Editorial

The studies published at *Pro Ethnologia* 17 are united by the concept of worldview, which is one of the most fundamental constructs for the analysis of a human being, society and the culture. A worldview may be understood as a culturally organised macro thought constituted of concepts regarding the general essence of life. These ideas are usually not expressed so directly and thus consist of tacit knowledge. A certain consensus is prevalent that worldviews are constructed on the basis of universal categories as Self, the Other, Relationship, Classification, Causality, Space and Time. The content of these universals varies from one society to another and within a given society.

"Worldview" is a construct widely used in social sciences and humanities, particularly in anthropology and philosophy, quite often the approaches and interpretations of various disciplines have merged in a particular study. We might ask, why studying the worldview seems to be so popular still now? Partly it could be explained by a continous information overload, general fragmentation of knowledge and changes in values in contemporary society. The concept of worldview seems to offer the framework to reach more holistic descriptions about the world. The authors, of the collection are mostly anthropologists/ethnologists and folklorists who offer different perspectives on the example of different cultures. Both traditional and modern worldviews have received attention in the collection.

The first two articles, in this issue, focus on the idiosyncratic culture of the Setus, an ethnic group residing in South-East Estonia. Due to the influence of historical developmental factors, (belonging to Russia and in the sphere of the influence of the Greek Orthodox Church beginning from the 13th century), oral tradition has played an essential role in their culture.

The Setus', especially their women's traditional song folklore, have served as one of the symbols of Setu culture beginning from the second half of the 19th and throughout the 20th century. In the first written version is transmitted the "hidden voice", while the author of the second article argues that by the end of the 20th century it had become the "sole ruler" in culture.

Andreas Kalkun analyses in the article "The World of Seto female autobiographers"the autobiographical songs of Setu women, which

already had been collected in the 1920s–1930s, yet, had so far been disregarded. These texts had been concealed among the so-called classical folklore and, as marginal, had remained outside the researchers' sphere of interest to this moment of time.

The author shows how these texts reflect the patrilocal order of the family in the early 20th century. He analyses how social environment, which greatly determined women's role (subordination to the will of husband – father or brother(s), getting married, giving birth to children, especially sons) and destiny, echoed back in their songs. The latter also expressed the singer's individual destiny and their assessments of it.

Andreas Kalkun emphasises that these texts have a special value, as singing for Setu women was one of the few possibilities to publicly express themselves (their thoughts, feelings, emotions). According to his words in these songs *the voice of the women silenced by society can be heard*.

Madis Arukask aims to consider the changes in the Setu runo song tradition in the 20th century by taking a part of the repertoire (address songs) of a concrete folk singer, Anne Vabarna as the example.

The author argues that the cultural changes of the 20th century – the gradually increasing invasion of the modern world already in the 1920s–1930s, or the first period of the Republic of Estonia, and especially during the later – Soviet – period, have caused changes in runo song tradition, particularly in the function and performing of songs. As a result, runo song (song culture) is not oriented to the community any more, but, on the contrary, as the author maintains, has been "released" into the wider public. For instance, address songs – the addressing of the singer to the audience in different life situations, which existed in traditional song culture – has gradually been more and more directed to those outside the community (in the case of Anne Vabarna – first to the collectors of folklore, later on, for instance, also to the Soviet-time power representatives).

The author admits that in runo song tradition, form is gaining the upper hand over content.

Finally, the question remains unsettled as to what is going to happen to Setu song tradition in the 21st century and to whom it is going to be addressed.

Svetlana Karm also represents the "gender aspect" of cultural analysis. In her article, she deals with transition rituals, which in Udmurt traditional culture are related to different periods in women's lives and the transition from one period to another.

The rituals related to transition periods are universal in cultures and

eras, yet, especially in traditional society, transitions from one stage of human life to another are often precisely and strictly organised. In Udmurt culture, a woman's life has been especially strictly regulated.

In her analysis, Karm focuses on the rituals connected with the coming of age and also the one that principally consists in the sprinkling of the young woman (young wife or bride) with water.

The author, who herself as a bearer of Udmurt culture possesses "insider's competence", has selected for more thorough treatment the rituals whose performance she herself has observed during fieldwork. Besides that, she also uses as an essential source, the video material, which has been recorded during the joint expeditions of the Estonian National Museum and the National Museum of the Udmurt Republic in the 1980s and the early 1990s.

As a conclusion, the author emphasises that the initiation rituals were closely connected with the festivals in popular calendar.

Two articles focus on the worldview of Lithuanian traditional and contemporary folklore and folk belief. **Radvilė Racėnaitė** deals in her article "Perception of death in Lithuanian traditional culture" with Lithuanian idioms, narrative folklore and ethnographic material, the notions of personified death in Lithuanian *traditional folk world*. Notwithstanding a rapid decline of traditional folk worldview, there can still be recorded traditional folk narratives about death in Lithuania. Various idiomatic sayings, which have preserved archaic features of personified death, appear to this day both in local press articles and in everyday language of town-dwellers. In Lithuanian folk narratives, death is mostly pictured as a woman dressed in white. Death can also be seldom portrayed as a man, a child, or an animal. Racėnaitė shows, how the coexistence of a few different death concepts is based on the idea about the syncretic nature of traditional world-outlook. The coexistence of different images also presents interpretational and regulatory models of how to transform the mystery of death into appreciable images. The syncretism of a few death images in Lithuanian tradition means that both older and newer conceptions of death coexist in the minds of people.

Laima Anglickienė analyses in the article "The image of people of other religions in the Lithuanian folklore" the image of people of other religions in the Lithuanian folklore of the 19th century – at the 1st half of the 20th century. According to the author, people do not try to understand doctrines of other religions and deny this as bad and wrong, estimating their religious rituals and customs as strange or funny. Estimations and interpretations of other people's religious customs are reflected in folklore.

The article deals both with the folklore about Christians (Non-Catholics) and about Non-Christians, concluding that in oral traditions other religions are reflected more often than other confessions.

The encounter of different worldviews often brings about an opposition – especially when a worldview is converted into an ideology, i.e., has assumed an active nature. The following three articles give a survey of the conflict of different worldviews, which occurred side by side with the establishment of Soviet power.

In the article, "Yuri Vella's worldview as a tool for survival: what filming reveals", authors **Liivo Niglas** and **Eva Toulouze** focus on the analysis of the Nenets' poet, reindeer herder and social activist Yuri Vella. The authors have developed the study according to two different approaches, one based on filming and the other completing the latter by data from traditional fieldwork. Liivo Niglas and Eva Toulouze show in their article how Yuri Vella has built himself a worldview that offers him a solution for survival. Traditional roots are the basis on which the indigenous people of the North may build a healthy life, but Vella does not turn exclusively towards the past and integrates selected elements of modernity, which allows it to be part of the actual world without losing identity. Conflict between two worlds is solved by creative symbiosis and the authors conclude that Yuri Vella's mission is both to propose concrete modalities that may inspire the Nenets, the Khanty and the other peoples of the North in Russia, and to awake international awareness of this issue.

Tatiana Bulgakova, in her article, proceeds from a tragic event – the arrest and conviction of Bogdan Onenko, the famous Nanai shaman, in the 1930s, because of the fact that he had accepted certain rewards (clothes and animals) from his patients in order to sacrifice them to the spirits (called sewens) who assisted him. In a thorough analysis, the author aims to disclose the reasons for the shaman's behaviour in the context of traditional culture, whose bearers even now regard the shaman's activity as necessary and indispensable. The other parties in the conflict were (those) members of the shaman's congregation who under the influence of Soviet ideology had abandoned their former worldview and now regarded this act as "robbery", as well as the representatives of the new power. Tatiana Bulgakova shows how one and the same fact can be interpreted in different worldviews, which in this case caused a conflict with tragic consequences.

Irina Kotyleva's article **"**The role of Soviet ideology in the transformation of Komi traditional holiday culture in the 1920s**"** treats the developing and introducing of holiday culture related to Soviet ideology in Komi-Zyrian territories.

The concept of time is a characteristic feature of the worldview. In the early 20th century, the holiday culture and rituals of the Komi people were determined by the Orthodox worldview.

The author emphasises that the aim that the new power had in mind, in reforming chronology and holiday culture related to it, was to replace the sacral character of holiday time proceeding from Orthodoxy by the one proceeding from the new ideology, or "the Christian era should be substituted for by the socialist era." Kotyleva's treatment is based on interesting archival materials: reports of the agitation and propaganda departments of the district committees of the Komi oblast, also central and regional newspapers and the calendars of that period.

In the first part of the article, the author deals with the calendar shift (transfer to the so-called Gregorian calendar) and the introduction of the new, Soviet chronology (holidays) into the calendar: first they appear in calendars side by side with the holidays based on Orthodox tradition, then the two lists of holidays exist together for some time and finally the process results in marking only Soviet holidays in calendars.

The second part of Kotyleva's analysis describes the Soviet holiday tradition, the creation of new holiday culture, its forms and elements. The author emphasises that the transformation of holiday culture became one of the most important directions in the work of the „builders of the new world". She also observes that, side by side with the celebration of new holidays, also an active fight against traditional holiday culture occurred in many different forms. In both cases, plays with often propagandistic content, which were performed in the Komi language, had a special role. The author summarizes that new holidays and propagandistic performances became the main translators of communist ideology into people's minds.

Worldview is a shifting and changing phenomenon. Such shifts both influence and find representation in narratives. The last two articles of the issue analyse the connections between worldview and narratives.

The article "The religious practice of *mirskoye obmiraniye*: The motifs of Old Slavonic apocrypha reflected in Ingrian folk narratives" from **Taisto Raudalainen** deals with some prophetic speech genres and folk religious practices connected with the prophecies/fortune-telling. A practice of dream-telling, divination and prophesising called sometimes as *mirskoye obmiraniye* – lit. 'dying, falling into the deep sleep similar to the cataleptic state', was also quite widespread among the Russian peasant women since the late middle-ages up to recent days. The narratives have been collected mainly in the course of the life experience interviewing sessions of elderly women, the majority of them Ingrian, but also some half-Russian women.

Through the analysis of the narratives of some particular informants, Raudalainen also discusses how a person's knowledge and competence in the traditional folk narrative resources are connected to their success and influence in social discourses.

Jürgen Beyer presents in his article "Whom should one thank for a narrow escape? Lessons drawn from a perilous journey from Vormsi and Noarootsi to Finland in 1796". A story of five men from Vormsi and four men from Noarootsi, who set out to hunt seals on the ice off the Estonian coast on a late-winter day in 1796 and drifted away on an ice-floe. Finally they reached Hankoniemi in Finland and climbed ashore. Jürgen Beyer studies the reports found about this journey in different sources and shows, how people told about this journey, placing their viewpoints in various traditions of understanding divine providence or sheer coincidence. He concludes his study, asking questions about the importance of narrative sources, particularly historical narratives and these narratives as a research area: should they be studied by folklorists, philologists, or historians.

Terje Anepaio, Pille Runnel

The World of Seto Female Autobiographers

Andreas Kalkun

At the beginning of the 20th century, many autobiographical improvisations from Seto women were collected. These texts have been written down not by educated folklorists but by the Seto people themselves. In these texts, the fiction and the reality, or the traditional and clearly individual subject, are interwoven in an extremely complicated manner. Due to the indefinable nature of the texts and their authors' gender and marginal position, these texts have stayed without researchers' attention so far. In this article, I will focus on the autobiographical songs of 24 Seto women[1]. All texts are today stored in the Estonian Folklore Archives, whereas most of the texts have been found in Samuel Sommer's folklore collection, four in Eisen's collection and one in the ERA collection. None of the autobiographical songs nor any of their parts had been published[2] before I presented my research. The autobiographical texts were collected between 1925–1935 both from the northern and southern part of *Setomaa*: from Järvesuu, Luhamaa, Meremäe, Mäe, Satserinna and Vilo '*nulk*'.[3]

The texts were found by using the song lists of the Estonian Folklore Archives (also the electronical register of Sommer's collection created by Paul Hagu) but many songs were found just randomly while reading improvisations, dedication songs, songs of *paabapraasnik* (i.e. women's

[1] Natalie Aasa (63), Natalja Jänessoo (?), Anna Kaljusaar (b. 1916), Jevdokia Kandle (b. 1833), Jevdokia Kandle-Kõomägi (b. 1900), Matr´ona Keskmaa (b. 1889), Aksenja Kirvõs (?), Anastasia Kuuste (47), Anne Kõiv (40), Pelagei Kõoleht (?), Maria Kütte (?), Irina Lepistik (?), Ksenia Linna (46), Stepanida Lund (71), Matrena Mällik (48), Evdokia Palokene (b. 1886), Darka Papitalo (58), Anna Peramets (b. 1885), Avdotja Põvvat (?), Tat´o Rendla (?), Anastasia Sangaste (38), Maar´a Soepoig (58), Anna Sonts (b. 1870), Anne Vabarna (b. 1877).

[2] I have analysed the same texts and published some of them as examples in my earlier articles about Seto women's autobiographical songs (Kalkun 2002; 2003).

[3] *Nulk* is the native geographical term describing a group of villages situated in close proximity in Setomaa.

party songs) etc. Since nobody has mentioned autobiographical improvisations in their researches about Seto folk songs before, this song type did not exist[4], the autobiographical texts cannot be easily found in folklore archives, these texts need to be noticed in the amorphous and indefinable forms of interpretations. The autobiographical texts vary in length (the longest text has 946 verses; the shortest texts have only about 20 verses). In many cases, a shorter or a longer biography in prose, written down by the collector, precedes the autobiographical song. Sometimes more than one autobiographical improvisation has been written down from one autobiographer (for example Anna Sonts, Natalja Jänessoo, Anne Kõiv).

The majority of the female autobiographers, I am looking at in this article and whose age we know, are middle-aged women. According to the information given by the collectors, the youngest autobiographer is an 18-year-old married woman named Anna Kaljusaar, and the oldest one is a 102-year-old widow named Jevdokia Kandle. There are married women, widows and spinsters among them; also, the different social classes are represented – from the daughter of a shopkeeper to a beggar. In most cases, the collectors of the songs have been local young people (Mihail Peramets, Ekaterina Põllula, Nikolai Oinas, Anna Tammeorg, Dimitri Karnask) among them have also been the close relatives of the autobiographers (Ivvan and Timmo Vabarna, Agrafina Jänessoo). The relatively frequent occurrence of the autobiographical songs in the written material of the local and *close* collectors speaks about *innocence* and *naivety* of the collectors without any experience of the official folkloristics. Therefore, also the "non-existing" genres or texts with questionable folkloric value have been collected, which probably would not have happened if the collectors had been educated folklorists. At the same time, this fact also refers to the intimate and non-public nature of the autobiographic texts, which is why these texts were presented only for family members and relatives.

I have purposely focussed only on the texts themselves and the semi- and meta-texts surrounding these texts while studying autobiographical

[4] The term 'song type' used in Estonian folkloristics originates in the comparative-historical ideology from the 19th century. According to that ideology, every folkloric text, which has been collected and stored in nowadays, has its primeval form. Apparently, so called improvisational texts, especially the songs that manifest with emphasis the connection between a text and an author, do not fit into this narrow system, and due to their actuality belong to the periphery of classical folkloristics.

songs, and I have not specifically looked at how the life of those autobiographers is reflected on the church registers or on other documents.

Invisible texts

Estonian folklorists have preferred to look at the runo song as a mean for reaching the pre-textual hypothetical texts and worlds. To the folklorists, the analysis of the traditional poetics or search for the myth fragments has been more important than an individual singer and her text that obviously stands historically too close to them (see Arukask 2000: 57–59). The singer, who lived at the end of the 19th century or at the beginning of the 20th century, has been referred to as someone who is beginning to forget and move away from the core of the tradition; someone who has mangled the initial form and meaning of a folk poem. As a result of the same ideology, the improvisational texts are stigmatised by the folklorists.[5] The historical proximity of the texts and the possible individual connection with their authors, as well as the ambivalent form of the poems, has made these texts a non-prestigious subject for researchers.

The aim of this paper is to show that Seto women's improvisations are free from these kind of stigmas examining these texts synchronically. I'm trying to see these texts as they are – perfect and sole at their moment of creation – without degrading their authors by calling them reminders or adaptors of the tradition. For me, Seto women's poetical autobiographies are excellent documents of the history of everyday life that reflects the life in a patrilocal family as well as their authors' individual aesthetics and devices of poetics. Fortunately, the poetical autobiographies of the simple and illiterate peasant women, whose "voice" usually dies with their bodies, are written down by the folklore collectors and preserved as written documents in the archives.

Today, Seto women's autobiographical texts are the only written traces that remind us of the life of the simple peasant women at the beginning of the 20th century. We know quite a lot about urban people and their everyday lives from the same age because they left us an innumerable

[5] The same tendency of ignoring lyrical and improvisational songs have seemed to be prevailing also there, where the Finnish comparative-historical school of folkloristics has been most valid for very long time in different historical and ideological reasons. According to Senni Timonen, for example the majority of lyrical songs collected from the North-Karelia have been stored as "a by-product" of more valuable genres like epic songs and spells (1998: 232).

amount of diaries, letters, books and other written documents. Seto women died (even at the beginning of the 20th century) so that the only documents from their lives were the church registers of their births, marriages and deaths. Traditional folklore, especially improvisational songs collected from Seto women, enables us to hear the voice of these women and have a look at their world.

Setos' improvisational songs (including the death and bride laments) are the texts that certainly required a highly individual expression of the author's own emotions and experiences in words. Setos' death laments are full of autobiographical digressions and memories. Also, in the bride laments beside traditional motives, there are passages that refer to concrete personage and situations. The improvisations and votive songs reflect the uniqueness of the singing moment as well as the attitude of the singer even more clearly.

Texts with gender

Seto autobiographical songs, as well as a large part of the song folklore as such, are collected from women. There is no reason to take the folklore texts for something neutral in respect to gender, and to accept the mainstream trend in research, which decontextualises and depoliticises folklore texts.[6] At the beginning of the 20th century, Seto culture was clearly gendered, as the biological gender of women and men defined their social and economic position in a village and in a family; their possibilities for self expression; their education, and their expected patterns of behaviour. Without doubt, the song of a folklore singer is not just a thing in itself but it is affected by its creator – by his/her gender and social environment. The oral tradition is essentially gender centred. The tradition is very diverse; it is not just a homogeneous illustration of "a local mentality" but is very closely connected with the social position of performers, with their gender and social status. Also, it is obvious that the oral tradition does not simply reflect a previously existing and congealed social reality, but instead constantly creates or recreates, authorizes or undermines the social practices and cultural forms of the everyday world of singers and speakers (Raheja 1997a: 6). On the one hand, folksongs keep

[6] The woman's nearly universal unquestioning acceptance of her own devaluation cannot make texts created by women neutral in respect to gender (Ortner 1996: 30) neither can do that Seto women's supposed contentment with the valid social order.

up and ensure the gender stereotypes and principles that are accepted in a given society (they reproduce common knowledge about the roles and hierarchy between genders) but, on the other hand, they give the person who is familiar with the tradition the possibility and freedom to express her/his dissatisfaction, despair, anger or resignation.

Similarly, the idea of the unified "voice of a woman" that appears in the folklore texts created by women is just illusory and simplifying (compare Raheja 1997b: 174). Regardless of the fact that given autobiographical texts come from the same time period and from the women who lived in very similar conditions (Seto patrilocal village, similar religious, economic and educational background) one may say that "the voices" of the mothers and daughters, widows and spinsters and married women arising from the songs are different and sometimes even contradict one another. In conclusion, "the women's perspective" in Seto autobiographical songs differs from the men's one but is not unitary at its micro level.

The form of the autobiographical improvisations is the Seto's version of *Kalevala* verse. When one started to collect and write down Seto folklore, Seto women were highly proficient in using the traditional verse so that in addition to remembering and repeating the old folk poems they could freely produce new ones. The improvisations in the Samuel Sommer's collection (124 648 pages from 1922–1936), Miko Ode's long songs in the third volumes of *Setukeste laulud* as well as the enormous number of runo songs (150 000 verses), collected from Anne Vabarna, all refer to the ease of singing runo songs and to the general proficiency of this form.

With their existence, the autobiographical improvisations manifest the singers' freedom to express oneself using the whole set of possibilities a runo song form has to offer. The longest known autobiographical improvisation consists of 948 verses and the shortest ones consist of 20 verses. The oral text, which is created *impulsively* and oriented to the specific audience, becomes after writing down, "an improvisation" that has the potential to speak to the readers also after its performance. When recorded, the initially flowing and ever changing oral text acquires the features of a written text; it has one definite form, it is rigid and unitary.

The transparent scriptor and a confessing woman

According to Foucault (1998: 49), the confession is a discursive ritual that reveals power relations, and where the speaking subject is, at the same time, the subject of an utterance. It isn't possible to confess without a real or an imaginary "other"; "the other" is the presupposition of the confession, it forces the subject to confess, evaluates and judges it;

punishes, forgives and conciliates. Seto women's autobiographies have been written down by the singers' female relatives (daughters, sisters) or by young literate people from the same village. Since the informant and the scriptor are intimately related, the situation of collecting is similar to the natural situation of performing these texts, so that the singer and the scriptor may have a real dialogue.

Often in these texts a scriptor is addressed, as well as meditations on what could happen to the written confession in the future. The singer trusts the scriptor, and she considers the scriptor to be a actual recorder of the reality, a transparent glass which doesn't change or deface the performed text. Jevdokia Kandle identifies herself with a scripting process and a scriptor, she sings of how she has cried while *scripting* her autobiography.

If you only knew my mind,
my gentle soul,
how did I cry while I wrote how did I spatter tears.

S 82728/9 < Setomaa, Vil´o p., Vil´o v. < Kol´o v. –
Mihail Peramets < Jevdokia Kandle (Kõomägi), b. 1900 (1934)

According to Foucault, the compulsion to confess is set into us so deeply, that we don't perceive it to be brought about by the power limiting us. Hence Seto women consider producing texts about their own lives more a therapy (performing autobiographical improvisations, women have often cried) or intimate interchange of experiences between generations, than a compulsion. At the beginning of the twentieth century, in a patrilocal Seto village there weren't many other opportunities for women to express themselves besides singing. So, singing in certain places, on certain events and in a certain form was constituted and accepted by the tradition to be one of the few possibilities for women to express themselves more or less publicly, participating in a situation of singing or lamenting as a creator or as a performer.

The runo song and the worldview

Seto women's autobiographical improvisations are runo songs. However, the poetic form of *the* runo song is not neutral or without meaning, being hardly if at all related to the content of a text. When Seto women create autobiographical texts using the traditional form of the runo song then it means that with the poetic *apparatus* of a runo song, alliterative word pairs, formulas, motives and maybe even *thought models* and plots, typical

to the runo song, will be transported into the new text. The question is – does the text write itself through the women?

It appears that the traditional motives like "trees are not the same in length" bring forth a certain ideology into the autobiographical improvisation. This particular motive – don't despise each other – has the same meaning in both the autobiographical songs and other poems. However, there are many other examples where the autobiographers take a traditional formula or motive and give it a very intimate and individual meaning.

Presumably the motives of courting in the autobiographical improvisations follow the tradition in their poetics as well as in their ideology. The themes, which are less connected with the tradition, on the other hand, show the flexibility of the *apparatus* of the runo song and the multiplicity of the options the singer has. The non-traditional topics might adjust to the tradition in many ways.

Four autobiographers tell us about house fires, for example. Three of them begin by saying "*The fire was evil, the flame was furious*". Nevertheless, while describing the fire or soaking in water, women use very different motives. Anna Sonts borrows the motive (*the home lost, the lake left*) from a lyro-epic song "Leemeleht". Maar'a Soepoig describes her cattle left in the fire using the verses from "The burning of gold", and both Uljana Tammeleht and Anna Peramets use different motives from the pastoral and orphan's songs.

The variable application of the fire motives indicates the singers' independence and freedom while using the poetical system of the runo song. Likewise, the form of the text may influence the content, the narratives and the structural peculiarities in Seto women's autobiographies are determined by their authors' social environment and their social roles.

The roles of a woman

At the beginning of the 20th century, Seto women's life was structured and determined by the family system held in Seto villages and by the roles given to women (a girl, a bride, a wife, a mother, as well as a widow, a whore, and a spinster). All these roles can also be found in the autobiographical improvisations I am focussing on in this paper. Furthermore, the autobiographers' evaluations of their lives and roles, determined by the society, appear in these autobiographical improvisations. The similarities between Seto women's poetical autobiographies are, on the one hand, determined by the usage of the same poetical system and, on the other hand, by the common social environment. The autobiographers' position in a family and in a village, their opportunities

and choices have been limited and pre-determined in the same manner. The lives of married women include the same events and emotions; moreover, the evaluations given to the woman's life and destiny are similar too. As expected, each autobiographer, who is married, compares her life before and after getting married using the traditional motives that oppose the life of a wife to the life of a maiden.

However, in Seto women's autobiographical textual corpus there are women represented with different life stories (widows, spinsters, married women, recurrently married women) so that even these 20 randomly chosen texts here give us an interesting overview of the Seto women's world at the beginning of the 20th century.

As set with the patrilocal order of the family, daughters have to leave their home and start a new life in a new extended family. Parting with the childhood home has been a traumatic experience for Seto women.

In the autobiographical songs, women sing about their problematic relationships with the female members of the new tribe as well as about the power competition in the extended family. In the autobiographies, one describes the joy the women feel while visiting their childhood homes as married women.[7] The great part of Pelagei Kõoleht's and Natalja Jänessoo's autobiographies contain the motives of about visiting their childhood home. The Setos' custom to invite married daughters and sisters back home during the village festivals (Tampere 1960: 203) gave the women a chance to come back and visit their old family for a short time. Pelagei Kõoleht longs for Mary's Dormition Day when she could go and visit her widowed mother; and in her autobiography Natalja Jänessoo reproaches her brother who after their parents had died doesn't invite his sister to her childhood home during Easter anymore.[8] The importance of "visiting the

[7] The same kinds of emotions and relationships have existed in the societies with the similar patrilocal family system. Gloria Goodwin Raheja writes about Northern-Indian (Pahansu and Hathchoya) women's songs, where one complains about the fact that the woman becomes the "other" and the "alien" to her natal kin upon her marriage. Often, women express their distress about how their brothers who have been born of the same mother forget them. Also, women are afraid of that after their brother gets married, his wife takes their former position at home, and the family severs the relations with daughters and even forgets to invite them to visit their family house (1997b: 182, 188).

[8] Natalja Jänessoo is from Mäe village in Vilo *nulk*, where the *praasnik* (village festival) was celebrated on the memorial day of Pious Mary from Egypt, which often coincided with the Great Fast, and therefore was actually celebrated during Easter. That explains why Natalja Jänessoo expects to be invited to visit home (*kost'ma*) during Easter.

childhood home" topic in Seto women's autobiographies seems to refer to the fact that visiting home during festivals has also been a probable situation for performing these songs. The women's parties for a smaller circle of people and the gatherings of different female generations created a situation for presenting both the nostalgic childhood memories and the occasional laments. The young woman's connection with her childhood home was aborted when she wasn't invited to visit her home anymore.

