

The Compound refrain in the old-style song from the Land of the Foresters, Hunedoara

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Abstract: *The land of the Foresters from Hunedoara is an extremely rich area in terms of folk music productions, both from the occasional repertoire (carols, wedding or funeral ritual songs) and from the non-occasional repertoire (old style songs). During the field research campaigns carried out by Béla Bartók (1913-1914), Emilia Comișel together with a team of researchers from Bucharest (1946-1960) and Ioan Bocșa with Alina Stan (2017), the songs with free rhythm - parlando rubato, with an excessively rich ornamentation, with archaic melodic features, stood out due to several aspects. First of all, they were collected from the countryside, a very large number of songs belonging to this lyrical genre - the old-style song; the songs are individualized in the Transylvanian repertoire through distinct musical features such as the presence of different categories of refrain in the musical stanza and the way of interpretation, characterized by a strong vocal emission, chest voice, female group performance, very long sounds at the end and very long pauses between verses or stanzas. In the present study, we want to turn our attention towards those songs and melodic types which bring in the stanza a broader refrain, consisting of two musical entities, called compound refrain. Having at our disposal musical materials collected in different periods of time, we aim to identify these refrains within the melodic types, the evolution in time, the unitary character, as well as their spread in other folk areas.*

Keywords: *the Land of the Foresters; Hunedoara; vocal old style song; compound refrain;*

1. Introduction

Ever since the end of the 19th century, the Land of the Foresters in Hunedoara has been an area that has aroused the interest of the cultured people of the time, carrying out research especially in the technical and ethnographic field. The first musical research in the field was undertaken by Béla Bartók (December 1913 - January 1914), reaching 5 forest villages: Feregi, Cerbăl, Lelese, Socet and Ghelari. He recorded over 80 vocal songs and 120 instrumental songs, played on whistle and bagpipes, recordings made on phonograph cylinders. The songs belong to different folk genres and were published in the Rumanian Folk Music collection², published posthumously, over 50 years after their collection.

The second field research campaign had a more complex objective - to make a monograph of the area, involving researchers from the Folklore Institute of Bucharest, from various fields: Ilarion Cocișiu, Emilia Comișel, Mariana Kahane-Rodan, Rodica Weiss (musical), Ovidiu Bârlea (literary) and Anca Ciortea (choreographer). Thus, between 1946-1960, they researched 12 villages: Alun, Bunila, Cerbăl, Cerișor, Feregi, Ghelari, Goleș, Lelese, Poienița Voinii, Ruda, Runcu Mic and Sohodol, the collections being made on phonograph cylinders or on tape recorder. Although several hundred songs were collected, about 150 songs were published in the *Folklore Anthology of the Land of the Foresters (Hunedoara)*³, in 1959, and reedited in 1964.

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² Béla Bartók. 1967. *Rumanian Folk Music* (vol. I, II, III). Haga: Edited by Benjamin Suchoff.

³ Emilia Comișel. 1959. *Antologie folclorică din Ținutul Pădurenilor (Hunedoara)*. București: Editura Muzicală.

In the summer of 2017, Ioan Bocşa and Alina Stan, professors at the “Gheorghe Dima” National Academy of Music in Cluj-Napoca, undertook an exhaustive research of the area. All the forest villages were researched (31 villages and hamlets - the settlements mentioned in the previous research plus Arănieş, Bătrâna, Boia Bârzii, Cernișoara-Florese, Ciulpăz, Dăbâca, Dumbrava, Hășdău, Lunca Cernii, Meria, Merișor, Poiana Răchițelii, Rădulești, Runcu Mare, Stâncești-Ohaba, Ulm, Vadu Dobrii), with 336 vocal songs being recorded on digital support. This musical material, which includes various folk genres such as: wedding ritual songs, army songs, funeral, mourning, carols, old and modern style songs and dance songs, was published in December 2021 in the volume *Traditional Vocal Music from the Land of the Foresters, Hunedoara*⁴.

