres were sung by women.

A similar variety of melodies [as of lyrics] is not found. Almost everywhere one meets the following “tunes”: the swinging tune, the wedding tune, the herding tune, the men’s tune and the game tune. These tunes are not absolutely the same

in each village, and while the differences are often subtle, they can also be greater, e.g. the swinging tune in Tappurla village is very different from the swinging tune used in Virve village. (EÜS VIII 1238/9)

In south Estonia several generic terms have developed from characteristic function-related refrain words, e.g. *kaasitus* (wedding song with refrain words *kaasike*, *kaske*, *kaske-kanke*, etc.), *leesitus* (harvesting song with *üles*, *üle-(h)es-les-les*, etc.), *helletus*, *õlletus* (special reciprocal herding calls with *(h)ella*, *õlle*, etc.). Those terms were used to derive designations for melodies, e.g. *kaasitusviis* (tune of wedding songs). When folk singer Anna Evert discussed what melody to choose, she characterised tunes with terms like *kaasiteme* (verb “to sing with *kaske*”) and *ellatamine* (substantive “singing with herding call melody”), derived from context-related refrains.<sup>33</sup> Sometimes generic terms, especially terms for wedding songs (*kaasitused*, *pulmalaulud*), were generalised to designate all local *regilaul* songs in recent tradition (Rüütel 1999: 91; Särg 2008: 48).

Ingrid Rüütel has pointed out that the native term for a “song”, *laul*, is used only for pieces with poetic text and well-formed musical structure. For example, although the herding calls (*helletused*) have musically developed melodies, they have never been called “songs” by folk singers as they had quite short and simple lyrics (Rüütel 1997: 40; 1999: 95).

#### REGILAU SINGERS ABOUT WORDS-AND-MELODY RELATIONSHIP TODAY

An unbroken *regilaul* tradition has survived only in some peripheral districts, such as Kihnu island and Setomaa, and also in the Seto diaspora in Siberia today, although singing contexts are changing everywhere. In village communities old cultural traditions are now being taken over by local folklore groups. The traditional way of improvising lyrics is to some extent still alive. Interesting memories about *regilaul* singing were recorded among Siberian Setos during fieldwork in 2008. One of the collectors, folklorist Andreas Kalkun, has concluded that Siberian Setos distinguish between two basically different singing traditions: on the one hand, the Seto *regilaul* tradition with neither definite lyrics nor a strophic structure, and on the other hand, Estonian and Russian end-rhymed songs with fixed, strophic, lyrics. In the Siberian Setos’ opinion only the latter can be called (ordinary) songs. They say that the Seto *regilaul* singing tradition does not include songs as fixed entities, but singing means that “words are being gathered to the tune”. That is, in ritual contexts women created many song lyrics to a traditional tune, probably compiling formulaic motifs and their own improvisations. Old women told folklore collectors about long-lasting singing sessions at weddings, herding and funerals, etc. (Kalkun, Sibul 2008) For example, this fragment from a dialogue:

Semmeni Olli: We had a sister All’a, she started a random song at a wedding and then sang [the same song] all through the wedding. She had many words.

Kopa Manni: Kunaski Nati also had many words, once when we stayed at the night quarters, she was running the same tune throughout the whole God’s night, and those words, where she gathered them from. (ERA, DV 640, 9:20–10:40)

A contemporary famous folk song improviser among Estonian Setos, Kukka Mari, sings all her songs to some well known local tunes: "Mari sings all her thoughts to party tunes, some of them to a longer, some to a shorter tune, depending on which fits better" (Sarv 2004: 52–53).

Apart from a few remnants of old *regilaul* tradition in countryside, there is a powerful folk song revival all over Estonia. Several folklore groups started their activity in the 1970s. Their music was mainly revived from folk song publications that have been compiled on the basis of archived sources, but partly learned from oral tradition in countryside. As a result of their activity, many completely forgotten folk songs and games became very popular in towns and spread in oral tradition, especially the melodies. Today a secondary tradition includes both staged performances and spontaneous group singing.