When my dear father died,
when my mother was taken down under dirt,
I lost my golden visiting-place,
my flourishing swinging-place.
Although my brother
lives in my childhood home,
he, my mother's dear chicken,
he won't call me to visit,
to visit every time,
he leaves me into oblivion,
he forgets mother's chicken.
O my brother,
dear mother's chicken!
My gentle soul didn't know it,
the berry's mind didn't understand it,
when comes that hour,
when paces that time,
when comes Easter time,
when comes eggs-time to my lawn,
they won't call me to visit,
they won't count me as a dear visitor.

S 110298/9 < Setomaa, Vil´o p., Mäe v.
< Agrafina Jänessoo – Natalja Jänessoo (1935)

In their texts, the autobiographers repeat the traditional motives where a girl complains that she has been given away for marriage too young. In addition, the female autobiographers complain that parents did not let them wait for the right suitor or even to choose a husband for themselves. The above mentioned motives in the women's autobiographies reflect the fear of Seto families that their daughters might stay at home for too long and never get married. For a patrilocal family system, a girl who can't find a man to marry, and stays at her father's house, is useless and weakens a family. As married women were called after their husband's name then spinsters were called after their father's name during their whole life in

order to signify their affiliation.[9] When the patriarch of an extended family died or was changed, the status of a single and dependant woman declined steeply. In the beginning of Irina Lepistik's autobiography the collector writes about her typical spinster's life. After her father's death, blind Irina became a beggar, living on her brother's land. She earns her living by healing village people and doing needlework.

Irina Lepistik, a folksinger, was born... (baptised in Salesja) in Vilo village in Vilo parish as a daughter of Prooska. Her father was a true farmer. Irina Lepistik is not married and she does not have any children. She has learnt the folksongs on her own without studying anywhere. Today, she is living still in the same village (mentioned above) on her brother's land. She does not own land. The only property she has is a small house that looks like a small sauna and it has no outbuildings at all. Both, singer's mother and mother's sister are folksingers too. At the moment the singer earns her living as a beggar and sometimes she also does some needlework although she is almost blind. Everything she makes looks nice and clear though, and even nobody with good eyes could not do better needlework. Also she can help when someone has sprained one's ankle. But she is not able to work on the field or do farming.

S 2365/6 Setomaa, Vil´o p., Raatsova v. – Jaan Orusaar (1927)

The status of a childless widow is as despised and feared as the life of a spinster. After she had buried her husband and son Evdokia Palokene had to go back her childhood home where she had to accept the little support of her brother. The contemptible and low status of a widow makes Evdokia sing her suicide utopia.

Dear woman, dear berry,
dear tender mother's child,I
remain leaning on windy sky,
on beautiful air.
My dear younger brother,
dear tender mother's child.
I went to him,
I went to his home to see him,
I remained for winds to shove,
for raindrops to pelt.

[9] The family names were given to the Seto people in 1921.

He invited me to his home,
beguiled to his family.
That's why I went back home,
to my brothers house.
Then I became a pauper,
I became as poor as grave.
What to do? Where to go?
Where to go? What to do?
I went to the sea shore,
I went to the brook shore.
In my mind I wished to walk into the sea,
in my heart, into deep water.

S 73722/3 > Setomaa, Pankjavitsa p. / Vil´o p., Vil´o v.
> M. Peramets – Evdokia Palokene (b. 18.02.1886) (1934)

When singing about remaining a spinster the metaphors of perishing and burning have been used. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Seto village interpreted the fact of marrying late or staying single as a resistance to the family system that firmed the marginal social position of single women and deprived these women of the benefits that were meant only for maidens or wives. In her autobiographical improvisation, Irina Lepistik sings about the shame of dying with a braid and getting old wearing a maiden's chaplet, and jokes about the straw sheaf she has married.[10]

I praise God,
give two thanks to darling!
I was married against my own wish,
I got a husband without looking.
I thought I'd die with a braid,
I thought to grow old with maiden's chaplet.
They said my virtue would burn in a stove,
my honour would go to the stove.
My virtue's hour came slowly,
my honour's hour came too quietly.
I'm to be hugged by a sheaf,
I'm to be laughed by rye sheaf,

[10] Before getting married, the Seto girls had their hair in long plait. In weddings and *kirmask* (village festivals) they wore a special wreath that referred to the status of a maiden. A married woman had to cover her head with a doily tied with a ribbon – *päävüüga*.

rye sheaf is my husband,
straw sheaf is my kin.

S 2379 > Setomaa, Vil´o p., Vil´o v .> Jaan Orusaar – Irina Lepistik (1927)

The women's life has proceeded from one initiation rite to another and this has been judged and controlled by their parents, husband or village society. In the same way, the woman's body as well as her fertility and reproduction ability have been controlled and set by the rules. Women's clothing, hair or behaviour is determined by her status in a village and in a family and not by her wish. Reaching the fertile age, wedding, child birth and the end of the fertile period are inevitably depicted in both women's hierarchical position in a family and the external markers, like wearing adornments or being without them and covering hair or not. Tat'o Rendla's brothers, who have beingn taaking care of her, and also village people are concerned because they think Tat'o might become a spinster or a whore and the benefit belonging to the village society might perish.

I lived with my brothers,
with my homeboys.
That was my brother's talk,
that was homeboys' speech:
"Our village is talking a lot,
in our corner there are many rumours."
Village said I would stay at home,
parish also said I would grow old.
O evil people of the village,
angry folk of the corner.
Village said I was lazy,
I, berry, sleep with boys.
It wasn't true what they said,
it wasn't proper what other people said.
I hadn't learned to be lazy,
I wasn't taught to be sleepy.

ERA II 173, 489/90 (2) < Seto, Vil´o p., Mitk-Sagorje v. –
Anna Tammeorg < Tat´o Rendla (9.–12.11.1937)

In the autobiographical songs, the topic of marriage has an important place.[11] For example, a great part of Stepanida Lund autobiographical

[11] Apparently, the women have perceived their position and situation more stable or just not worth

narrative describes her wedding rituals. The significance of wedding is still comparable with other initiation rites. The belief about the extremely significant border crossing, or the fatal importance of the successful initiation rite, not only appears in the wedding descriptions but also elsewhere in the autobiographies.

For instance, women suspect that there were some kind of bad predictions at their birth or baptising process that have shaped their fate. Avdotja Põvvat says that her godparents didn't read the Creed during the baptism ceremony and caused all the failures of her life with this. Evdokia Palokene accuses her brothers and parents who didn't drown her when she was a child although they should have been noticed the ominous mole on her neck.

O my own mother, darling,
my two dear parents!
When I was a tiny tot,
a bird with blue wings,
I wish I had been drown by my brothers,
I wish I had been carried to well!
I found dangerous mole on my forehead,
I found evil freckle on my neck.
I wish I had been carried to sea,
I wish I had been cast to brook.

S 73720 > Setomaa, Pankjavitsa p. / Vil´o p., Vil´o v. > M. Peramets – Evdokia Palokene (b. 18.02.1886) (1934)

Seto women's autobiographical songs reflect a system, which organisational structure and public identity associated only with men. Women have been dependant on the good will of their husbands and sons. The absence of a husband or a son has changed the woman into an inferior and imperfect creature. Even owning the land was associated only with men; a woman was a property, which meant she could never own or inherit anything.

mentioning after having a child in a new family than getting married or being a maiden. At least in the autobiographical songs one speaks about this life period quite sporadically in connection with some dramatic events like house fire, the death of a child, sending a husband or a son to the army or daughter getting married (Kalkun 2002: 51). There are no references to the relationships with the daughter in law in the versions of autobiographical songs known to the author.

Once upon a time there were several daughters in a family, and when their father died, and there weren't any sons, then the village took away their land. Mother with her daughters had to find another place. When I was six years old, my father died. I was the only child in my father's family. For two years my mother lived without a husband. There were just the two of us. Then my mother got married again; she got married in winter, and the next spring the village took our land away.

ERA II 286, 52/5 (49) < Setu, Vastseliina p., Hinsa v. –
E. Kirss > Taarka Pino b. 1871 Hinsa v. (1940)

The autobiographical improvisations and all other possibilities of singing that were determined by the tradition have given women an opportunity to express themselves. The major part in the autobiographical texts is simple stories about the everyday life of simple women. Occasionally, utopic dreams or sincere confessions arise from the neutral and calm texts.

Domesticated high religion

Seto women's autobiographical improvisations are poetically coded documents about the everyday life of women living in a patrilocal family, about their fears, desires and faith. The autobiographical songs give us intimate information about their authors and their environment. These songs reflect the position of the female autobiographers in the family hierarchy as well as their worldview and beliefs. Besides the traditional motives and themes, the autobiographical improvisations also include entirely individual motives that enable us to see into the authors' spiritual world as it is represented in a text. It can be seen from the text how directly and simply Seto women communicate with Jesus, Mary or Saints, and how Mary's or Jesus' intervention into women's everyday life in the role of an advisor or a prohibitor is perceived as a common thing.

In their autobiographical songs, Seto women mainly turn to Jesus (Essu), Mary (Maar'a) and Saint Nicholas (Mikul). According to Laura Stark, also in the texts of orthodoxian Karelian people, the same individuals are most popular (2002: 50). In most cases, we can see rhetorical exclamations – the prayers to ask for help or to thank- that appear repeatedly as a refrain in many autobiographies. Using those formulas, Anna Sonts thanks for her second marriage, for her son's return from the war and for her health and long life expectancy.

Thanks to God for that,
glory to Mary!

The Creator has created good health for me,
Jesus has written a long life.
I don't sigh on strawmattress,
my head isn't grieving in bed's head.

E, Stk 32, 39/41 (23) < Seto, Toomasmäe v. –
E. Remmel < Anna Sonts, b. 1870 (1926)

My husband lived in my own village,
grew up in my bringer-up's courtyard.
During one month I didn't hear any evil word from him,
during one year any bad talk.
That's why I'll give thanks to God,
glory to Mary.

S 8687 < Seto, Mäe p. Mikidämäe v. –
Ir´o Sonts < Anna Sonts (1929)

We gave thanks to God,
glory to Mary.
My darling came home,
came home to support us,
came home to help us.

S 8693 < Seto, Mäe p., Mikidämäe v. –
Ir´o Sonts < Anna Sonts (1929)

In the texts of different women, the same repeatedly appearing refrain may also express women's resignation – that Jesus and Mary have created the world as it is. These refrains or key phrases arise on the surface of the text as the formal markers that accent the narrative.[12] *It's created by God; it's coming from Mary* Anne Vabarna sings compliantly when her father gives her away for a marriage. The same verse comes after Anna Sonts' suicide dream. *It's created by God, it's coming from Mary.* Referring to Jesus and Mary, Anna accepts the world order as it is and confirms the fact that there is an insuperable split between her rebelling utopia and the actual life of

[12] Marie-Françoise Chanfrault-Duchet studied the prose autobiographies of French working class women who were born at the beginning of the 20th century. She calls the repeating key phrases in the texts refrains. The key phrases express the harmonic, neutral, unclear, difficult or other relations between *the self* and its social environment (1991: 79).

women. Nevertheless, in the autobiographical narratives Jesus may directly interfere into the autobiographer's life prohibiting her or having a conversation with her.

In Seto women's autobiographical improvisations, the localised and familiarised relationship with God and Saints appears, as it is essential to popular Christianity (see Stark 1996: 152). God and Saints of a popular religion are more close to the people, they are related to the particular churches and natural objects (according to the *memorates Holy John the Forerunner* has sat on the Jaani rock in Miikse village; Jesus writes a letter to the autobiographer Jevdokia Kandle) and unlike the canonical texts they behave like ordinary people. In her autobiography, Tat'o Rendla, while describing her wisdom and tolerant nature, compares herself with Saint Nicholas.

I lived my own life,
I grew up day by day,
I thank God,
two thanks to the darling.
My mind was wise,
my mind was judicious.
My mind was as St Nicholas's,
my head was like a king.
I can praise God,
I can mention Mary's name.

ERA II 173, 489/90 (2) < Seto, Vil´o p., Mitk-Sagorje v. –
Anna Tammeorg < Tat´o Rendla (9.–12.11.1937)

The unitary and the universal in high religion are often fragmented and local in the popular interpretations of Christianity. For Setos, different Mary's icons are personified and refer to the different *Mother of God-icons*. For example, during the *Pechory-Pskov pilgrimage* one has told that the Pechory's Mary was taken to her daughter (that means one Mary's icon was taken to another Mary's icon). *Pechory's Dormition of the Mother of God* icon was named Old Saint Mary and the miracles related to the icon were assigned to this particular Mary. Personified icons had different value – some were more holy than others, some were even worthless, so one was allowed to destroy them (Hagu 1999: 88), some were just more beautiful and newer than others. For example, the icon, which the bride brought into her new family, re-organised the whole family icon collection. *The "fresh gods" were put into the best place – in front – because they were*

prettier, and the older ones were put behind.[13] Obviously, Seto women perceive the icons and Saints depicted in them as humans, their beauty and other characteristics are not radically different from human ones. In her autobiography, Matr´ona Keskmaa praises her beauty of youth to be above that seen in the monastery's icons.

O me, dear maiden,
me, desired berry.
When I went to Pechory,
when I went to a fair,
in Pechory there was no such picture,
no such icon in the monastery.

S 104988 (18) < Petserimaa, Vil´o p., Truba v. –
Paul Külaniit < Matr´ona Keskmaa (1935)

In the same way, Seto women have domesticated sacred places and acts. Before important decisions or acts women go to the church or pray at home. Jevdokia Kandle, who in order to be able to get married, has to procure a paper that would prove her age, goes first to the church because she is afraid to go to the priest's home. Despite Seto women being deeply religious, they have ignored the church officials and have even been afraid of them and the entire bureaucracy related to the church institution (compare Stark 1996: 154–155).

Maiden, I cried until Izhborsk,
duck, I cried when I was going to the priest.
Before I went to the priest's home,
before I turned to the scribe,
I went to the church.
There I prayed to God,
there I mentioned Mary's name.
Through tears I prayed to Jesus,
desired berry, I prayed St Nicholas.

S 82563 < Setomaa, Vil´o p., Vil´o v. < Kol´o v. –
Mihail Peramets < Jevdokia Kandle (Kõomägi), b. 1900 (1934)

[13] ERA II 286, 87/90 (71) < Seto, Mokra v. - E. Kirss <Nati Morel b. 1853 Põrste village Vastseliina parish, married into Mokra village.

The Setos' interpretation of the orthodoxy has included several women being humiliated, involving sexist or abusing beliefs – for example, a prohibition to go to the church or to pray during the menstruating period or the belief that women are impure after giving birth to a child and need a priest's blessing to become pure again.[14] However, the sacred places like the church, chapel and monastery are not perceived as dangerous or strange ones, on the contrary the proximity to these places is rather desired and preferred. The female autobiographers wish to marry a man from the church village or they boast that they can hear church bells and priest's prayers at home.

There are signs in the texts indicating that the 20th century, with its overall profanation, has also influenced the religious life of the orthodox Seto women. Besides the autobiographies where many references to the church calendar, the priests and different religious practice can be found, there are also texts that have been presented during the Great Fast. In these cases, women express their doubts about the legality of their action but still sing their songs, getting used to the new situation where they get paid for singing.

[14] This kind of women devaluating beliefs are not anything inherent only to the Seto people or their interpretations of Orthodoxy. Both the official doctrines of the Eastern and Western Catholic Church are not free from the hostility against women and lack acceptance of gender equality. The biggest taboos are related to the female body, its functioning and its sexuality. The notes of the beliefs collected during the same time period support the fact that the beliefs about menstruation, delivery and women being impure were valid while the Seto women's autobiographies were created.

When you have menses, you shouldn't genuflect for God, you shouldn't go to the church, and you shouldn't commemorate the souls of your parents, because it's a big sin. Then isn't a woman pure.

S 107614/5 (3) Seto, Vil´o p., Lõtino v. < A. Oinas Tammeorg < Ode Hunt (February 1935)

Concerning women, it's so, that we shall not go to a church, when we are filthy. In old days then they didn't go even to the sauna, because a sauna is like a church, for us a sauna is for purification of the body, and a church is for purification of the soul. They didn't as well touch icons, when they had that period. One even asked then someone else to put candle and just gave money for that. ERA II 286, 95/106 (77) < Setu, Mokra v. – E. Kirss < Nati Morel b. 1853 Põrste village Vastseliina parish, married into Mokra village.

After giving a birth a man didn't sleep with a woman till the sixth week, then they went to the church and let the priest to worship for that woman. The woman bowed down three times, the priest took the child on his arms, touched child's lips with an icon, and then kissed the cross and the Evangely.

S 107615/6 (6) Seto, Vil´o p., Lõtino v. < A. Oinas Tammeorg < Ode Hunt (February 1935).

Listen, wise men from Tartu,
listen, high educated boys,
we have a long fast,
we are reckoning the Old Style.
I have no permission to sing,
to sing or to twist in joy.
We should be fasting
and reckoning the Old Style.
O, I'm a poor and sick woman,
a lost soul,
that's why I didn't fast,
I didn't reckon the Old Style.
Nowhere else did I receive coins,
nowhere else did I receive hundreds of marks,
to go to a doctor,
to go to a nurse.

S 82728/9 < Setomaa, Vil´o p., Vil´o v. < Kol´o v. –
Mihail Peramets < Jevdokia Kandle (Kõomägi), b. 1900 (1934)

Jevdokia Kandle sings her autobiography during the Great Fast. She knows that what she is doing is wrong, but she still sings because she hopes to get money from the scriptor she needs in order to go to the doctor. The excuses and doubts that appear in Jevdokia's text with regard to the violation of fasting rules refer to the difficult ethical and moral decisions the singer must have made in a new situation of folklore collecting. The fact that the orthodox woman had stopped fasting shows how radically the folklorist (even one coming from the same environment as the singer) can influence the singer in her decision making. The illusion of the scriptor's transparency, objectivity and passivity was destroyed in the ethnography a while ago. The presentation of a folklore text is a dialogical process where both the singer and the scriptor have their own roles (see Clifford 1986: 2).

In conclusion, the marginal and stigmatised texts, that have been left aside for several reasons, may still contain very interesting information for the researchers. Seto women's autobiographical songs haven't got much to offer to a researcher, who is constantly looking for fragments of myths or reflections of the ancient epics created by men. However, these texts can be extremely valuable for a researcher who wants to know more about the author of this kind of text, about her personality, position, and her time. In Seto women's autobiographical songs, the voice of the women silenced by the society can be heard. We can see how these women reflect on their life experiences, their faith and their social environment. Closely reading the

autobiographical texts that have been kept in the archives for years, one can discover a clear and intimate picture of the female autobiographers' lost world.

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The 20th Century in the Setu Kalevala-metric Tradition and Anne Vabarna's Address-songs as the Marks of Changes in the Overall Genre System[1]

Madis Arukask

As an introduction

Kalevala-metric songs have had a special place in Estonian folkloristics, in collection and research work, from the beginning of its emergence. Kalevala-metric tradition has been seen as the most specific facet of Estonian folklore, which has acquired specific attention beside other folklore phenomena. Publication of Kalevala-metric songs has, for decades, been the focus of attention and, different opinions regarding the principles of issuance, consistently impeding the actual publishing, have sporadically caused resignation, hidden to a smaller or greater extent, both in relevant researchers directly and in the entire Estonian folkloristics as a whole (cf., e.g. discussions with regard to the publication of a several-volume-long scientific edition of Estonian Kalevala-metric songs, *Vana Kannel*, participated in by H. Kokamägi, O. Kõiva, E. Laugaste, H. Niit, I. Rüütel, H. Tampere, Ü. Tedre and others, during the 1970s in the journal *Keel ja Kirjandus*). It seems that Estonian folklorists' relationship with the older folk songs is more specific, not solely that between the researcher and the object of research.

Older folk songs have a peculiar meaning in the Estonian cultural landscape. This could be compared with accumulated capital, the existence of which is being sensed somewhere in the back of one's neck,

[1] In an adapted version, the current article is based on one chapter of the author's Doctoral thesis "Aspects of Narrative Kalevala-Metric Songs. The Genre and Structure of Setu Lyro-Epic Kalevala-Metric Songs at the End of the 19th Century" (2003).

however, it is not properly known and remembered any longer and not much understood. The older folk song, using a religious-phenomenological comparison, is like a *deus otiosus*, being located, for a long time already, far away from the everyday human sphere and, might not even be recalled on a daily basis, whose existence is being perceived as something alienating rather than creating intimacy, however, it is irreplaceable to address him in more serious crisis situations. The reasons for the Kalevala-metric song to have occurred in such a position are the rapturous cultural events during the recent centuries, the national awakening time at the 2nd half of the 19th century and the fact of reaching modernism; and, in a more narrow viewpoint, the coming of the newer end-rhymed folk song tradition, offering a new way of looking at the world and aesthetics, dating approximately from the 18th century.

Estonians' self-identification as a singing nation inevitably relies, in the current practice, namely on the newer folk song and particularly on the joint singing tradition, emerging from the social and choir movement, the model pattern of which originates from the national-romantic bourgeoisie Europe, as the labour-Lutheran, independence-oriented internal-Estonianship, had tacitly being inclined towards this. One could argue but the truth is that the active identity of the *singing-Estonia* today is being more reflected, (in addition to Eurovision), by the arranged and modern different types of choirs, fostering polyphonic singing, relevant festivals and competitions and, first and foremost, all kinds of song festivals, introduced by Johann Voldemar Jannsen, the creator of Estonian journalism who, in his time, regarded Kalevala-metric songs with undisguised ignorance.

Undoubtedly, the Estonian choir movement, together with its fruits, is not solely a *pokazukha*-like artificial outcome, but a phenomenon which has actively been propagated in Estonians' spiritual life for more than a century, and has thus occupied a natural part thereof (cf. Kuutma 1998: 48 ff.). In today's Estonia, polyphonic choir songs are not solely sung on the stage, wearing decorative folk costumes, instead, this could similarly take place as authentic folklore in spontaneous situations at any type of meetings and gatherings where people with relevant repertoire knowledge have come together (cf. also Särg 1999). If listening to the older Kalevala-metric folk song causes cultural translation problems in today's Estonians, then this is definitely not the case when happening to the heeding to choir songs. The situation can probably be best described by the fact that the choir songs by the noted Estonian composer Veljo Tormis, based on older folk songs, laments and incantations are more intrinsic to modern Estonians (naturally with certain elite inclinations) than their folkloric

sources. It can be assumed that here, the assisting component is not the more contemporary adaptation of the soundscape as Tormis has been conscious of tradition in this regard, but, first and foremost, the general and total change in context. The choir, resounding Tormis' choir work "Curse upon Iron" from the stage, lead by the conductor, will probably never render an account to themselves that initially, this was rather an intimate incantation aimed at healing personal woes and not an exalted performance.

A similar path has been taken by the once folk-authentic dance culture and instrumental music. During the 20th century, arranged "folk dances" and arrangements of folk music, written down in notes, presented by distinctive bands, have become more homely. Today's folklore movement, a hobby-based form of culture, which uses and performs such outcomes, is, in itself, a pattern laid out within decades; providing a lust of action, intrinsic to that of a living culture to those who deal with it; however, the acquisition of it takes place pursuant to matrixes designed and prescribed by someone else, in the form of supplementary rather than primary education. Folklore movement, similar to choir singing culture, has become totally different, being rather focused on the stage situation, which is the main distinguishing feature regarding the older folk culture of the pre-awakening period.

Setumaa in the cultural background of Estonia-proper

When observing the cultural situation of Setumaa during the recent century, we can perceive a conspicuous difference. Focusing on the traditional Setu singing culture, we can notice that the older Kalevala-metric song has not abdicated its position here compared to the extent elsewhere in Estonia. Here, Kalevala-metric song has not yet become an alienated and ever dimming older cultural layer, which in a best situation, could be revived in a renewed context after being taken out of the archives. In Setumaa, older folk song is indisputably more centred that even, e.g. in the Kihnu island where Kalevala-metric songs are still partially in operation, however, quite discernibly, within certain situation boundaries (as wedding songs). It could be said that in Setumaa, Kalevala-metric song is not simply a history, but a living history and, simultaneously, the present time.

Due to certain development-related factors, these cultural impacts, which have moulded the relevant situation in the rest of Estonia, have not become dominant in Setumaa to such an extent. Without going into detail, the following distinguishing features could be mentioned:

1) Historical belonging within the impact sphere of the Greek-Catholic

Church (at the latest from the year of establishing the Pechory Monastery in 1473), which has shaped a distinctive religious worldview, significantly different from the rest of the Lutheran Estonian community, with more integral preservation of pre-Christian images, in symbiosis with Orthodox sensual favouring of mystics, whereas in the more rational Lutheranism, these features have been ousted a lot more systematically;

2) proceeding from the latter, oral cultural specifics[2], have had a much greater importance here, as, up until the beginning of the 20th century, illiteracy has been prevalent among women, conditioned, differently from the rest of Estonia, by the lack of literature, religious life and school education in the native language;

3) conspicuous kinship-related feeling of belonging, the background of which is also related to folk religion and, in its basis, more oriented towards communication with the other world and deceased ancestors – relevant evidence can also be found in the observed singing tradition;

4) (associated with the above-mentioned) a significantly larger amount of customs and holidays, actively operative until recent times, in comparison with the rest of Estonia;

5) positioning in the border area of cultures as a factor in noticing differences and in being constantly aware of one's cultural status and relevant reviewing;

6) continuous location in the role of a cultural marginal, conditioned by an excluding attitude exercised by major neighbours (Estonians and Russians) which, in its own turn, has kept the skill of finding creative, cultural and survival strategies consistently active;

7) characteristic fields of subsistence, particularly ceramics, peddling and also fishing;

8) purely physical, culturally differential conspicuousnesses, e.g. jewellery and clothing; similar to the music and singing culture;

9) language which has differentiating features also for close neighbours in the west.

Further, we concentrate on the features of Setu culture, more apparent to the outside. When talking about the self-conception of the Setu people

[2] Walter J. Ong, when speaking about oral modes of thinking and expression, has pointed out the following characteristic features thereof: additive rather than subordinative, aggregative rather than analytic, redundant-"copious", conservative-traditionalist, close to the human lifeworld, agonistically toned, participatory rather than objectively distanced, homeostatic, situational rather than abstract (2002: 36–57).

during the 2nd half of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, Indrek Jääts, in his research on identity, mentions Orthodox religion, (women's) folk costumes and (women's) singing tradition (1998: 38–41). Later on (until World War II) it is possible to observe a certain decrease in the rendering of relevance to clothing and religious life, whereas, on the contrary, the importance of oral folklore increases in self-presentation – in many instances, due to the growing interest of researchers (ibid.: 54). Further on, from the Soviet period until the re-establishment of the Republic of Estonia at the beginning of the 1990s, rendering significance to songs, clothing and religious life becomes ever more differentiated between generations, as it is valued prevailingly by the older women whereas language and political issues, related to borders and cultural autonomy, become more topical for younger people and the invigorating intelligentsia (ibid.: 65 ff., 95 ff.).