Chapters

2. General aspects of the genre

The old style song is the best represented genre in all Romanian areas, this aspect being also valid for the Pădureni County. In all field research campaigns, including the current research, more than half of the material collected belongs to this lyrical genre. Because many defining aspects of the genre, respectively particularities identified in Pădureni, were treated in a previous study⁵, we will point out some essential elements for understanding the present research. The melodies are characterized by genre-specific features: tetrapodic lyrics (acatalectic and catalectic), free rhythm - parlando rubato that allows for and promotes the intercalation of a rich, often excessive ornamentation, preference for pentatonic structures, Eolian and Dorian or chromatic modes. The musical stanzas are fixed, consisting of two, three or four melodic lines, composed on the principle of repetition or chaining and generally cadence on stage I. In this respect, in the recent material a preference has been identified for placing the final cadence on second degree, maybe due to the influence from the Banat area. There are also structures amplified to six or eight melodic lines, but in a small proportion. A possible consequence of the growing influence in the Banat area is the presence of the refrain in various forms: additional refrain, regular regular, irregular refrain, compound refrain and pseudo-refrain. We have found, quite frequently in our material, the replacement of the final verse with a refrain.

A peculiarity of this area is the quite frequent group interpretation of these songs, especially in gatherings or in the field, as evidenced by the records of researchers. The way of interpretation, even today, is close to that of ritual songs, that is, it is sung with a strong emission, chest voice, guttural, with long elongated final sounds and long pauses between verses and stanzas.

3. Concepts from literature

In the present study we aimed to identify and analyze those songs that have in the composition of the musical stanza two refrains, placed next to each other and occupying the last two lines in the verse of four melodic lines. In order to interpret analytically as correctly as possible this category of refrains, we begin with a theoretical research. Following a

⁴ Ioan Bocşa, Alina Stan. 2021. *Muzică vocală tradițională din Ținutul Pădurenilor, Hunedoara*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura MediaMusica.

⁵ Alina Stan. 2021. *The Old Style Song in the Land of the Foresters, Hunedoara. Melodic Type with Refrain Resulted from Melodic Interjections*. Cluj-Napoca: Studia Universitatis, Babeș-Bolyai, Musica, 2: 277-296.

chronological exposition of the specialized works dealing with versification and implicitly the categories of refrains from the Romanian folk genres, the first *Musical Folklore Course*⁶ is the one elaborated by Ioan R. Nicola, Ileana Szenik and Traian Mîrza, in 1963. After a definition of the refrain, both from a literary and musical point of view, after clarifying its abundance in some genres (carol) or in some geographical regions (Banat), at its crystallization stage, we are presented with the classification given by Constantin Brăiloiu. Three types of refrains are identified: the pseudo-refrain, the regular refrain itself and the actual refrain, irregular. At the end of the list of refrain categories, it is mentioned that there are some refrains even longer than 12 syllables, in the satirical carols ("de pricină") from Hunedoara and in some proper songs "... where they are organized in smaller series of equal or unequal verses, but linked by (paired) rhyme:

- Trandafirule,
Leagănă-te codrule.

- Of, dragă și iar dragă
Fir de iarbă neagră.

Fir de cucuruz,
Auzi, mândră, auzi."⁷

It is further pointed out that these long refrains, in terms of literary content, have nothing to do with the content of the poetry to which it is added: it is invariably sung on the same melody."⁸ We want to exemplify with the text of a song from our collection:

Gura me din ce-i făcută,
Din vin roșu și din turtă,
Codrule,
Pice-ți frunza galbenă, mă⁹.

We have found that examples of literary texts are presented and that there are longer refrains, but clear terminology is not yet used.

In the course of *Musical Folklore* by Emilia Comișel, we find the following information about this kind of refrains: "The *compound (verse) refrain* is made up of verses of different sizes, from 10 to 34 syllables. It is found in the satirical carols and in some lyrical songs. In the latter, sometimes the content of the refrain differs from one stanza to another"¹⁰. The following example contains only two melodic lines:

„Eu m-aș duce-a cătăni
Numai pușca de n-ar fi,
Hai, nană, nană,
De trei ani mă duc cătană."¹¹

In this course we identify the use of a specific term, that of *Compound refrain, versified*, but there is no clear distinction between refrains with two melodic lines - compound refrains or those with more lines - strophic refrains.

