From field recordings to(wards) patterns in Dutch folk songs

Frans Wiering

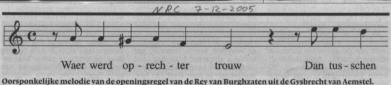
Department of Information and Computing Sciences
Oslo (virtually), 9 June 2021



Louis Grijp (1954-2016)

- musicologist and performer
- specialised in Dutch song culture through the ages
- burning questions
 - where are the melodies of our songs?
 - how are songs (orally) transmitted?
- early adopter of computing tools
 - tracing contrafacta
- great sense of publicity
- excelled at mobilising resources





Door onze redacteur KASPER JANSEN

AMSTERDAM, 7 DEC. Hoe klonk de Gysbrecht van Aemstel 367 jaar geleden? Dat kunnen we weten, nu de muziek van de Rey van Burghzaten uit het toneelstuk van Vondel is teruggevonden. De melodie van 'Waar werd oprechter trouw', gezongen bij de opening van de Amsterdamse Stadsschouwburg in 1638, blijkt afkomstig van het lied 'N'esperez plus mes yeux' van de Franse componist Antoine de Boësset.

Tot nu toe was van de vier reyen (koren) uit de *Gysbrecht* alleen een melodie bekend bij de Rey van Klarissen 'O Kerstnacht, schoner dan de dagen'. Die tekst van Vondel heeft sinds lang een officiële religieuze status en is opgenomen in bundels met psalmen en gezangen. 'Waar werd oprechter trouw

Melodie Gysbrecht gevonden

dan tussen man en vrouw ter wereld ooit gevonden? zal morgenavond op de juiste noten worden gezongen door de tenor Nico van der Meel tijdens een concert in de Noorderkerk in Amsterdam.

De melodie is vorige maand ontdekt door de Utrechtse musicoloog prof. dr. Louis Peter Grijp, ook verbonden aan het P.J. Meertens Instituut in Amsterdam. Grijp vergelijkt al jaren met behulp van een computer liedteksten en muziek. In de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw werden die meestal niet samen afgedrukt. Voor veel liederen werd geen nieuwe muziek gecomponeerd. Men zong – zoals nu nog bij bruiloften en feesten – 'op de wijs van'. Die melodieën kende iedereen.

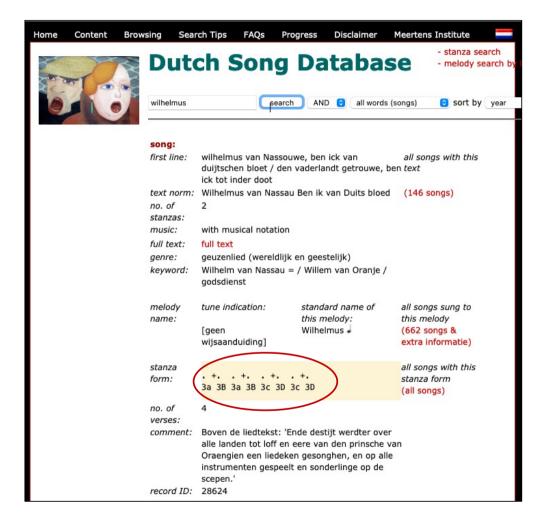
Wanneer de computer constateert dat lengte en ritmiek van woorden en strofen precies passen op de muziek van een lied, kan Grijp met aan zekerheid grenzende waarschijnlijkheid zeggen wat de originele melodie was.

Omdat de kennis van de oorspronkelijk muziek verloren ging, is later voor de Gysbrecht nieuwe muziek gecomponeerd door tal van componisten, zoals Ruloffs, Verhulst, Zweers, Diepenbrock, Badings en Tarenskeen, de laatste nog in 1995. [• Vervolg GYSBRECHT: pagina 9]

Dutch Song Database

- http://www.liederenbank.nl/
 - started as card file of folk songs
 - historical sources added in several projects
 - currently c. 175 000 items
 - very rich metadata (e.g. on strophic forms)

 hosted by Meertens Institute, along with many other fascinating resources, see https://www.meertens.knaw.nl/cms/en/collections



Onder de Groene Linde

- field recordings of Dutch folksongs
- collected by Will Scheepers and Ate Doornbosch
- recordings dated 1950-1986
- repertoire was sung during labour in early 20th c.