Thus, when talking about the Setu Kalevala-metric tradition, we can bring out two important points. First, it does qualitatively differ from that in the rest of Estonia, as it has preserved a living bond with the past without mediators from elite culture. On the other hand, external intervention, to an ever increasing extent, has become the key for the survival of the Setu singing culture: at first the interest of scientists and, ever increasingly, the interest of that of the public and tourists. Despite the fact that the Kalevala-metric tradition in Setumaa has been preserved in an incomparably more viable manner than anywhere else within the historic area of the Kalevala-code, recent developments indicate an increasing orientation towards outwardness.

The Soviet period was characterised by progressive arranging of folk culture in a special-presentational form, its nominalisation to definite presentation groups and events. Fortunately, there was not much intervention as regards repertoire in Setumaa. However, outward looking, and accordingly adaptation of singing culture, had already started earlier, during the first Republic of Estonia (in 1918–1940), when more talented female Setu singers were set forth and valued, primarily for the wider world. Inevitably, human ambitions and desire for earning have, in this process, been concurrent with natural gifted qualities and the love for singing. The wish to reach the same level of publicity and appreciation, primarily in the eyes of the external world, as that acquired by the one-generation-older great singers, has also inspired Anne Vabarna[3], one of the best-known Setu singers today. Thus, it is obvious that the actual start of taking folk culture out of its natural context and setting it on the stage, aiming at its popularisation and promotion, took place namely in the

Republic of Estonia, where dominance was given to era-based stereotypes in demonstrating and favouring culture. Naturally, prime attention was focused (and still is) on the most conspicuous achievements in different parts of Estonia, the exhibiting of which did not cause excessive technical extra difficulties and, simultaneously provided purely economic subsistence.

The Kalevala-metric tradition, together with its very distinct musical polyphony, became very clearly and particularly apparent within the Setu culture, at the beginning of the 20th century, which, at the time, was entering the modernism phase. In the Setu cultural landscape, it is namely the older folk song which is a *work* equivalent to the value of a cultural base text (cf. Heda Jason's *literary work*[4]), preserving certain central cultural values. Nevertheless, other folklore forms/works were existent in the then Setu culture, which now inevitably started to deserve less attention. Or in other words, Kalevala-metric song was/is a cultural phenomenon, which, being one of the few among the ones in the alternating cultural milieu, was given a permit for survival from outside.

Such promotion of the presentations by Setu female singers has, during the entire century, confirmed the belief in Kalevala-metric songs as a cultural symbol value also among the Setu people themselves. Having been understood as such as early as during the second half of the 19th century, the sovereign triumph of the Kalevala-metric song, among other folklore phenomena, has lasted until today. However, this has some considerable disadvantages from the viewpoint of Setu cultural integrity. A situation has gradually come into being where the feminine Kalevala-metric song, and relevant aggregations around it, is not one of the most attractive and

[3] Armas Otto Väisänen describes the ambitiousness of Anne Vabarna in the second part of the Seto lugõmik as follows: "She herself forced me to write down the song-texts. Why? Because she also had been "at the party in Petseri, walking in a borough", and other great singers – Ode, Irö and Taarka – were honoured there greatly, everyone got five thousand marks in addition! Anne was not permitted to sing. This was what she complained to me singing" (Väisänen 1924: 25–26; see also Hagu 1995: 30–31; 2000: 190–191).

[4] When developing the theory of ethno-poetic genre, Heda Jason mentions, among other matters: "Each culture, even the simplest and pre-writing one, possesses literary works that carry its focal cultural values. These works differ from similar works in related cultures, at least to a certain extent. Other works are peripheral and often fully sharable with other cultures, even with those distant in time and space" (2000: 19). Matti Kuusi (1994: 41) has proposed the specificity of the Kalevala-code among ancient Baltic Finns, that is could have been used for coding most essential societal messages and cultural base texts.

stressed sides of the Setu cultural integrity, next to other similar and balancing phenomena but instead, has become a total and absolute ruling feature, which is being supported and fed by unsuspecting external tourist interests. It is thus clear that, in such a manner, we are already dealing with an artificial construction, which inevitably has to take energy from outside.

Setu Kalevala-metric tradition today has, willingly or not, been anchored to the "domain" of a certain social group. A typical singer of Kalevala-metric songs today is a female past the threshold of middle age, with a set and more or less stable material background in the current Estonian (rural) society, who has grown up in the spirit of Soviet stage-centred culture where she has repeatedly had an opportunity to train her relevant abilities; however she has acquired traditional singing skills by natural way, i.e. by hearing it in the community circle from early childhood. In addition, considering the valid cultural picture, she is most efficiently orientated towards showing herself and her skills, proceeding both from her own will as well as from external demands. Traditional Setu folk costume is now rather a "work outfit" for her, not a traditional finery. External demand has made its corrective amendments here, too – the Setu brooch, as one of the characteristic clothing elements, has to be worn as part of a stereotypic requisition and is not any more an attribute of a woman in fertile age.

In such a situation, there is both inevitability, as well as a self-reproducing witches' circle. An imagination of a good singer as rather an elderly (semi)legendary individual with abundant repertoire, as a cultural mark, is universal (cf., e.g. Foley 2000: 29 ff.). However, this has definitely not meant that a specific group has conquered and, in a sense, monopolised the entire relevant area of tradition. Undoubtedly, men are today in a poor situation as Kalevala-metric songs have, although in an incomparably lesser extent, survived in their mouths until the recent times and have been revived by now (see also Sarv 2001: 95–96), similar to younger women and particularly single maidens (who, as a group, have once been the carriers of a large section of tradition). On one hand, their passiveness has been caused by unfavourable external impacts (fashion trends, accrual of new singing traditions, role shifts in the everyday life) and, to a similar extent, also by the more sharpened intra-cultural competition for the "proper" and "approved-by the higher-level" presenter of Setu culture (i.e. Kalevala-metric tradition).

If, in the history of lyro-epic Kalevala-metric song as a genre, it is possible to point out the centuries-long fluctuating and hesitant status of particularly the domestic male culture (and thus that of Kalevala-metric

male songs) between the female culture and alien elite culture, then now, a situation may emerge where generally acknowledged singing culture of Setu women will occur in a similar contradictory standing, between the extra-Setu "official" demand on one hand, and, on the other hand, the modern self-cultural facets that have been withdrawn to the periphery. It was possible to observe a similar situation, for instance, on the celebration of the St George's Day in Värska in 2002. Following the church sermon, amidst abundant foreign guests, a certain vacuum-like situation occurred during the village feast *kirmas*: as some of the external visitors had left, it also seemed that the female singers in folk costumes did not have much motivation to show themselves. Local men from outside the "official culture" began to fill the relatively "out-of-the-script" idleness, having consumed alcohol beforehand, and, in a freely formed circle, with the accompanying of a couple of accordionists, began to sing their songs. It is not amazing at all that the living singing culture of the Setu men today rather consists of general-Estonian newer folk songs.

Within a couple of hours, the author could not hear any distinctly Setu folk songs, be it older or newer ones (however, it cannot be totally excluded that there were not any). Instead, I have a memory of sea-related songs of Kihnu origin that have become popular by way of radio. A separate company of bystanders was formed by local young people who, playing the guitar, sang tunes known from global culture from time to time. The men's, as well as the young peoples', relationship to the Setu cultural mark – Kalevala-metric song and its performers – seemed to be more than absent.

The description of the above-mentioned situation provides some idea regarding the lack of balance that "cultural" Estonia has been rooting not only in Setumaa but also in other regions of the country. It is obvious that reactionary ignorance shown particularly by young people and men, towards any kind of the houses of culture/folk culture actually proceeds from the one-sided selection alternatives – official cultural policy has not at all been capable of considering more complicated and "less aesthetic" forms of culture which inevitably exist in society, keeping the entire picture in balance and creating a necessary balance surface and background for these cultural phenomena that are being advertised even on an essential level. If, during decades, a situation has been created in Setumaa where the preferred presenter of Kalevala-metric songs is primarily a female past her fertile age, who, after having fulfilled her primary obligations in front of society, has some released energy to go in for something else, then there is nothing amazing about the fact that Kalevala-metric songs are unpopular among others: a young maiden or, even worse, a man in any age, would

not like to identify themselves with an elderly woman approaching or of the retirement age.

We can discern how many-faceted is the seemingly commonplace proposition, which regards the Kalevala-metric song as one of the cornerstones of Setu identity. If a critical amount of features, characteristic of Setu culture, has been selected within decades, then, the compilation of an agreed sample, that would carry and confirm today's Setu identity in a best manner, seems to be one of most focal and complicated tasks for the Setu intelligentsia that has raised its head during the last decades.

Above-described cultural background changes, permeating through different periods, have by nature created a situation where Kalevala-metric songs, those sung centuries ago and the ones performed today, do not overlap any more as cognitive categories. First and foremost, changes have taken place namely with regard to the function and presentation situation of the songs. Feminine lyro-epic and, even less, lyric, in their literal message, do not, in any case, strive to express a more general feeling of togetherness, this is a feature more intrinsic of masculine epic or even that of a myth (cf. also Arukask 2002). In the following, using the example of Anne Vabarna, a singer who has witnessed and herself illustrates the upheaval that has taken place in the newer Setu singing culture, we will observe as to what is the extent of person-related specificity and special interests expressed by an ordered lyric paragon and to what direction can it incline the integral tradition?

Anne Vabarna (1877–1964), one of the most well-known Setu singers, whose recorded singing presentations, dating from the beginning of the 20th century, comprising *Peko*, which is considered to be the national epic of the Setu people (see *Peko. Setu rahvuseepos* … 1995) and some other lengthy-formatted Kalevala-metric song-based developments, have reached the Estonian Folklore Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum, similarly to other genres besides customary Kalevala-metric lyric, lyro-epic and the epic of newly-generated origin. Here, the main role, besides prayers with Orthodox and also Lutheran or free congregation-related influences (see Kalkun 2001 for details), is given to the so-called improvisations which actually constitute a particular type of Kalevala-metric occasional poetry. This genre, in its functional nature, is not at all too excessively new or "modern". Kalevala-metric address-songs, made in various situations of life – be it laments at funerals and weddings, and why not mutual teasing-songs, evanescent by today, sung at weddings and between men in inns (hereby, cf. the description given by Georg Julius Schultz-Bertram, denoting a singing occasion in a pub in 1857 – see Laugaste 1963: 167–168)

have actually been similar addresses with traditional forms of language and topics, with improvisation having a certain role, although the share of it which would be worthy of underlining, can hardly be qualitatively more substantial than, for instance, in lyro-epic elaborations of the subject matter.

However, provided the address-genres, related to important events or entertainment, have historically probably been, as a rule, community-centred or at least Kalevala-metric language-focused, then the creation of the great Setu singers of the 20th century has been more and more addressed to the wider public and by way of this, has become the trade-marked "cultural product" of modern times – either unnoticeably for the singers themselves or fully consciously. It is clear that the thinking patterns, espoused by the carriers of the after-undulations of oral culture, as one of the statements of folklore-related givenness, may contain and probably do contain an independent urge to pour one's sincere and ceremonial feelings into Kalevala-metric addresses-songs – both in the case of today's singers and well as in that of Anne Vabarna's. However, in the case of addressees outside the Kalevala-metric culture, it is more and more questionable as to what extent are we dealing with adequate reception and, on the other hand with the consumerism of an exotic culture.

It is likely that in the case of Setu singers, the share of the above-mentioned address-songs, as an independent folklore genre, has consistently and proportionally been increasing within the entire outcome of Kalevala-metric songs during the 20th century. One could not exclude that for the public consumers of culture in Estonia, these would soon become (or already are) the main phenomena of Kalevala-metric songs heard in live presentation – as the singers feel it to be most natural and reasonable to perform them, both situationally as well as communicatively. If traditionally, the singing of Kalevala-metric songs as a process has indeed been an interaction between the singer or the choir and a culturally competent audience, then it is expectable that this is also being thrived for by today's Setu singer who still is in the grasp of tradition. However, it is unthinkable that by presenting a lengthy lyro-epic format or custom-related lyric at a large-scale public event, the singer could achieve contact with an audience, which does not know the language from the viewpoint of understanding the Setu text. Obviously, address-type genres or even the ones presented as a specific order, are the ceiling of possibility in this regard.

Anne Vabarna's phenomenon

Using the example of Anne Vabarna, we will see how address-genres, directed outwards the community, fortified their positions in the ever

more modernising Setu society within the 20th century – moving hand in hand with changing circumstances, and irrespectively of political formations. It is indeed true that in the case of Anne Vabarna, we are dealing with a person whose Kalevala-metric form was also authentic when intermingled within spoken language[5] – in conversations, she has temporarily been capable of automatically expanding her thoughts into Kalevala-metric usage with a unique switching.[6] There is enough reason to assume that the sample texts given below also originate from a format other than that of the ordinary folk song.

Addresses to Matthias Johann Eisen, Paulopriit Voolaine and to other Estonian folklorists, doctors or public figures are indeed intimate in their nature (i.e. addressed to people who are personally important, in one way or other), and simultaneously, meant to go beyond the boundaries of the traditional Setu community circle. In the "encomium" directed towards the Tartu academic circle, the main emphasis is laid on flattering gratitude, the background of which is the emotional and also economic relevance of folklore collectors for the singer:

	No kuulkõ õks tii Tartu targa herra,	Listen you, wise men of Tartu,
	Emakeele õks tii ilosa poisi.	Nice guys from the Mother Tongue Society.
	Anne anna õks ma hõpõ aitümma	I give you silvery thanks
	Kullatsit kumarusi.	And golden bows.
5	Selle anna õks ma hõpõ aitumma	That's why I give (you) silvery thanks
	Pääle kulda kumarusi.	And golden bows.
	Timahava õks tii olõt teräväpä,	You are the cute ones this year,
	Seldsi vele tii virgõmba.	Together the diligent brothers.
	Kui tulõ tuu illos edimäne,	When comes the nice first
10	Kulla kuu pääväkene.	Day of the month.
	O, õks teid virku seldsi veljo,	Oh you, diligent brothers of the Society,

[5] This, in its turn, seriously indicates that Kalevala-metric songs, written down by way of dictation, may indeed differ from the sung ones concerning their versification, nevertheless, with regard to their other features, they are not at all less valuable or authentic.

[6] In her interview with Aino Strutzkin, a co-employee with the Estonian Radio, in 1959, Anne Vabarna, 82 years of age, answers a number of questions in the Kalevala-metric formula speech (RKM, Mgn II 327 a).

	Mitond meli marakõist.	Lot of you, sweet berries.
	Tuu migu õks vello virgõpasta,	Let the most diligent brother go,
	Imekana kallepast.	(Let) the darling hen (go).
15	Kua veese õks ta poste kuuraha	Who takes to the post office the money for a month,
	Mullõ and abiraha.	Brings me the benefit.
	Toolõ saagu õks kuniga miil,	Let him have the sense of a king,
	Saagu jänese jala.	Have the feet of a hare.
	Kui tulõ õks ta pühõnes päiv,	When comes Sunday,
20	Kallus kallis aokõnõ.	Turns dear time.
	Sis õks ma keerä kerikohe,	Then I roll to the church,
	Meli lää õks ma mari mastirahe	Me, sweet berry, go to the monastery
	Teid pallõ õks ma keset kerikot,	I pray for you in the middle of the church,
	Kulda lühi kotal.	Under the golden lustre.

AES, MT 145, 1/12 < Setu – N. Vabarna < Anne Vabarna's improvisation

It could be said, slightly mystifyingly, that here we are dealing even with a magic relationship – in her message concealed in Kalevala-metric poetic language, Anne Vabarna is making an attempt to influence folklorists to favour, record and financially remunerate namely her creation. In return, she vows to pray for them in church. Regarding its mytho-poetic structure, such an approach does not essentially differ from an incantation, the addressee of which is also The Other, from outside the (living) community. It does not seem believable that Eisen, Voolaine and other more distant visitors would have consciously been the representatives of the supernatural for Anne Vabarna, however, at the same time, this is being referred to by the message poured into a figurative language – the singer once again deals with her personal things, such a repertoire is not meant for integrating the community's feeling of togetherness (as is epic and also a myth) but a private matter of an individual.

Tradition-based lyrical Kalevala-metric song (except for songs associated with customs), particularly in its usual feminine format, deals with conscious self-exposition and, in addition, often with opposing oneself with the audience. Nevertheless, the message is meant to be directed towards the community although it is clearly trying to break the integral identity. In texts of magic nature, we can prevailingly see a concealed attempt for personal prosperity. It is not a secret that there are a

number of spells, which, meant for healing a misery or illness, can actually be addressed to another member of the same community – to neighbours. In this context, similar outward-directed "songs of praise" seem to be the expected indicators of the decaying patriarchal community in the modern winds of draught.

In Anne Vabarna's addresses of the newer times, the traditional geography of songs has also been widened and clearly altered, thus acquiring the flexibility and topicality otherwise intrinsic of the newer folk song. By remembering Herbert Tampere and Oskar Loorits, she says, among other matters:

Kagoh om õks ka doktor tubli herr	See, there is a doctor, a good man,
om Loorits loofka säks.	there is Loorits, a kind nobleman.
Täll õks et omma ilo toro,	He has a tube of joy,
man laulu kõik massina.	machinery of songs with him.
Helsingihe õks ma saada kulda teno,	To Helsinki I send golden greetings,
anna hõpõ aitümma.	give silvery thanks.
Tsirgalõ õks ma panõ noki otsa,	I put (these) to the bird's beak,
harakulõ hanna külge.	to the tail of magpie.
Tsirk teke õks sääl nokil numbrit,	The bird dials numbers with its beak,
harak handa höörätelles.	the magpie whirling its tail.
Kulda läävä õks sis teno kongressi,	Golden greetings will go to the congress then,
perüs teno Preisidendile.	real thanks to the president.

ERA II 296, 583/6 < Setu, Järvesuu 'nulk', Tonja[7] village –
M. Vabarna (brought by H. Tampere) < Anne Vabarna (1931/41)

One can say that similar personal issues have been one of the main subject matters in the 20th century Setu address-songs. Anne Vabarna's personal problems and expectations continue to exist thematically also after World War II. In her song addressed to the doctor-in-charge of the Räpina

[7] Also used Ton'a.

Hospital, she mentions her health problems:

	Sinno_ks ma ikula pallõ,	I beg you crying,
	silmäviil veerätele:	with rolling eye-water:
	kotoh om iks mul elo ikuline,	my life is maudlin at home,
	kogone kurvaline,	desperate at all,
5	valukõnõ_ks mul kääse varbehe,	ache goes to my toes,
	suur halu hambehe –	great ache to my teeth –
	kui saasõ_ks teil palat parembast,	if you will have a good ward,
	väega höste värmitüs,	a well-painted one,
	mullõ saada_ks sis punarist,	send for me the Red Cross,
10	kiirabi keerätele[q]!	order the ambulance!

RKM II 179, 181/2 < Setumaa, Ton´a village –
P. Voolaine < Anne Vabarna (1963/4)

Anne Vabarna's texts express a visible respect towards the authorities; this simultaneously reflects traditional deference to hierarchically higher institutions as well as her political pragmatism. A relevant characteristic example among other similar ones is her address to Erna Visk[8], a minister of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, in which Vabarna, already having problems with her health, cannot evade her other personal desires:

	Erna_ks illos inemine,	Erna – you nice person,
	Visk virve hüä!	Visk – a good woman!
	Kui olli ma, laulja, Oravil,	When I was, a singer, in Orava,
	pall´o haigõt parandamah,	healing myself a lot,
5	sis saadi Teele tuu kirä,	then I sent (you) this letter,
	pall´o höste palsse:	begged a lot:
	Teilt iks ma küsse rahakõist,	I asked you for money,
	palssi pall'o papõrrahha.	begged a lot for bank notes.
	Kui ma_ks küsse, rutto saadit,	When I asked you sent me immediately,
10	tull´ puhas postineio.	a clean post maid came.

RKM II 179, 78/88 (2) < Setumaa, Ton´a village –
P. Voolaine < Anne Vabarna (1963/4)

[8] Minister of Social Security Affairs of the Estonian SSR (1958–1964).

Undoubtedly, Anne Vabarna is capable of intercepting the ideological trend by telling a high government official of the Estonian SSR the following, in the same address:

S´oo tekk´ iks hirmsa Hitler,	This is because of terrible Hitler,
kuri säksa kuningas:	the evil king of Germany:
Hitler ai kokko suurõ sõa,	Hitler drove together a big war,
otse kokko ohvitseri[q],	found together officers,
esi_ks tä kai kui kalkun,	he himself looked over as a turkey,
oll´ tikõ kui tiigre.	was angry as a tiger.
Hitler iks tahtse tappa poolõ[q],	Hitler wanted to kill halves,
Vinnemaa verd juvva,	to drink the blood of Russia,
Hitler iks kor´as suurõ kooba,	Hitler dug a big cave,
ihas ilvese mano –	wanted to be near by lynx –
ilves iks sei timä iho,	the lynx ate his body,
lõvi 1õigas´ timä lõõri.	the lion cut his veins.

The Soviet system conspicuously re-designed the society, creating theoretical preconditions for a new type of collectivism – socialist community feeling. The inevitably politicised addresses by Anne Vabarna also reflect the then society – primarily in her gratitude to those who have made it happen. However, it is obvious that here, in the best instance, we are dealing with a certain community-related quasi-identity, if at all. Most certainly, such type of an expression of solidarity is not the target for Anne Vabarna. Again, her wordings are either addresses to the carriers of power or particular publicist descriptions of circumstances regarding everyday life. Vabarna thanks Tallinn, the capital of the Estonian SSR, for providing assistance and guidelines for the enhancement of life and praises Lenin who lies in the mausoleum; narrates about life in the state farm and advancements in her home village with the thoroughness of a village chronicle, in which, next to descriptions of the situation, similar to lyric Kalevala-metric songs, there may also be addresses intrinsic of mythic songs – however, now they are directed towards authorities and comrades:

No tulli ma teidä tervütämmä,	I came to greet you,
kulla höste kummardamma:	to bow to you with care:
tere no iks selge seltsimehe,	hello good comrades,
päle kalli kommunisti,	and dear communists,

5	pareba iks pardimihe,	the best men of the party,
	tere iks jäl pehme pidorahvas,	hello gentle party-people,
	saijadsõ sali rahvas,	the sweet people in the hall,
	mis meil no iks viga veeratellä,	there is no harm to roll,
	kua viga kul'atella,	no harm to walk around,
10	siin laula iks mi lille siseh,	we are singing here in the flowers,
	kulla tutta koltal,	at the place of golden tassels,
	kõik iks siin lipu libisõsõ,	all the flags are waving here,
	hobõtipu' tibisõsõ.	the silvery tops are tinkling.
	Taalin om kah iks kulla korgõh,	Golden Tallinn is on high too,
15	päle liidet lille sisse.	merged in flowers.

RKM II 33, 396/8 (4) < Setu – L. Pedajas < Anne Vabarna (1951)

What can we read from such examples? Whether the more self-interested side of the artist's ego, regarding the great singer? Or an attempt of an ageing person, who is being ever more pushed aside from life, to go along with the changing life? Probably all of this, but primarily, a more large-scale change in the entire singing tradition – the invasion of the modern world, starting with the 20th century, has created a state of affairs where the share of incompetent addressees with regard to the Setu Kalevala-metric tradition has abruptly increased, topical subject matters and presentation situations have been altered. This has conditioned the carriers of the old tradition to start searching in new directions. On one hand, these searches are characteristic of a viable tradition, at the same time, we can admit the above-mentioned shifts in the genre system of Kalevala-metric songs, an increase in the share of address-songs directed outwards, beside the former ones with more community-centred nature, thus having thickened its feeling of identity.

It is likely that, concurrently with this, the peak of importance of the tradition-carriers themselves has also shifted or at least (as also shown by the brief analysis of Anne Vabarna's texts) they have acquired a conspicuous adaptation ability, depending on the current situation and context. There is no doubt that all Setu singers of the 20th century have also felt themselves at home in the traditional Kalevala-metric song, fixated upon by Jakob Hurt and his contributors in the 19th century. What would

be the situation likely to evolve into during the 21st century?

In conclusion

We can say that the role of Kalevala-metric songs in the self-identification of the Setu people has generally been preserved and is still of importance. Nevertheless, we have to concede that tendencies have become apparent in which Kalevala-metric songs, and singing thereof, have changed from the essence into a décor. This, however, is inevitable, and even natural, one can say. When looking back with a longer perspective, it is possible to admit that the intra-traditional shift to the increase of lyric and female singing has created a natural precondition for all kinds of further individualisations. The entirety of tradition has to, in modern hectic circumstances, more intensively deal with constant searching for the new and not with the intensification of the old; this, in its turn, probably pre-necessitates and conditions the more increasing chipping off of the individual presenter from the traditional core.

Singing for singing's sake, which in any way seems to be the fate of the lyric mode of expression, also seems to characterise today's Kalevala-metric song. Thus, it seems to indeed be moving more and more into the sphere of "pure" art, which does not, however, have a living bond with the everyday life of the inner circle. The Kalevala-metric song, as a tourism object, is in fact a tradition in Setumaa, but, as a phenomenon of folklore, not in its first life any more (cf. Honko 1998). Even one of the events of the modern Setu nation building – the custom of a singing contest during the Days of the Setu Kingdom – is undoubtedly a thoughtful activity for the organisers of the occasion who also have to orient to the non-Setu audience. The principle to let singers with choirs compete with prescribed song topics is the most clearly order-based way of conduct which makes the presenters choose a code of addressing either something or somebody.

A situation where, by using the traditional poetic devices of Setu Kalevala-metric language and imagery, songs will, in the end, even be sung about the European Union's agricultural policy and exhortations would then be made towards Brussels' officials to be more merciful, is another example (although of slightly more extremist nature) of keeping the tradition alive and viable.

Manuscript folklore sources mentioned in the text

AES, MT Estonian Mother Tongue Society, collection of dialect texts.
ERA Collection of the Estonian Folklore Archives.

RKM Collection of the Estonian Literary Museum.
RKM, Mgn Tape Collection of the Estonian Literary Museum.

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Transition Rituals in the Life of an Udmurt Girl/Maiden/Woman in the Late 19th to 20th Centuries

Svetlana Karm

"The system of customs and rituals, which in a conditional-symbolic way marks the most noteworthy events in people's lives, constitutes an important characteristic of each ethnos, a rather stable and clearly expressed component of their culture" (Fedyanovich 1997: 3). This article gives a survey of the rituals performed in the female life cycle, of the so-called transition stages in her life. The tackling of the female topic is not incidental at all. In the traditional society of many a nation, including the Udmurts, it was namely the life of a girl/maiden/woman that was more distinctly regulated and presented in a sign-symbolical way. This was related to both the birth-giving function and the general working activities of women as well as the idea of a woman as "an unstable, periodically impure creature" (Kabakova 1999: 208).

Transition rituals, which constitute a part of the traditional family life of the Udmurts, attracted already the attention of pre-revolution scientists, and so short descriptions of the Udmurts' customs can be found in the works of the authors from the late 19th – early 20th centuries (Buch 1882; Gavrilov 1891; Vereshchagin 1886; 1889; Munkácsi 1887; 1952; Pervukhin 1888–1890). Several rituals are also touched upon in the thematic researches from the last quarter of the 20th century, first and foremost, the ones concerned with the calendar rituals and popular education of the Udmurts (Khristolyubova 1984; 1985; Nikitina 1992; 1997), women's folk costumes (each shift in the social status was accompanied by a change of the headgear and the whole costume) (Belitser 1951; Kosareva 2000), as well as the role and status of the woman in ancient times and in Udmurt society in the 19th and early 20th centuries (Shutova 1995; 1998; Ivshina 1999; 2002).

