

The Religious Practice of *Mirskoye Obmiraniye*: The Motifs of Old Slavonic Apocrypha Reflected in Ingrian Folk Narratives

Taisto Raudalainen

The article will consider some prophetic speech genres and folk religious practices connected with the prophecies/fortune-telling narration mainly in the course of the life experience interviewing sessions with the elderly Ingrian women. The most of my informants are Lutheran Finns, although I have additionally interviewed some Orthodox Izhorians (Ingrians) and half-Russian women as well. My task is to approach certain **socio-religious usage in the multicultural environment**. I also have tried to recover possible diachronic ties between some of these genres and folk religious practices, which are obviously Orthodox (or more precisely 'hesychast') by their historical origin in my opinion. So, I will hopefully shed some fresh information on the question of the 'cultural fusion' in the minds of people sharing two different confessions and language groups on the former Ingrian soil. (See regarding the term also Honko 1990.)

Some ethno-strategic practices of Russian Orthodox origin as the 'folk cultural substrate' in Ingria since the 17th until the 19th century

There was a rather widespread practice of dream-telling, divination and prophesising called sometimes as *mirskoye obmiraniye* – lit. 'dying, falling into deep sleep similar to the cataleptic state', among the Russian peasant women since the late middle-ages up to recent days. The telling about the dreams (possessing usually quite obscure content) used to melt inside different kind of traditional elements of folklore both oral and written origin. (See, e.g., Panchenko 2002: 78–83, 353; about dream-telling also by Järvinen et al. 2000; Stark 2002: 15; Wigzell 2002, online). Here we are dealing with the socio-religious lower-level practice, which also contains some features of monastery **asceticism** (comp., for example, the demands of the strict fast, ritual purity and tabooed untouchability of the

visionaries). Also an aspect of the feminist power or even a kind of resistance regulating at least the discursive processes on the grass-root level local community should be noticed here. So, we could even speak about the feminist non-official ecstatic reactions towards the fast social rushes or moral collapses inside *mir-obshchina*, comparable to the social functions of *jurodstvo* in its mainly masculine presence. The crucial point is that both of them are using asceticism and are classified as **ecstatic contra-cultures**. They could have rather **long periods of quiet** after which they burst into the telling of “ultimate Truth”. No doubt, both of them were sensitive to the socio-political **crises**, especially during the periods of large de- or reconstructive periods in Russian history like *smuta*, the period under the reign of Peter the Great. The last two wars have had almost drastic consequences for the agriculture and village community etc. (See about the ethnic narrative strategies in Russian folk culture Chistov 1967: 240–290; Belousov 1991: 26–29; Aleksandrov & Pokrovski 1991.)

The violent reforms of Peter the Great, often using military power, released one of the waves of socio-religious ecstatic movement among the lower monastery clerics and peasantry. There appeared the distinctive features characterising the mystical attitudes among different sectarian and also Old Believer factions. The asceticism, hesychast eremitism and ecstatic practices had increased especially after the suppressions, military torments and the large acquiring of church land-properties etc. The resistance of the great part of monastic clerics had in fact already continued from the monastery rebellion in the Solovki islands, which began in 1661, spreading thereafter more largely in the whole Russian North (esp. in the monasteries of Vyg (*Fin.* Uikujärvi) in Olonets and Pustozersk in the Komi area – the place where Archbishop Avvakum himself was burned. (See, e.g., Crummey 1970; Hosking 2001.)

The charismatic, and often literate leaders, have taken over the role of the clerics in the situations where the main sacraments of the church (among others the ‘Priesthood’, ‘Marriage’ and ‘Eucharistic’ – *prichashenie*) were put under question in many communities. The self-nominations of the new “Christs”, appearing of self-made “Tsars” and various Prophets was a common practice at the turn of the 16th–17th centuries. The idea, that the truth was somehow “veiled” by the worldly anti-powers representing by Tsar-antichrist himself was widely popular since the so-called “confused times” (*smuta*) and it was one of the reasons, why the popularity of the Apocryphal texts (*potayennye knigi*) was especially high. There was a hope incubating about the appearing of the Lord Saviour himself, who would reveal the “ultimate Truth”. Among

others was a founder of *Skopchestvo*, Kondraty Selivanov¹, the last “*istinnyi tsar*” (the only true Tsar), who declared himself Tsar Peter the Third who came to punish for violence and to reward justice. After his death, a lot of people started to wait His Third Advent ...

The enthusiastically labelled ecstatic movements, including prophecies and ascetics, enveloped the whole Russian society especially in the second half of 17th and during the 18th centuries. (See, e.g., Chistov 1967: 240–290; Panchenko 2002: 103–107, 121, 203; about the case of the eschatological prophecies in 1632 in Ingria see also Korhonen 1938.²)

Some of the researchers are convinced that the visionaries and prophecies used by the charismatic leaders, and later also in local village prophecies, stem deeply from the monastic culture of the late middle-ages. Faith Wigzell has mentioned: *The visions and dreams about visits to the other world (obmiraniya) are both oral and written. These testify to a greater or lesser extent to the continuity of a tradition dating back to early Christianity, transmitted to the East Slavs via translated apocryphal and hagiographical literature.* /—/ *It rests upon a range of texts from different parts of Russia, with particular emphasis on texts recorded in the Soviet or immediate post-Soviet period. They come from official Orthodox as well as Old Believer circles.* /—/ *Within a community that values them they can confer authority on the dreamer/visionary, and so give her or him the former more commonly power.* (Wigzell 2002, online. The bold is mine – TR. See also Panchenko 2002: 141–144.) Wigzell has written about these kinds of popular practices using mainly the materials of the so-called “trial-lore” (see about the term in Panchenko 2002: 46–47). My own material is

¹ *Skoptsy* – the members of the enthusiastic religious sect castrating themselves and calling themselves also ‘White Dove’ as a symbolic figure of the Holy Spirit. They did not keep severe the *Stoglav* liturgy (established in 1551) which has respected by the Old Believers. *Skoptsy* have even confessed partially the reforms of Nikon. The movement is usually classified as the sect and called *novoverie*, the new religious movement, in the literature. Their spiritual leader Kondraty Selivanov died about hundred years old in the monastery of Suzdal in 1832.

² Here the author describes one of the cases of so-called trial-lore (see, Panchenko 2002: 46–47) in the soil of the former Swedish Ingermanland concerning the handicraftsman (called Levoska) of Ingrian orthodox (Izhorian) origin who had contacts with some sectarian (hesychast?) monk or Starats (elderly spiritual teacher) on the other side of the Russian border, possibly in the district of Tver which was the fugitive area for the large number of Karelians and Izhorians during the Swedish-Russian military activities. Levoska prophesied against the Swedish officials, having got the direct apocalyptic messages from very heaven. He was brought in front of the court in Riga in 1637.

based mainly on free interviews and spontaneous speech of my informants recorded during my fieldwork between 1997–2002.