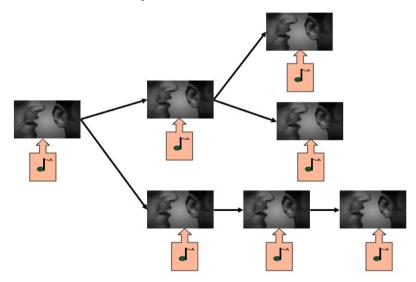




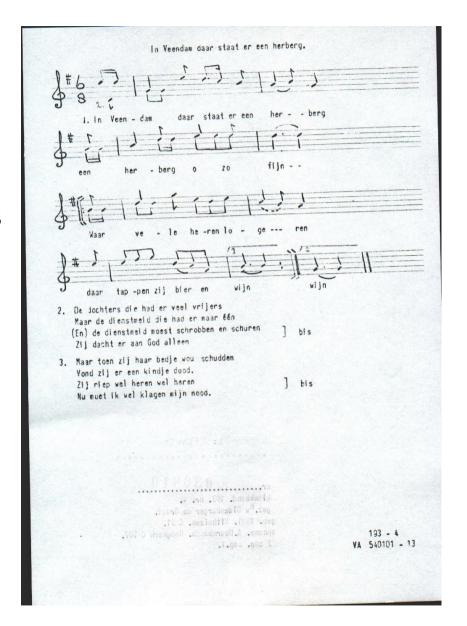


Onder de Groene Linde

- now part of Dutch Song Database
- c. 7000 items, audio + manual transcriptions
- show evidence of oral transmission: songs appear in many variants

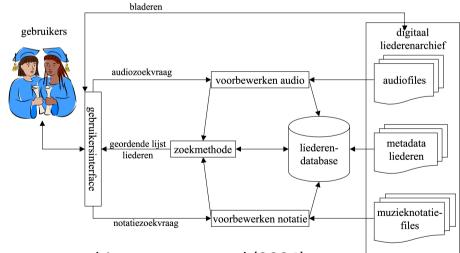


impression of oral transmission, by Peter van Kranenburg



Missing: melody search engine

- from a failed proposal (2000)
 - aim is to find melodies for song performance
 - tolerant against changes caused by oral transmission
- notion gradually refined in later proposals



system architecture proposal (2004) note audio-notation symmetry



manually-aligned variants of Neerlands bergjes, c. 2000

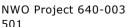
Missing: melody search engine

WITCHCRAFT project (2006-2010)

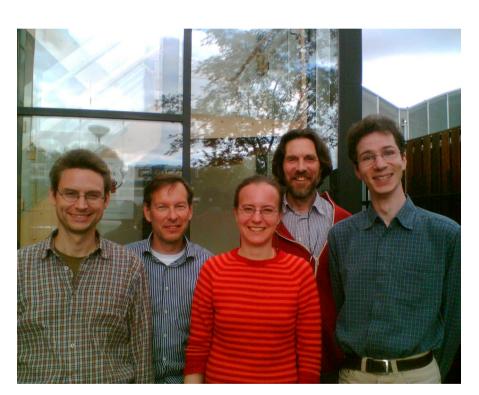
...to develop a fully-functional content-based retrieval system for large amounts of folksong melodies stored as audio and notation...









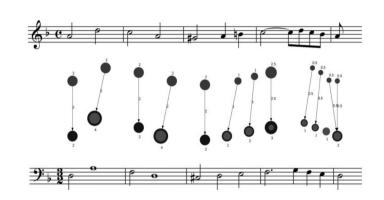


WITCHCRAFT team in 2008. Left to right: Jörg Garbers, Frans Wiering, Anja Volk, Louis Grijp, Peter van Kranenburg. Missing: Remco Veltkamp, Martine de Bruin

Data issues

what representation to query?

- experience so far was with incipits (RISM A/ii)
 - notation-based
 - Earth Mover's Distance works well on short segments
 - efficient, maximises song access
- complete melodies
 - fewer items digitised
 - whole melody is affected by oral transmission
 - usable for other purposes
 - more appealing
- we chose the latter
 - > successful leverage of data creation projects







Data issues

what format(s) to use?