Purposely ousting the more sacramental transition rituals – birth, wedding and funeral (which have been treated in scientific literature quite thoroughly) – the article deals with the ones related to the age of consent

ныл кураськон (or *ныл куриськон*) (maidens' begging or praying), *ныл брага* (maiden's mash) and the ritual called *сялтым (чалтым)* (not translated word for word, consists in bathing in the water), which in different sources is explained differently and is mainly connected with the bride. This kind of choice of material is partly connected with the fact that the author herself has first-hand fieldwork experience of the performance of these concrete rituals.[1] In addition to fieldwork materials, the author, a bearer of Udmurt culture herself, having a command over the system of this socio-cultural communication, (here I would like to express my deep gratitude to my grandmother Fyokla Mikhailova (1910–1996), an expert in folk traditions), also refers to personal experience. The scientific side is actively supported by the information provided by the audio-visual documents from the joint expeditions of the Estonian National Museum (ENM) and the National Museum of the Udmurt Republic (NMUR), preserved in the video-archive of the ENM. The existence of the rituals related to the female growing-up cycle is dealt with by opposing history and the present time – this kind of narrative visually demonstrates the variability and vitality of the elements of the Udmurts' traditional world perception.

Rituals of the infant period

In traditional society, the "gender identification", the symbolic connection of the child to its future actions, occurred already in the first few minutes of its life. So, in order to cut off the umbilical cord, the midwife took the baby in her arms and carried it to the sauna doorsill (borderline area!), where she chopped off the baby-boy's umbilical cord on a log with an axe, whereas, when a girl was born, the log was replaced by a spinning wheel, and instead of the axe a small knife was used (Atamanov 1985: 93). In accordance with the future working activities, also, the following actions with the umbilical cord of the baby were performed. So, according to the reminiscences of the Mazitova sisters from the village of Karamas-Pelga, Kiyasovo (rayon) district, Udmurtia, *the mother put the umbilical cord of the baby girl on the weaving loom in order for her to be quick in handiwork, and that of the baby-boy – in the cattle shed, in order for him to be successful in cattle raising. Nowadays, the umbilical cord is often left in*

[1] Video-archive of the ENM – V 003–004, 1988, V 062, 1993.

the hospital – no wonder that children often have to stay in hospital (i.e., are frequently ill).[2] The Udmurts expressed their attitude towards the birth of a boy or a girl with the words "*гырись шедӧтӧм*" or "*чересӧсь шедӧтӧм*", which meant "a ploughman has been found" and "a spinner has been found", respectively. At the end of the 20th century, when the importance of making a difference between this kind of everyday male and female activities practically faded, people said about newborn babies "*этемы вань*", "*эте шедӧтӧм*" (/we have an *эте*; we found an *эте*), "*дыдымы вань*", "*дыды шедӧтӧм*" (we have a *дыды*; we found a *дыды*)[3] . The very fact of birth, i.e., the baby coming to the world, is, as a rule, neglected.

Distinct matrimonial strategy concerning the newborn baby girl manifests itself in the first good wishes offered to her. So, when asking for blessing from *Инмар-Кылчин* (the supreme deity of the Udmurts) to the newborn baby, equally with the wishes for longevity and "life sweet like honey", one of the wishes is that "she would grow up and be fitted as a wife at least for a widower. This kind of good wishes to the newborn girl are expressed because her future is still unknown; maybe, even a widower does not want to marry her" (Vereshchagin 2000: 17). And in a contemporary Udmurt village, one of the very first wishes for a girl is that "she would be fitted to get out among people", i.e., get married; for a boy it is important to "be fitted for a soldier"[4] . Probably it was for the same reasons that a baby girl was wrapped into her father's shirt; yet, some other reasons have also been given for this kind of wrapping: "The newborn baby was wrapped by the midwife into an old shirt – the father's shirt, if the parents wanted the next baby to be a boy" (Khristolyubova 1984: 63). At present, it is rather the practical function of this kind of wrapping that is mentioned (or making nappies from worn-out clothes – women's shirts or men's factory-made ones sewn according to a traditional cut) than the magic one. So, young mothers explain it with the expression "it has always been so", and the older informants say, "Elderly people said that nappies were best to be made from linen cloth. And of course there was no money to make nappies, especially for this purpose; babies were wrapped into shirts and tied up with sleeves, so that they would not kick and get naked.

[2] Informant Maria Mazitova, b. 1926. Video-archive of the ENM – V 108, 1991.

[3] "*эте*", "*дыды*" - diminutives-petnames for addressing baby boys and girls [SK]

[4] Informant Olga Mikhailova, b. 1942.

Men did not have any linen shirts at that time any more, they only had those bought at shops."[5]

In the first years of life, ritual activities are related to the infant's physical development and no particular sex differences are observed at their performance. So, the appearance of the first tooth is observed in a special way. According to tradition, the first person – someone from the family or relatives – who sees the infant's first tooth cutting, has to give them something as a present. The infants get their first haircut not earlier than at the age of one year, and the hair must not be thrown away – it is wrapped into a piece of cloth and put away in a chest (Gavrilov 1891: 151)[6], or carefully gathered and burnt in a stove. Hair is usually burnt also after the following haircuts.[7] It is believed that if you scatter the hair, the person will lose their memory/reason. The hair is burnt also because this way bad people cannot get hold of it – (it is very easy to cast an evil eye on the child through their hair), – and also for birds not to find it or the wind not to carry it away – or else you would frequently feel dizzy or you could not find your place. When the infant loses the first milk tooth, it is pressed into bread crumbs and given to a dog with the words "*мыным андан пиньдэ сёт, тыныд – сяртчы пинь*" ("give me a steel tooth, leave to yourself a turnip tooth – i.e., made of turnip").[8] The image of a dog, in the Udmurt worldview, is directly connected with the spirits of the ancestors, a dog is like a mediator between the living and the dead. So, even nowadays, the Udmurts throw part of the funeral feast food to dogs. If dogs show teeth to one another at that, it is considered to be a good omen – "the old ones liked the donation".

[5] The information was gathered by the author in the village of Staraya Monya, Malaya Purga district, Udmurtia.

[6] The same was also said by the informant Olga Mikhailova, b. 1942.

[7] The special attitude towards hair embedded already in childhood manifests itself also in my present everyday practice. So, if a family member's hair is cut at home, it is always burnt in the stove (yet, would this custom be observed if there was no stove in the flat?), but if it is done at a hairdresser's, hair as something dangerous loses its meaning, i.e., it is impersonalised; this is the kind of «existence of a migrant, who has been torn away from their own ethnos, but has not yet been able to merge into the new socium, a relic of the former traditional ethnicity» (paraphrased by the author: Rybakov 2003: 8).

[8] According to her grandmother, the author of this article did the same with her lost tooth.

Most probably the very first mention of the real confrontation between sexes belongs to Grigory Vereshchagin[9] – "from the time of weaning off, if it is a boy, he already sleeps with his father". Usually the mother started to wean children off after they had cut their first teeth. This was done gradually; the mother either smeared her nipples with soot or dough, or tied her breasts with a kerchief, this way causing, in the infant, a repulsion for breasts (Vereshchagin 2000: 42–42). Sometimes the mother put, at her breast, a brush made of pig's bristles, which was meant for carding flax, calling it a bugbear "*бокоез вань*"[10] ("there is a bugbear", "bugbear – this is how you frighten children" (Borisov 1991: 30)). The mother usually breast-fed children until the age of 1.5–2 years or even longer; – breast-feeding was considered to be a contraceptive.

Spinning as a symbol of women's activities

Further upbringing of children is closely connected with working activities. Probably, one of the first initiation-type rituals related to girls was the one performed with their first spinning: "*When washing the first hank spun by the girl, the* чалтым (чалтым кароно) *has to be performed, where the girl herself also has to be present. She is lifted above an ice hole and her feet are dipped into the water. The girl's mother bakes a round loaf of bread* (кӧлмеч) *and makes* кумышка *of average strength specially for this occasion and takes these to the place where the hank is washed. Also, a man is asked to come here, either young or old, who happens to be at the ice-hole, in order to perform the praying ceremony. After worshipping and*

[9] The work referred to here is "*Очерки воспитания детей у вотяков*" (Survey of Educating Children at Votyaks) (Vereshchagin 2000: 14–82). V. Vanyushev (2000: 10–12) observes that a summary of this work is first given in "*Вятские губернские ведомости*" (News from Vyatka Guberniya), 1892, No. 38, and the information about this manuscript can be found in the *"История полувековой деятельности Императорского Русского географического общества. 1845–1895"* (History of Half-Century-Long Activities of the Russian Imperial Geographical Society. 1845–1895, St. Petersburg, A. Suvorin's Printing House 1896). It can be said that this is one of the first works in Udmurt ethnology studying childhood issues. The work entitled "*Человек и его рождение у восточных финнов*" (Man and His Birth at Eastern Finns) written by Kuzebai Gerd in the early 20th century, became available to the general public after its publication in Helsinki in 1993 (Gerd 1993). Some fragmentary mentions about the rituals and upbringing of children can be found in the works of many researchers, e.g., Pervukhin 1890; Buch 1882.

[10] My own mother did the same while weaning off her children.

saying prayers everyone present has a shot and a piece of bread, saying, "May she become a diligent spinner"".[11]

The making of yarn and clothing was one of the main occupations for women and generally symbolised the female sphere of activities. The objects related to spinning – the distaff, spindle and spinning wheel – represented the fertile forces of nature, and served as the sign of wealth, fertility, and vitality. The girl, who was learning to spin, was cajoled, "*If you do not learn to spin, both your front and back will be naked. If during one day you spin a ball of yarn of the size of a hen's head, you will not be poor*". Jokes were made about girls' work, predicting their future, "*If the yarn winds to the top of the spindle, you will marry into the nearest village, if it winds to the bottom – you will marry far away. If it winds askew, the relations in the family will be strained. If the ball of yarn is wound unevenly, with knots, you will get pregnant and give birth to a bastard. You must not start spinning from the top, or you are not going to get on well with your mother-in-law*" (word-for-word, you will be pulling each other's hair). The girl's spindle and spinning served as evaluation objects also in other nations. In the museum catalogue of the ENM, there is also a note from Karelia about the fact that "*young men used to make predictions about a girl's traits, proceeding from the roundness of her spindle. These estimates are so obscene, so indecent, that the informant* [a woman, SK] *refused to convey them*".[12] "Dances, dances – gets pregnant" – says an Ersa-Mordvin riddle about the spindle (Mokshin 2002: 45).

Rituals connected with coming of age

Reaching maidenhood, admittance into the corresponding youth group was observed by special ritual activities, which were largely intermingled with calendar holidays. When participating in the joint expedition of the NMUR and the ENM in 1993, the author had the possibility to watch, personally, the rituals related to coming of age performed in the village of

[11] Informant Yekaterina Tukayeva, b. 1934, who has described the below-mentioned prophecies related to the yarn and the girl's future. Video archives of the ENM – V 108, 1991. Unfortunately, these s kinds of Udmurt initiation rituals have practically not been recorded in ethnographic literature, therefore the fragmentary data about the ritual related to the first spinning, which were obtained from the video materials of the museum, are especially valuable, as nowadays the ritual *чалтым* (*сялтым*) is connected only with the bride, which is described further on.

[12] Information about item B 98: 6, a spindle from Karelia.

Varklet-Bodya, Agryz district, Tatarstan, and gather information from local people. Here, these rituals are included in the cycle of spring festivals called *акашка* (archaic ritual of receiving the spring, which, under the influence of the Christian calendar, coincided with Lent – *быдзыннал*).[13] At the present time, these kinds of rituals have practically been forgotten in other places.

The maidens' ritual called *нылъёслэн куриськонзы* (maidens' praying or begging) is performed on the day of *акашка*. According to informants, the ritual was formerly performed on the Monday after Lent. As religious festivals were forbidden during the Soviet time and they had to be celebrated covertly, but all the participants attended school and were not allowed to be absent without a sound reason, *ныл куриськон* started to be celebrated on Sunday. As a rule, the participants are maidens at the age of 16–18.[14] They are called *курасьКисьёс* – "beggars/prayers". The ritual starts early in the morning, as they have to make a round of all houses. Maidens, in festive folk costumes (on this occasion, for the first time in their lives, put on their festive attire with a sleeveless coat *буртчин дись* made of woollen cloth or velvet, and also wear breast and shoulder ornaments) gather in one end of the village and head to the village priest for blessing. After that they, carrying buckets, go through all the houses, collecting donations – in each house they are given eggs, salt, grits and other foodstuffs for cooking the ritual porridge (the round is made in the opposite direction than that of the initiation of boys *эру карон* or *урай вӧсь* performed on Maundy Thursday). A fire is lit on a small field *акашка бусы* (the field where the praying ritual *акашка* – the festival of the beginning of spring works – is performed). The maidens are not allowed to light the fire themselves; this is done by the father of one of the maidens or the young men participating in the *эру карон* ritual. The newly initiated young men watch over the fire, cook porridge and help the maidens during the whole festival (as the maidens face a transition to the other generation, they are not given the task of cooking porridge for the common meal).

When the porridge is ready, all the village people gather (differently from the young men's ritual, where only the men of the village gather, but

[13] The description of the ritual called *ныл кураськон* was first given by Y. Trofimova (Trofimova 1992: 44–49). The materials of the joint expedition of the NMUR and the ENM were used in Aado Lintrop's doctoral thesis (Lintrop 2000; 2003: 202–203; http://haldjas.folklore.ee/~aado/rahvad/udme.htm.)

[14] The "*ныл кураськон*" ritual of 1993 was participated by six girls born in the years 1976–1978.

the maidens and women are prohibited to come; neither are they allowed to watch the preparations for the *эру карон* ritual) with their own plates and spoons; they also bring home-made alcoholic drink called *кумышка*. When everybody has gathered (and by that time the porridge is also ready), the priest or the father of one of the girls (*вӧсясь*) starts with the ritual: breaks some spruce branches and places them on the grass, laying a towel on top of them; then he puts a big bowl with the ritual porridge on the towel and a bowl called *сюмык*, into which maidens pour some *кумышка*. The participants in the ritual put money called *люгезь* on a certain spot on the spruce branches; this money is meant for buying or mending the ritual equipment, and it is held not with a bare hand but using the sleeve end (in order to avoid direct contact with the "alien" sphere). When the offerings have been made, the praying ceremony with the porridge begins. The people present say prayers, standing with their faces to the south, with the priest in front, followed by the newly-initiated maidens, then older men, young men, boys, and behind them women, maidens, girls. This ceremony is followed by a common meal, in the course of which the newly-initiated maidens treat their fellow villagers to a drink. This act is often merely symbolic: hardly taking a sip, everyone utters their good wishes – *таза лу!* (to your health!) and returns the glass to the maiden. When the festivity is over, the maidens take the ritual porridge to the priest's house as a token of gratitude for his prayers, initiation and blessing.

On the following day, after the maidens' ritual, the newly initiated young people gather for their own ceremony called *курегпуз сиён* (egg eating). The eggs and grits left over after the *эру карон* and *ныльӧслэн куриськонзы* rituals are cooked separately by the young men and maidens in two houses, and then only the young people who participated in the rituals gather.[15] Other people are not allowed to come. The onlookers (*учкыны лыктэмъёс*) are given boiled unpainted eggs through the window. Young people also bring the home made alcohol called *кумышка* for the party. They drink and eat here, make merry, play games, sing and dance.

[15] Y. Trofimova points out that "*after a few days the newly-initiated youngsters and maidens meet in the woods. There they boil the eggs that they have collected during ныл кураськон and eat them together. After that they make merry, play games, sing*" (Trofimova 1992: 47). Probably beginning from 1985 the ritual was somewhat modified, and in 1993 the informants did not notify of the festivities in the woods any more.

After having a party in this house, they go to visit all the participants in the ritual (*нергее ветло*). Now, all the onlookers (*адзисьёс*) can also join in – both the young and the old people. In each household, they are asked to sit down and are offered some food, and the guests sing songs, dance, and make merry.

After performing these rituals, the participants – youngsters and maidens at the age of 16–18 are considered as fully-fledged members of the adult population of the village; they can get married, participate, equally with the others, in festivities and prayers, and youngsters can also be elected priests at religious praying ceremonies. It should be mentioned that youngsters and maidens of the same age, who have not gone through this ritual, but have already got married, as well as pregnant single women are not asked to participate in the ritual; yet, they can join in the common ritual meal equally with the other villagers.[16]

An unavoidable stage, in making preparations for getting married, was juvenile gatherings. Single young men went to these get-togethers to find a girlfriend and girls were looking for boyfriends; it was also the place where information was obtained about young people. A peculiar ritual related to coming of age was an inter-village youth's gatherings – "sittings" – which were organised after finishing the autumn harvest season – here boys and girls of pre-marriage age gathered. Sittings called *ныл брага* ("maidens' mash" or "maidens' beer"), which were widespread in the northern districts of Udmurtia (the folklore group from Vuzh Gyia village performed this at the shooting of the film "*Северные удмурты в начале XX века*" (Northern Udmurts in the Early 20th Century) in 1988[17], were still organised here even in the 1950s.[18]

The sittings took place in each village in succession. The inviting party organised food and drinks and laid the table. The foodstuffs were gathered as potluck; hot meals were made as well as pastry, beer, and confectionery. Before the event, an agreement was made with fellow villagers and two farmhouses were "bought out" – one for changing clothes, and the other for eating, drinking and merry-making.

[16] Video archive of the ENM – V 062, the author's fieldwork materials from 1993. Informants Sedyk Grigoryeva, b. 1929; Mikhail Grigoryev, b. 1961.; Nikolay Ivanov, b. 1931.; Maria Ivanova, b. 1931.

[17] Video archive of the ENM – V 004, 1988. G. Vereschagin describes an inter-village youth's ritual called *пукон табань* (could be translated as "*посиделочные табани*" – "sitting bread"), which is similar to *ныл брага* (Vereschagin 2000: 217–218).

[18] The author's fieldwork materials from 1988. Informant Nina Maksimova, b. 1932.

On the fixed day, the guests were met on the edge of the village, seen to one of the houses to change, and after that to the other, where the table had been laid. Young people sat at table in pairs – a youngster and a maiden. Village people came to "have a look at the pairs". After the meal, at about midnight, maidens changed clothes, and then games and dances started, which lasted till the early hours of the morning.

> *"In the get-togethers called* нӧл брага *young people at the age of 16–17 participated. Teenagers and married people did not go there. When you were asked to come to the "maidens' mash" for the first time, it meant that you were admitted among grown-up maidens and you were allowed to go to other villages to participate in the sittings and play games. If you were not yet asked to participate in the "maidens' mash", you could infrequently go walking with them if they asked you to come, but you were not supposed to go with them to other villages."*[19]

Similar youth get-togethers with guests invited from neighbouring villages were also organised in other places. So, in the village of Pytsam, Malaya Purga district, even in the early 1960s, people observed the custom of an autumn festival *пинал куно* (young guest). In one of the houses, where grownup girls lived, the table was laid and guests from another village were received, and then the guests made a round of all the houses of the participants in the youth festival, where also tables were laid. The choice of the village from which guests were invited, was, according to the informant, determined by the fact that some people had friends or sweethearts there – *туганъёссы отысь вал*. After some time, young people made a return visit to the other village, where they were also warmly received and treated. This kind of ts youths' visiting with a festively laid table, singing and dancing to taccompaniment of the accordion or other instruments differed from "adult festivities" actually only by the composition of the participants, as it was meant only for young single people (*18 ареслэсь пичиез ӧй вал* – not younger than 18), and they organised the whole festivity themselves, although their parents still helped them with preparing the meal and alcoholic drinks.[20]

[19] Information from Galina Chibysheva (Popova 1998: 112). In Y. Popova's opinion, the ritual called *нӧл брага* or *сизӧл брага*, which was performed by the Beserman of some villages, has been borrowed from the Northern Udmurts, as this kind of territorial get-together did not occur in other groups of the Beserman.

[20] Informant Olga Mikhailova, b. 1942.

Youth rituals were socially important not only for young people themselves, but also for the community as a whole. On the one hand, young people "introduced themselves" to the adult population of the village both when making rounds of the houses as well as at get-togethers, where the grownups came to "have a look at the pairs". On the other hand, the adults viewed them not only as equals to themselves, but also as potential future spouses for their grownup children; perhaps they started to "observe" them more carefully.

The fact that a maiden was asked to participate in the inter-village sittings and other similar rituals kind of emphasised her sexual maturity and readiness for getting married. However, we lack practically any data about the first menstruation and activities related to smeared underwear – informants usually stress the girls' shyness and reticence in this respect: "*She told neither her mother nor her friends – she was embarrassed. When she was washing her underwear in a stream, she was looking behind her back all the time to see if someone was nearing.*" [21] The tabooing of the concrete topic is proved by prohibitions like "*you must not leave the smeared cloths lying about everywhere – an evil eye could be cast on you*" and the expressions widespread at present denoting menstruation: "*ас нерге*" (word-for-word "on one's own"), "*котыръёсы котырам*" (word-for-word "one's own things (objects, situation) around (me)")[22], "*куноосы вуизы*" ("my guests are here / arrived"), "*куноосы дорам ай*" ("my guests are still here"), "*праздникъёсы али*" ("I still have holidays")[23], – this kind of intimate topic is directly related to the concept of dirtiness, filthiness "*жоб котырыд, кырсь*" ("(you are in / have) a dirty, unclean situation" or "it is dirty, filthy around you")[24], and requires further study.

From a bride to a fully-fledged woman

The transition of the maiden into the social status of a woman was particularly regulated and ritually marked. This stage started with the wedding and finished with the birth of the first child. This period is characterised by the so-called "rituals of alienation" – the prohibition for the bride to return to her parental home earlier than three days after she

[21] Informant Fyokla Mikhailova, b. 1910.
[22] Informant aged 60.
[23] Informant aged 25.
[24] Informant aged 60.

was taken away from there; changing of the married woman's name, when she loses her maiden name forever and instead, gets the name of her family or is called after her home village; the tabooing of kinship terms on the husband's side; special regulation of the bride's behaviour in the new family (Vladykina 1998: 125). The period of the transition status of the bride is completed by the ritual called *сялтым* (or *чалтым*), which is directly connected with the cult of water.

One of the most complete reports of the *сялтым* has been presented by Grigori Vereshchagin, who has related the ritual directly to the women's festival called *шорт миськон* (washing of hanks), which falls at the end of February – beginning of March:

> *It is remarkable that in all Votyak rituals money plays an important role, especially silver coins – even at the so-called* сялтым*... Сялтым is divided into two parts: the first part is called the real* сялтыман *– extorting* кумышка *from the godfather or godmother for the fear of bathing or dipping into the ice-hole on the river; and the second part –* сялтым *– when the godfather, being at the* шорт миськон *at godmother's, treats the guests to* кумышка *procured by the godmother. It is known that the* шорт миськон *(washing of the yarn) is the main Votyak female festival, in the course of which women cook different treats for the yarn-washers. The godfather or his wife are also asked to participate in this festival as washers. On the river at the ice-hole, where yarn is washed, the godfather or godmother are threatened to be dipped into the water, in order to make them promise to procure a quarter of a bucket or less of* кумышка*. If they make the promise, they are not dipped into the water, but if they do not, they are bathed, i.e., their feet are dipped into the water* (сялтыман)*, yet usually it is only a joke, therefore the act of bathing is accompanied by friendly bursts of laughter. There are, of course, those who cannot be stirred in their resolve, neither by threats nor by bathing (i.e., dipping into the water), and they remain determined… and the blackmailers have to back off, defeated… Yet, despite of all this, in the evening* кумышка *will be provided by the godmother at the* сялтым*. This is what* сялтым *is all about: the godfather together with other guests sits at the table on a bench, and the godmother gives him a three-litre-bottle of* кумышка*, putting it in front of them on the table, and next to the bottle – a glass with* кумышка*. In addition to this, the godmother puts in front of the godfather a kerchief with the value of about 25 kopecks*[25] *and asks him to receive this present and treat everybody with*

[25] Some figures for comparison: in Glazov county in the 1860s a sheepskin fur jacket cost 18–24 kopecks, a coarse woollen peasant overcoat – 20–30 kopecks, a pood (16.3 kg) of barley – 30–35 kopecks, a pood of oats – 17–25 kopecks (Volkova 2003: 104–105).

кумышка as if it were his own, yet, usually, according to tradition, he himself has to drink the first glass, the second one give to the host-godfather, the third – to the hostess-godmother, and after that, if there is another godfather – to him and then, continuing agewise, as it is determined by the ritual. Each person, who gets a drink from the guest-godfather, even the host, gives him a coin, often a silver one, which the guest afterwards passes on to the godmother, but, getting a drink from the godfather, gives him a coin as a present. Treating this way the ones standing near him, the guest-godfather gives the bottle back to the godmother-hostess. After that, together with the rest of the guests sitting at table, he eats what he likes; meanwhile, the table has been laid – there are plates with the main course, pirozhki*, and so on; also the so-called* постряпушки *made of wheat flour. Women are singing songs while the guests are eating.* (Vereshchagin 1996: 122.)

The author has not made it very clear who exactly was worshipped at this ritual.[26] Probably it is about inviting and worshipping a newly-wed couple – godson and his wife, i.e., the bride, by the godparents of the newly-married man.

The dictionaries of the Udmurt language also connect this ritual with the washing of yarn:

Сялтым – Udmurt custom: while washing hanks, people are having a party in the honour of the bride or newborn – the bride treats the guests and the latter give her presents – coins (Borisov 1991: 275).

Сялтым – ritual of bathing in an ice-hole (when yarn wound into a hank is washed). *Сялтыманы* – bathing of the bride *(while washing yarn wound into a hank)* (*Udmurt*… 1983: 408).

Nowadays, the ritual called *сялтым* is more known as the bathing ritual of the bride in the water (river) on the first day of hay-making, which is probably related to the fact that, by the late 1950s, home-made fabric had been ousted by the manufactured one (Khristolyubova 1993: 143), and making yarn in great quantities as well as organising the ritual of washing hanks lost its topicality.

The rituals connected with the bride, which symbolised her rebirth in a new quality, differed even inside one district. So, only in Malaya Purga district, Udmurtia, several versions of it are known (the local name is

[26] According to V. Dal's dictionary, "*кум, кума* – godfather and godmother generally having a spiritual relationship; but for the godson himself they are not godfather and godmother, but only to each other, and regarding his parents and relatives" (Dal 1914: 559).