So, the leading monks of the hermitages, who had spent a long time in the monastery of Athos, were experienced with the mystical-religious movement, called hesychasm (lit. ‘the quietening or keeping something quiet’), which had taken shape among the Byzantine Orthodox clergy and was also quite popular among the multinational environment in the monastery of Athos. The idioms such as МЛЪЧАНЕ (УСТЪ), ЛЮБЯ БЕЗМЛЪВИЕ, НЕ ГЛАГОЛАТИ, НЕ ОБЪРЗАА УСТЪ (etc.) and the following were of the rigid rule of asceticism or eremitic life (see, e.g. *Житие Сергия Радонежского* (The vita of Sergii of Radonezh) (ca 1314–1392) / quoted in: Toporov 1998: 560–570).

It was obviously introduced into the **grass-root level peasant practices** in Russia very soon after the appearing of the cenobitic and hermit cloisters, so-called sketes (*skits*) in the Russian North during the 15th–16th centuries and continued both in oral and written culture. That ecstatic way of meditation concerned, among others, the recitation of so-called “Prayer of Christ the Saviour” (*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner*³) and the demand of ritual silence already mentioned above. If the monk had repeated the prayer for three years, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and finally Holy Trinity were in his heart *in corpore*. The movement, based on these kinds of texts, existed in different monasteries from the 15th until 18th centuries and underwent a larger-scale revivalism in the course of the 19th century. So, there existed a rather strong fundamentally religiously contra-culture, based paradoxically on almost profane leadership, at least after the period of secular reforms headed by Peter the Great and enlightenment rationalism encouraged by Catherine the Second. (See, Zenkovski 1991 (1948): 42–44; Hosking 2001: 122–126 and also Panchenko 2002: 141–143; Clay 1985.)

The visions describe the journeys to the World beyond and inform, how the **dead relatives** live over there and what kind of **life-conditions** they have.

The recent field reports refer to the fact that the prophetic practice, based on the self-justification of the mystical experience, was still in everyday use in the first half of the last century and in some cases even after World War II until recent times – as has been shown by the data

³ The recitation of the *Gospodi Isuse Khriste, Syne Bozhii* inhaling the breath, and *pomilui miya, greshnogo* when exhaling the breath (Clay 1985: 89).

referred to by F. Wigzell, originating from the Russian archives and fieldwork collections and my own field materials collected between 1998–2002.⁴ Although the very beginning of the mystical tradition is connected with the monastic and clerical literal sources and elitist circles, it transformed into a popular form of dream-narratives and prophecies, among others, via the enthusiastic (charismatic) religious movements, called *Khristovschina* (the ones who pray the Lord) and *Khlystovschina* (the flagellants or charismatic ones), mainly during the 18th–19th centuries. (See also Clay 1985.) It is quite interesting to mention that some ideas and narrative elements of the religious-ecstatic origin were sunk deeply both into the State Orthodox and even Lutheran population in Ingria and the Karelian Isthmus.

It is well-known, that the great number of Ingrian Finns belonged to the sectarian communions, called (*hyppy*)*seuralaiset* – ‘the jumping ones’. There was an idiom, quite widely spread amidst Finnish Lutheran inhabitants of Central and Western Ingria, for the (charismatic) exaltation: *henkeen tuleminen* ‘coming full of (Holy) Spirit’ (or *olla henkess* – ‘to be (religiously) exalted’) which originally was used only by sectarians mentioned above. The constant prayer, in the name of Christ, is also known outside the very circles of the ecstatic religious movement (see, e.g., Akiander 1860: 252–262). In my field materials, there could be found the almost declarative notion: “*Mie rukkoilen aamuin ja illoin – vahin ain hei’n majajaa.*” (I pray constantly to protect your household against the Satanic powers). The sentence could be better understandable in the general background of the Russian orthodox peasant mentality. The multifarious elaborations of *hesychasm*, the orthodox dogma about the ‘deification of man’ (*bozhestvennost’*) and ‘the likeness of substances’ (Greek *homoiousios*, Russ. *tozhestvennost’*); so-called “holy foolery” (*yurodstvo*) and apparition of the ‘fake-Christ’ (*lzhechristy*); finally also the institution of the spiritual leaders, called *startsy* have funded these particular mentalities or cultural expectations (Clay 1985; also Panchenko 2002: 230).

⁴ It is really fascinating to find out, that these practices have been still alive so recently. Faith Wigzell has shown that this kind of rhetoric and imagery was still rather usual during the 1920s–1930s and obtained even more strength after WW II. Kirill Chistov has argued relying on laments that the genres relating to the commemoration customary gained strength because of the big number of victims in the WW II. It is clear that the traditional imagination concerning the World beyond follows as well such catastrophic events.

The religious enthusiasm related to female popular culture

The visions, to be analysed below, contain, besides other material, the precise descriptions about the journeys to heaven or hell, where the **dead relatives but also their dead (and possibly not baptised) children have been met and better celestial being or life-conditions for them were prayed for**. We could even speak about “the dominance of the dream narratives” – both vision-like and prophetic ones – to a quite remarkable extent in the Orthodox communities of Russian North. Telling of dreams (among the rest, the visiting of the dead relatives in heaven) was quite normal and accepted, for example, among the elderly Karelian women who, as a rule, gained by telling these stories some **additional religious and moral virtue**, as well the discursive social power. (See, e.g., Järvinen et al. 2000.) Possessing the role of the dream-teller or visionary, they aimed at leadership or at least better influence on the discursive field of Christian morality (also Wigzell 2002, online). Without any doubt, these partly marginal spiritualities of the Russian Orthodox Church, have had their influence on the lower level (and especially feminine) religiosity in the times of depression and desperation (e.g., Clay 1985; see also Meehan-Waters 1986: 117–142).

One of my informants from the Kupanitsa (*Gubanitsy*) parish, for example, lived in one village (Seropitsa) all her life has directly tied the “sacred, almost immaculate pureness” and “seeing the visions or – as she formulated – “the sacred dreams” saying that to the sinners like herself would never-ever be given these kinds of dreams. (See more about the socially bounded dream-telling: Järvinen 1996b: 259–261; Järvinen 1998: 305). There is some information about these kinds of narratives also amongst the Votian (see, the field materials of Prof. Paul Ariste: Boranova, Mati v., LXXIX, SUH* 260⁵) and Izhorian (my own field materials in summer 1999) orthodox groups. The Ingrian Lutherans on the Karelian Isthmus and in central Ingria have had relations to the dream-realm as well (see, e.g., Ruuttu 1931: 34; also Kaivola-Bregenhøj 1997: 208). All in all, the techniques and motifs analysed here are, in my opinion, connected rather with the Orthodox cultural background than with Lutheran lay prophecy and had their flourishing peak immediately after the reformation in the Northern part of Europe (e.g., Beyer 2000). From the general socio-religious-point of view the movements of two

⁵ EKI SUH – Votian-Izhorian Field Recordings at the sound archives of the Institute of the Estonian language.

different cultures could be comparable. However, it is quite impossible, that the Finnish population, settled here since the beginning of the 17th century, could transmit (carry on) orally some visionaries of Western European-type for far more than 300 years.

