

Songs on the mountain pasture



CD 1 – 10 Eli Storbekken, song, lokking (cow calling): *Kulokk (Cow Call)*, fritt etter Ellen Fløtten, Alvdal (Østerdalen)



Eli Storbekken, Østerdalen

Lokken - the cattle call - had an important function for the milkmaid, who had to get the animals home in the evening. By calling the animals, she was spared the task of searching for the livestock in the mountains. This form of calling could be a mixture of musical runs and high calls, often a musical masterpiece. Long, virtuosic runs on the same vowel could break into small dance tune motifs. The tonal range was often wide, possibly one and a half octaves, and the tonal intervals could be difficult and intricate. In the text, it was not uncommon to have enticing cries such as “Come now, cattle!”, or the names of the animals or the species.

Each milkmaid had her own call, which the animals recognised over long distances, and the call varied according to whether it was cows, goats or sheep that were being called home to the mountain farm.

Life on the mountain pasture formed the basis for several vocal forms of expression in the olden days.

Huving or *hjaling* is the term for the song which was used to keep in touch and send messages over long distances in the mountains. *Laling* had a similar function, but was more melodic and had a complete text, often in a question and answer form.



Huldreløkkene could be connected to myth and folktales, and were used as *voggeviser* (lullabies) or to entertain children. Here is a *huldreløkk* after *Brita Bratland*, where the old hag, Gygra (pronounced jygra) lures all her young.

Kom heim Hal - vor Skam - son, Skam Ra - ni - son, Ra - ni
 Bran - son, Bran Bryn - jul - son, Bryn - jul Brål - son, Brål Brit - ten og Tip - pen
 Ty - ri og et - te kje - m'e han Hal - var. No hev eg
 al - le mi - ne kyr heim att or hei - i, men
 He - ma - li og Kje - ma - li gieng at - t'e i Dy - re - dals - bei - ti, men
 in - gen skò få vi - ta hot dei hei - ter. Og la - la meg og
 la - la deg, høyr' du eg la - lar, du sva - rar meg, på lan - ge lei så
 la - lar eg. Nei la - lar ja, kor - ta - ne bla', kom - mer du kje no, så
 kje - me' du i - sta' La - la meg, la - la meg, la - la.
 Sva - ra meg, sva - ra meg, sva - ra.

The folk from the under world also had good advice when it came to curing sickness, such as mastitis. They had to put a pan of steaming hot herbal water under the udder of the cow, and the herbs had to be selected with care. Here follows a good prescription, after Brita Bratland:

Vi - er - vand og ma - ri - a - hand og tur - t'e upp - on - de li - o,

1.
det skò du røy - kje ky - ri di mæ, fe von - de vet - te å fri ho.

2.
det skò du røy - kje ky - ri di mæ, så skò ho mok - ke frò - e.



Brita Bratland, Vinje

When we write about this in the past tense, it is because the traditional mountain pasture life these days has almost died out, and therefore also its song traditions connected to the mountain farm. But since we have around a one thousand year livestock and mountain pasture tradition in Norway, these song traditions are some of the oldest music inheritance we have.