чалтым). In the villages of Pytsam and Novaya Monya, even in the late 1950s – 1960s the bride, fully dressed, was thrown into water on the first day of hay-making (чалтымак пылато – *bathe all over. Probably the name of the ritual is also derived from it* – чалтым*?!*), in the village of Staraya Monya (at the distance of three kilometres from the village of Novaya Monya) a plaited rope was tied round the bride's waist and she was pulled up over the upper crosspiece of the swing (a prop made of two poles and an upper cross-beam). To this ritual, people brought round loaves of wheat bread called *бискыли* made of flaky paste and bannocks made with whipped eggs called *курегпуз табань*; elderly people said prayers. Later on, (in 1973), in the same village the bride was only soused over with water from a bucket during a festival called *гырон быдтон* (end of ploughing, i.e., spring fieldwork).[27] The description of this kind of ritual in the same district can also be found in literature, "On the first day of hay-making, young people, given permission by the elderly, hide a kerchief taken from the bride, or an apron or a longcoat, and throw them in a tree, and tie her to the latter (the modern version consists in untying the apron strings). Walking to her in succession all the new relatives (mother-in-law, father-in-law, brothers and sisters-in law), they ask her what she calls them. Not giving their names, the bride utters the corresponding terms of kinship, publicly stating her fully-fledged kinship to the new family. She is released only when her husband takes her things off the tree. After that the ritual of bathing starts" (Vladykina 1998: 118–119).

The rituals similar to the Udmurt ones were performed also by other Finno-Ugric peoples. So the Komi on the Luza, Letka and Vym Rivers in the first summer after the wedding, during hay-making and grain harvesting "bathed" the bride in the river several times – she was pushed into the water when she was doing her laundry or her kerchief was thrown into a tree. On the Vyshka and Mezen Rivers, a ritual called *нетсу* was performed. During hay-making, in a faraway meadow the bride cooked porridge, into which much butter was added. Her husband climbed a spruce, chopped off branches at the very top and tied the place up with birch-bark or a piece of sheet metal. After this the bride, turning to everyone working by their Christian name and patronymic, asked them to taste the porridge. These rituals somehow released the newlywed from

[27] Informant Olga Mikhailova, b. 1942.

everything that up to then had connected her with her parental home, with the "maiden's will" (Limerov 2000: 143).

The throwing in the tree of the objects, which were the most characteristic parts of the female attire that the bride put on for her wedding party, symbolises the completion of the transition status of the bride. The ritual of bathing[28] similar to it in its meaning strengthens the mythological idea of death=rebirth even more (Vladykina 1998: 119).

This way the ritual called *сялтым* (*чалтым*), which was performed approximately half a year or a year after the bride settled down in her new home, became a starting point in the life of the young wife as a fully-fledged member of the new family, which was frequently strengthened by the birth of a child.[29] A maiden, becoming a woman, entering a new family, preparing to be a mother for her would-be children, was supposed to receive communion with water – the bride was definitely bathed in a river. It is interesting to mention that, apart from "communicating" the bride for her new family and new life, people turned to water in prayers for strong and healthy children. When bathing or sousing a maiden, a newlywed, a young wife, they were wished health ("*кускыд медаз жадьы*" – "may your back not get tired"), love of work and swiftness ("*киужлы шаплы мед луоз*" – "may she be fast in handicraft"), and so on. Here also exists the practice of strengthening with words (oral formulas) the magic activities connected with the natural qualities of flowing water – its fast continuous movement, freshness, transparency, the ability to cleanse.

[28] In 1988 the participants in the shooting of the film (Northern Udmurts in the Early 20th Century) explained the necessity of bathing the newlywed with the fact that the latter had to be given the possibility, when being wet through, take off her *шортдэрем* – a buttonless long overcoat; otherwise she would have had to work in «full dress»; at haymaking, women were allowed to wear just a shirt. (Author's fieldwork materials, 1988).

[29] Some authors (Vanyushev 1986: 67) have compared *сялтым* with the ritual of bathing the bride on the second day of wedding, which is observed by many peoples (the Udmurts call it *выль кен/ак пылатон* – sprinkling the new daughter-in-law), before the bathing the bride has to change into women's attire. The bride goes with the guests to a spring (well, river), where the oldest of the women, leading the procession to the river, or the mother-in-law sprinkles the head and feet of the bride with water, after which the bride has to scoop some water into buckets and all those present sprinkle water. The bride carries the buckets on a yoke, trying not to spill over the water, and her friends follow her, trying to splash the water over the brim. Later on the bride treats her new relatives to this water, and she is given money in return, or with this water ritual porridge is cooked for further blessing. The ritual of bathing the bride has gradually acquired a conditional character; nowadays the primary aspect is to test the bride with work. The wedding ritual of communion at a spring is also demonstrated in the film "Southern Udmurts in the Early 20th Century" by Aleksei Peterson and Serafima Lebedeva, Estonian National Museum, 1983.

Woman in a cult practice

The life of the woman, inside a family, was regulated by a whole range of prohibitions also after the termination of the period of avoidance, which was especially evident in cult practice when ritual purity was necessary. Yet, at the same time, the role of the woman in Udmurt family and cult rituals was extremely important. Even the family priest, the protector of family *воршуд* (*воршуд–утись*, deity-protector of family happiness, SK) "had to be married, as, together with him, according to tradition, his wife also performed services. The title of a priest was passed on from father to son. In the case when the priest died, having not passed on his title, the appointment of the priest depended on his wife" (Luppov 1999: 46). Also, only a married man was allowed to fulfil the obligations of the presiding priest, and sometimes, when his wife died, he was allowed to do it together with his daughter-in-law.

In the late 19th century, Grigory Vereshchagin pointed out a few rules related to the cult of worshipping deities and spirits:

1. Women without headgear symbolising the transition to the group of the elderly, and pants are prohibited to participate in sacrificial rituals;
2. Women are not allowed to slaughter animals or cook food from sacrificed animals;
3. In the domestic chapel called *куа* dedicated to the family deity *Воршуд* neither maidens nor women are allowed to move to and fro in front of the chest called *воршуд-кудыр*;
4. If the sacrifice is made to the sylvan spirit *Нюлэсмурт* (lit. "woodsman" – SK), *Керемет* (spirit of evil, also the place for performing pagan prayer ceremonies – SK), *Чер* (illness, sickness, spirit of disease – SK) and other gods and spirits taken over from other nationalities, women are not allowed to eat it;
5. In the places where women are allowed to be present, they have to wear clean clothes;
6. Menstruating girls and women are prohibited to be present at sacrificial rituals;
7. On the day of sacrificing no work can be done, you have to keep to absolute peace;
8. Men, especially priests, have to wear a white robe and bass shoes at sacrificial rituals; they have to gird themselves with belts;
9. Sacrifice to deities, except for *Чер*, and to the spirits of the deceased, must be a foal, not a much-ridden horse;
10. The priest, who is standing or sitting in a praying position, has to

wear a hat and hold twigs in his hands (Vereshchagin 1998: 38).

So we can see that six rules of the ten are directly related to women, one (connected with work) is concerned with both men and women, two of them are related to men (actually, priests), and one is connected with the sacrificial animal – this is an excellent example of sex-related regulations in cult practice.

Certain behavioural regulations are also observed in the religious praying rituals performed nowadays. So, only priests are allowed to enter the sacred site *луд* surrounded by a fence. Usually women do not enter the domestic chapel *куа* (if they do enter, they are allowed to keep only to the left-hand side), but in rituals performed in holy groves *луд (*or *керемет)* they are forbidden to participate. More often than not, women at common praying rituals remain "passive supervisors" of cooking the ritual meal. As was mentioned already above, the young men's initiating ritual *эру карон* (the performing site is not far from the holy grove *луд*) also takes place without the participation of women, whereas the ritual of initiating girls is participated in by all the villagers.[30]

In many an everyday, etiquette-related and ritual, situation prohibitions are simplified for women beyond the age of fertility, and they are bestowed certain "privileges"-obligations. The old woman is frivolously active in the rituals where the nearness of the Great Beyond is present – the ones related to birth and wake. It was only during the ritual called "*нуны сюан*" (infant's wedding) that women could afford dancing squatting, clapping their hands under the knees. Obscene songs, unambiguous gestures (lifting the dancing women with the handle of the oven peel, covering the head with the lifted train of the dress, tucking up the train of the dress, trying to denude the father of the child – taking off his trousers, demonstrating his "manly pride" and, by doing so, make public his participation in the event) had to contribute to the "infectious birthgiving" ("*пиян мед палалоз*"). In other situations, these s kinds of dance steps were regarded as impolite. It is necessary to mention that only elderly women, i.e., the ones that had crossed the threshold of fertility, consequently - a certain group in the life cycle – could afford such obscenities and gestures (Vladykina 1998: 308).

In the days of common intercession, performed in graveyards in the spring and in the autumn, it is the elderly who go from door to door – "*кисьтон нерге*", and the hosts treat them to a glass of vodka and some

[30] Video archive of the ENM – V 001–002, 006-008, 062. 1988, 1989, 1993.

snacks. While the attitude towards drinking by women in Udmurt society was and still is rather negative, then this kind of behaviour from elderly women during certain periods is considered as acceptable, it might even be said that it is included in the obligatory set of regulations of the ritual.

The last "transition" ritual, which completes the transition of the woman to the world of the deceased, is the intercession for the dead parents "*йыр-пыд сётон*" ("sacrificing animal's head and feet") or "*вал сюан*" ("horse's wedding"), when the married daughter sacrifices a cow for her mother (and a married son – a horse for his father). This is a colourful performance reminding us of a wedding. In both cases, *тöр/тöро,* sits at the end of the table (at wedding it is the chief, an honourable figure (Borisov 1991: 286), he is seated on a pillow in the red corner – SK), dowry is made for the "future life", and suitable melodies of wedding songs are sung., yet, all the things in this ritual occur vice versa: at the wedding table *тöр* there is a friendly couple, at the wake – just one person, an old woman or man, playing the role of the newlywed *выль кенак*; miniature clothing not suitable for real life, allowed at the wake, singing of wedding songs the other way round: in honour of man the melodies are played which at an ordinary wedding are sung by the relatives of the bride in the house of the bridegroom, and in honour of a woman – the melodies of the bridegroom's relatives... Just like at a wedding, the activities are carried out in two different places. On the one hand, it is the house of the deceased, on the other – a place where the bones of the sacrificed animal are thrown. And then there is the obligatory travesty of the couple taking away the bones: the woman puts on a man's hat, and the man – a kerchief or a headcloth, this way creating the situation of "the alien", the beyond.[31] After performing the "horse's wedding" (3, 5, 7, etc. years after death), where "77 generations of ancestors" are asked (*77 выжы кулэмъёс)*, the deceased is considered to have eventually entered the beyond and occupied a respectable place there (see the description of the ritual in Vladykin & Churakova 1986).

In all the ritual activities distinguishing the transition landmarks in the life of a girl/maiden/woman, equally to the protective functions, the

[31] This ritual of intercession has been performed by the Udmurts until now. Here the details related to trees should be emphasised: in this ritual, the bones of the sacrificed animal are either hung in a tree or thrown on its roots. And, what else is interesting in the context of the article, in some places, for example, in the village of Varklet Bodya, Agryz district, Tatarstan, the bones are taken to a place called *йыр-пыд куян* (word-for-word: place for throwing away heads and feet) exclusively by men. Video-archive of the ENM – V 001, 1988.

connection with the beyond – the world of ancestors – is carefully observed. In incantations-prayers, ritual visits, symbolic activities related to water, changing clothes, the existence of pairs (two houses) in young people's rituals, common meals, giving and receiving presents, joint merry-making accompanying women's rituals, their interfusion with the agrarian calendar – in all these we can observe the encoded system of symbols, images, ideas of the traditional world view of the nation.

Transition rituals are characteristic of all ethnoses and all times. The most significant Udmurt rituals, sacramental for each person and the whole society related to birth, wedding and funeral, continue to preserve many of their traditional features. Some other transition stages are perhaps not so important on a global scale; yet, having a certain meaning in changing a person's social status, are continuously transformed. Each ritual, being a "manifestation of contemporary life in each period of time, carries a many-centuries-long experience of the people" (Khristolybova 1984: 6) and reflects the mental, moral, social stereotypes and values of the society of its era. While, in traditional society, the life of each individual was regulated by the community, and the rituals were often related to the agrarian calendar, then, in modern society, many a ritual is performed in the seclusion of one's own family and next of kin; and side by side with the fading of certain kinds of working activities people also start forgetting the rituals connected with them. The beginning and end of school-time, university, getting a passport, the first salary and some others become the transition points in the life of Man. The essence and form of the ritual change, yet the idea remains the same – to ensure the further well being of the person, as well as of those surrounding them.

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[32] Although ethnographical films are "staged", I consider them as sources, as all activities in them are carried out by common villagers-Udmurts, for whom everything happening in the film is part of their present or former reality.

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Perception of Death in Lithuanian Traditional Culture

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The article, regarding Lithuanian idioms, narrative folklore and ethnographic material, deals with the n otions of personified death in Lithuanian *traditional folk world*. The investigation has disclosed that, in folk narratives, death is mostly pictured as a weird woman dressed in white, whereas the widespread European perception of death, as a skeleton with a scythe, is of little significance there. In addition, death can be seldom portrayed as a man, a child, or an animal. The coexistence of a few different death concepts evinces an idea about the syncretic nature of the traditional world-outlook, as well as presenting interpretation and regulatory models as to how to transform the mystery of death into appreciable images.

The complex system of the worldview reveals human aspirations as comprehending the fundamental problems of existence. The notion of death can be considered as probably the most expressive phenomenon amongst them. Emotions, which are evoked by death, are quite contradictory: the mystery of death, on the one hand, stimulates natural curiosity, while on the other hand, it provokes fear in the face of the unknown. The traditional world concept is not a mere copy of the substantial reality but rather a creative interpretation of the environment in the realm of human consciousness (Bufienė 2000: 174). Therefore, it is characteristic of folk philosophy that the world is often interpreted in the anthropocentric context, when "non-human things are complemented with dimensions of mind and will, abstract and mental objects get a "body"" (Krikmann 2001: 91). In Lithuanian mythology, the mystery of death is also elucidated by means of animation or, more often, personification of otherworldly occurrence. Death is mostly portrayed in a human form, though it may also appear as an other animate phenomenon (e.g., a ghost) / living creature (e.g., an animal).

So, the world outlook performs an interpretational function (Gurevičius 1989: 27), which, consequently, enables the transformation of ambiguous human feelings towards death into visible and appreciable

images. These mental perceptions are no less real than the surrounding material universe, since the semantic model of the world is regarded as truly actual and reliable (Postovalova 1988: 46–47, 55). The interpretational factor of the mythological system, in its turn, is interrelated with the regulatory function (Postovalova 1988: 26), which provides the community with pre-existing, well-tried models of conduct in the face of death. The nature of these behavioural patterns can be perceived from both visible and mental signs of human activity. Folk narratives about death and funeral customs play a key role in this case.

An attempt to define the figure of personified death in Lithuanian traditional world outlook, regarding Lithuanian idiomatic sayings, narrative folklore, and ethnographic data should be considered as the object of this article.

It is worth to mention certain difficulties, which might arise in a process of the description of the death picture. To begin with, although death is portrayed in a similar way both in religious and fairy tales, the image of personified death differs slightly in Lithuanian mythological legends, religious tales and fairy tales. In mythological legends, the features of the death figure are more diverse, and these characteristics find their roots in the local, most probably, the pre-Christian tradition. Meanwhile, in Lithuanian folk tales, the picture of death is closer to the notion of Christian iconography, which became established in Lithuania, for the most part, during the Baroque period.

What is more, different mythical characters may figure in otherwise identical plots of Lithuanian mythological legends (Kerbelytė 1999: 53). In cases where they are directly named, it becomes evident, which supernatural beings are believed to appear before someone's death. It could be said that personified death / personified illness / souls / devil most often substitute each other in variants of similar plots. However, in a portion of mythological legends, mythical characters are not named and only features or actions are numbered. Since the beings, which are associated with death, posses certain common traits or behavioural characteristics, the researcher, hence, is forced to accept rather personal judgments, concerning which mythical character is referred to in these sorts of narratives (KTFL: 26; Vinogradova 2000: 18).

The confusion of the respective mythical characters might be connected with the decline of traditional worldview. On the other hand, however, such situations may reflect the syncretic nature of the traditional world outlook itself, when the same features might be attributed to different mythical beings that are believed to appear under similar circumstances

(Vinogradova 2000: 19–20).

In Lithuanian traditional culture, personified death is called by a few different names, which are, in the feminine gender, grammatically: *giltinė, mirtis, smertis*. The latter word "*smertis*" is Slavonic by origin. Nevertheless, it has been popular not only in the borderland with Russia, Belarus and Poland but also in the rest of Lithuania due to a few periods of Polonisation and Russification.

It is significant that, in the Lithuanian language, there exists a special proper name for personified death, – *giltinė*.[1] Mythical beings quite often are addressed by names of euphemistic character. These appellations may indicate "dwelling place, peculiarities of appearance, specific origin or even divine nature" of mythical character (Vėlius 1987: 35). According to the scholars, epithets, which had characterised deity in the beginning, might have been later turned into proper names owing to a process of sacralisation and mythologisation (*Mitologijos*… 1999: 483–484). The word "*giltinė*" is etymologically linked with words "*gelti, gilti*", that is to "to sting like a bee / to bite like a snake". This etymological model is partly confirmed by a few historical sources dating back to XVI century and several mythological narratives where an obscure figure of death as a being with a sting or with a long poisonous tongue is depicted. Therefore it could be presupposed that the name "*giltinė*" has originated from an epithetic form (i.e., "the one that bites/stings"), which, in the beginning, might have been used as some sort of euphemistic nomination.

Lithuanian death personification finds its roots in the general European extended image of death as a female being, dressed in white clothes. In folk carnival processions, people who acted the role of death also wrapped themselves in white fabric (Vyšniauskaitė 1994: 23). In addition, death may be portrayed as a being of white body colour. Therefore a pale person is addressed: "[You are] white as death" ("*Balts kaip smertis*")(LMD I 891/6/). However, white colour is also characteristic of personified diseases (KTFL: 372), souls, or ghosts (KTFL: 464–465). Similarly, in mythological legends, a dead person who keeps coming home may appear in a white linen cloth, a white sheet, a white shawl, or a long white shirt (Korzonaitė 2002: 10). According to the researches, the significance of the white colour

[1] Very few Lithuanian mythological legends exist that speak about the death as a man. All these texts present a personal experience: someone meets a strange man, then somebody dies in a neighborhood and afterwards a conclusion is made: "This was death walking to the village". The death is called "*smertis / giltinė*", i.e., by grammatically feminine noun.

in these narratives is of archaic origin, since this colour was characteristic of a shroud and the mournful clothes of the ancient Balts (Dundulienė 1983: 34).

In Europe a change of white, as the original colour of sorrow, to black occurred in the Baroque period (Kilianova 1996: 384). At first, these alterations became noticeable among the nobility and in the middle class. Later on, this change in colour spread from cities to the countryside. In Lithuania, the black colour has had more noticeable impact on the habits of people's mournful clothing. Meanwhile, both in idiomatic sayings and in folk texts, personified death is seldom envisioned as a woman dressed in black. Heroes of mythological legends may collide with a human-shaped black figure carrying a scythe on a shoulder (LTR 1191/417/), or they may see a strange lady in black clothes wandering near a cemetery (LMD I 271/1/). These narratives end with an explanation that it was death. Such assertions mostly reflect the dominating opinion, at the time, that the text was recorded. However, they may express the individual storyteller's convictions, which sometimes are put into words because those who record the legends urgently ask the performers to explain what it was. In the opinion of Lithuanian folklorist Bronislava Kerbelytė, these assertions are not related to the structures of the mythological legends' plots and therefore they can easily be changed or omitted (KTFL: 26). Thus, it is difficult to make a definitive conclusion whether the above-mentioned statements about death are from a reliable grounding. On the whole, the black colour is more characteristic of other supernatural beings that are also believed to appear near a dying person or at the graveyard, e.g. animated diseases (Basanavičius 1998: 133–135), souls (ibid.: 151), or ghosts (KTFL: 465).

In mythological legends, personified death is usually portrayed as an elderly woman. However, in this situation a general tendency can be observed that the appearance of death depends on the sex and age of a dying person. A few narratives relate that a strange child, or a weird male being, is seen before the death of a child or a man, respectively. These peculiarities are especially obvious in those mythological legends that tell about children's death. For example, it is related that a countryman encounters a baby's death as a strange little child walking to the village and soon after a sick baby suddenly dies in the neighbourhood (KTFL: 465). On the other hand, souls of dead children (*Lietuvių…* 1981: 212) or personified illnesses (*Šiaurės…* 1985: 315) may also appear in the shape of a child.

Death can be met in a zoomorphic form as a small animal. In oral

tradition, though, corresponding texts are relatively scarce. Here is an explanation given in one mythological legend: "Death is a small beast. It is hard to tell, what kind of a beast death is. It is similar to a marten but it is not exactly a marten; it is similar to a fox but it is not exactly a fox. Well, it is similar to a dog, but still it is not exactly a dog" (Marcinkevičienė 1997: 19). In Lithuanian tradition, the occurrence of a strange animal (a dog, a cat) or bird (a goose, a pigeon) is more often regarded as a death omen (KTFL: 469). It is also believed that certain animals (for example, a cat, a dog, a horse) are able to see *giltinė* and therefore they can predict the approaching of their master's death (KTFL: 492).

Animated death may also manifest itself in an invisible form. Nevertheless, death gives itself away with strange sounds or unusual phenomena. For example, people hear the door banging or observe it opening and then closing but nobody comes in (Basanavičius 1998: 138). This way, it is believed, *giltinė* steals into the house where someone will die in a short time. For that reason perhaps, it was a usual thing to tease a noisy person that he "knocks about like death" ("*Baldos kaip giltinė*") (LKŽ III: 303).

In Lithuanian oral repertoire, there predominates a tendency that *giltinė* is envisioned as an individual being in those narratives where the mythical character portrayed is directly named as death. Such a mode of description is characteristic of Lithuanian folk tales (e.g., local variants of "Cheated Death" (AT (330), "The Smith and Death" (AT 330 A), "Death in the Knapsack" (AT 330 B) and certain mythological legends (KTFL: 465).

Meanwhile, there exists a group of narratives, in which several mythical beings are seen before death, yet their names are not always indicated. For instance, these can be two white ladies (Basanavičius 1998: 130), two men in white (ibid.: 150), three white girls (ibid.: 132), or four children dressed in white (ibid.: 139–140). When these beings are named, it becomes evident, that before great epidemics, three 'Plaque Ladies' wander around the country (KTFL: 123). The souls of dead relatives are also seen visiting a dying person in a big crowd (KTFL: 465). However, in many cases, the subordination of these numerous beings is not specified. Therefore, at times it is quite difficult to draw a clear conclusion concerning which mythical characters are referred to in a corresponding case.

Death is only directly addressed in the plural in Lithuanian idiomatic sayings. For example, in traditional swearing formulas, a person is cursed: "Go away to deaths" ("*Eik sau po giltinių*" (LMD I 701/587/). And in folk similies, a man is compared with nine *giltinės*: "She walks crouched like nine deaths" ("*Ein susisokusi, kap devynios gėltinis*" (LTR 850/8/), "Grinned like nine deaths" ("*Išsišiepė kaip devynios giltinės*" (LKŽ XIV:

753). Phraseological expressions form a part of the language system, thus they are subordinated to the common traits of evolution of the latter. It has been noted by linguists that language is more resistant to changes than the cultural environment. Therefore, idiomatic units might preserve the archaic extra-linguistic information, without significantly affecting its content (Jasiūnaitė 2001: 138). Consequently, phraseological sayings, which refer to several deaths, might reflect the former reality of Baltic mythology.

On the other hand, it has to be noted, that in Lithuanian phraseology, there exist quite a few sayings of similar nature, which refer to other mythical phenomena or different numbers, e.g., nine or a hundred devils; four, seven or nine thunders; two or nine disasters; nine wolfs, and so on. To the mind of folk researchers, in all cases mentioned, the connection between a mythical character and a certain number are not necessary of organic and indispensable nature (Laurinkienė 1996: 171–172). These numerals, in maledictions or curses, are supposed to express the magic of abundance and they must not be interpreted literally. Hence, the above-mentioned sayings about several or "nine" deaths are, most likely, also meant to increase the power of malediction or the suggestiveness of comparison.

Despite of all variations analysed, death is mostly portrayed as a strange being with the stress put on its ugliness. The symbolic interpretation of the environment in the traditional world outlook is virtually based on the opposition of the usual and the strange, i.e. the division into kin and alien from the point of view of humans. The outer world is believed to be dangerous and harmful to human society. Therefore, mythical beings, which are located in the other world, are endowed with demonic features, which are not characteristic of human nature (Toporkov 1989: 95). In its turn, the picture of death, in traditional narratives, is also quite often distinguished by its repulsive nature.

For example, idiomatic sayings emphasise those features of personified death, which are regarded as some sort of deviation in comparison with human appearance, e. g., thinness ("Thin as death" – "*Kūda kaip giltinė*" (LTR 822/74/); abnormal body colour ("White as death" – "*Balts kaip smertis*" (LMD I 891/6/); unusual coldness ("Frozen as death" – "*Sušalęs kaip giltinė*" (LMD I 932/8/); too wide a smile ("Grinned like nine deaths" – "*Išsišiepęs kaip devynios giltinės*" (LKŽ XIV: 753), etc.

The analysis, of idiomatic sayings, also reveals the ways, in which *giltinė* is believed to cause death. She may strangle (LKŽ III: 303), suffocate (LMD III 173/33/), seize with nails a person's throat or pinch away

(Paulauskas 2001: 217). However, phraseological units do not refer to the death that occurs after being stung by *giltinė*. In the opinion of Lithuanian scholars, though, this idea of passing away is considered to be the most archaic one (Balys 1958: 235; Beresnevičius 1999: 280). Nevertheless, the ways enumerated show that the process of death, in Lithuanian traditional culture, was mostly perceived as an act of killing, carried out by personified death.

The notion of death, which mows people like grass, or chops their heads off with a scythe, is also common in the Lithuanian traditional folk worldview. At the same time, the widespread European figure of death, as a skeleton with a scythe, has been popular only in the Lithuanian traditional carnival processions and folk art, though such an appearance is extremely rare in Lithuanian folk narratives. This image is portrayed in only a few Lithuanian variants of fairy tales and religious tales (e.g., AT (330), 330 A; 330 B). However, it is emphasised there that such a shape has not been originally characteristic of *giltinė*, as in early times she was good-looking and not so thin. These changes were determined by a long-lasting bad experience. For instance, *giltinė* was stuck in an apple tree and ravens peck off all the flesh so that only bones were left. Ever since *giltinė* has remained wizened like moss (*Šiaurės*… 1985: 128–129).