The social discursive practices representing the peasant orthodox environment contained mostly oral genres and just a few pieces of literary origin. Let me point out the specific status of the strangeness, foreigners, pilgrims and secrecy in the conditions of oral transmission. The kind of unusual phenomena earned often the nimbus of sanctification. The pilgrimages to the hermitages or faraway monasteries gave also specially high accentuation to the individual (e.g., Panchenko 2002: 93). The knowledge, originating from behind the horizon of the everyday experiences, was highly appreciated, especially at the times of the social crisis or era of political uncertainty.⁶ Here, we are dealing one with the most crucial reasons for the popularity of the hesychast practitioners and prophecies actively using the motifs from the apocryphal apocalyptic and visionary tradition inside the lower-level Eastern Orthodoxy, among others amidst Old Believers and practitioners of *Khristovschina*. (See regarding the apocalyptic prophecies, e.g., Tikhonravov 1898; Rozhdestvenskaya 1998; Vitkovskaya & Vitkovski 2000; also Panchenko 2002: 353–365.) The prophecies produced by the female prophets might have been often rather hectic after when the mediators had fallen on the floor having lost their consciousness (see, also Clay 1985: 90).

⁶ However, it is not impossible at all, that peasantry compounding this kind of knowledge continuously synthesized and created anew the ancient mythical motifs about the journey to the Other-World. The pilgrim could be as a cunning user of the consecrated word-power as well some wise man/women was the ruler of the right techniques and the mighty words stemming from the netherworld. Let us, for instance, remind ourselves about the way of obtaining the charms in the Runic songs of Olonets Karelia (see, e.g., SKVR (Suomen kansan vanhat runot) I (1), 399). There is no doubt, that as well as the possessing the power of the charms or incantations by the wizard, also the pilgrim has got the similar status of “the guardian of verbal treasure” after his return from the sacred place. It could not be wasted or used in the wrong context – otherwise the power would disappear. Therefore, keeping quiet and concealing the words (comp. to the hesychast movement as well) is highly appreciated in traditional society, where the word (story, song, charm, etc) and reality had strong causal, even physical relationships. Thus, the basic schemes of the more or less controlled higher-level Christianity and so-called lower-level peasant ethno-strategic practices are easily comparable, which testifies brilliantly, that they made just two complementary counterparts in the same space of the medieval European culture (see also Pócs 1998: 15–20; Stark 2002: 70–71).

Some characteristics of contextual environment and performance situation for the ‘prophetic speech’ in general

Firstly a quick overview of the genre, called miraculous visions in the West, and *mirskoye obmiraniye* (visiting to heaven or hell after falling into a deep dream) in the East. Here we can differentiate at least two phenomena: the medieval Christian visionary motifs based on the apocryphal writing or telling, and additionally the technique of the ‘altered state of consciousness’ appearing sometimes as a long lasting, even lethargic state of sleep. The motifs are very much alike which have been known, for example, from the famous visions and apparitions of Thurkilli, Tnugdali from England, and Gottschalk from Holstein in Northern part of Germany or Olaf Åstenson’s *Draumkvædet* from the soil of the modern Norway appearing in the conditions of the 12th and 13th century’s Roman Catholicism. The crossing of borders between this world and the world beyond are not rare in Orthodox tradition. The Old-Slavonic hagiographical and apocryphal writings contain numerous motifs, for example, about the visiting of Holy Jerusalem or going through the Gates of Paradise. The visions in apocrypha-based oral tradition, as a rule, transmit sometimes quite detailed pictures of the life-conditions in Paradise or in Hell, where all of the co-parishioners are headed.⁷

The visions have often said to be seen in the state recalling lethargy, in the deep sleep, during heavy illness or some other serious psychic confusion. The time of experiencing is often limited one, connected to the bigger annual feasts, as well to the death of the closest relatives or the most important commemoration days in the orthodox ecclesiastical annual cycle. The persons, who have made these dream-trips, were often also marginal by their life course or mentality having experienced several deep crises (the violent deaths or the suicides of the closest relatives, accidents or serious diseases). The visionaries could sometimes have been famous and honoured in their home parish or even outside of it, but it is almost

⁷ The descriptions of the Hell’s torments, the realm of Paradise and the way towards are available in several books of apocryphal writings: St Paul’s Revelation (e.g., 11–23), St Peter’s Revelation (e.g., VI, 20–32); specifically Russian Orthodox apocryphal Books as “*Skazaniye Otca nashego Agapiya*” (The Legend about our Holy Father Agapii), “*Khozheniya Agapiya v ra*” (Agapii’s Pilgrimage to Paradise) or “*Khozheniye Bogoroditsy po mukam*” (The Virgin Mary’s Path around the Pains and Torments) contain also plentiful such kind of motifs (See the texts and also comments to the texts in: Rozhdestvenskaya 1998: 122–146; Rozhdestvenskaya 2002: 13–15; Vitkovskaya & Vitkovski 2000: 43–45 etc.

never their own choice, rather the result of the co-operation of the co-parishioners and clerical officials. (See, e.g., Benz 1969: 104, 353–378, 413, 618; Strömbäck 1970: 1–34, Assmann 1979: 10–15, 25–35; ; Siikala 1992: 122–124; Gurevich 1993: 239–260; Gurevich 1995: 50–65.) The majority of the visionaries have been tried to be canonised under the strict control of Roman Catholicism. The Greek Catholic Church, on the contrary, had less interest in the control, including Russia.

Almost every peasant was interested about her / his own fate (so-called ‘small eschatology’) and sought for knowledge about their dead relatives in the World beyond. (See, e.g. the ethnographic program compiled by Count Tenishev in the Government of Vladimir in the end of the 19th century. – Firsov & Kiseleva 1993: 409–411.) Additionally, there were those who had more grace and virtues to have the visions and interpret those. (Järvinen 1996a; see also Järvinen et al. 2000.)

As much as the ‘small eschatology’ the parishioners were interested about the more general events of the ‘big eschatology’. However, there had been foretold, not only the events of the Last Judgement, but yet veiled events in the far away future. Needless to say, that the need and popularity for that kind of visions or omens arose especially at the time of personal and, all the more, of social crises or political collapses (See also Panchenko 2002: 323; Panchenko 2000, online).