It was interesting to know if a tendency to use only a few melodies occurs in contemporary oral *regilaul* tradition. My own presupposition was that folklore groups, performing on the stage, have to entertain audiences and cannot be very monotonous, as contemporary people prefer variety in music. Therefore a staged program usually comprises melodies of different character, i.e. songs from different districts and different genres and/or do not last too long. Similarly, a music CD of a folklore group never contains two songs with the same melody.

But what happens at spontaneous group singing, also called singing in its primary function (Klusen 1986)? To get more information, I took part in singing occasions and interviewed some contemporary famous folk singers. Sometimes singers compiled and improvised song lyrics during the singing session.

*Regilaul* group singing can be fully spontaneous (e.g. at afterparties) or organised events (called "*regilaul* room" or "nest") where some good folk singers are invited. In live *regilaul* singing, one person has the role of a leader and she or he sings verses, repeated by others. All participants can act as leader by turns, or anyone who has a good idea for the next verse or next song, can continue. Once an improvisation starts, the melody does not change. It is also quite possible that during one singing occasion several songs can be sung to one melody.

Among contemporary *regilaul* singers we find many young people without musical education, so they cannot read and write musical notes. Moreover, some of them are so fascinated with oral transmission that they basically do not use writing at all, even for learning long song lyrics or remembering their own improvisations. Singers have discovered *regilaul* for themselves in different ways, e.g. they have experienced an impressive song performance by relatives or friends who are active in the folklore movement. Often they are people who like music but are without academic musical training.

One of the most appreciated *regilaul* singers is Lauri Õunapuu (born in 1979) in Tallinn, a leader of the *Arhailise Meestelaulu Selts* (Society of Traditional Male Singing) and a member of a very popular ethno-rock band *Metsatöll*. Many people appreciate him highly as a powerful transmitter of our "ancestors' voices and ancient memories" (Õunapuu 2007). He tried to learn classical guitar in childhood, but gave it up because of an angry teacher. So he started to play several instruments on his own. His folk music interest increased step by step, influenced by the atmosphere of the Estonian national movement in the 1990s, ethnic music in films, folklore concerts and his grandparents' songs in Viljandi county. He works as an IT specialist, composes songs, plays different folk instruments and sings (Sommer 2006; Õunapuu 2007).

Lauri said that he has quite a few tunes compared to the number of texts. He learns melodies by ear, but has also used a computer program: "I mainly hear [melodies] from other singing people. I have quite a few tunes compared to songs, the most part [of my lyrics] I sing to one-two-three tunes."<sup>34</sup>

Lauri can quickly remember lyrics, he knows all his large repertory by heart and in principle does not use written texts. However, he often records musical ideas using a dictaphone (Mägi 2006). Lauri mentioned that it is better not to use too many different melodies. Firstly because it is much easier for him to remember and (re)create song lyrics than melodies. Secondly, in singing situations it would be easier both for a leader and a choir to sing to a limited number of tunes.

Sometimes he has been asked to create songs for festivities, e.g. for Queen Elizabeth's greeting in Tallinn in 2006. In such cases he creates only the song lyrics and uses some of his favourite tunes. Lauri said that if he had a separate melody for each set of lyrics he would write it down. He admitted that some people disdain this kind of singing:

I know, it is said about me, that I sing very poorly, in a dragging and boring way, but those people like very to rap all songs up quickly, so I don't think of my songs as being poor, it depends on people's taste.

Both, traditional and contemporary *regilaul* singers sometimes forget the tune under the influence of a previous tune and – consciously or unconsciously – continue singing with the same melody. The experienced *regilaul* singer Kadri Kukk (born in 1893) from Karksi, rarely changed melody during long recording sessions in the 1960s and 1970s. There are song lyrics recorded by her with two or three different melodies, depending more on the previous melody than on the character of the song. All songs tended to be given similar melodies if sung in the same context, i.e. when she was interviewed by the folklorists.