In Lithuanian mythological worldview, death is seldom portrayed as a skeleton but rather as a strange woman wielding a scythe, for example: "*giltinė* is very thin, she walks around wrapped in a mantle made of straw and carries a scythe on her shoulder" (Balys 1981: No. 1). This image of death is also common in Lithuanian phraseological expressions. For instance, an old or sick person is pitied: "Death hammers a scythe for him" ("*Jam giltinė jau dalgę gelanda*") (LKŽ III: 303), "Death puts a scythe to his neck" ("*Jau smertis kiša dalgį jam už kaklo*") (LKŽ XVII: 575). This notion is also reflected in Lithuanian folk beliefs that motivate people to hold onto certain traditions. For example, it has been considered dangerous to whet instruments late at night, since "a person who grinds a knife in the evening, whets the scythe for death" ("*Kas vakare peilį galanda, tai giltinei dalgį plaka*" (Balys 1981: No. 50). In addition, similar beliefs are actualised in mythological legends that narrate about supernatural experiences during the annual cycle of holidays. Thus, it was supposed unsafe to walk about in the open air on Christmas Eve. However, one man went out just after Christmas Eve and he saw *giltinė* hammering a scythe by the roadside. The man became so frightened that he died shortly afterwards (*Lietuvių*…1981: 213).

To summarise, the investigation has disclosed that it is not possible to

define a unified picture of personified death in the Lithuanian traditional worldview. In the course of ages, the analysed notion has undergone various influences. The research data shows that new ideas have gradually been layered on top of the older ones, creating a heterogeneous picture of personified death. Nevertheless, mythical phenomena, concerning death, are mostly objectified in a quite realistic way, the process being based on the anthropocentric understanding of the world. The diversity of death's appearance should not be regarded as chaotic. We may more clearly speak about the syncretism of a few death images in Lithuanian tradition when both older and newer conceptions of death coexist in the minds of people. Despite all the changes, in symbolism and picture, the old image of death, as a woman in white sometimes wielding a scythe, has been preserved until today. Notwithstanding a rapid decline of the traditional folk worldview, there can still be recorded traditional folk narratives about death in Lithuania. Various idiomatic sayings, which have preserved archaic features of personified death, appear to this day both in local press articles and in the everyday language of town-dwellers.

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The Image of People of Other Religions in Lithuanian Folklore

Laima Anglickienė

Introduction

In Lithuania, like in every other country, people of other nations and religions have lived since the old times. Not always have Lithuanians and other ethnic-religious groups lived together only in a friendly fashion. The binary system of world classification is old just like mankind. Opposite "own/my" vs. "strange" is one of the most popular contra-positions. Living nearby one nation, one notices all differences of other ethnic groups, i.e. their other religion, different customs, other occupation (social strata), language, distinctive appearance and temperament (Anglickienė 2002b: 82–85). This article analyses the only religious aspect: the image of people of other religions in Lithuanian folklore. The aims of the article are to introduce the most popular narratives and specify reasons, due to which they came into folklore. Folk motives are gathered from the Lithuanian folklore manuscripts that are in the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore, from the published collections of folklore, and are written by the author herself during the expeditions. The examples of modern anecdotes, about these strangers, are taken from the Internet (mostly from www.delfi.lt).

Formerly religion was a major delimited factor more even than nationality. National identity in comparison with religious identity is formed rather late especially in Eastern and Middle Europe. During the population census of 1897, many tsarist officers, who gathered statistical data, did not understand what the concept "nationality" meant. Consequently, in Lithuania the inhabitants who considered themselves as "locals" or "Catholics" were marked as Poles; Belorussians were called either Russians or Poles (according to their mentioned religion) and settlers of Protestant faith were attributed to Germans (Merkys 1958: 86). But the majority of Lithuanians and inhabitants of Lithuania were always Roman Catholics.[1] There were 85.72 % Catholics, 7.65 % Jews,

[1] Catholics were not only Lithuanians but Poles and part of Belorussians, too.

1.59 % Old Believers, 1.13 % Orthodox Believers, 0.05 % Muslims, 3.86 % people of other confessions according to the population census data of 1923 (*Lietuvos*… 1923: 40). One example can clarify the importance of religion in earlier times. The Lithuanians of Lithuania Minor (that was a region of Prussia, today – Kaliningrad oblast) belonged to the Protestant Church since 1525. That possibly weakened their ties with Lithuanian Catholics from the Great Duchy of Lithuania. In the 19th century, the barrier of faith became more significant than the Lithuanian language. At first, Lithuanians hated their colonisers, that is Germans, but eventually a common religion united them (Matulevičius 1989: 128–129). Of course, the Ger-manization of this region influenced not only the Lutheran Church, but also the whole German system of education. In folklore, people tell that some Prussians (inhabitants of historical Prussia) are real Lithuanians, but because of their Lutheran faith they are called Prussians (Staugaitis 1921: 101).

Undoubtedly, various religions are regarded differently. Lithuanians consider Protestants or Orthodox Believers to be Christians like themselves.[2] Confessors of other religions – Tartars, Karaites and especially Jews – are called pagans or infidels. Even officially, Jews were separated from Christians in 1388 by the Great Lithuanian Duke Vytautas in the privilege for Jews of Brasta. This tradition of separating Jews as well as other ethnic groups (Tartars, Karaites) from the part of community, which had status of local inhabitants lasted during all period of the Great Duchy of Lithuania. Moreover, even the elite's understanding about non-Christian religions was superficial and incorrect; it raised untenable fear, which was conducive for spreading of exaggerated phobias. Christian society did not recognise strangers living nearby (Šiaučiūnaitė-Verbickienė 1999: 388–389). However, peasants understood religion more superficially: "Faith existed in forms, in symbols

[2] Incidentally, it must be noticed that in Lithuanian folklore quite popular strangers are Gypsies. But speaking about them it is never mentioned that they profess any religion excepting that Gypsies always profess the dominant religion of the country (or region) in which they live. The flexibility of Gypsies can be shown in this example: "A Gypsy is asked: Which religion do you profess? Which you like. What languages do you know? All which I need. What is your citizenship? That's no matter: we all are the children of Eve" (Bendoravičius 1933: 157). In folklore, Gypsy's relation with religion is quite original: he is not afraid to cheat priests, to steal anything from them and even after stealing he manages to get remission of sins from them (LTt 97; AT 1807)

and customs which surrounded man, but not inside man. Forms and customs had Christian content, but common people did not perceive, understand or think about it" (Pakalniškis 1990: 160).

Consequently, people of other religions were evaluated according to the scale of their own values and Catholic norms. Folklore also partly reflects this reality and all stereotypes about strangers. But it will be observed that in the verbal art every described subject or phenomenon is embellished with verisimilitude, an artistic effect is the most desirable while telling such stories. Therefore, further explanations about real facts of strangers' religious customs and their reflections in folklore can not be understandable forthright; this information can help to explain what reasons have influenced the rise of folk motives.

Generally, in folklore people recognise faith according to the ethnic group which confesses this religion: faith of Jews (in Lithuanian language these words are different: *žydas* means nationality, *judėjas* – religion), Tartars (= Muslims), Prussians (= Protestants).[3]

Regarding several reasons: different popularity, variety of motives – Lithuanian folklore about people of other religions can be divided into two groups: 1) folk motives about non-Christians and 2) folklore about Christians, but non-Catholics.

Non-Christians Jews

In folklore, people of other religions and their religious ceremonies are very often mocked, because in folklore any distinguishable man or situation is always noticeable. Other peculiarities of religion and their interpretations are the most popular subject in folklore especially about Jews. It must be observed that generally a "Jew" was the most popular stranger in Lithuanian folklore.

This popularity was influenced by several reasons. First of all, we know that special cultural attributes are characteristic of people of a particular religious group. Only when one religion is typical for an entire nation, this group is characterised by cultural affinity. That is why Jews, the only believers of Judaism, are distinguished for their cultural geniuses, which was and today is noticed by all other ethnic-religious groups. Whereas, other religions are practised by many nations. Sec-

[3] In religion the word *Prussian* was applied not only for inhabitants of Prussia – Lutherans but very often use for all Protestants (Slavėnienė 1991: 31).

ondly, Jews lived in very closed communities and their social and cultural life centred on the synagogue. This dissociation from other groups of inhabitants was palliative but also a provocative factor. The fewer strangers were known the worse and more forbidding features were ascribed to them. Sometimes, only human curiosity influenced disrespect and especially intolerance to differences of religious life. That was not essentially deliberate hostile acts, but they often had a contemptuous character (Mardosa 1999: 99). Thirdly, for a long time, until the Second World War, Jews were the largest ethnic group in Lithuania. All Lithuanian peasants met them as tradesmen and handicraftsmen. A lot of Jews lived in all European countries, too. Therefore, international stereotypes and accordingly migration of folk motives influenced popularity of this personage in Lithuanian folklore.

Researchers define popular and elitist, traditional (religious) and modern anti-Semitism. Religious pre-modern anti-Semitism was grounded on the idea that Jews were collectively responsible for the killing of the Christian God. This collective responsibility separates them from all other religious-ethnic groups (Sirutavičius 1998: 34).

Even in the 19th century, the position of the Catholic Church in regard to Jews did not differ from popular anti-Semitism. In the sermons of priests and prayer books it was mentioned that Jews crucified Jesus Christ and the image of the Jew, who lives according to the Talmud, full of various evils was formed (Sirutavičius 1998: 36–37; Vareikis 2002: 99). Only in 1965, the II Vatican council eliminated some subtle points from theology, which were connected with the crucifixion. Christ died not because Jews crucified him, but because he "underwent His passion and death freely, because of the sins of men and out of infinite love, in order that all may reach salvation" (*Declaration*… 1965, online).

All the above mentioned reasons formed a rather negative image of Jews, both in the Lithuanian society of 19th – the 1st half of the 20th century, and in folklore. Moreover, non-Christian religions were evaluated as bad and false. Lithuanians called Jews, more rarely Tartars as pagans. Even more, they did not treat them as people but as speaking animals. It is said that Jews do not have a soul (LTR 1530[423]). It is connected with the belief that a strange God is not real and a strange religion is soulless or is devil-worship (Belova 1997: 29–30). The conception of the Jew infidel is widely spread not only in Lithuania, but also all over Europe. Christians often said after christening of a baby: "We bring to church a little Jew and bring back a Catholic (Mardosa 1999: 100) or Christian" (Belova 1997: 28). The supposed inferiority of the Jew is

reflected in the proverbs: "The Jew is not a man and one maid is not a fully hired family" (LTR 1011[123]). He is equal to the mythical being: "Jew or devil is the same" (LTR 3424[67]). But in Lithuanian proverbs, people of other nationalities or religions – Germans, Russians – are compared with the devil, too.

However, other strangers did not suffer so much because of their religion. Of course, Catholics made fun of the differences but seldom made mockery of the actions. Whereas Jews were disturbed during their prayers when they stayed at houses of Lithuanians or men behaved intolerably during important Jewish feasts. Sometimes especially young men joked very roughly forgetting all moral and ethic norms. For example, in the interwar period youngsters in Salakas, (district of Zarasai), disenterred a deceased Jew, set him on a horseback, pushed a piece of pork into his mouth and left him by the synagogue (VDU ER F2 B2, 52). Sometimes, religious differences were turned to account knowingly: in the period of 1920–1940s, when Lithuanian children wanted to earn money, they admitted a crow to the synagogue. Then Jews asked them to catch the bird and paid for catching 5 Litas[4] (Čepaitė 2001: 2). There are folk stories with analogical situations: boys come up on the roof of the synagogue and flow inward (LTR 1744[84]) / or admit an owl into the synagogue (LTR 1744[81]). Jews think that there is a Christian Holy Spirit / Catholic God.

Some details of Jewish religion were known quite well. Jews wait for their Messiah that is why in the tale, a trickster pretend to be the God and orders a Jew to marry his daughter to him because then Messiah will be born. But the girl is born and the trickster absconds with the funds (LPK 1846; AT 1855A). It is not allowed for Jews to touch the cross and a boy protects the cloth, which the Jew wants to steal when he put the cross on it (VDU ER 25–6, 6).

In the legends, faiths of Christians and Jews are compared in prejudice of the Jew. Priests and rabbis fight regarding whose God is stronger: when the priest sprays the altar of synagogue with the holy water, crashes the one corner of the altar (LTR 422[14]).

But the most popular are terrible stories about Jews harming the Christians and even killing them because of Jewish religious rituals. These stories are popular all over Europe (*The Blood Libel…* 1991; Cała

[4] Then one centner of grain costed such sum.

1992, etc.). Periods of various incriminations for Jews can be delineated. For example, from the 5th–6th century Jews were blamed for profanation of the Host in Western Europe; from the 12th century on there was a rumour about Christians children killed by Jews for their ritual purposes (Gurevich 1989: 305). The signs of intolerance for Jews appeared in the Great Duchy of Lithuania only in the middle of 16th century and Jews were not blamed for the profanation of the Host (Šiaučiūnaitė-Verbickienė 1999: 419). Therefore, there are only a few folk-tales about that. The most popular motive: Catholics who serve in the houses of Jews bring the Host (= body of Christ) from the church and Jews knot it in order to obtain blood from it (LTR 1001[33]; 1248[84]).

But the myth about killing of Christians was expanded. The existing belief that Christ was killed by Jews is explained as if Jews needed Christian blood: "the Jews martyred Jesus and that is why their progeny have to do something bad for Christians that day [i.e. during Easter] (LTR 1000[60]).[5] These stories tell about ways as to how Jews kill Christian children or even adults and the reasons for what purposes they use that blood are explained. It is told that they bake matzos with blood, moisten the eyes of new-borns Jews with this blood because Jews are born blind like dog puppies and Christian blood helps them to eliminate this defect. Jewish women put the scrap of cloth, which is moistened with blood into shoes in order to trample the people of other faith (Anglickienė 2003: 220).

That blood "spurts" from everywhere. One legend tells that a man moved out and left Calvary in his house. Jews found and martyred it, pierced the side of Christ. Blood began to flow continuously. All dishes were full of blood but Jews could not stop the spurt. Then they decided to scamper out of this small town (LTR 552[796]).

In other stories, Jews do harm to Christians in others different ways, too. It is told that Jews sell tainted and dirtily made food. Jews add their hair or lice into the cakes which are sold to Christians (VDU ER 38-7, 5). A dead Jew is washed and that water is poured on the herring (VDU ER 32-6, 2). It was even said that no gifts could be taken from the hands of Jews because with the gift they would also hand over their bad luck

[5] It is unbelievable but the same stereotypes exist today, too. In Lithuania during Easter of 2002 3-year old girl disappeared from the yard of her parents. One unofficial version of this event was that Jews kidnapped the girl and killed her for their rituals. After a few weeks the girl was found drowned.
[6] URL: http://www.delfi.lt/jokes//scripts/s2f/s2f.php?type=joke&id=830714 (2002 03 08).

(TŽ 360). In some stories there are explanations of people that Jews do harm for Christians because in such a way they diminish Christians and that their religion orders them to do so (LTR 1463[80]).

These terrible stories influenced real life, too. People who were employed by Jews avoided staying overnight in Jewish houses (VDU ER 30-10, 7.4). People were afraid to go to their cellars or shops and especially children were warned of the dangers of kidnapping or killing.

Other neutral stories tell about strange, and as well as funny Jewish religious customs, (funny that means for Lithuanians Catholics and generally speaking for Christians). Sometimes such stories have a folk explanation. Most of such stories are international because all Christians noticed the same different patterns.

For example, when Jews pray they roll a special belt around their hand. And it is explained that they do so in order that devils would be afraid to disturb them because would be struck (LTR 1508[415]). People think that Jews martyr bread during Easter, beat it, but after the feast they apologise to it (LTR 552[795]).

Jewish religious customs and rituals, which were noticed by Lithuanians when Jews bagmen stayed at the houses of Catholics are reflected in the proverbs: "Don't murmur like Jews the prayer" (LTR 1139[76]); "He rolls like Jews the prayer" (Bacevičienė 1993: 42). Noticed religious rituals are shown in these proverbs: "He is afraid like a Jew during a terrible night" (LTR 733[637]); "He shakes like a Jew sins into a swamp" (LTR 468[208/3]); "He is happy like a Jew with the Sabbath" (LTR 733[631]).

Moreover, differences between Christian and Jewish religious rituals are shown: "He is afraid like a Jew of the crucifix" (LTR 4084[729]) or "He is afraid like a Jew of christening" (LTR 3767[26]).

Stories about different Jewish food, their menu are rather popular as well. They can not eat pork and people explain why Jews have such prohibition: "Christ turned to a pig a Jewish woman with children who were hidden under the tub when Jews wanted to examine if Christ knew everything. That is why Jew can not eat blood of a relative (LPK 1867; AT 1855). This fact is reflected very pointedly in the tales and anecdotes: people try to foist pork for Jews in various ways. A farmer trained a Jew to eat pork when the Jew was kept three days in the granary where only sausages were kept (LTR 4314[97]). Actually such things were done not only in tales. In reality, people often tested Jewish children by covering their lips with flitch (Mardosa 1999: 99).

The other peculiarity of the Jewish menu is a great consumption of

onions and garlic. That was not usual for the local menu and Lithuanians stated that Jews smell of these spicy vegetables. The bad smell is explained in such a way: Jews rubbed the body of Christ with garlic or do not obey commands of Moses (LPK 1867 B; AT 1855). That was like a penalty. Whereas in another story it is explained that Jews eat garlic in order that devils do not visit them because devils do not like to go there where is a bad smell (LTR 1508[117]). Jews do not eat pike because this fish has all the tools with which Christ was martyred (that means that bones have a similar form of a cross) (LTR 1415[25]).

Folklore about Christians

Lithuanians met Jews because they lived in all the territory of the country. But people of other confessions – Protestants, Old Believers, and Orthodox Believers were met rarely because their number was smaller. In some territories, they lived in whole communities, in other places, they lived severally. That is why folklore about people of other confessions is spread in these territories where they lived. It is interesting to note, that during the population census of 1897, tsarist authority counted Lutherans according to their ethnic composition – there were *c*. 37.5 thousand of Lithuanians and Latvians and *c*. 20.5 thousand of German Lutherans (*Pervaya...* 1904: 84–91).

People of other Christian confessions were evaluated to be friendlier in comparison to non-Christians. In one etiological legend, circumstances of the origin of Lutheranism is explained: one girl agreed to marry a devil and then she bore a son Martin (= Luther) who disfigured Catholicity (LTR 1542[385]).

Commonly, in folklore, people of different confessions do not understand each other's religious customs or ceremonies in the Church. Especially that can be said about Protestants. For example, in a tale Lutheran German does not understand Catholic feasts: he thinks that hinds try to cheat him when they after All Saints' Day (1st November) again want to celebrate St. Martin's Day (11th November). And German landlord forces his hinds to work. Workers find a bear in the forest and call it Martin. German fight with "Martin" but after defeat he allows celebration of all Lithuanian (Catholic) feasts (LTt 66; AT 1705 B*).

Latvian Lutherans boasted that in the Catholic Church, a priest with some beautiful things went ahead of him and thus Latvia was graced (ŠLSA 114). Lutherans did not understand that there was a procession, a usual thing for Catholics. Or the Lutheran Germans did not understand the Latin words of the priest and promises to give two oxen (LLA 827).

However, Lithuanians distinguished between Russians Old Believers and Orthodox Believers and regarded these groups differently. Old Believers had a better reputation than that of the Russian Orthodoxy. This example, with two Russian groups, is analogous to the example of Lithuanians (which was given in the introduction of this article) and proves the importance of religion in earlier times over again. Such a difference had been brought about by historical reasons. Old Believers came to Lithuania at the end of the 17th and in the beginning of the 18th centuries, because of religious persecution in their native country, in Russia. They were naturalised and become a local minority and most of them were peasants as local Lithuanians. When Lithuania was occupied by tsarist Russia, at the end of the 18th century, a lot of Russian Orthodox Believers came to Lithuania and became privileged people as far as religion, economy and language were concerned and Lithuanians became a minority in their native country. Of course, invaders were always hated and thus they were depicted in folklore as poor and bad people and very often also as thieves. Besides, Old Believers themselves drew distinction between themselves and Orthodox Believers and the following Russians were stranger than Lithuanians Catholics in spite of their common nationality. Old Believers married Catholics more often and such marriages were better estimated than marriages between Old Believers and Orthodox Believers (Čiubrinskas 1998: 94–95).

Confessional differences are more often reflected in the proverbs: "He does not make the sign of the cross like Prussians" (LTR 346[226]), "You are like a Prussian who does not go to the church for confession of sins" (LTR 346[223]). Lithuanians mocked at Lutheran reverends: "He is splay (or he yaps) like the Prussian reverend (LTR 346[218] / 5224[19/46]). "Different" God of Protestants or Orthodox Believers was noticed, too: "He sits in the corner like a *Russian God*" (LTR 3631[118]); "He smiles like *Prussian* Jesus in the Moon" (LTR 5311[994]), "Foolish like the German God" (LTR 3892[260]) – such proverbs show that people did not understand religious doctrine.

Strangers-magicians

In folklore, all strangers (people having some peculiar features) are mentioned as having magical powers. But sometimes, magical powers are ascribed namely to people of other religions or confessions. For example, plenty of superstitious beliefs in Northern Lithuania are explained by facts that the Latvian land – Curonia is nearby and moreover, a lot of Protestants lived in this part of Lithuania (Valančius 1972: 263).

In one mythological legend, German capability to conjure is explained by another religion: "they were Lutherans, not Catholics and knew various wizardry" (LTR 4220[56]).

On one hand, magicians can do harm to people, animals or plants, but on the other hand, there are folklorist stories which tell that exactly people of other religions can help. Researchers noticed that formerly Protestants believed that Catholic priests could conjure away demons, help to remove whammy, cure some diseases and even show thieves (Taylor 1989: 94). Actually, even Orthodox Church speaks damns (Tokarev 1990: 94). Lithuanian researchers Jurijus Novikovas and Ramūnas Trimakas who gathered incantations of Russians Old Believers have noticed that they consider people of other nations and religions as the most authoritative and dangerous magicians (Novikovas & Trimakas 1997: 268).

When Lithuanians split with neighbours and wanted to do something bad for them they frighten each other: "we will buy Jews beggars in order to convert you into pigs" (Končius 1996: 238). Such a tradition was spread not only in Lithuania. Slavs explain that Jews were asked to pray in some intentions because Jews propitiate God sooner and wrongdoer is punished more awfully (Belova 1997: 31).

In folklore, it is fixed that sometimes a namely infidel was asked for help: "The horses of one Lithuanian peasant were stolen. He gets advice to bring one candle to the synagogue. The Jewish rabbi said that, after one year, a peasant would know who the thieves were. Everything happened so as the rabbi had said" (LTR 4551 [52]) .

Other religions of magician are not always mentioned in folklore. It is amalgamated with other attributes of strangeness: belonging to other ethnic groups or social strata, other anthropological types or speaking other unknown languages.

Infidels in modern folklore

Today, the theme of the other religion is popular in international genre – in anecdotes (Anglickienė 2002a: 191–196). Other Christian confession usually is not mentioned, but people of other religions – Jews, Muslims are mocked. In folklore, Muslims usually are named Arabs. These religious-ethnic groups in anecdotes are popularised by political events of latter years, which captured the attention of whole world. Strange peculiarities of these religions are noticed, i.e. for the Christian part of the world funny, unusual and even unacceptable customs, for example, Mussulman polygamy:

Sultan gives for his messengers little crystal shoe and says:
– That girl for who fit this shoe will become wife of my son.
And messengers have found 2137 girls for whom that shoe has fit. And they became wives of this young sultan.[6]

In another very short anecdote, two differences are mentioned: polygamy and prohibition to drink alcohol: "Why is alcohol forbidden in Arabian countries? That is instinct of self-preservation: just imagine that you get home drunk in the morning and 10 wives with rolling pins wait for you!"[7]

In the modern anecdotes about Jews, more popular is the theme with a clever, resourceful and sly businessman. Religious customs are reflected seldom:

Jew asks rabbi:
– Please, say rabbi if I can parachute during Sabbath.
– Yes, of course, it is only forbidden to spread parachute![8]

In this case, it is intended to say that during the Sabbath Jews can not do anything even service himself. In the popular obscene anecdotes, it is told about circumcision of Jews.

The difference is that in former times peasants mocked such things, which they saw in their own eyes and wondered at those peculiarities; and today anecdotes reflect modern man's deeper understanding of various religions and interest in world political events. Then such anecdotes are created: "Moses guided Jews from desert 40 years… And those who got behind, today we name Arabians".[9]

Conclusions

1. It is an international phenomenon that strangers and their religion are diminished. Other religion/confession is evaluated through the system of the professed, in this case the Catholic, religion. People do not try to understand the doctrine of other religions and deny it as bad and wrong, estimating their religious rituals and customs as strange or funny. These sometimes negative; sometimes-neutral estimations and interpretations of their religious customs are reflected in folklore.

[7] URL: http://www.delfi.lt/jokes//scripts/s2f/s2f.php?type=joke&id=820868 (2002 03 08).
[8] URL: http://www.delfi.lt/jokes//scripts/s2f/s2f.php?type=joke&id=535091 (2002 03 08).
[9] URL: http://www.delfi.lt/jokes/index.php?sdate=&category=20653top=&search&no=30 (2004 04 15).

2. Folklore about people of other religions can be divided into two groups because of different attitude to different religions and the popularity of motives: 1) folklore about non-Christians; 2) folklore about Christians, but non-Catholics.
3. In verbal art, other religions are reflected more often than other confession. The most popular infidel is the Jew. That was influenced by international and local reasons. Other religion is denied as untrue, bad and it has more differences in comparison with Christian.
4. Other confession is reflected less. It is more often spoken about Protestants who do not understand rituals, which are officiated in the Catholic Church or religious customs in narrative folklore. The attitude of Catholics towards other confessions and their differences are reflected in proverbs.

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Yuri Vella's Worldview as a Tool for Survival: What Filming Reveals

Liivo Niglas
Eva Toulouze

Introduction

This article is an attempt to study one individual's worldview. Studying cultures as such has arisen serious criticism by postmodernist authors, especially visual anthropologists, who emphasise the uniqueness of the individual's experience and worldview (cf. MacDougall 1998). We shall develop our study according to two different approaches, one based on filming and the other completing the latter by data from traditional fieldwork. We have chosen to focus our analysis on a very peculiar personality, the Nenets poet, reindeer herder and social activist Yuri Vella. In order to develop more specific items about his worldview and its multiple expressions, we shall start by a general presentation of his biography and his present way of life. This introduction shall be followed by a reflection about the authors' position to study Yuri Vella's worldview.

About Yuri Vella

Yuri Vella is well known as a representative of Russia's indigenous peoples. His reputation has spread over the borders of Siberia and even of Russia. He has been invited to the USA, to Finland, to Hungary, to Estonia and has been the main "hero" of several documentaries and TV programs. He was born in 1948 in Western Siberia, in the basin of the Agan River. Ethnically, he is a Forest Nenets. The Forest Nenets are a small people of about 2000 persons living in the taiga and the forest tundra (Toulouze 2003a: 96–97). Their traditional living areas are the upper courses of the Eastern and Northern tributaries of the Ob (the Kazym, the Lyamin, the Pim, the Tromyugan and the Agan) as well as the upper courses of rivers flowing into the Arctic Ocean (the Nadym, the Pur); they occupy regions where bogs alternate with rivers, lakes and woods. Their traditional way of life was based, until the last decades, on hunting and fishing; they were semi-nomads because of reindeer herding, an activity granting them

transportation and that compelled them to move every season to different pastures (Verbov 1936: 63–64; Khomich 1995: 22–23; Golovnev 1995: 56). In the Soviet period, collectivisation changed the Forest Nenets way of life: individual herds were merged into collective herds, hunting and fishing were controlled by the State and the people, who lived in small units in the forest, were gathered into villages (Toulouze 2003a: 99). School and army became compulsory for the indigenous people as well as for all the other Soviet citizens. Further on, in the 1960s, another main change took place in the Forest Nenets' life: oil was discovered under their traditional territories and oil companies started to drill it, bringing into these remote areas thousands of new people and industrial as well as urban structures. Moreover, this industry is of vital importance for Russia as a whole (Kurikov 1999).