In the course of *Musical Folklore* written by Gheorghe Oprea and Larisa Agapie the following facts are very succinctly signaled: "Proper songs can have both an ornament refrain

⁶ Ioan R. Nicola, Ileana Szenik, Traian Mîrza. 1963. *Curs de folclor muzical*. București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică.

⁷ *Idem*, p. 83.

⁸ *Idem*, p. 83.

⁹ Ioan Boțșă, Alina Stan. 2021. *Muzică vocală tradițională din Ținutul Pădurenilor, Hunedoara*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura MediaMusica, nr. 428.

¹⁰ Emilia Comișel. 1967. *Folclor muzical*. București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică. p. 76.

¹¹ *Idem*, p. 76.

(syllables with no meaning), *Ihai nu și numai na, Of Ileană, Of inimă, Foaie verde* etc. and a thematic refrain – completing the meaning of the song or appearing as an answer for the content of the other verses (in love songs) - *Dorule, Hai dorule hai, Mândra mea, Nană, nană, Mărioara mea, Lino, Leano* etc”¹². We still find that some songs do not contain a refrain, while others may have up to four refrains. Wider refrains are considered to be those in which the number of syllables is high. ”When the formula exceeds the length of a verse (according to Brăiloiu - "beyond 12 syllables", according to Emilia Comișel - when it exceeds 14 syllables), the compound, strophic refrain appears; it consists of at least 2 to 8 metric series and is grouped by rhyme or assonance.”¹³ In this course there is a presentation of the musical characteristics of the songs from different dialects and subdialects. In the presentation of the old style song itself, in the analysis of the songs from the Bihor dialect, the authors point out that in the last part of the melodic stanza there may be refrains or verse replacements. We note that in both folklore courses the terminology of compound, versified, strophic refrain is introduced.

According to Ileana Szenik, the broader refrains are called *Strophic refrains*, although of the two examples given, the first consists of only two musical entities: ”In proper songs we also find refrains with more verses forming a stanza and they are called *strophic refrains*. They are a special part of the musical stanza made up of several melodic lines.

Trandafirule,

Leagănă-te codrule.”¹⁴.

Even if in this course also we identify the use of that terminology, compared to the first folklore course developed 50 years ago the differences between the meaning of a compound or strophic refrain are not yet presented. We point out the possible confusion in interpretation, if these terms describe one and the same phenomenon or totally different aspects.

The last two doctoral theses supervised by Prof. Ileana Szenik, in 2008-2009, (Alina Stan and Adela Țârc) deal with the carol from Transylvania, the various refrains becoming defining elements of the genre. In both works, it is very clearly defined: “Compound refrains extend over two musical entities (two successive melodic lines), taking the place of the refrain itself and the place of the next verse. Usually, compound refrains occupy the last two lines of the stanza (lines 3 and 4, for 4-line stanzas or 2 and 3 for three-line stanzas)”¹⁵. Usually, the first refrain has a narrower structure (bipodic), and the second refrain retains the rhythmic structure of the melodic line, respectively the verse it replaces. The strophic refrain is defined by the combination of several musical entities (more than two). We bring as an example a carol from the material recently collected in Pădureni:

¹² Gheorghe Oprea, Larisa Agapie. 1983. *Folclor muzical românesc*. București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică. pp. 69-70.

¹³ *Idem*, p. 71.

¹⁴ Ileana Szenik. 2010. *Folclor. Modul de Studiu pentru Studii Universitare prin Învățământ la Distanță*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura MediaMusica. p. 32.

¹⁵ Alina Stan. 2009. *Limbajul muzical al colindelor din Transilvania*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Clear Vision. p. 148.

Feregi, HD
Grup femei

♩ = 168

Tă - tă noap-țe-a ba - țe-on vân - tu, Dă - li - a - nă,
Dă - li - a - nă, fa - tă-î dal - bă.

PAD 031 *Cul. Bocșa I., Stan A., 2017, Tr. Stan A.*

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4. The presence of compound refrains in various melodic types

4.1. The first melodic type

Next, we want to turn our attention to some songs that belong to the lyrical genre – the old style song, from the Land of the Foresters (Pădureni), which is individualized by the existence of these compound refrains. The composition is identical to that presented in the carols: in stanzas of four melodic lines, on the third line is placed a small refrain (bipodic, tripodic), and on the fourth line is placed the second refrain, which has the extension of a verse (tetrapodic), actually replacing it.