I was rather surprised to experience the same kind of vision telling, relying on the motifs of the Orthodox tradition, also among the local Lutheran inhabitants speaking in Finnish. It is obviously borrowed from their Orthodox neighbours. However, the borrowing mechanism is not the simplest one. Namely, there has been a rather large stratum of the so-called “Children of the Crown” in the former Ingria. They were children adopted from numerous orphanages of St Petersburg to grow up in the rural vicinity. They made up almost 20% of inhabitants in some regions. According to the order of the government, they were baptised in the Orthodox Church and the state also paid for their education in the Tsarist era. However, as for the Ingrian Finnish villages, the children spoke Finnish as their mother tongue and were socialised in the value system of the Lutheran Evangelism, which was often adopted by them as the first confession. As a matter of fact, such persons sometimes transmitted the values of the Orthodox Faith into the mostly Lutheran environment. The repertoire to be analysed belonged to the descendant of the “Child of the Crown” who’s grandfather was an adopted child from St Petersburg public orphanage and therefore Orthodox. Her mother got used to regularly visit the Orthodox Church liturgies, as it was not far from their homestead.

The visionary motifs narrated by Nina L. and their background

Now, shortly, I will shed light on the historical background of these multi-ethnic territories and on the life-course of my informant. The vicinities of St Petersburg were rather multicultural, especially during the last decades of the Tsarist era. Besides the Finns and Russians, some territories were inhabited by Estonians, Latvians; the vicinities of St Petersburg also by Germans, and the north-western part of the territory by Orthodox Ingrians and Votians, as well. Thanks to the fuzzy ethnic and confessional map, also the multifarious linguistic and mental transgression processes had been taking place continuously. The lack of clear borders sometimes paradoxically produces new actual borderlines to be explicated and then transgressed again by single persons.

The name of my informant is Nina. Without any doubt, it is important, that Nina's mother and grandfather were members of the Greek Orthodox Church, her father was a Lutheran and one of her uncles was a Baptist. In spite of her grandfather's Orthodox confessional belonging, as he was a 'Child of the Crown', adopted from one of the public orphanages in St Petersburg, he served as a sexton in the local Lutheran Church. Nina herself has participated both in Lutheran and Orthodox services all her life. As for the Orthodox practices, she has been regularly keeping a family intercession book all her life. She additionally has lived more than 10 years in Olonets, Karelia where she could have the firsthand contact with the *mirskoye obmiraniye*-tradition as well. However, I had no opportunity to obtain precise information about the possible sources of her repertoire.

Nina was also among the first persons who joined the re-building activities of the local Lutheran church of Kupanitsa (Gubanitsy) in the late 1980s from the very start of clearing the ruins. She states "getting always the wings" after visiting the service. It is remarkable, that she has some kind of ecstatic, at least exalted relationship towards the religious domain, and it depends not on the particular confession at all. Her mother, for example, in spite of her Orthodox confessional belonging, had even participated a couple of times in the village services of an ecstatic sectarian movement called *seuralaiset* by communion themselves and *hyppy-seuralaiset / skakuny* – 'the jumping ones' by the neighbouring Finnish and Russian groups.

So, let us now speak about "the genre of the dream narratives" that was quite extensive in the Orthodox communities of the Russian North. The telling of the dreams, which often contains the stories about visiting dead relatives in the World beyond, is quite normal and accepted. Among the elderly Karelian women, it is still expected that they tell their dreams

gaining, by this, some additional moral virtue or discursive social power. As a matter of fact, the role of a dream-teller or visionary gave a chance to influence the field of everyday discourses. (See, e.g., Järvinen 1998: 305). There is some information about these kinds of narratives amongst the Votian and Izhorian orthodox groups, as well. (See, the field materials from P. Ariste: M. Boranova, Mati v., XIX, SUH* 260; the field materials collected by the author in summer 1999.) Also the Ingrian Lutherans on the Karelian Isthmus and in Central Ingria have had a close relation with the realm of dreams. (See, e.g., Ruuttu 1931: 34; also: Kaivola-Bregenhøj 1997: 208.)

Now, I will present some concrete visions of my informant Nina living in the village of Orava, parish of Kupanitsa on former Ingrian soil.

Three of the Nina's "dreams" have appeared at some focal days of the period of 40 days during which Orthodox believers use to commemorate their closest relatives. (The custom is originally based on the belief that the soul of the departed one remains near the homestead for approximately 6 weeks.) The rest of her dreams have appeared at the periods of deep crises or important annual calendar feasts, for example, before Easter time. Her telling of the miraculous dreams was highly formulaic relying on the experience of many earlier performances.

A. The dream seen 40 days after her grandfather's burials. (He died accidentally hooped by the mare-horse)

- a) The fear about the father's fate after his death
- b) The room where **a lot of doors** are located
- c) The **last door** is obligatory for everyone
- d) The Last Judgement
- e) The hierarchy of the sinners in Purgatory
- f) The **white place and white clothes** – her father's soul is finally saved.

B. The Jesus-apparition before the Easter Time

- a) N. put **her mother's Icons** in order
- b) Somebody enters the room
- c) Jesus stays suddenly in front of her, on the threshold of the room
- d) N. **begins to float** around the room

C. Jesus supports her when she alone gathered the whole crop on the potato-field

D. The praying for the son of her sister during 30 days after his sudden

death, N's brother appears finally in her dream after the 40 days were gone

- a) The **cattle** go out on the meadow
- b) N. is very **tired** and wants to lie down
- c) There is a **crowd** everywhere
- d) She finally finds the **building** where **long stairs** are leading "**under the roof**" of the building
- e) She arrives in the **white room** where the **clean bed** is
- f) Somebody climb upstairs, it becomes apparent that her **brother** came here also
- g) N. gets information about his brother's saviour from the eternal fire of Hell

E. N. sees her sister's son every single night during for 40 days after his suicide, and prays for his soul. (The topic has obviously an Orthodox origin)

F. N's dream-vision about "the Heavenly Kingdom" seen before the Church of the home parish would be re-built

- a) The road runs between the fields
- b) N. arrives at the **mountain**
- c) N. arrives at the **very end** of the world
- d) The feeling of choking and **fear of death**
- e) Suddenly the lovely and **beautiful world** opens in front
- f) The brightness of the **sunrise**
- g) The topography of the other-world:
The **Lake** of the blinking waves
The shine of gold and silver
The **Shrine** of Paradise
- h) The **unexplainable joy** (*innarrabilia*)
- i) N's hope to paint the picture upon the doors of the local parish church.