Contemporary singers also told me how easy it is to forget a well-prepared melody under the influence of previous songs. Ülle Paltser (born in Tallinn) has learned songs from childhood in the Leegajus folklore group and is now a leader of the Sinimaniseele folklore group in Tartu. She said at one of the singing sessions:

I have often experienced that I had just listened to a song recording, then I sang this song the whole way, but if I had got to a repetition, I opened my mouth and another tune came out! [...] It often happens that you start to sing the tune of the previous song. (ERA, DH 106)

## CONCLUSIONS

In this article some characteristic aspects of Estonian singing culture were analysed, which appear at first as the abundance of lyrics and scarcity of melodies. A similar phenomenon has been described in different musical cultures and I supposed that it could be universal for oral music traditions. The research was mainly based on materials from the Estonian Folklore Archives and interviews with contemporary folk singers.

Old Estonian folk songs were combinations of melody and text that emerged during performance following the local singing tradition. Old folk songs include *regilaul* with a homogeneous metre, performed by a leader and a chorus, and some other archaic vocal

genres, performed solo. The text was usually the primary aspect and the music existed as a traditional mode of uttering metrically and poetically structured lyrics, often closely related to singing context. The main task of a singer was to (re)create or improvise lyrics, fitting them into the context. Song texts with the same or similar functions tended to be performed with the same melody (or similar melodies), which were orally transmitted in local tradition. So it happened that the *regilaul* tradition operated with a bulk of lyrics and a handful of melodies.

An unitary Estonian culture did not exist until the late 1800s, although every region had its subtle differences. Word-and-melody relationships and context-and-melody relationships have been analysed in the singing tradition of Karksi parish. Statistical analyses of the 700 song variants demonstrated that approximately half of the melodies were combined with 6 per cent of the texts. The main difference emerged between context-related and text-related melodies, i.e. there are older general tunes whose usage depended on context (they can be used in one or several functional contexts, and the same lyrics can be sung with different melodies in different contexts), and slightly newer specific tunes, used with certain lyrics. Among context-related tunes mono- and polyfunctional melodies can be distinguished, used in one or several song genres, although they have no strict separation.

*Regilaul* singers used a few melodies for their entire repertoire, usually one/two local melodies for each function plus some specific tunes learned from their relatives and village people. Singer Greete Jents from Karksi parish has sung approximately one third of her recordings to her favourite melody type. Folklore collectors wrote that singers know many verses, but sing them to very few melodies.

*Regilaul* lyrics about singing let us suppose that singers did not pay much attention to melodies. Singers' musical abilities (e.g. singing complicated melodies, carrying a tune well, creating melodies, knowing many melodies) are not directly mentioned, but their skill to (re)creat lyrics, and her/his magical power and a good (usually loud, resounding) voice are pointed out. Folk singers did not talk about creating melodies, but in interviews explained changes in tune traditions as the "emerging" or "coming" of a new melody. When a singer needed a new melody she/he obviously adapted it from another song. *Regilaul* lyrics about song creation do not distinguish clearly between the composition of lyrics and tunes. In some variants the opinion is expressed that a melody existed before a singer acquired the lyrics.

Estonian vernacular terms for melodies (or melody types) are mainly generic terms referring to a song's function, e.g. "swinging tone" (*kiigeton*).

Contemporary Estonian *regilaul* singers without musical education who (re)create and improvise songs, say it is easier to sing all lyrics to a few melodies than to have a different melody for each song text. Both traditional and contemporary *regilaul* singers sometimes forgot the melody when under the influence of the previous melody and consciously or unconsciously continued singing with the same melody. If singers start to improvise lyrics in spontaneous singing situation today, they do not change a melody.

Research into the melody-and-words relationship in Estonian folk songs demonstrates that quite a low number of context-related melodies that were not consciously created were in circulation. Singers' creative powers were probably centred on song lyrics. The main task of a singer was to (re)create or improvise lyrics for communal singing. As it would be quite impossible to have both complicated lyrics and melodies without a written notation system, the music had to be simple (cf. Nettl 1964: 201).