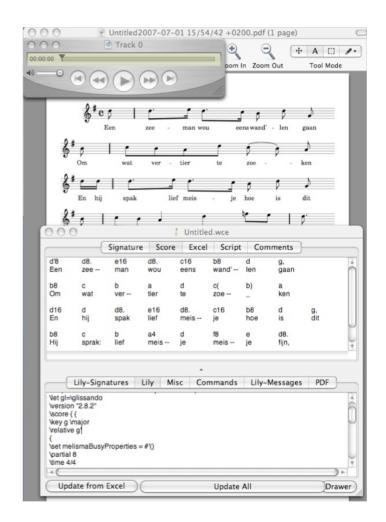
- Lilypond subset (open format)
- convert to Humdrum, MIDI

using which tools?

- WITCHCRAFT editor
- GUI entry less successful than code entry

encodings formed the nucleus of the Meertens Tune Collections http://www.liederenbank.nl/mtc/

- scans, encodings, audio, ground truth, annotations, metadata (linked)
- 18,618 digitally encoded pieces

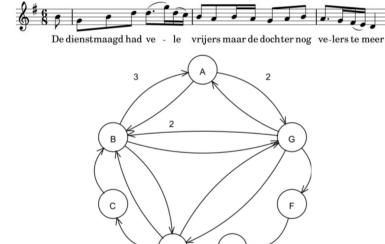


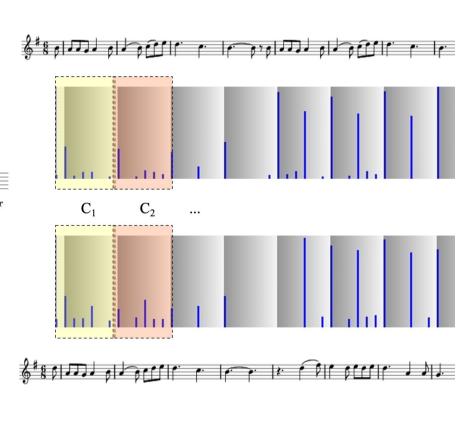
Ground truth

- melody search engine supposed to be based on tune similarity
- as a proxy tune family was used
 - already annotated in the collections, by domain experts
- worked fine for measuring retrieval performance
- mainly an engineering approach
 - not particularly helpful for understanding either tune family assignment or oral transmission
- hence, ground truth annotation experiment with domain experts
 - role of melodic patterns
 - Anja's talk

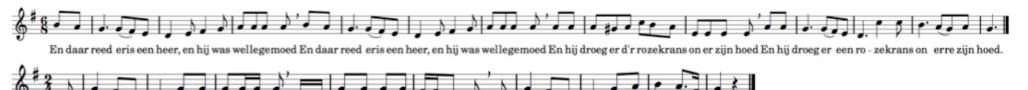
Testing melody retrieval models

- Earth Movers Distance
- Inner Metric Analysis
- graphs
- others...



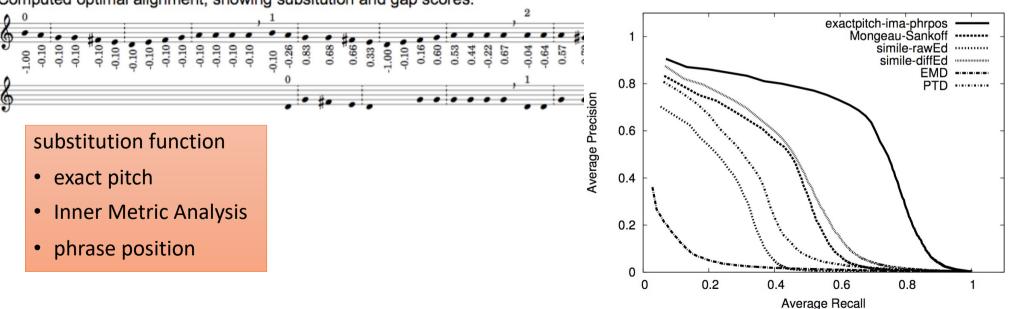


Sequence alignment worked best



Daar reed er een heer die was wel dideldon die was wel don da don didelon don Daar reed er een heer die was wel dergemoed

Computed optimal alignment, showing substitution and gap scores:





Dutch Song Database

- stanza search

- melody search by keyboard



song:

first line: [En wat] baart de liefde veel smarten / En al van ene matroos

text norm: De liefde baart veel wonder De liefde is dwingeloos

music: with musical notation



recording: audio

available: transcription (music)

melody name: tune indication:

[geen wijsaanduiding]

standard name of this melody:

all songs sung to this melody (77 songs)