In the last dream, we could see Nina's eager wish to paint her very vision above the entrance of the local parish church, which according to her would offer the co-parishioners an opportunity to know where they are heading. The main thing is, that the vision was seen in the beginning of 1970s, many years before the local church was re-built from the ruins in 1991, just 4 or 5 years after the "Ingrian problematics" was released from official ideological control.

Let me now turn to the more detailed motif-analyses of these 'remarkable

or miraculous dreams' Russ. *znachimye sny*; Fin. *merkkiunet, ihmelliset unet* (see, e.g. Firsov & Kiseleva 1993: 410; also: Ruutu 1931: 38.)

At first, let us have a look on the most widespread motifs in the European visionary tradition. It is easy to notice a great similarity between them and Nina's repertoire.

1. Crossroads where the narrator has to turn Left or Right.
2. **Stairways**, which lead up or down.
3. **Angst-experience**; being afraid of consequences of personal **Sins**.
4. The experience of **floating**. (Levitation.)
5. **White angels** as guides in the world beyond.
6. The room where there are **a lot of Doors** as the waiting hall for Purgatory.
7. Last Judgement.
8. The **description of the pains** suffered by the card-players, thieves and robbers.
9. Shiny brightness of the World Beyond and the **feeling of great Joy**.
10. Mystical state of un-spokenness (*innarrabilia*).
11. Miraculous Garden or Shrine.
12. Miraculous Building(s) or Town.

As I have mentioned already, many of the images and motifs found in Nina's repertoire are known in Western tradition as well (see, e.g., Simonsuuri 1950: 160; Simonsuuri 1961: 82). All in all, using these apocryphal motifs as "ethno-strategies for crisis-solving" was actually really widespread all over medieval Europe – both in the west and the east. (See, e.g., Dinzelsbacher 1989; Gurevich 1993: 241; Gurevich 1995.) Aron Gurevich has noticed: "*/—/ the multifarious visions and apparently dead person's narratives about their journeys and the fate of the departed ones in the World beyond. They warned their co-parishioners about the punishments or informed about graces expected in the World beyond immediately after their returning back to the realm of the living*" (Gurevich 1993: 242). However, as for a difference between the East and West, in the Western tradition the ones who had travelled to the World beyond had been told not to reveal anything about their experiences, except the fact, that horse-thieves and card-players would never reach the Gates of the Heaven.

The motifs used by Nina are surely not of the Western origin but are related to the traditional Orthodox genre called *mirskoye obmiraniye* in Russian. Let us have a quick look on the main themes of the genre, using a

questionnaire, which is presented in a large Ethnographic Program composed by Count Vyacheslav Nikolayevich Tenishev in the end of the 19th century. “Where are the souls of the departed ones heading? Where will they stay until the Last Judgement Day? What kind of representations do peasants have about Paradise and Hell? Which penalties and for which sins are they suffering? Has anybody been in Heaven or Hell during the state of lethargic sleep? What did they tell about their experiences thereafter? How could the living people relieve the torments of the recently dead in Hell?” (See, Firsov & Kiseleva 1993: 410.)

In that kind of text, usually the clearly formulaic motifs of the “breath-taking beauty”, “brightening heaven” or “radiating light” of Paradise oppose the notions of “doom”, “twilight” and “mist”. In addition, there are the themes of a dangerous journey and fear, as well. There is a tension between the state of ignorance and uncertainty on the one hand and the divine enlightening, peacefulness and omnipotence of the Celestial City on the other. In addition, the motif of the luxuriance of the Paradise Garden appears as the third feature of the apocryphal writings. The hill or valley, the shrine or open field, fertile meadow or devastated fallow area are present in these narratives time to time. And finally, it is very important to mention the experience of great joy and wordlessness, which make together the very core of the mystical tradition. (See also, Rozhdestvenskaya 1998: 122–146).

The warnings and moral accentuation of these exemplum-like apocryphal plots comprise the great number of the Orthodox Christian values, which influenced the peasants’ mind in the course of several centuries. So, these have had an important didactic function as well. For example, the non-canonised apocryphal writings like *Сказания Отца нашего Агапия* (The Legend about our Holy Father Agapii), *Хождения Агапия в рай* (Agapii’s Pilgrimage Journey to Paradise) or *Хождение Богородицы по мукам* (The Virgin Mary’s Path around the Pains’ Torments), and also the hagiographic writings called *Житие Макария Римского* (Vita of Makarii Rimskii) or visionary text *Видение Св. Феклы* (The Vision of St Fyokla) include the kind of motifs met also in Nina’s dream-telling performing. Each of them contain the miraculous motifs about Paradise or Hell, dramatic details about the Other-World, the Way to Holy Jerusalem, the Gates of the Golden Jerusalem; its miraculous buildings, finally shiny atmosphere and divine brightness are described. The Paradise shrine, or Hell’s pain and torment, are also both mentioned in these writings. It is evident enough, that Nina’s dream-motifs are more or less directly related to the particular Old-Slavonic texts, dating in some

cases back as far as the 13th century. These texts have had a great influence on the literature describing the pilgrimage journeys (itinerary narratives), because the physical path of pilgrims and the paradigmatic path of Passions (Calvary) had similar content and formal structure for the believers as well in Western and Eastern Catholicism.⁸ (See, Rozhdestvenskaya 1998: 122–146; Rozhdestvenskaya 2002: 13–15; see also, Tikhonravov 1898.)

Milena Rozhdestvenskaya has shown how largely the motifs concerning the Way to the “Celestial Jerusalem” or the gates of “Paradise Garden”, are presented in Old Slavonic Apocryphal writings. These motifs are actually quite similar to those in Apocalypse’s 21st chapter, which were rather widespread in oral narratives as well (Rozhdestvenskaya 1998). Yuri Lotman mentions that the ‘physical visiting’ of heaven or hell is comparable to the pilgrimage journey and therefore wholly familiar both in Russian medieval texts (see above) and the numerous narratives of pilgrimage itineraries. (Comp to Russ. *palomnichestvo*, and Fin. ‘*taittaa taivalta*’.) It could also be symbolically interpreted as the person’s moral journey concerning the basic values of the Christianity. However, Lotman points also out that the kind of rhetoric contravenes the in some sense with the basic idea of separation of “this world” as a place of sorrow and reticence (*skorb*) and “the World beyond” as the place of joy (*radeniye*). The sorrow and reticence are the signs of a true piety (*bozhestvennost* – ‘godliness’) in “this world”. In principle, the journey to the joy- and plentiful paradise during one’s lifetime is the source of joy and satisfaction, which in fact is not wholly acceptable for the believer from the point of view of the true Orthodox morality. However, Lotman notices as well that the apparent joyfulness results in a growing piety in such a situation. And, finally, the joy and satisfaction characterizing the state of Paradise will make finally questionable the unworthiness and sinfulness