This result supports a hypothesis that the scarcity of melodies can be characteristic or even universal for text-centred oral music cultures, as it facilitates text (re)creation. If a group of people wished to express themselves together and with emotional power in different conditions using memorised and recreated texts, then the best way was to sing it to a ready tune. The Estonian peasant singing tradition developed in a manner that fulfilled those conditions.

## NOTES

1 Translations here and below by the author.

2 “Tune” can mean a particular “melody shape” or more generally a variable “melodic framework” here (Schimmelpenninck 1997: 226).

3 The book is edited and to some extent co-authored by Frank Kouwenhoven (Schimmelpenninck 1997: xiv).

4 Folk song anthologies do not reflect the usage of melodies in real singing tradition, but offer various possible tunes for contemporary people. Of course, the wider variety of melodies is preferred by folklore groups and composers searching for (raw) material for their performances and compositions.

5 End-rhymed strophic songs emerged under the influence of European music and were usually performed outside the ritual context as entertainment.

6 The contents of songs were closely related to an activity, so the Estonian generic classification of folk songs is based on the function and content of song lyrics. The main song genres are connected to works, calendar rituals, family rituals, games and activities with children. The majority of songs, unrelated to a certain activity, is classified by their content as lyroepics and lyrical.

7 Most songs have been recorded from a single singer without a chorus as the *regilaul* singing tradition had almost perished by the period of active folklore collection. Therefore, verse repetition is quite rare in Karksi sound recordings, especially in the case of one-line refrainless *regilaul* melodies (Example 1). As far as is known via sound recordings and memories, various refrained melodies (Example 2) and two-line refrainless melodies (Examples 3, 4) were used for communal singing with a leader and a chorus in Karksi.

8 More rare in the *regilaul* tradition are three- and more-line tunes.

9 RKM, Mgn II 385 b, recorded by Herbert Tampere in 1960.

10 RKM, Mgn II 1767 e, recorded by Ingrid Rüütel and Olli Kõiva in 1970 (Särg 2008: 339).

11 RKM, Mgn II 551 b, recorded by Herbert Tampere and Selma Lätt in 1961 (Särg 2008: 249).

12 The parish was the main unit of administrative division and its borders had coincided with cultural areas in Estonia since ancient times. The parish is divided into townships that comprised several villages.

13 It is supposed in Estonian folk song study that a transcription, made in fieldwork, can represent a generalisation of several melodic variants, sung by an informant.

14 It is often unclear whether the singer sang all her/his lyrics to the same melody or the melody was sung once (or several times) and then additional lyrics were dictated, referring to the melody.

15 Every individual researcher may make somewhat different choices, relying on the experience of our research group in analysing *regilaul* melodies. Usually, at first several attempts are made using slightly different criteria for distinguishing melody types.

16 The number of different text types is somewhat greater than the number of melody variants, because some melody variants were used for several text types. Sometimes many lyrics were compiled by the singer in a way that made it difficult to decide if there are one or more songs.

17 The empirical frequency of both features occurring together was divided by the theoretical frequency of their occurring together. The theoretical frequency was computed using the following formula:  $(n^1 \cdot n^2 / n^1 + n^2)$ , where  $n^1$  and  $n^2$  stand for the occurrence of each feature.

18 Sung by Marie Helimets from Karksi, RKM, Mgn II 624 a, c, d (Särg 2008: 135–137, 139).

19 RKM, Mgn II 540 a, recorded by Herbert Tampere in 1961 (Särg 2008: 330).

20 Sung by Mai Mölder from Karksi, RKM, Mgn II 587 j.

21 As intermediate form between “special” melody and “group”, “polyfunctional”, “general” melody are some “semispecial” melodies, used with a few lyrics of similar structure, e.g. some songs with the *vat-luuli* refrain, which have developed as later variants from archaic *regilaul* text types such as *Tilluke teopoiss* (Little Serf), *Hollandi sulane* (The Netherlands’ Farmhand) and *Loomine* (The Song of World Creation).