(86 songs)

all songs with this text

In Frankrijk buiten de poorten (2)

comment: Transcriptie door mr. J. Kunst.

record ID: 70022

source:

siglum: OPN OGL ([1950-1980 ca.])

title: Onder de Groene Linde: opnamebestand

song number: 407

copy used: Amsterdam MI: OPN OGL

transcription Nederlands Volkslied-Archief 27684

number:

singer: Boer, Tjerk de

recording: Houtigehage 25-03-1950 by Will D. Scheepers

- search is largely hidden
 - · via hyperlinks
- melody search by keyboard is supported

find similar first phrases

You searched for this melody:

r: NLB70022

sg: OPN OGL ([1950-1980 ca.]), [nr. 407]

f: [En wat] baart de liefde veel smarten / [...]

st: In Frankrijk buiten de poorten (2)

t: [geen wijsaanduiding]

download MIDI-file



r: NLB70022 strophe: 2

sg: OPN OGL ([1950-1980 ca.]), [nr. 407]

f: [En wat] baart de liefde veel smarten / [...]

st: In Frankrijk buiten de poorten (2)

t: [geen wijsaanduiding]

download MIDI-file

r: NLB72619

sg: OPN OGL ([1950-1980 ca.]), [nr. 21310]

f: Wat baart ons de liefde veel smarten / [...]

st: In Frankrijk buiten de poorten (2)

t: [geen wijsaanduiding]

download MIDI-file

r: NLB74491

sg: OPN OGL ([1950-1980 ca.]), [nr. 33402]

f: Een zuster en broeder die leven tezamen / $[\dots]$

st: Een zuster en broeder die leven tezamen

t: [geen wijsaanduiding]

download MIDI-file

r: NLB144057

sg: Haan HK1968 (1968), p15 [nr. 5]

f: In Den Helder daar woonde een boertje, o [...]

st: Daar was eens een boer (1)

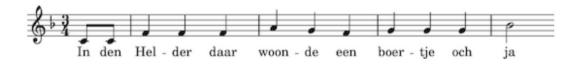
t: [geen wijsaanduiding]

download MIDI-file









Did we realise our aims?

- develop a content-based retrieval system for a large number of folk song melodies stored as audio and notation
 - design similarity measures, based on models of music cognition and perception
 - create a search tool that provides access to the collection of Onder de Groene Linde for scholars and general public
 - 3. support testing of hypotheses about oral transmission of folk songs
 - 4. design a music information retrieval system suitable for other large music collections

- vastly underestimated audio problems (though we did some experimentation)
 - much work on similarity measures, with variable cognitive/perceptual motivation
 - 2. total success
 - 3. barely: lack of historical dimension in data, no model of musical transmission
 - 4. not much technical uptake: RISM office is experimenting with alignment

RISM search by Utrecht University

https://www.projects.science.uu.nl/monochord/

create melodies query matching method selection results about

Query type: Database query with number 1982.

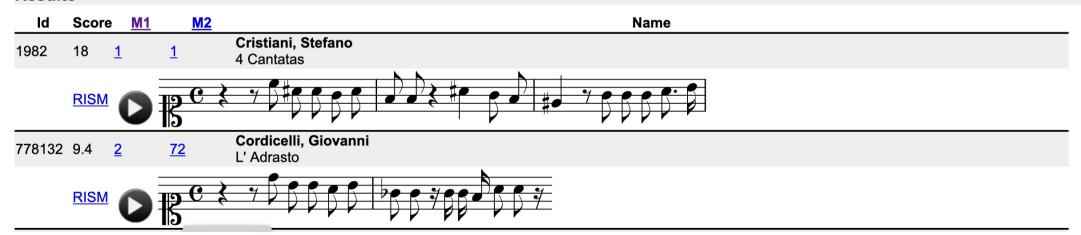


Matching methods

Column M1 in table is rank of matching method 1 ..

- 1. Exact Pitch
- 2. Scaled duration with Exact Pitch

Results



Looking back

- crucial to have a strong musicological case
 - made us look beyond the obvious (ground truth)
 - great stimulus for large-scale data creation
- interesting relationship between tool development and computational music research
 - many musicological questions remained unanswered
- successful continuation:
 - Tunes and Tales: deeper into oral transmission
 - COGITCH: catchiness, long term memorability
 - MUSIVA, about which Anja is going to talk