This is the context Yuri Vella lives in. His individual background is a very ordinary one: his father was a reindeer herder, who died when Yuri was five years old. His very young mother married a Khanty[1] , and Yuri was sent to boarding school in the village of Varyogan, were he spent much time with his paternal grandmother, who was very deeply rooted into traditional Nenets culture. He did not finish high school but was called to the army and then came back to his village and started a most ordinary life: he married at 19 a Khanty girl from the neighbouring village, who gave him four daughters, he worked at different activities, among whose he was during some time mayor of his wife's village and hunter at the collective unit in Varyogan. Since the first year after the army, he did not drink, which is a very exceptional practice among the Nenets or Khanty men (Toulouze 2003b).

He was older than 35 when, upon the advice of a friend, he decided to apply to the Literary Institute in Moscow[2], where he was admitted after having completed his secondary education. As he used to write poems, he chose the department of poetry and published his first collection of poems immediately after having finished his studies, in 1990. His last book was published in Khanty-Mansiisk in 2001 (cf. list on Yuri Vella's works). Still, while he was studying by correspondence, spending some weeks per year in Moscow, he spent most of his time hunting in Siberia.

[1] The Khanty are another indigenous people of Western Siberian whose eastern branch lives in the same areas as the Forest Nenets.

[2] It is an institution training, among others, future writers.

In 1990, he fulfilled a dream: he bought 10 reindeer and moved with his wife from the village of Varyogan, where they have a house, into the forest, in the area where his paternal ancestors dwelled. He had to learn to be a herder, for he had no experience of his own. Since then, his main home, where he lives with part of his family, is in the camps surrounded by a fence that he has built with his own hands: a winter camp, a summer camp, and a spring-autumn camp where the reindeer calve. At the same time, he had to learn to fight for the land: reindeer herding and oil drilling are in a kind of unfair competition, in which the former has very little chance to survive (Miskova 1999). His fight has led to a serious conflict with the oil giant LUKoil, against whom Yuri Vella lost a trial in 2001.

Yuri Vella's plans are turned towards the future. He thinks of his grandchildren and tries to grant them the possibilities of choice his children's and his own generation has been denied of: as all the youngsters from the indigenous peoples, his daughters have been to school without much profit, losing traditional skills without acquiring new positive values. Yuri has opened a small school in his camp, for he wants his grandchildren not to lose the ability of coping with live within nature. He prepares a dictionary of toponymies, in order to give them the possibility, some day, to claim their traditional lands on the bases of name places.

About the authors

The authors of this article have complementary information sources and approaches to this issue.

Liivo Niglas is an Estonian filmmaker and anthropologist, who met Yuri Vella in autumn 2000, when Yuri visited Estonia with his wife Yelena and another Forest Nenets. His goal was to start a co-operation programme with the Estonian National Museum. Yuri Vella brought to Estonia about thirty VHS cassettes he had recorded himself over the years, assisted by his wife. This was but less than the third of a large archive collection of recorded material Yuri shot about the Forest Nenets and other indigenous peoples of Western Siberia in general. The Estonian National Museum recognised the value of these materials and proposed to digitalise them. During his stay in Tartu (Estonia), Yuri Vella met Liivo Niglas, was interested by his first film about the Tundra Nenets[3] ("The brigade" 1999)

[3] Liivo Niglas' research as an anthropologist has been mainly focused on the Tundra Nenets and the role of reindeer in this culture. He has made repeatedly fieldwork in the Yamal peninsula with a precise reindeer herders' brigade.

and proposed him to film the Forest Nenets. Liivo Niglas spent twice one month at Yuri Vella's place in 2000 and 2001 and recorded 19 hours of rough material. He delivered "Yuri Vella's world", a 58 m. documentary film, in 2002.

Eva Toulouze is a French researcher on Finno-Ugric cultures working since 1991 at Tartu University. She first met Yuri Vella at a literary event[4] in Siberia in 1998 and started to translate his poems into French. Therefore Yuri Vella invited her to stay at his camp in the taiga and work there on the translations for a bilingual volume in Russian and French. She spent as a whole about five months in Siberia in 1999–2000. Yuri Vella's texts in Russian and Nenets as well as their translations from Russian into French were published in 2001 under the title "Triptihi/Triptyques" (Vella 2001).

In both cases, the main aim was not to study Yuri Vella's worldview. Eva Toulouze had been invited in order to translate Yuri Vella's poetry into French and lived in the camp as a member of the family, sharing house with Yuri and his wife. She was thus in a favourable position to observe everyday life in the camp as well as Yuri's behaviour with different guests and even with anthropologists. Many aspects of his worldview emerged through observation of his spontaneous conversations and monologues. Liivo Niglas had similar experiences while making his film. He intended to record how Yuri and his family lived in the forest with their reindeer herd, what the children and their teachers did within the school, and how the oil-companies interfered with all this. Almost as soon as he started filming, he noticed that Yuri Vella's discourse and behaviour revealed his worldview. What struck him was the fact that Yuri told many things not because he was asked for them, but only because the camera was there: it worked as a necessary stimulus, which helped Yuri to reveal fundamental assumptions of his culture. Yuri knew that the camera could record his words for others and for the future, even if probably he did not always take it consciously into account.

Moreover, Yuri Vella was deeply interested both in having his works translated and in being the hero of a film for another practical reason: he feels the need of protection from the representatives of oil industry. His connection with foreign circles is indeed a physical protection: oil

[4] For his 50th birthday, the Khanty writer Yeremei Aipin, who is going to be repeatedly mentioned hereafter, invited a group of friends from all over Russia and from abroad to visit his home region. Eva Toulouze and Yuri Vella were among the guests.

industry may not afford to remove him, as long as he may be more disturbing as a victim than as a living reindeer herder.

We were encouraged in our attempt of discussing openly about one single individual's worldview by Yuri's repeatedly emphasised stress on the idea that "(his) life is a museum". It is his way of fulfilling his responsibility towards his people. He desires no privacy: his life is meant to be seen, it is open to any guest, he wants it to be watched, recorded, shown and spread. People may visit his camp and spend there some days living their hosts' life and been shown its different aspects and its rules. Thus, Yuri intends to spread among people – both natives living mainly in villages and people coming from the "other" world, Russians and foreigners – a deeper understanding and respect of what traditional way of life represents. It is his mission: he lives not for the sake of instant life, but wishing to give this life further meaning, further impact, to be useful by merely living in front of other people, by preserving the traditional way of life for the upcoming generations. Therefore he has deliberately exposed himself to the glances and the analysis of the outer world. This allows us to overcome ethic scruples about publicly detailing the way a single person perceives the surrounding world.

Yuri Vella is a Nenets, but he is not an ordinary Nenets: unlike most of his fellows, he has both deep traditional roots and a good knowledge of Nenets culture and has received from higher education an insight of Russian and Western cultural values. He has found a peculiar way of harmonising these two systems of values in order to find a personal model of a way out of the tragedy his people, as all indigenous peoples in Russia, is living. Therefore, we shall hereafter develop how these two points – traditional aspects and personal elaboration – emerge in his worldview.

Tradition in Yuri Vella's worldview

Much has been written and analysed about the worldview of Russia's peoples of the North, whose life is in thorough connection with nature and whose belief system is based on animism (Golovnev 1995, Slezkine 1995, Niglas 1997). Mentality history ("l'histoire des mentalités" of the French Annales' school) has revealed that mentality changes much slower than the real surrounding conditions (Duby 1961: 937–966; Le Goff 1974; Hutton 1981: 238–259; Raulff 1987; Barros 1993). Russia's peoples of the North have undergone traumatic historical experiences during the 20th century: they have been thrown into contact with the dominant Russian culture, whose values are entirely different. Even nowadays, colonists do not recognise local traditions as a "culture", but as "wildness" opposed to

"civilisation" (in Russian *цивилизация*). The dominant character of this worldview appears in the way colonists organised and still organise society, occupying nature and bending it to their will, submitting it to their own needs; it is also enhanced by school, where children are taught in a materialistic spirit, by the army, where young men spent two years under the pressure of alien values.

The Nenets are thus caught in a deep and painful contradiction between irreconcilable values and understandings. Their worldview at the beginning of the 21st century reflects both the traditional basis, that has not entirely disappeared, and the need for adaptation to newer elements. We shall hereafter stress on the way some traditional aspects emerge in Yuri Vella's discourse, behaviour and choices. The main points are his relation to nature, the structural importance of location connected to history, the principle of permanent moving, the principle of wholeness and the connection between different levels, the endeavour to avoid conflict in the way problems are solved.

Yuri Vella's relation to nature

"Yuri Vella's world" starts with an impressive statement by Yuri Vella, who opposes life in the wild and life in urban areas. The camera follows him in the forest in winter. He shoots a squirrel. After that, he wipes snot from his nose on a trunk and comments: "my nose is running. Living in the camp, there are no bacteria but when you go to where there's progress and civilisation, you'll get an infection at once. And then it starts, your nose is running, your head is aching". The filmmaker chose to fix from the very beginning a basic element in Yuri Vella's perception of the surrounding world: the opposition between his Own and the Other. As for traditional culture, nature is the surrounding that warrants harmony – here, health; the urban world, alias the Russian world, is connected with disease, with negative phenomena. It is also to be noticed that Yuri expresses this opposition through objective, physical criteria – criteria also connected with "nature", men's body being for him part of the physical world.

Nature is so organically part of the Nenets' world that explanations about its functioning reveal most spontaneously the deep knowledge and experience the Northern aborigine have of dialogue with it. This is clearly to be seen when Yuri Vella walks with his grandchildren and their teachers up to a bear's den and explains them how it is possible to know whether it is inhabited or not. His knowledge is reinforced by personal experience ("once, your grandmother and I went to the woods …").

Nature is also the factor that connects one with one's past, with one's roots: the outsiders are not able to read nature, but this is only their cultural inability, for nature talks, nature gives messages. The Nenets are able to read the nature's messages: by looking at reindeer tracks, as the film shows, Yuri is able to recount the herd's movements. But nature gives not only messages about the immediate reality: it preserves traces of the past, a past that colonists fail to recognise. Once, in April 1999, Eva Toulouze had the following experience, while travelling with a Russian driver from Varyogan to Nizhnevartovsk. The driver, who came from Ukraine and had lived there for twenty years, was proud to explain and to show all that had been done throughout these years: "here there was nothing, now there is an airport; here there was nothing, now there are summerhouses" and so on. Some time before, Yuri Vella had told Eva that the airport occupies the area of Stepan Yegorovich Kazamkin's[5] winter pastures that the summerhouses had been built on the Kazamkins' holy grove. What is "nothing" for the newcomers has a history for the indigenous people. This is probably the reason why northern peoples are often considered to be peoples without a history: their history is not political, but geographical.

In the film, Yuri Vella connects concrete places with his family's history. He leads Liivo Niglas to a spot from where it is possible to see the territory his family comes from – the hill shown to the filmmaker allows him to talk about his grandmother and to recall her life history. Memory is a feature of the places: while travelling with Yuri Vella throughout the taiga, he will often stop and recollect a legend, a story, i.e. someone stopping to drink tea and seeing a bear and so on. Nature is active: this dimension is clearly connected with the traditional Nenets animistic worldview, which gives to the natural elements their own will and power.

Yuri Vella and movement

The Nenets were traditionally nomads. True enough, the Forest Nenets way of life is not so entirely based on nomadism as the Tundra Nenets', but nonetheless reindeer breeding compels the Forest Nenets to some aspects of nomadism. They must take into account the interest of the animals, which need permanently fresh food on new pastures. The reindeer herder knows where the best pastures are and gives his herd the opportunity to get there, either (in winter) by opening the corral in the

[5] The Kazamkin are an Eastern Khanty clan.

direction he wishes the herd to go, either (in spring) by directing himself the herd to the best places. Moreover, nomadism is often presented as the ideal pattern of the Nenets' existence. The Nenets maintain the remembrance of much wider movements in the past: Yuri Vella's mother for instance describes the movements of her father with the herd in a way that very much reminds of the Tundra Nenets' migration tradition. It is difficult to say whether this memory contains any historical truth or not, but it certainly reveals the present scale of lifestyle values.

Movement is present in Yuri Vella's understanding of true life, first of all under the form of actual migration (in Nenets: *myusyesy*) from one camp to the other. Liivo Niglas' film follows one of these migrations: while traditionally the Nenets used (and in the tundra still do) reindeer sledges in caravan (in Nenets: *myut*), nowadays in the Agan basin the Forest Nenets move from one place to the other by minivan. The film shows how the two family units living together (Yuri Vella, his wife, two grandsons and the two teachers on the one hand, his daughter Tayna, with her husband Edik and their three children on the other) load the vans and move from the winter camp to the summer dwelling. The atmosphere is quite nervous: the adults tell off the children who interfere with the loading process. But Yuri himself is cheerful: he kindly looks at the filmmaker and asks how he feels, in order to assert his own pleasant emotions in connection with the incumbent movement: "For the Nenets, moving to a new camp is always a festive day. My wife thinks it's a festive day. Right? A party!"

Movement is part of everyday life. Even if the Nenets have nowadays houses in villages and sedentary camps[6] : providing the reindeer with the most effective care may require living for some time in provisional camps. This is shown in the film: with the assistance of a neighbouring family, Yuri Vella and his wife erect a tent not far from the area where the reindeer are supposed to calve. Therefore, in a 58 m. film shot within two months, we see Yuri Vella living in two permanent camps and one provisional camp, at his home in Varyogan and also moving around with his car (the

[6] The traditional dwelling place was the "mja'", the conic tent so practical for moving. But in the last decades, the Agan Forest Nenets do not use them as commonly as before, and have started to build themselves one room's log huts, called in Nenets "Khanty houses". Many of them still have a tent in their household and use it when it is required.

oil workers' village, the festival in Novoagansk). This is a good example of how movement, migration are important in the Nenets' way of life and worldview.

But movement is nowadays limited. Yuri must take into account the actual surrounding world that is full of barriers. The barriers are materialised by the division of territories, by fences. The people's movements are limited: when Yuri Vella drives his car with his wife and his neighbours and arrives up to the oil field territory, he makes a remark: "Let's not enter the premises. So that they will not yell at us". The worlds are, as just at the beginning of the film, quite separate: the "Others" world is hostile, dangerous, but unavoidable (they must sometimes get into it); anyhow, it is clearly alien. Yuri Vella often stresses that he does not carry his rifle when he goes out in the taiga for long distances, in order to avoid trouble with the oil drillers: although carrying a rifle in order to shoot animals if they happen to cross the Nenets' path is a basic element in the natives' tradition[7] , this practice has become dangerous.

Movement is limited also for the reindeer: while formerly they were allowed to move all over the taiga, nowadays it is dangerous for them to get out of the circle Yuri has determined for them. Outside, it is the "wild", the world without rules, where any single reindeer may be transformed into "soup" without the least scruple. Yuri has built, with the assistance of his wife, a fence all around his territories: this is not so much aimed at forbidding the entrance to unwished visitors as to protect the reindeer and avoid their getting out of the area. The opening and shutting of the fence when Yuri moves from his camp are twice shown in the film, marking clearly the border between Yuri Vella's world and the external space.

Thus, while movement, as the film shows, is an important element in the Nenets' general worldview, the actual world has led to a substantial reduction of movement possibilities for the Forest Nenets: this is certainly an element of frustration in their everyday life.

Reality as a whole

The peoples of the North's worldview give an important place to the idea of balance. While the "Western" worldview insists on quantitative issues – more and more production, higher and higher value, quicker and quicker results – the indigenous peoples insist on harmony and balance: they are

[7] The rifle is used both for protection, mainly against bears, and for hunting.

the promoters of sustainable development, respectful of resources, using only the necessary amount required for actual needs.

When the filmmaker started to film Yuri Vella, he knew about his stubborn struggle against oil companies. He expected political statements about the destructive influence of oil drilling. But Yuri chose to express his point of view by appealing to traditional values. He did not talk about the colonists, but of himself, not of oil but of hunting. He reminded that he was formerly a sable hunter and explained the idea that every one has one's own measure, which must not be exceeded. Nature gives you signs about your own personal measure: Yuri was able to understand these signs and stopped hunting when he understood that his measure was full. Other Nenets (or Khanty) were not able to decipher the signs and went on. They all died prematurely. The message is clear: the oil drillers exceed their measure, and this is harmful for nature, for the environment, as well as for themselves.

Traditional worldview does not emphasise social punishment for violations of natural rules: punishment comes from the gods themselves (Leete 2002: 170–179), who, for instance, did not allow Yuri's father or Alexandr Aipin to live long after their measure had been fulfilled. This is the fundamental conviction on which Yuri's approach is based.

The understanding of reality as a whole is one of the basic characteristics of traditional worldviews, by which they differ from Western dominant ideology: the indigenous peoples identify thus links between very different aspects that compose it, even in cases where – from a Western point of view – no connection is ever imagined. For example, once Yuri, his wife and Eva Toulouze started from Varyogan by car and intended to spend the whole day in the nearest town of Raduzhny. During the day, the car had numerous mechanical problems. Yuri's serious reaction was to try to recall what he could have done wrong, which of his deeds had called a punishment from the spirits.

This way of connecting phenomena is the key to interpret, in terms of worldview, the story of the president's reindeer. This is quite a well-known story (Leete 1997: 41; Leete 1999: 23), that occupies a good amount of time in the film and that several authors have commented for example in all-Russia media. Let us sum it up, first of all on the level of facts, secondly on the level of Yuri's discourse in the film.

In 1995, Yuri and his wife dedicated a reindeer to Russia's president. In their herd, each individual animal has its owner, usually, but not exclusively, a member of the family. The reindeer, a female, was given to Boris Yeltsin, although not personally: it was attached to the function of

Russia's president and was thus inherited by Vladimir Putin as he became president. All the reindeer to which the president's reindeer was to give birth belonged to the president's part of the herd (that's why a female is considered as a good present). According to Yuri, the president has the right to do what he wants with his reindeer, "even to pasture it himself".

In Liivo Niglas' film, Yuri Vella emphasises a peculiar dimension of this extraordinary experience: the reindeer appears as a representative of its owner, whose welfare, health and success are reflected on the animal's behaviour. This aspect of the president's reindeer is certainly not the only actual dimension of the deal[8], but it is significant and not specious: although one might suggest that Yuri's idea is merely a brilliant speculation for the film, experience shows that it is the actual way in which Yuri sees his reindeer. In 1998, Yuri had presented Yeremei Aipin[9] with a reindeer for the Khanty writer's 50th birthday. Yeremei accepted the present, but did not go to Yuri's place to take his animal and bring it to his own herd. In 1999, at the Congress of the Private Reindeer Herders (an organisation whose leader was then Yuri Vella), the two men quarrelled and Aipin, while he was drunk, said to Yuri that he was not to accept his present and expressed complete lack of interest for the reindeer. When Yuri went back to his camp, he noticed that Yeremei's reindeer started behaving strangely and died before long. Yuri Vella had no doubt about the connection between the animal's sadness and loneliness and his owner's behaviour. This example allows us to take seriously what Yuri comments about the president's reindeer and the president's own welfare.

These connections are presented in the following way: 1) Yeltsin fell ill. Yuri sacrificed his reindeer's young. The president was cured; 2) Yeltsin started the war in Chechnia. His reindeer and her elder daughter disappeared without leaving any traces; 3) There was a survivor, a small

[8] When Yuri Vella first talked to Eva Toulouze about the president's reindeer, he emphasised another motivation for his choice: if the conflict with the oil drillers should lead to such a situation, that the herd has nowhere to pasture, the first animal to be sacrificed would then be the president's – in front of the journalists. Yuri Vella is very much aware of the importance of mediatic approaches (Toulouze 2003b: 206–207).

[9] Yeremei Aipin was also born in Varyogan in 1948. The two intellectuals are very different from one another and they are well aware of one another. Their relationship is often quite nervous (Toulouze 1999).

female. She grew up to be Putin's reindeer. Now she is to give birth, if everything goes nicely, the birth will succeed. If Putin does something wrong, something may happen. Some days later, Yuri came back to the camp with a small dead reindeer baby: the president's reindeer young had not survived the cold. For Yuri, this was a warning for Putin.

Yuri's expression is nonetheless prudent. The three sentences presented in point 1) are no more connected in his speech than in our formulation. He leaves the conclusions to be drawn by other people: they made a sacrifice and the president was cured. He does not assert that the sacrifice was the reason for the president's recovery, but the fact is that he was healed. This is an interesting point in Yuri's behaviour. Clearly, he believes in the connection between the reindeer and their owners, between the deed and their consequences. At the same time, he is perfectly acquainted with the Western scepticism about all this kind of "superstitions", and he presents them in a way unobjectionable to the outside world. The influence of modern values upon traditional values is here very clear. Another example of this compulsory prudence is Yuri's remark when, in March 1999, he asked one of his guests, a Nenets from Num-to, to carve him "a god", i.e. a wooden idol to be covered with cloth and to be put in the family box. When the carving took place, inside Yuri Vella's winter hut, it was followed by a short ceremony, in which Eva Toulouze also participated. At the end of it, Yuri Vella commented, clearly addressing the foreign guest: "That's how we entertain ourselves!" Awareness of the "Other" leads the Nenets to express superficial scepticism concerning the spiritual sphere and their own worldview on this point, mostly in order to avoid unpleasant mockery, as they have clearly been accustomed to.

All these comments have shown that elements well known in the traditional worldview appear always intermingled with comments that show how they had to adapt to realities where their own logic is rejected as ridiculous by dominant culture. We shall hereafter focus on some worldview aspects peculiar to Yuri Vella.

Individual aspects of Yuri Vella's worldview: the intellectual construction

Yuri Vella's place in the Nenets community is peculiar. His specific features are on the one hand certainly connected with a personal tendency to intellectual elaboration and on the other hand they are the result of the uncommon experience that has lead him to higher education and to the understanding of the world situated beyond the boundaries of his own society.

We mentioned hereabove the traditional importance of nature in the Nenets' general and Yuri Vella's particular worldviews. In the abovementioned sentence, Yuri Vella did not only observe that in the outer world people get always some disease, he defined this world through the notions used by the "Other": where there are "progress" and "civilisation". This remark may be commented from different points of view. There is an inside joke: progress and civilisation were two central notions in a discussion Yuri Vella had in February 1999 in Helsinki with the Khanty writer Yeremei Aipin, who accused him to be hostile to "progress and civilisation". Since this discussion, Yuri Vella always uses ironically these two notions together and the sentence in the film is clearly an allusion to this incident. The intonation of the end of his sentence is an allusion to Yuri's favourite film, a Russian film about Baron Münchhausen, where the hero (played by Oleg Yankovski), pronounces one sentence with the same accent. More important is the other level. Yuri Vella deliberately provokes: he presents from a negative point of view values that are seen by the surrounding values system as exclusively positive. As we shall further on note, provocation is a very constant way of presenting problems, in order to spark off reflection from the people he talks to.

Awareness of himself and of others

Provocation implies awareness of the audience. Yuri knows quite well the worldview of the people who are supposed to receive his message. He tries to adjust his own discourse to the audience in order to provoke some kind of reaction in return. The most striking aspect in Yuri's approach is his very deep awareness of himself and of the world. From this point of view, he is utterly an intellectual. He has been building up consciously his own identity: his experience both of Russian higher education and of the nostalgia of his roots has led to a real choice of the path to follow – to be a Forest Nenets in the 20th–21st centuries, not refusing contemporary world but selecting consciously the elements to integrate, to merge into the mould of his traditional values. Constructed as it is though, Yuri Vella's identity is made of authentic material. His unique position as a mediator is connected to the fact that he is the only person who, having acquired the highest values of European-type culture has chosen a traditional way of life trying to integrate them. He has also chosen to reject some ordinary aspects from the traditional way of life: his refusal to drink spirits shows the strength of his will – only some very rare individuals are able to resist the temptation of drunkenness, which in the North is "not only a social disease, it is a national tragedy" (Ogryzko 1988: 87). Yuri Vella's

awareness induces a permanent observation of his own life, as glanced from the outside at he lives it.

While watching the film, the spectator may have the impression that Yuri Vella plays a role in front of the camera, for the camera. This impression is justified, although it is not completely correct: Yuri Vella is an actor indeed, but not for Liivo Niglas' camera filming him, he is an actor of his own life at every moment of this life. He plays his own character: he plays the reindeer herder while being a reindeer herder. He plays the traditional chief while being a traditional chief. Once, a big group of visitors arrived at his winter camp to spend two days there. The visitors were Russians, some of them were acquainted with Yuri, there was among them a television filmmaker who wanted to show him the film she had edited about him. The visitors arrived, gave Yuri their presents and settled in the different huts. Yuri called for everybody and organised a meeting in his hut. Then, he acted the traditional chief. He gave instructions about how to live in a camp and was most impressive when he made a speech about vodka: "Why don't you find any other present than bottles? All the men of my clan have been killed by vodka. Why do you bring us death?" He acted in the most efficient way, relying on the appeal of exotics and using it to convey a message the visitors shall not soon forget: they packed back shamefully their bottles and never proposed drinking any more. By choosing this peculiar way of doing that, he guaranteed the unforgettable impact of his message. The scenery was somehow staged. But the emotion was real indeed. Acting is his way of living, the price of his awareness of himself and of the world around him.

Yuri Vella knows about the use of a camera, for he has used one himself. He does not pretend to be a filmmaker, but he did record archive materials about the life of the indigenous peoples of Western Siberia. He is aware of the weight of message allied to image and used it as a passive weapon for his goals. This means that all his actions are reflected and oriented towards a goal: he does not answer a question just for the sake of answering; he always tries to convey the precise message he intends to transmit. As a matter of fact, all communication always has concrete goals.

The fixation of time

Yuri's acute awareness leads him to a peculiar perception of time. Unlike his family and his closest acquaintances, he has no present as such; he lives not in the present, but in the future. Looking from the future back, he perceives that the instant is becoming past as soon as we live in it and forms continuity with what others distinguish as being the past. This

comes from his permanent positioning himself from the point of view of posterity: time is not merged into the present, but into the future, for the fate of all is to become past. That's why memory is so essential in Yuri's understanding of reality: memory is not only connected to the past, but with both present and future. This element is explicit in Yuri's reflections about the perspectives of life in the North: while sitting in his kitchen in Varyogan and commenting the danger of easy parasitism, which works as long as the State is disposed to give money and privileges to the indigenous peoples; but Yuri expects that one day, oil shall finish, the colonists shall go back to more hospitable regions; but the aborigines have no other place to dwell in, they shall have to go on inhabiting deserted regions and they shall need the skills of non dependent life in the forest. This is how the past is expected to become necessary in the future.