22 Text types *Ei mind jõua ohjad hoida* (Reins cannot Hold Me), *Küla jääb kuulama* (the Village will Listen to Me), *Metsamurd* (Forest Break), *Hea hääl* (Good Voice) and *Hädine hääl* (Feeble Voice) (Tedre 1969: 97–167).

23 *Laksu(ta)ma* – verb, derived from onomatopoeic word *laks* (slap, clap) stands *inter alia* for nightingale’s singing.

24 *Kukkuma* – verb, derived from onomatopoeic word *kuk(k)u* (cuckoo).

25 Some of those melodies (points 6–8) can alternatively be regarded as being monofunctional tunes that tend to become rather special, e.g. the mumming song melody is in principle related to a St. Martin’s or St. Catherine’s Day context, but it is always used with the same lyrics.

26 Text types *Lina katkudes sain märjaks* (I Got Drenched While Plucking Flax), *Ema ja armud* (Mother and Loves), *Tilluke teopoiss* (A Little Farm Fand) and *Venna sõjalugu* (The Brother’s War Tale).

27 RKM II 273, 635, written by Olli Kõiva in 1970 (Särg 2008: 177).

28 In more detail, melody (8) is also used for St. Catherine’s Day mumming two weeks later, but the customs of both holidays are very similar.

29 For example, the melody of a lyric song *Ema ja armud* (Mother and Loves) has Latvian origin (Goldin 1977: 131–134).

30 RKM II 87, 627 (5, 6), written by Herbert and Erna Tampere in 1960.

31 RKM II 94, 645/6, written by Olli Kõiva in 1960.

32 Text types *Kust laulud saadud* (From where songs have come), *Pulmades laulikuks saanud* (I became a singer at weddings) and *Laulud tööl õpitud* (I learned my songs at work) (Tedre 1969: 111).

33 Anna Evert asks: “Whether I have to sing refrain *kaske* or *ella* in between verses?” RKM, Mgn II 615 k, 1961 (Särg 2008: 101).

34 Here and below is quoted my phone interview with Lauri Õunapuu 2008.

## SOURCES

ERA – Estonian Folklore Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum.

ERA, DH – Collection of digital sound recordings.

ERA, DV – Collection of digital video recordings.

EÜS – Manuscript collection of the Estonian Student Society.

RKM II – Manuscript collection of the State Literary Museum.

RKM, Mgn II – Collection of sound recordings on open-reel tapes of the State Literary Museum.