⁸ It was quite usual, that the early trans-scriptors made rather voluntary additions in the description of the Other-World or passions experienced there. So, the written culture was sometimes as fluent and variable as the oral one. The creative way of understanding in regard of apocryphal writings was allowed and therefore these were much more popular than strictly canonical Biblical writings. Many of the scholars stressed out that apocryphal writings gave to the ordinary peasantry the possibility to catch emotionally basic Christian dogmas expressed often too abstract for them. An important role played also the structural similarities of some apocryphal texts with the tale-world contenting the familiar roles of the actors, the dramatic dialogues or crucial knots of the plot. Even some visual masterpieces of the Orthodox iconography were clearly based on the apocryphal motifs (Rozhdestvenskaya 2002: 12–15.)

of “this world” (Lotman 1992: 410–412; also Chistov 1967: 238). Having in mind the religious-ecstatic movements of the lower-level Orthodox mysticism consisting the cult called *radeniye*, we could easily understand, what kind of semantics it could keep inside. The members of the movement, singing and dancing, have been begotten by the Holy Spirit or settled by Holy Trinity itself, believed to see the Gates and Gardens of Paradise before their eyes. The crossing and disturbing the borders put by the canonized official Orthodoxy was a guilt, as well as an aim of them.

Now, it is perhaps time to ask a question: is it possible, that the practice of *obmiraniye* had also some quality of a grass-root feminist resistance? (See, as well Wigzell 2002, online.) Let us imagine, inside the *mir-obschina*, especially in the course of its critical periods, there was a need for the competence of untypical crisis solving of the visionaries. In such cases of trouble, such as an unexpected or violent death or other major accidents, often there was a need to violate and then reformulate the standard virtues. Could we then possibly speak about *obmiraniye* as the religious practice among Orthodox women comparable to that of *yurodstvo* among men? The crucial parallel is that both of them contain some features of ascetics or so-called *odinochestvo* – certain eremitic way of life. They could entail some periods of silence after which the ritual performer bursts into making prophecies or telling the Ultimate Truth. In a way, we could speak about an ecstatic counter-culture, which gave possibilities to generate lower-level interpretations for solving inner-group tensions and crises.

Speaking about the social discourse practices circulating within the peasant Orthodox environment we have to keep in mind the specific status of secrecy, foreigners and pilgrims as well as other unusual and therefore often sacred phenomena. Perhaps it would be interesting to remind ourselves of the Russian term for Apocryphal writings, which is a direct translation from the Greek original, ‘*potaennye knigi*’ – ‘secret, concealed books’. The knowledge from these writings rose like from behind the horizon of the common believers’ everyday experience. Therefore, they were considered as having a very high value. This was especially high capital at the times of socio-political uncertainty.

The practice of *mirskoye obmiraniye* is reflected indirectly also in the Votic ethnological databank gathered by P. Ariste during the 1950s and 1960s (see, e.g., MB, LXXVII (SUH* 259–260); VF I (SUH* 30); FV, XXXV (SUH* 106)). The people called ‘*soborovannye*’, ‘*otpetye*’, that is, ‘*laulotetud*’ in Votian, seemed to have had also some real power in the village society as had the dream-visionaries. The Russian words ‘*soborovat*’ and ‘*otpet*’ mean ‘to anele’, ‘to give extreme unction or

confession'. The same applies to the Votian words 'lauloa' and 'laulogoittaa'. Thus, although still living in "this world", these people have had already the contact to the World beyond (see, e.g., MB LXXVII (SUH* 259–260). They represent "the living dead" who after the received ultimate anele did not die and thus were able to transmit the experiences or messages of the other world. And what could be more exciting or frightening for the Christians?

The folk-religious practice of *obmiraniye* seems to contain some features of the Orthodox piety called hesychasm, as well. The hesychast religious practice originally descends from alternative layers of the Orthodox monasticism and focuses on the appreciation of silence. Falling into a deep and sometimes rather long lasting sleep, the visionaries could behave like hermit monks keeping the hesychast silence. (It is well known, that one of the latest enlivenings of the hesychast movement, inside the Russian Orthodox Church, took place as an alternative praying piety since the end of the 18th century and continued in some monasteries all throughout the century.) At the grass-root level of meta-reflection, the folk-religious practice of *obmiraniye* was clearly connected to that of ritual purity, untouchability and the idea of Christian poverty related to the way of life in small *skits* or smaller cenobitic monasteries.

Once I tried to ask one of my Orthodox informants, who has visited all during her life the Lutheran Church, whether she ever had seen 'miraculous dreams'? She was a descendant of a 'Child of the Crown' having lived in the Lutheran environment and spoken Finnish every day. Although having actually told me some experiences of the *obmiraniye* type, she answered at once: "*How could I tell you that kind of miraculous dreams. The persons, who experience these dreams, have to be 'saintly'⁹, without any kind of sins. But I have sinned a lot!*" (Aleksandra K. in Seropitsa v. of Kupanitsa parish.) Thus, there seems to exist a kind of demand for impeccable behaviour or ritual purity to be able to see dreams classified as "the sacred ones". (See also Stark 2002: 57, 71.) These particular persons have stated keeping a certain type of ritual purity not only during the fast and feast, but as much as possible even in the course of everyday activities. They touched, for example, the handles of public wells using a towel or wearing the white clothes (especially a white apron

⁹ The term 'pyhät' could be also interpreted as 'godly or sanctified people', 'the people who have made the pilgrimage journey'.

or shirt) during the whole year. (See above about my field notes from the village Vanha-Holopitsa in Spankkova (*Shpankovo*). The practice of Orthodox sanctification is seen as one of the inevitable characteristics for the religious authorities at the local level.

The “voices” heard by Aleksandra K.

I met a 90 years old Lady, called Aleksandra, in Seropitsa of Kupanitsa in spring 1997. She was a truly shiny person with a wonderful sense of humour. Aleksandra was, like Nina, born in an Orthodox family, and she later got confirmation in the Lutheran Church, as well the vast majority of her closest friends and contemporaries. However, she preserved, without any doubt, some closer contact with the Russian orthodox tradition.

I noticed soon after the beginning of our conversation, that she could not tell me about certain themes concerning fulfilling the particular folk customs, dancing and singing without mentioning about making thus the “great sin” before she will leave the World and enter in front of the Heavenly Court. She, however, never refused to answer. But there were some stories, which she performed spontaneously without any particular demand from our side. These stories were clearly genre-specific, however rather weakly crystallised. The motivation of the narration was also quite obscure for me until I came more familiar with the Orthodox apocryphal writings and the female *mirskoye obmiraniye* closely related to each other.