The first melodic type in which we identified these refrains is the most unitary, both literary and musicaly:

Dăbâca, HD
Preda Sofia, 70
Cerișeri Anișca, 57

♩ = 58

Gu - ra meș d'in șe-î fă - cu - tă?
D'in vin ro - șu și d'in tur - tă.
Co - dru - le,
Pi - șe-ț frun - za gal - be - nă, mă!

PAD 111 *Cul. Bocșa I., Stan A., 2017, Tr. Stan A.*

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The songs are collected from the same part of the Land of the Foresters, a variant from Dăbâca village (PAD 111) and two variants from the village of Hășdău (PAD268 and PAD098). The villages are close to each other, but the informants are different.

¹⁶ Ioan Bocșa, Alina Stan. 2021. *Muzică vocală tradițională din Ținutul Pădurenilor, Hunedoara*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura MediaMusica, nr. 291.

¹⁷ *Idem*, nr. 428.

The lyrics are tetrapodic acatalectic and the rhythm is free - parlando-rubato. The refrain is composed of two entities of different sizes: regular bipodic refrain (long rhythmic values and excessively ornate; even if it only has three syllables - *Codrule*, due to the extension it occupies a whole melodic line) and regular tetrapodic refrain - *Pice-ți frunza galbenă, mă*, with a completion syllable. The sound scale is a minor heptachord with Eolian/Dorian influences due to the shifting character of *c* (*c sharp* upwards and *c natural* downwards). The other stages are stable. Cadence is on stage I. The form is $AAB_{rf}A_{rfk}$, cadences VII, VII, 3, 1, arched melodic profile.

The three variants are almost identical, the difference being the ornamentation of the third line, the short refrain:

- the treble sound is reached by an ornament, simple apogee:



- the treble sound is reached by a melodic note in a fourth interval:



- the treble sound is reached by a melodic note in an octave interval:



4.2. The second melodic type

The second melodic type in which we identified the presence of a compound refrain has musical features that bring differences from the first melodic type: the rhythm is more precise, bringing specific structures to the giusto syllabic bicron rhythm, slightly rubato and with elongated final values, which will lead to a significant reduction in ornamentation. The sound structures are also different from the first melodic type - major penta-hexachords, with the final on the second stage. The architectural structure brings new elements within the four-line form $AAB_{rf}C_{rf}$; the general melodic profile remained unchanged - arched. Another change from the first melodic type, where the short refrain consisted of three syllables, is the presence of a five-syllable tripod refrain, sung on the word *Trandafirule*, rubato and richly ornate:

- the first example shows a variant from recent research, which could be a preliminary step in composing the stanza with a compound refrain; the third line has the status of a refrain, the final line being sung on the verse:

¹⁸ *Idem*, nr. 428.

¹⁹ *Idem*, nr. 430.

²⁰ *Idem*, nr. 429.

Cerișor, HD
Vinca Cosana, 84
„a lu' Chici”

♩ = 190

pi, Tran - da - fir cu frun - za la - tă,
Tran - da - fir cu frun - za la - tă,
i, Tran-da-fi - ru - le!
Ba - tă - ce, măi, ba- đeo, ba - tă.

PAD 094 *Cul. Bocșa I., Stan A., 2017, Tr. Stan A.*

21

- the same song was identified in the Comișel collection, collected almost 70 years ago, from the village of Sohodol. On lines three and four, the compound refrain is sung:

92

PĂ VALE VINE UN TREN

Mgt. 115 a.

Com. *Sohodol* – Hunedoara.
Inf. *Lupescu Valeria*, 16 ani,
Oprinescu Marița „Marița”, 18 ani,
Balint Paraschiva, 17 ani,
1951.

Tempo giusto ♩=80

Pă va - le vi - ne un tren, Pă va - le vi - ne un tren,
Tran - da - fi - ru - le, Lea - gă - nă - mă, tre - nu - le.

22

- two variants of this song (melodic type) were identified in the Sălaj area, in research conducted over 50 years ago:

²¹ *Idem*, nr. 427.