## REFERENCES

- Duden 1989 = *Duden Etymologie: Herkunftswörterbuch der deutschen Sprache. 2. völlig neu bearbeitete und erweiterte Auflage von Günther Drosdowski*. Bd. 7. Mannheim [etc.]: Dudenverlag.
- ECC = Erie Canal culture (Ballad of the Erie Canal). – <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA02/volpe/canal/music.html> (accessed September 21, 2009).
- Espeland, Velle 1995. The Lullaby. The Problem of Typology for Non-narrative Folksongs. – *Arv: Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*. Vol. 51: 351–355. [http://www.visearkivet.no/pdf\\_filer/diverse\\_artikler/english/the\\_lullabye.pdf](http://www.visearkivet.no/pdf_filer/diverse_artikler/english/the_lullabye.pdf) (accessed September 21, 2009).
- Gerasimov 1977 = Герасимов, О. Некоторые замечания о музыкальном фольклоре елабужской группы восточных мари. [Resümee: Mõningaid märkmeid idamaride Jelabuga rühma muusikalisest folkloorist. Zusammenfassung: Bemerkungen zur Musikfolklore der Jelabuga-Gruppe der Östlichem Mari.] – Ingrid Rüütel (toim./ред.). *Soome-ugri rahvaste muusikapärandid. Музыкальное наследие финно-угорских народов*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1977, 402–438.
- Goldin 1977 = Гольдин, М. Латышско-эстонские связи в народном музыкальном творчестве. [Resümee: Läti ja eesti rahvamuusika suhetest. Zusammenfassung: Zusammenhänge der lettischen und estnischen Volksmusik.] – Ingrid Rüütel (toim./ред.). *Soome-ugri rahvaste muusikapärandid. Музыкальное наследие финно-угорских народов*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1977, 104–134.
- Gomon 1977 = Гомон, А. Песни ижор. [Resümee: Isurite laule. Zusammenfassung: Lieder der Ishoren.] – Ingrid Rüütel (toim./ред.). *Soome-ugri rahvaste muusikapärandid. Музыкальное наследие финно-угорских народов*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1977, 282–291.
- Kalkun, Andreas; Tiit Sibul 2008. Siberi setod – omad ja võõrad. A Paper at the Conference of The Estonian Academic Society of Folklore, October 30, 2008. Tartu, the Estonian Literary Museum. [Manuscript.]
- KLP 1992 = *Kiriku laulu- ja palveraamat*. [Tallinn]: EELK Konsistooriumi kirjastusosakond, 1992.
- Klusen, Ernst 1986 [1968]: The Group Song as Object. – James R. Dow, Hannjost Lixfeld (ed. and transl.) *German Volkskunde. A Decade of Theoretical Confrontation, Debate, and Reorientation (1967–1977)*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 184–202.
- Lintrop, Aado 1991. 1990. aasta Kaug-Ida ekspeditsiooni päevik. The Estonian Folklore Archives, ERA, KK 98. [Manuscript.]
- Mägi, Marko 2006. Lauri Õunapuu. – *Eesti Ekspress*. Nr. 36 (874): A 35.
- Nettl, Bruno 1964. *Theory and Method in Ethnomusicology*. [New York]: Free Press of Glencoe.
- Rüütel, Ingrid 1977. Vadja rahvamuusika tüpoloogia ja stiilid. [Резюме: Типология и стили водской народной музыки. Zusammenfassung: Die Typologie und die Stile der wotischen Volksmusik.] – Ingrid Rüütel (toim./ред.). *Soome-ugri rahvaste muusikapärandid. Музыкальное наследие финно-угорских народов*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1977, 216–277.
- Rüütel, Ingrid 1982. Oudekki Figuurova vadja rahvaviisid. [Резюме: Водские народные напевы Оудекки Фигуровой. Zusammenfassung: Die wotischen Melodien von Oudekki Figuurova.] – Jüri Linnus (toim.). *Läänemeresoomlaste etnokultuuri küsimusi*. Tallinn: Valgus, 1982, 41–52.
- Rüütel, Ingrid; Koit Haugas 1990. A Method for Distinguishing Melody Types and Establishing Typological Groups. (On the Material of Estonian Runo Songs) – M.G. Boroda (ed.). *Musikometrika 2. Quantitative Linguistics*. Vol. 43: 169–186.
- Rüütel, Ingrid (toim.) 1994. *Suu laulab, süda muretseb. Valimik eesti rahvalaule. Anthology of Estonian Folk Songs*. Tallinn: Forte. [CD]
- Rüütel, Ingrid 1997. Estonian Folk Music Layers in the Context of Ethnic Relations. – *Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore*. Vol. 6: 32–69. <http://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol6/ruutel.htm> (accessed September 21, 2009).
- Rüütel, Ingrid 1999. Varafolkloorsetelt vokaalžanridelt lauluni III. – *Mäetagused*. Vol. 10: 90–105. <http://haldjas.folklore.ee/tagused/III> (accessed September 21, 2009).