Our first interview session began with the personal experience story about the confirming service which, by the way, earns exceptionally important and an often even most crucial place amidst the persons autobiographical memories among Ingrian women. She had started telling me which Psalm was sung in the moment they have reached the Altar and kneeled. Then they prayed saying the Paternoster together. Then, suddenly, she started to tell how she forgot Paternoster (possibly the consequences of the total soviet atheistic propaganda). She could remember it only partially, not word for word. Then at once she got ill and settled in a great fever and high blood pressure. She **could not speak** and lay in the bed as if paralysed. In that state, she asked God: “Teach me to pray again!”, and after that somebody taught her the *Paternoster* again – “*it wasn’t Satan, /—/ but God transformed into some Holy person or ... Holy Spirit*”. She is not aware, who was the particular person – Omnipotent God, Holy Spirit or some Saint. She also stressed, that she has not seen anybody, but only **heard** the Voice or Word. Aleksandra finally regained her health and as she told me additionally could suddenly read also the Cyrillic alphabet. Having got only Finnish education “of two winters” in

the local village school and been confirmed in the Lutheran church, she was, all through her life, completely illiterate in Russian. She, thus, has lived through a true miracle, when she asked for the prayer, but got additionally the ability to read the Cyrillic texts.

Thereafter, she said, using a prophetic register, how corrupted is contemporary life in the villages and more generally in a whole world where the presidents are fighting and peoples go against peoples. The performance ends with the didactic story how grandma' gathered all of them regularly "like the Chickens" and interpreted parts of the Holy Bible. The description reminds us of the lessons of the confirmation class, (*pappilassa käynti*), or Lutheran clerical institution for examining a person in reading the Holy Scripture (*kylän lukuset*).

The narration of my informant resembled closely the orthodox idea about the 'deification', which means that Orthodox have constantly aspire towards the "Godlyness" and if Jesus will be coming in the future, he will recognise them as the People of God (*Lyudi Bozhii*) who will take them on 'His Right Hand' (see, e.g., John 3: 2.). The worship of the *Khristovschina* movement is based fundamentally on the same idea. They believe that they are ready for the Second Advent before the Last Judgement having received the "second baptism" begotten straight by the Holy Spirit. (See, Clay 1985.) Aleksandra, thus, has obviously borrowed some of her religious explanations from some ecstatic circles, which were plentifully present in the Central of Ingria until the 1930s when the bigger wave of deportations caused the rapid increase in these religious communities. (See about the 'hearing the voices' and prophesies around these religious circles: Clay 1985: 88, 90–91; Panchenko 2002: 321.)

The interesting question is which are the motifs on the background of that kind of narrating in a society? A. Panchenko has rightly underlined the role of the social crises aiming more or less consciously towards the balance inside the agricultural *mir-obschina* (Panchenko 2002: 340–341). That kind of narrating, as I already mentioned above, generates new discursive frames for the actual topics positioning the traditional genre practices constantly anew. Thus, the collapse, or serious corruption of the traditional moral values, causes inevitable growth of mainly apocrypha-based prophesying, telling and interpreting the dreams or apocalyptic foretelling the future. The multiple marginal persons, the members not only minorities but also "micronities" (the tiny transitional groups in-between the existing minorities) are especially sensitive in using the alternative genres specified by the esoteric, or even mystic characteristics.

The prophetic dreams told by Katri R. – The reminiscences of *mirskoye obmiraniye* amidst the Finn Lutheran inhabitants?

I have had an opportunity to record the description of falling into the state of “ritual sleep” of a vision-seer experienced through the eyes of her granddaughter, a young girl of approximately 8 years:

I had the grandma' ... She knew really much! And she always slept in the sauna and the door was locked. So, she lay there two weeks. She neither ate nor drank anything at all. Then she professed, she had a revelation how those houses ... where you lived in Tashkent ... those stone houses sank underneath. /—/

- Your grandma? Really?! -

- That's right! **She saw the dreams in the course of two weeks and all of this had been revealed to her!** She had seen all these kinds of future events and then **she finally went completely out of her mind.**”

(Katri R's and Anna H's conversation in Vanha-Holopitsa v. of Spankkova, rec. T. Raudalainen 2002)

Katri continues the narrative with the scenes how she went to the grandma' to prove if is she alive any more. She told me precisely, how her grandma' had gone to the entrance space of the sauna and lay down for a week or even two. The old woman did not eat or speak a word. My informant remembered how she had gone to prove whether grandma' had been breathing or not any more. When grandma' finally had woken up and made her first footsteps, she tottered like a drunkard. Thereafter, she stated everything she had seen during her long-lasting dream-journey. The one possible example for such kind of practising has been supposed the apocryphal journeys to the underworld, for example, in the “Virgin Mary's Path on the torments and pains”, as well in the Evangelicals of St Paul and St. Peter, which possessed also apocryphal status.

Katri additionally remembers, that adults did not allow her to disturb grandma' in the anteroom of the sauna, which is a clear sign about the fear, that the soul of her could not otherwise return into her body. It is interesting to know also, that Katri's grandma' had kept also a certain kind of ritual purity and seized, for example, the handle of the village well using the towel, she always wear a white apron above the everyday clothes. Practising the norms of purity had Katri's grandma' fulfilled the demand of the deification which was one of the characteristics in regard of 'seeing the revelations'.

All in all, here we could recognise the clear ascetic practice of *mirskoye obmiraniye* with its traditional stages of strict fast, quiet and deep lethargic

sleep and finally prophetic speech of revelations. One of our Ingrian Finnish informants has confirmed, in our joint fieldwork with Arvo Survo in 2000, that in the pre-war times, at least in the 1930s there was a big number of such kinds of people who had fallen into the state of deep sleep practicing that way of crossing the borders between that world and realm beyond.

Katri herself and her forefathers are *Savakko*-Finns from Spankkova parish. Her repertoire is rife with eschatological motifs, which are originating indirectly from the other apocryphal sources, as well. Some of these motifs are well-known as well in Estonian folk prophecies and legends about the plague (see Hiiemäe 1997: 86, 390, 468). ‘The horses will wade through the blood-streams’ (*hevoseset kävelööt valjaihe ast veressä*); ‘there will come wars, plague and terrible famines’ (*tulloot sovat, rutto ja kauhia nälkä*); ‘earthquakes will shake the whole world and flames will shoot up to heaven’ (*maanjärjestykset järisyttää maata ja valkia käyp tulemaa muan sisästä*); ‘love will capitulate to the evil forces’ (*tulloo suuri pahhuus ja ei jää rakkavuutta muan piäl*); ‘mankind will hate each-other and sons will be arrogant towards their fathers’ (*ihmiset kävvyyt toin toisiaa vihhaamaa, pojat kävvyyt issii vasten*) and finally even ‘the stone will not stay upon other’ (*kivvee kiven piäl ei jää*), ‘everywhere is the wasted fallow’ (*aava pelto vua*); ‘asking (praying) is useless like dust and ashes’ (*pyytäminen on enää vain tyhjä tomu ja poro*); ‘just a few men will remain on the earth, and if you will see the footmark, you will kiss the one’ (*ei yhtäkää miestä jää muan piäl - ku niät jäl’lenki, ni annat suuta sil*). In my opinion, besides the New and Old Testament Books could probably some apocrypha be indirect sources of these largely popular motifs recycled orally in multifarious circles both in Orthodox and Lutheran environments. No doubt, the literary sources might also easily enliven the former oral existence of these motifs. One of the latest printed apocryphal sources was, for example, the extremely popular “Book of Sibyl” which has been published as a brochure almost 15 times (!) in Finland during the second half of the 19th and the beginning of 20th centuries (Simonsuuri 1950: 152–160). But also The Book of Esra (3–14) (which is added to the Old Testament Books as an Apocrypha) and The Testament of Moses (10) (although the book was not published besides the canonised texts of the Bible, it is, to some extent, known in the Orthodox tradition) and could have been in the background of these motifs and ideas.