²² Emilia Comișel. 1959. *Antologie folclorică din Ținutul Pădurenilor (Hunedoara)*. București: Editura Muzicală, nr. 92.

320. Și te leagă-nă frumos

Săg. SJ
Borz Grafic. 42
Borz Ileana. 39

♩ = 208

Și te lea-gă - nă fru - mos. măi. Și te lea-gă - nă fru - mos. măi.
Tran - da - fi - ru - le, Lea - gă - nă - te, bra - du - le, mă.

[AMC2290-13] Cul. Mîrza T., 1967; Tr. Szenik I.

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- several variants of this song (melodic type) were also identified in the Bihor area, in the Mîrza collection (no. 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 290, 291, 292):

284. CINE-O-ARĂDIT DRUM PĂ MUNTE

Mg. 1367/133
sept. 1967

Fîșca
Ungur Cociuba Ileana, 47 ani

Parlando rubato (♩=272)

Ci - ne - o - a - ră - dît — drum pă mun - te Ci - ne - o - a - ră - dît —
drum pă mun - te, Tran - da - fi - ru - le.
lea - gă - nă - te, co - dru - le.

24

We mention the fact that, within the same melodic type, there are no variants without refrain.

- a variant was also identified in the Banat area, but much more distant from a musical point of view:

²³ Ioan Bocșa. 2008. *Muzică vocală tradițională din Sălaj*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura MediaMusica, nr. 320 (322).

²⁴ Traian Mîrza. 2014. *Folclor muzical din Bihor: schiță monografică*, ed. îngrijită de Maria Cuceu și Anca Parasca. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Tradiții clujene, nr. 284.

126. (237)

TRANDAFIR DE LA FEREAȘTRĂ

Fig. 55 d (14.658 d = 450—451) Cântă Viorica Petru, țărană,
20 de ani, 17.XI.1922.

Sasca Montană

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4.3. The third melodic type

The last typological category in which we identified the presence of this refrain also includes songs with stanzas made up of four melodic lines. Compared to the previous types, variants without refrain were also identified. These songs are characterized by the fact that tetrapodic lyrics bring a different literary content and even the refrain (tripodic and tetrapodic) brings changes from one stanza to another:

Trandafir frumos
Și-asară la mândr-am fost, mă.

Floare de fonfii,
La mândra la brău. (PAD 391).

Within the melodic type, variants with different rhythmic structures are identified: sapphic and disponde, rubato giusto syllabic, rubato divisional. From the sonorous point of view, minor penta-hexachordic structures, bring fluctuating steps *f – f sharp*, *g – g sharp*, bringing chromatic inflections and Phrygian cadences. Changing the text from one stanza to another brings different metrical structures: tripod / tetrapod and tripod / tripod.

We present two musical examples, the first selected from recent research, and the second one from the Comișel Collection:

²⁵ Brediceanu, Tiberiu. 1972. *Melodii populare românești din Banat*. București: Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor, nr. 126 (237).

Bătrâna, HD
Roman Anița, 60

$\text{♩} = 168$

(ei,) Mă fă - cu mai - ca-n Lu - goj, mă,
Mă fă - cu mai - ca-n Lu - goj, mă,
au, Trăn-da - fir fru - mos,
Ș-a - sa - ră la mân - dr-am fost, mă!
Var. 1) Var. 2) Var. 3) Var. 4) Var. 5) Var. 6) Var. 7) Var. 8) Var. 9) Var. 10)
str. 2,3,4 str. 2 str. 3 str. 4,6,8 str. 5,7,9 str. 5,7,9 str. 5,6,9 str. 6,8,9 str. 7 str. 9

PAD 391 *Cul. Ișfănoni R., 1982-1983, Tr. Stan A.*

26

99

M-A FĂCUT MAICA-N LUGOJ

Fgr. 14560 a.
Culeg. Em. Comișel.

Com. Bătrina — Iliă.
Inf. Herciu Cornelia „a lu Pistolea”, 29 ani,
Bistrean Solomie, 30 ani,
Roman Anița, 30 ani.
1954.