- Sarv, Õio 2004. Kukka Mari laulu' ku aolugu. [Summary: Kukka Mari's Songs as History.] – Mari Sarv (ed.). *Regilaul – loodud või saadud?* Tartu: Eesti Kirjandusmuuseum, Eesti Rahvaluule Arhiiv. Eesti Kultuuriloo ja Folkloristika Keskus, 51–62, 261–262.
- Schimmelpenninck, Antoinet 1997. *Chinese Folk Songs and Folk Singers. Shan'ge Traditions in Southern Jiangsu*. Leiden: CHIME Foundation.
- Schweitzer, Albert 1908. The Origin of the Melodies of the Chorales. – <http://www.bach-cantatas.com/Articles/CM-Schweitzer.htm> (accessed September 21, 2009).
- Sommer, Lauri 2006. Kui on hundisyda sees. Intervjuu Lauri Õunapuuga ansamblist Metsatöll. – *Muusika*. Vol. 7: 4–8.
- Särg, Taive 2000. Vanemate rahvalaulutekstide ja -viiside seosed Karksi kihelkonna kalendrilauludes. [Summary: The Relations of Texts and Melodies in Early Calendar Songs of Karksi Parish.] – Tiiu Jaago, Ülo Valk (toim.). *Kust tulid lood minule... Artikleid regilaulu uurimise alalt 1990. aastatel*. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 277–327, 349–352.
- Särg, Taive 2008. *Karksi vanad rahvalaulud viisidega I*. Tartu: Eesti Kirjandusmuuseumi Teaduskirjastus.
- Tampere, Herbert 1935. *Eesti rahvaviiside antoloogia. Anthologia Cantuum Popularum Estonorum I*. Tallinn.
- Tampere, Herbert 1938. *Vana Kannel III. Kuusalu vanad rahvalaulud I. Mit einer Zusammenfassung. Alte Estnische Volkslieder aus dem Kirchspiel Kuusalu I*. Tallinn: K. O.-Ü. Kultuurikoondis.
- Tampere, Herbert 1941. *Vana Kannel IV. Karksi vanad rahvalaulud I*. Tartu: Teaduslik Kirjandus.
- Tampere, Herbert 1956a. *Eesti rahvalaule viisidega I*. Tallinn: Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus.
- Tampere, Herbert 1956b. Mõningaid eestlaste etnilise ajaloo küsimusi suulise rahvaloomingu valgusel. – Harri Moora (toim.). *Eesti rahva etnilisest ajaloost*. Tallinn: Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus, 255–277.
- Tampere, Herbert 1956–1965. *Eesti rahvalaule viisidega I–V*. Tallinn: Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus.
- Tampere, Herbert 1964. *Die Stiltypen der Melodik estnischer Runen*. Tallinn: Akademie der Wissenschaften der Estnischen SSR.
- Tampere, Herbert; Erna Tampere; Otilie Kõiva (toim.) 2003 (1970). *Eesti rahvamuusika antoloogia. Helisalvestusi Eesti Rahvaluule Arhiivist 3. Anthology of Estonian Traditional Music. Recordings from the Estonian Folklore Archives 3*. Tartu: Eesti Kirjandusmuuseum.
- Tedre, Ülo (toim.) 1969. *Eesti rahvalaulud. Antoloogia I*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat.
- Tedre, Ülo (toim.) 1970. *Eesti rahvalaulud. Antoloogia II*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat.
- Tedre, Ülo (toim.) 1971–1972. *Eesti rahvalaulud. Antoloogia III*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat.
- Tedre, Ülo (toim.) 1974. *Eesti rahvalaulud. Antoloogia IV*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat.
- Vitolņš, Jekabs 1986. *Латышские свадебные песни. – Kāzu dziesmas. Latviešu tautas mūzika*. Rīgā: Zinātne, 31–40.
- Õunapuu, Lauri 2007. Julgeme olla ise. – Maavalla Koda. <http://maavald.ee/uudised.html?rubriik=85&id=1724&op=lugu> (accessed September 21, 2009).
- Yat-Kha. Aldyn Dashka. – [http://www.yat-kha.com/html/what/yat\\_kha\\_cd\\_aldyn\\_dashka.php](http://www.yat-kha.com/html/what/yat_kha_cd_aldyn_dashka.php) (accessed September 21, 2009).