The most exciting repertoire is Katri’s own dream-telling, which is highly synthetic containing the foretelling and interpreting different autobiographic events as life experience stories. The composing technique of Katri’s narration supports rather large epic performances. She has a

brilliant memory on the one hand, but on the other hand also the extraordinary verbal abilities. There is no doubt that these two belong together in an essential way (see, Raudalainen 2001: 59–78).

Katri R. has mentioned several times, that grandma' herself taught her *ars somnium*, because she wanted to be as good as her grandma' in the remembering and interpreting of the 'important dreams' (*merkikkäät unet*). The real competence of the culture-bound dream-telling bursts out in her early motherhood in the end of the 1930s, when the dramatic crises were already imminent and the gloomy clouds of frightening war were gathering. The collectivisation with its inhuman consequences had just recently begun. Some people were already deported in the Kola Peninsula (Khibinogorsk) and some of them just got lost in the Soviet concentration-camps system. The Finnish Lutheran churches and schools were locked in 1937. Those who refused to join the collective farming have overtaxed by the officials. The big amount of cattle and other domestic animals were taken away. Additionally, the huge norms for the cutting of forest were put on the shoulders of them. Often also women and children had to participate in the forest cutting. That was the actual background causing the traditional ethno-strategies of crisis solving. I could support the view that Katri's attitude to the "folk narrative resources" is quite a creative one, the textualising of autobiographic events intertwined with the tradition-bound genres is highly fluent and speaks thus about the competent usage of the core elements of ethno-poetic substrate (see, e.g. Harvilahti 2003: 125).¹⁰

Katri has seen several prophetic dreams in these critical times. One of them concerns her little sons running and playing on the street of the village. Here, I try to resume the rather long narrative. It is thundery. The awful thunderclouds are gathering. Suddenly the lightning begins to flash and the clouds are moving closer and closer. The thunderbolt throws mud and earth through the fuzzy air. She begins to call the boys, but cannot find them. The horizon is almost black.

Then she stays on the stone near their farmstead fields. She tries to

¹⁰ The term invented by L. Harvilahti is interesting in many aspects. Here I would like to stress out especially the 'gravity of some characteristics as constants' through several different socio-periods of the particular ethnic group. The 'ethno-cultural substrates' could transgress the borders of the genres and their morphology could be transformed, but they still will be recognisable by outsiders. L. Harvilahti, for example, has stressed the role of lyrical "I" in the folk poetry sung in Ingria. But I suppose, the feature characterises not only lyrical epics, but also the autobiographic epic narrating as well.

catch the voices of the children, but cannot still hear anything. Then the clouds are moving slowly away and it sun begins to shine. The thunderbolt strikes once more heavily and thereafter the atmosphere will be bright and friendly.

The other dream begins on the same place near the farmstead fields, where a lot of stones of quite big size are lying. The crop is soon ripe. Katri stays between the stones and suddenly notices a lot of paper money originating from the Tsarist era (from the pre-revolutionary era of Stolypin and Kerensky, who unsuccessfully tried to accelerate the political and economical reforms in Russia). She begins to gather the money and finally the atmosphere seems rather peaceful.

Katri interpreted, that the first dream **meant** the beginning of the World War II and the second one the evacuation in Finland at the time of intensive frontal activities in Ingria in 1943. In her opinion, the stones symbolise the hard times becoming soon. The ripe crop means the end of the peaceful period after which the situation will change rapidly. They have probably leave their homes. The pre-revolutionary money represented the foreign land outside the Soviet state, where, of course, different money is also needed. She has told the first of her dreams on the kolkhoz fieldwork in spring 1940, but nobody believed her. Although German army had occupied some neighbouring states in these times, the war with the Soviet Union has begun approximately a year later in summer 1941. The kolkhoz workers were afraid of such kinds of stories, of course. It is remarkable, that soon after the second dream in 1942 Katri began to sew warm clothes for her children. Her mother started to knit woollen socks and woolly jackets. The cracker-breads were dried for the forthcoming *exodus* journey.

As I also mentioned in regard of *mirskoye obmiraniye*, Katri's dream-telling aims to cross the different borders between past and present, present and future or this world opposed to the possible worlds "beyond". Both of them are directed towards the prognosticating of the forthcoming developments in society around and generating strategies for the balanced crisis solving. Dreams are giving the valuable information and first of all legitimised word-power, which is also actively used in the critical situations. The persons who have more knowledge and competence in the traditional folk narrative resources are also more successful in leading the social discourses. They are able both to transform the topics and re-formulate the attitudes he current social field whenever is needed. Extraordinary talent in narrating might has given also to Katri R. a leading role in her society. She had, despite her young age, already several complementary social roles, as the

sorcerer using magical chants, the interpreter of the dreams and the singer in the women's party at St George's Day.¹¹

Coming back to the level of personal **narrating psychology** I would say repeatedly, that the persons often exaggerate, charismatic or at least the marginal ones, have more power to guide and even to change the orientation of the discourses. However, marginal personalities could possess much more discursive word-power thanks to their contacts with the other, from the point of view of majority groups often strange and even obscure realms. Using, therefore, ritual silence or purity, ascetics, prophesies or other characteristics of the mystical directions in Eastern Christianity have always had the semantics of "veiled knowledge", which is also seen in the word for apocrypha, *potaennyye knigi* – 'the secret Books'.

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¹¹ It has been mentioned, that the role of the sorcerer appeared suddenly, as I had an opportunity to hear the conversation between her and the relative women from her home-village concerning the snake had bite the udder of the cow. Katri was very angry, that they did not call her in time. She should make the things as is right and proper. Thereafter Katri told me shortly, that she had some experiences of curing the cattle in her young age.

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