Quasi giusto $\text{♩} = 69$

M-a fă - cut mai - ca-n Lu - goj, mă M-a fă - cut mai - lunga
can Lu - goj, mă floa - re de fon - fiu — La mân - dra la briu.
Lin - g-un trăn - dă - fir fru - mos, mă, Lin - g-un trăn - dă - fir fru - mos, mă,
Tran - da - fir fru - mos, Ș-a - sea - ră la ba - de-am fost.

27

²⁶ Ioan Bocșa, Alina Stan. 2021. *Muzică vocală tradițională din Ținutul Pădurenilor, Hunedoara*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura MediaMusica, nr. 419.

²⁷ Emilia Comișel. 1959. *Antologie folclorică din Ținutul Pădurenilor (Hunedoara)*. București: Editura Muzicală, nr. 99.

4.4. Compound refrain in the modern style song

In the material collected from the Land of the Foresters, a singular compound refrain was identified, in a melody included in the category of modern style songs due to the amplified form and its melodic turns.

Ruda, HD
Catrina Anișca, 74

$\text{♩} = 64$

Trę-se az ři vi-ne mâ-ne ři mă duc, lu-me, đin ci-ne,
Că via-ța me-ř tre-că-tă-re, Nu-ř în lu-me stă-tă-tă-re.
Hai, lu-me, lu-me, Ięumă duc ři tu-ř ră - mâ-ne!

Var. 1)
str. 2

PAD 045 *Cul. Bocșă I., Stan A., 2017, Tr. Stan A.*

28

A close version of this song was also identified in the Comișel collection. In addition to the compound refrain occupying the last two entities of the stanza, the first verses are completed with a posterior additional refrain *Leano*:

102

MAICO, INIMĂ DE PIATRĂ

Mgt. 497 e.
Culeg. Em. Comișel.

Com. Ghelar — Hunedoara.
Inf. Lucaci Salvina „a lu Dunăre“, 45 ani.
Toma Safta „a lu Zaharia Lupu“, 42 ani,
1955.

Poco rubato $\text{♩} = 74$

Mai-co, i-ni-mă de pia-tră, Lea-no,
Mai-co, i-ni-mă de pia-tră, Lea-no, flori,
co-dru-le, Pi-ce-ți frun-za gal-be-nă, mă.

29

²⁸ Ioan Bocșă, Alina Stan. 2021. *Muzică vocală tradițională din Ținutul Pădurenilor, Hunedoara*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura MediaMusica, nr. 502.

²⁹ Emilia Comișel. 1959. *Antologie folclorică din Ținutul Pădurenilor (Hunedoara)*. București: Editura Muzicală, nr. 102.

5. Conclusions

Following the research of the songs that belong to the non-occasional lyric from the Land of the Foresters, we can draw some conclusions:

- a significant number of songs with various refrains have been identified: additional, regular, irregular refrains, pseudo-refrains or larger refrains;
- the songs with two adjacent refrains, in which the first has a bipodic / tripodic metric structure, and the second tetrapodic refrain takes the place of the final verse of the stanza, stand out as a special category;
- from a musical point of view, the appearance of these refrains does is not random, or accidental;
- the literary content of the refrains is unitary within each melodic type;
- the songs presented are part of the Comișel collection (*Folklore Antology from the Land of the Foresters, Hunedoara*) and the recent research carried out by us in the area (*Traditional Vocal Music from the Land of the Foresters, Hunedoara*); no example was identified in the Bartók collection;
- identical or more distant typological variants were reported in the area of Banat, Sălaj and Bihor. Chronologically, the collections in Banat are the oldest (1920s), compared to the collections in Bihor (1960s) or Sălaj (2000s). Thus, we can consider that this type of refrain can be the result of an influence from the Banat area;
- in the stage of selecting the songs with this kind of refrain were also identified refrains consisting of two melodic lines, but which have the same extension as the lyrics (tetrapodic) or larger (pentapodic or chain of several lyrics). This helps us to determine and define these distinct categories of refrains present, especially in a genre in which this element of the refrain is not defining (see the carol).

We propose the use of the term *Compound refrain* for the refrains designating the phenomenon analyzed in this study (consisting of two unequal elements, the first short, the second the size of the verse) and *Strophic refrain* for ample refrains (consisting of two or more adjacent elements, most of them verse size).

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