Thence his passionate endeavour to save what he can from the present and what remains from yesterday. It is certainly one of the most permanent features in Yuri's mental activity, from the end of the 1980s up to nowadays. At the end of the eighties Yuri Vella was just emerging from obscurity. He used his authority to create a museum in Varyogan. Originally, Yuri Vella's museum was somehow different from the ordinary museums we are used to. He brought from different spots in the taiga buildings belonging to families that had to quit their camps and move to the village. Thus he achieved several goals: he saved the buildings from rotting in the humidity of the forest, but he also gave them back to their owners. His attempt to reconcile the people's different worlds is clearly to be read in this enterprise, which brings their roots much closer to these uprooted persons; he wanted to give his fellow-villagers back something from their own "authentic" life. Thus, a forest hut where people used to live represented a polysemic object: a production of peculiar skills, a personal item belonging to a person and symbolising this person and a place to be used further on for a slightly different purpose. The museum was thus a place where skills were fixed and recorded, where objects were witnesses of past culture to be preserved – this is the classical understanding of a museum. But for Yuri they all represented a concrete relationship to concrete people, the people who made them and the people who used them: there is history written in each log. For people who are able to read them, they are a source of information about these people, whose memory they retain. Therefore, some of Yuri Vella's video records are shot in the museum: Yuri himself comments the different items. He likes to act as a kind of Sherlock Holmes and surprise you by telling, on the bases of a small element of the reindeer harness, all about its owner and his

herd. And finally, the objects may still be used for practical goals, although they have been transferred to a different environment. Former owners could store things in the "labaz"[10] ; they could use their former house as a place for parties, where hosts from outside the village could be accommodated in an environment requiring all the skills of people living in the forest. For a museum, as Yuri likes to remind, is a place where the Muses gather.

The impact of ethnicity

In the film, Yuri Vella did not emphasise his belonging to the Forest Nenets. In his village and his region as a whole, there are two indigenous peoples living together and very much intermingled: the Eastern Khanty and the Forest Nenets. Yuri is himself married to a Khanty. He is interested in showing not especially the Forest Nenets' culture but both people's, considering it as a whole culture opposed to the "European's", to the so called "progress" and "civilisation" carried by the Russians. The folktales Yuri tells his grandchildren are indifferently of Khanty or of Nenets origin. This does not mean he is not aware of both communities' peculiarities[11] . But he seemed unconsciously to consider these differences to be of secondary importance, when confronted to the "other" world. In the film, Yuri mentions among "his kins" Alexandr Aipin – as a matter of fact, Aipin is a Khanty, and is not connected to Yuri by family links. This attitude was certainly encouraged not only by his personal family connections but also by the somehow subordinate position of the Forest Nenets, who are less numerous than the Khanty, and whose language is practically dying. Thus, Yuri Vella intended to record not only Forest Nenets material, but also Khanty: the indigenous peoples are seen by him as a whole, the differences among them being of small relevance if compared with the gap between them and the "Western" worldview.

Syncretic approaches: the integration of newer objects

Yuri Vella grew up in Varyogan. His grandmother Nengi was deeply inserted in the Nenets' culture and transmitted as much lore as she could to her grandchild. Still, Yuri experienced the frustration of not being a

[10] Russian word for indigenous store rooms on high pillars.

[11] This appears clearly in his comments to the Russian anthropologist Andrei Golovnev about the differences between the two cultures in everyday behaviour (Golovnev 1995: 90).

reindeer herder. As he says in the film: he dreamt to see reindeer from the window by being at school. This single sentence shows his deeper attempt to reconcile what seems to be absolutely contradictory – school, as a symbol of the "new", imported life, and reindeer, as symbol of tradition. All Yuri's endeavours may be explained by this syncretic and mostly creative approach.

This appears also in the way his life is settled. He lives a reindeer herder's life with contemporary tools: he moves from one camp to another when the needs of reindeer pasturing demand it, but, as in the film, he does it with minivans and not on reindeer sledges. His houses are built according to the traditional Khanty model. But Yuri Vella has an electric generator that allows him to take advantage of urban life technology: a very useful tool is the electric oven, allowing his wife to make bread in winter without having to work outdoors. There is also a video cassette recorder: films, not only documentary films about the life in the Northern areas, which he specially collects, films about himself, but also Russian classic movies are very important for him and provide constant entertainment for winter evenings. He loves listening to Bach and Mozart, as well as to the radio – while looking out of the window and watching his reindeer in the corral. So his life is actually a traditional life in the 21st century, which would meet many of the requirements of people used to a certain degree of comfort.

His worldview is certainly also influenced by elements of Russian culture that Yuri does not refuse, on the contrary. Russian classic movies are not only, as mentioned, a pleasant entertainment. They also provide structuring models. The best example is Yuri's favourite film "The very same Münchhausen[12] ", from the end of the 1970s. This film is not directly mentioned in Liivo Niglas' film, but it is present in the background: Yuri's grandchildren tell their teacher that their favourite stories are about Baron Münchhausen. They are under the influence of their grandfather, who watches this film several times a year and for whom the German baron is a real hero and even a model. We must remind that this film was shot during the deepest Brezhnev period, when Soviet intellectuals were compelled to express original and critical ideas in an indirect way. The absurd that characterises this film is a clear mark from this period, which at the same time is for Yuri the period of his becoming an adult.

[12] In Russian : "Тот самый Мюнхаузен", Мосфильм 1979

What does Yuri Vella find in Münchhausen? Undoubtedly the scene where Münchhausen, in spite of drinking a glass of wine, spills it on his lover's dress is very comforting for the fighter against alcohol.[13] But deeper on, Münchhausen is in deep opposition with the recognised, the official truth of his time: he wants to be himself, independently of what is ordinarily considered as correct. All his friends, as well as his beloved Martha, want him to accept compromise with himself for the sake of order: "I am an ordinary woman. Try to be like everybody else", beseeches Martha. "To be like everybody else!" repeats desperately the baron, understanding that he shall not find any support from anybody. Yuri Vella identifies himself with this utopist, who is ready to die in confirmation of his own utopias. This identification is evident from many small signs: quotations in everyday life, as well as the copying of some typical behaviours of the baron (as for instance winking). This is one of the most spectacular signs of Yuri Vella's sympathy for the syncretic approaches: total refusal, negation, rejection do not lead to any constructive way out of the tragic.

Yuri Vella has built himself a worldview that offers him a solution for survival. Traditional roots are the fundament on which the indigenous people of the North may build up a healthy life, but Yuri Vella does not turn exclusively towards the past. Traditional worldview must integrate such selected elements of modernity, which allows the aborigines to be part of the actual world, not to remain out of the main life streams, without losing their identity and their life in mechanical imitation and adoption of the dominant model. Conflict is solved by creative symbiosis, and Yuri Vella's mission is both to propose concrete modalities that may inspire the Nenets, the Khanty and the other peoples of the North in Russia and to awake international awareness on this issue. Translating his poetry, filming his life and even analysing his worldview in an anthropological paper may contribute to the success of his mission.

[13] While watching other Soviet classical films, Yuri regretted more than once in presence of Eva Toulouze that most of the heroes are regularly shown drinking and smoking, giving thus a bad example to the spectators.

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Sacrifice or Robbery? One Event in the Light of Different Worldviews[1]

Tatiana Bulgakova

Worldview, as a system of ideas, varying in different societies and cultural groups, causes the dissimilar and even contrasting attitude to the same phenomena. In the 1930s, under the pressure of the Soviet power, existing in the Far East of Russia, part of the indigenous peoples (Nanais and Ulchi[2]) was overly-directed toward the new communist ideology and atheistic worldview. The atheistic propaganda convinced this part of the population that there were not any spirits existing and that shamans ('predators' and 'exploiters') deceive them in order to get, from them, some 'sacrificial' animals as presents. Another part of the indigenous population remained attached to their traditional shamanic worldview.[3] As a result, in that system of departed coordinates, the very same events began to be interpreted to such an extent, in different ways, that mutual misunderstanding could lead sometimes to really tragic consequences as, for instance, the event, which had caused the imprisoning and death of Nanai shaman Bogdan Oninka.

The name of Bogdan Oninka is famous because of his active help to the ethnographers Albert Nikolayevich and N. A. Lipski, who worked among the Nanais in the 1920s and 1930s. He was Lipskis's guide and traveled

[1] Research for this article was supported, in part, by the Junior Faculty Development Program, which is funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State, by the authority of the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961 as amended, and administered by the American Council for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS. The opinions expressed herein are the author's own and do not necessarily express the views of either ECA or the American Councils.

[2] Nanais and Ulchi are closely linked peoples of the Tunguso-Manchurian group of languages.

[3] From the editorial board: Tatiana Bulgakova has dealt with the issue as to how Soviet power fought against shamanism, concurrent repressive measures and ideological conflicts in her article „Nanai Shamans under Double Oppression. Was the Persecution by Soviet Power Stronger than the Power of Shamanistic Spirits?" in *Pro Ethnologia* 15.

with Lipskis along the Amur River on their launch. They wanted him to show "where which villages were, where which nomad camps were," tells the shamaness Olga Sergeyevna. "Sure, as an old man he knew all that!" As Bogdan was considered to be a powerful shaman, he was a success and his congregation was extended to several villages and even to Ulchi district. People always conveyed him to his patients, from one village to another. "We took him here to our village and he shamanized here." Olga Yegorovna[4] continues. "Then we brought him to another place, and again to another one. He did not go on his own, of course. People conveyed him because he was a great shaman! Lipskis questioned (people), who (died), how many (people) died, in what village, where they were buried. Where did we know it from? But there were lots of elders at that time and they could tell all that."

Bogdan was arrested, according to a legal-suit against him, brought by the Ulchi district dwellers who were complaining that he had robbed them. Bogdan was condemned to prolonged confinement, and never left it alive. At the moment of arrest, Bogdan and his congregation were performing the *kasa* ritual (sending the souls of the departed to the other world) on an island far from the village. The militiamen came there on their special boat to arrest him. Amongst them was the first Nanai militiaman Anton Petrovich Beldy, the son of a famous shaman Dekhe. "We were mowing grass in the kolkhoz exactly that time," remembers Nesulta Borisovna Geiker. "It was in summer. That time he did *kasa*". "I also remember it!" takes it up shamaness Lindza. "We were performing *kasa* and had not finished it yet, when the people came to arrest the shaman." "They took that elder away. I hid myself and saw everything." "They

[4] The material was recorded during fieldwork done in Nanai district, Khabarovsk Krai in the years 1980–2002 from the shamans and from their relatives. The material was recorded in the Nanai language.
Alexander Sergeevich Khodzher – shamaness's husband; Lindza Beldy – shamaness; Ivan Torokovich Beldy – shaman; Konstantin Beldy; Nikolay Petrovich Beldy – shamaness's son, shamaness's husband and not opened shaman (it means that he had shaman spirits, but did not practice because there was not a special ritual commited to 'open' him as a shaman); Nesulta Geiker – shamaness; Nyura Sergeevna Kile – shamaness; Olga Yegorovna Kile – shamaness; Alla Kisovna Beldy – shamaness's sister, she was not a shaman, but she struggled with shamanic spirits, which wanted her to become a shamaness; Maria Vasilyevna Beldy – shaman's (Ivan Torokovich's) wife; Chapaka Danilovna (Posar) was not a shamaness, but she also had some spirits and shamanic call.

stated that they had a big plan [to arrest a number of shamans]! They had to fulfill [that plan]!" People talked of trying to frighten the militiamen who were arresting him, Bogdan took the 'snakes' out of his mouth, then he showed the fire from his mouth. (Alla Kisovna Beldy). But nothing could help him. They took him to Khabarovsk and then, passed sentence on him, and sent him to carry out forced labor in Elban. (According to the other statements, he was sent to Bolon [contemporary Achan]). "There were many prisoners there!" states Olga Yegorovna. "He worked together with them. Old! He was maybe 100, maybe 90! Old! Really old! Was he able to work for a long time?" Not even did his family receive the official version of his death. "They put him into prison, and nothing has been heard of him for ages," quotes Khorokta. "If they had murdered him they would have sent notification, that it was so and so! That they judged him, gave him the supreme penalty! But there was no court, no witnesses at all!" Probably Bogdan could not bear the hard work and perished soon after he was taken to Elban [or Achan].

As was said, Bogdan was blamed for robbing the inhabitants of Ulchi district, that before the eyes of the owners he openly took away, from them, their domestic animals and clothes. "He took only one pig from those ones who were poor. But from whoever had some better stuff, he took away everything. Like a robbery!' (Olga Yegorovna). Representatives of the authorities, who arrested Bogdan, and the bearers of tradition could not agree with each other's interpretation of Bogdan's actions. According to the worldview of those who judged Bogdan, his criminal offence was evident. And as Bogdan was arrested because of a 'robbed' Ulchi complaint, they apparently took the official view of that event. At the same time even now, so many years later, the bearers of the traditional worldview are sure that Bogdan's acts were completely legitimate and – what is more – they were undertaken in the interests of those who were plundered. "Right [innocent] Bogdan was to rob!" told me Olga Yegorovna in 1993. The reasons for such mutual misunderstanding are clear. If someone projects, onto the other one, the system of his own values, it leads, as is known, to such incomprehension and nonrealistic expectations of both sides (Khodarkovsky 1992: 9).

As withdrawal of the property, from some inhabitants of Ulchi district, actually took place, the point of view, of those representatives of authority who condemned Bogdan, does not give any rise to perplexity. It is more difficult to understand those who justify and approve of his actions. The given paper is an attempt to comprehend exactly the traditional view of Bogdan's deeds.

Shamanic congregation compelled to sacrifice

Before the robbery, Bogdan had several times successfully shamanized for those Ulchi, who he later robbed. All his sick Ulchi patients recovered and, according to the tradition, had to sacrifice for his *sewens* (shamanic spirits-helpers) after a lapse of some time. In other words, the robbed Ulchi were not, for Bogdan, merely strangers; they were his congregation and, as such, they had certain obligations towards him (or, to be precise, towards his *sewens*). But it was already the time of struggle against shamanism as 'an obstacle to building socialism' (Suslov 1932). Evidently, in the interval after Bogdan had performed his rituals, and before the appointed sacrifice as a kind of payment for that, Bogdan's congregation had time to accept the new ideology, to join the atheists, fighters against shamanism. It was a time when people blamed shamans for their belonging to the class of exploiters, stating that their activity 'harms /…/ development of the national economy and heavily imposes on the budget of the working indigenous people' (Suslov 1931: 132). Probably the agitators had time to confirm that Bogdan's congregation should not sacrifice to Bogdan's *sewens, and* not to pay to that exploiter by giving him their property.

To get a better understanding of what such a refusal meant, according to the traditional worldview, let us turn to the question about the relationship of a shaman and his believers First of all examine that group of them, who are his patients and customers. As a strict rule, a shaman does not shamanize for people on his own initiative. He acts only in the situation if the sick ones themselves (or their close relatives) applied to him with the quest of healing. "They come from afar," talks Lindza, "and ask me to bow before my *sewens* or to do for them something else right away! And I do it according to their words. Can I tell all that from my own? Only at their requests! It is not I, who make people (to do it)!' Initiative of the congregation members is significant, not only in the initial moment of performing, when it is decided either that ritual will take place or not. The believers take an active part in the ritual. Healing sick people, the shaman promises his *sewens* [spirits helpers] to sacrifice an animal in the case where they help. Those who were not healed [who could not locate the lost item and so on] as a consequence of shamanic treatment, are not obliged to give anything to that shaman. They are not a part of his/her congregation yet, despite they have been his/her patients for a while. Trying to achieve their goals, they can visit other different shamans and remain free in searching "their own" shaman, who will be able to help them. But if the shamanic ceremony was successful, the patient is thrown into the given shaman's lot for a long time.[5]

There are special mechanisms which hold congregants together with their shaman (make them take his advice again and again) and consolidate their groups making them stable. Those mechanisms are the following. After a successful ceremony, the congregation finds itself involved in sacrifices to the shaman's *sewens* in order to reward them for their help (they have to feed animals, prepare for sacrifices, etc.). Yearly, shamans must perform a ritual *undi*[6] crossing from house to house, visiting their healed patients, who sacrifice to their *sewens*. Shamaness Olga Yegorovna says: "Sick people come and ask me to pray to my *sewens* (for them). I bow [before my *sewens*] and they [patients] bow together with me." After that her patients must come again for sacrifice to her *sewens* which demand to be paid. Shamanic *sewens* "also have to feed their children!" continues Olga Yegorovna. "They have lots of children! Who will work with no salary? Nobody will agree to work if the kolkhoz stops its payments. The same is here (in shamanic practice)." No one is supposed to avoid payment-sacrifice. People believe that in the case of disobedience, not the shaman but *sewens* themselves (sometimes against the shaman's will) can punish the patient. Such a belief could be the strong means of compulsion, which consolidates the shaman's power in the congregation. But not each patient is actually punished; and many of them are not obliging at all. Olga Yegorovna is indignant about that: "I rescue people, but they don't give anything for sacrifice. They just don't want! How many years I have been working [as a shamaness]! For more than 20 years! [They give] nothing! No rooster, nothing do they bring to me! Only when they need, they ask me to pray for them!" The next time she continues: "Some people do not want to know anything after they have recovered. Spirits[7] punish them. They fall sick again and hurry, run back to the shaman. There are lots [of such people]. When a sick person comes and asks for help, I cannot refuse. I shamanize and ask the *sewens* to have pity. Sometimes, if someone is badly

[5] The next conversation with Maria Vasilyevna shows how people look for their own congregation. "Is the shaman angry if at first you asked him to heal you and then you went to another one?" "But we do not give him a report about that." "What if he learns it?" "Maybe! However we have to try. Probably another shaman will help. That way people wander [from one shaman to another]." "They are looking for help?" "We need help. Maybe Ella will stop being sick [after healing]. People go there and there like that. But if [Ella] becomes better after Mingo's ceremony, she is not looking for someone else anymore. What to look for?"

[6] *Undi* ritual is described by Anna Smolyak (1991).

[7] The word 'spirits' was said in Russian (*dukhi*).

sick, I have to shamanize for nine days and nights. So, don't forget when you are better! Some people do it [properly]. Having recovered, they sacrifice a rooster or a pig right away. But other people have recovered and think that they will never become ill again. And they stop shamanizing". Alexander Sergeyevich explains it in Russian: "If you need (to be healthy), you should kill a rooster *kulturno* (in a civilized manner). If you don't do it, you will die instantly. A rooster or a pig! Necessary! Without fail! If not, you will die".

The troubles, which happen to a non obliged patient, are basically spiritual. Being keen on spiritual phenomena due to her shamanic capacity, Chapaka Danilovna tells about how sick Katya was, she who had not performed, in time, her sacrifice promised. "Suddenly Katya got sick. Convulsions began. At night, they sent her to Troitskoye. I had poured some vodka [for the *sewens*] and bowed kneeling. I was beside myself with worry, I could not do anything. Everything was trembling inside me. I was shaking. It appeared, in my thoughts, as if a tousled woman was pursuing the car [where Katya was being driven]. [The woman] was hurrying, running, catching up with the car! Already she has overtaken it!" A careless patient is believed to be punished in two through four years. Such a punishment is either the returning of the previous illness in a more serious form than it was before, or sudden and as if groundless death. "Once I shamanized for Aivar", Olga Yegorovna talks. "He said that he became very well after that. It was well, really well! Four years had elapsed. He and Sergei went fishing. Suddenly Aivar began to collect his belongings. 'Where are you going?' 'Home! I have many things to do at home!' And he left. After that Sergei returned, dropped in his [Aivar's] place, but he [Aivar] had already hung himself. For no particular reason! His mother also had hung herself. They were *sewens* which punished him that he had shamanized at first and then gave it up! Two his children became orphans. It was in Bolon."[8]

Shamans compelled to sacrifice

If the promise to perform a sacrifice, given in the course of ceremony, is broken, it adversely affects, in the first place, not the guilty congregation members (who may even have no any problems at all), but shamans. It can be explained that in the decisive moment of the ritual, the shaman asks the

[8] Contemporary name of Bolon is Achan village of Amursk region.

patient's agreement to perform a sacrifice in exchange for health and well-being, nevertheless not the patient but the shaman gives this promise to the *sewens* and *endurs*. It is exactly the shaman, not the patient, who becomes the hostage in that contract concluded. Asking to release the *panyans* of his sick patients, the shaman kneels before those spirits which captured them, and remains in that position, as shamans explain it, until recovered patients bring, to those *sewens,* the sacrificial animals. Olga Yegorovna explains: "It looks as if we had talked to a chief, asking him to release a person from a jail. A person recovered [after shamanic treatment], but did not either say or give anything. But my word [promise] had been left there with a 'god'! That's why he [the 'god'] punishes me for that. It often happens like that."

Substituted sacrifice is needed "to raise a shaman from kneeling. Otherwise," as Chapaka Danilovna says, "for several years you can remain in such state as if you have been still kneeling. It is because Khodzher ama[9] wandering around [those places] and passing by you [kneeling] kicks you. The shaman's knees become arcuate." The results of the failed sacrifice, which are more severe for the shaman, who is not guilty in non obliging acts of their congregants, seem to be unjust. Lindza said: "If I bowed [before the *endurs* and *sewens*] and then nobody did anything in a month or in a month and a half, if the person does not come according to my promises, I'll get into trouble. That one who did not come also has to look out for trouble. It is really bad! Too bad! There are such people who don't come. Is it my fault that they don't come? I'm not guilty! It is him who is guilty! If that person is not coming, in *iludu* [the middle world] [shamans'] *panyan* [soul shade] remains to be there [near *toro*, worship place] as *armoldu* [an invisible reflection of a visible phenomenon, which has been taken away].[10] My *panyan* is still there kneeling! Kneeling, it is waiting for people to come [with an offering]. If I fell ill while [staying like] that, nobody would be able to do anything [to heal me]. If it is your fault, you yourself … ! Because of your empty words, because you do not do anything, I'll get in trouble! I'll die! That person, who had promised, recovered and forgot about his promise. Nobody believes that! I don't like it! That's why I do not sometimes agree to shamanize. I was sick all winter

[9] Khodzher *ama* is a spirit of the Khodzer clan. The legend says that this *ama* (father) lived in the late XIX and early XX centuries and he was a shaman. Khodzer ama's helping spirits are still worshipping under his name.

[10] In Nanai: *Iludu armoldu nai panyani* remains there.

through, and all summer I am sick, but nobody comes to sacrifice [for my *sewens*]!"

Punishing the shaman instead of his patient, is not nevertheless unjust, because *sewens*, which failed to wait until the sacrifice is performed, are much closer to their shaman, than to his patients, and it is easier for them to exert influence upon him. Olga Yegorovna complains: "If you are not feeding [your *sewens*] you'll fall ill. Especially it concerns us, shamans! They [*sewens*] act like this! You ask pity, and they take pity. Who has recovered [after that] has to stand a treat. If you have promised you should pay back, stand a treat! Otherwise [*sewens*] will take us [shamans] away! That's why I'm afraid to help people. I'd rather sit silently!"

One of the results of the failed sacrifice is that disappointed *sewens* stop serving their shamans and these shamans lose not only their health, but also shamanic abilities. "If only they bring me a small pig [for sacrifice]!" Olga Yegorovna says. "You may call and call for your *sewens* when you need to shamanize, but they never come." "Some shamans refuse to shamanize, because [the cured people] do not give any help [sacrifice]. "We have been working but have not received anything! So we won't work any more!" The *sewens* say this. And then they no longer come to work. You may bawl [calling for them], if you like, no one comes! I'll fling my drum away and go to sleep! The hell with it![11] When [a person] is sick, he says "For sure, we'll find a pig [for sacrifice]!" He says it once and twice [in vain], and for the third time the *sewen* refuses to come. Nobody rescues the *sewen*! Nobody gives [a sacrifice]!" (Olga Yegorovna). Even this fact, that *sewens* denial to obey to their shaman, is a serious threat to the shaman's health in any other situation. But, in this case, the situation becomes more complicated because the *sewen* failed to get a substituted sacrificial animal and takes its shaman instead as the easiest to its access person as a kind of sacrificial being.

"If a shaman has shamanized for someone, who had many *ambans* [evil spirits], the sacrificial animal is necessary." Chapaka Danilovna said. "If he [the patient] has promised and a shaman has removed his *ambans* away, if the *sewen* is waiting and cannot wait until the sacrifice is performed, it [*sewen*] will attack his owner [shaman]! At one stroke, the shaman will lose his consciousness! Such is a shamanic law!" The shaman's sickness

[11] Olga Yegorovna said it in Russian '*K chertu!*'

is understood, in this case, as a means of compulsion, used by *sewens* to make their shaman and congregation perform all necessary rituals. Ivan Torokovich says: "If they have shamanized and a sick person has recovered, but they have not fed the *sewens*, the shaman will fall ill. You [a sick person] were begging him [shaman], and the shaman has been drumming for you. You have got better, so you should dance [on a sacrifice]! A rooster or a pig is needed! If you have not done that, the shaman will fall ill. *Sewen* forces [you]! You must work and feed the *sewen*! If you do not feed the *sewen*, it will get into a rage!" Lindza echoes Ivan Torokovich: "*Sewen* needs to eat something! If my *sewens* have not eaten, I am down with sickness. If you do not feed them, you are sick. But how can I find something to feed them?" And she complains: "Only those words using, which [*sewens*] taught me, am I crying [singing in a shamanic way]! I have to live like that! I weep for a while and then finish it! Weep and finish! Such the way of my living is! Nobody will feel sorry for me, nobody will hear my weeping! How could it happen like this? I have talked [shamanized] about everything, but nobody has done anything for me [nobody sacrificed]. Okay, I'll perform *ningmachy* [getting information about the patient coming]! Let me do *ningmachy* and *taochy* [healing ceremony] for everybody, regardless of the number of people who would come to me [to shamanize]! Let 20 persons come if they want! But who among those recovered ones, has returned to me [with sacrifice]? Is it good? Turning over there, towards the sky we were bowing and asking for happiness [*kesie*]. Were they just words? Nobody sees those [*sewens*] and nobody comes after that to sacrifice [*tagoadasi*]! All right! I myself will die! No matter however bad it will be! I do not care!" This is so indeed that shamans can die in the situation where their congregation members do not hurry to them with a sacrifice even after they have learned that those shamans have fallen ill. Irina Torombovna considers, for example, that Lindza died through the fault of her careless patients: "Maybe someone had done it for our granny [Lindza]. They made her shamanize but then they did not bring her the sacrifice. That's why she died!" Olga Yegorovna complains about this unjust shamanic law. "I am working and working and helping all the people. But nobody from the country-side helps me! I'll fall ill and die! That is such a law!"

Shamanic measures of self-defense after the sacrifice failed

Danger threatened shamans resulting from a failed sacrifice and made them keep their congregants in obedience. If they are not successful in it, they may shamanize again but that time, with the aim to sacrifice and defend by

means of it, just by themselves. As a result, shamans recover, but their guilty patients fall ill and die as a rule. "Sometimes the [shaman] shamanizes for someone, but that [patient] does not bring the animal's blood promised." Chapaka Danilovna said. "Then the shaman will be taken ill. If a shaman has an animal, but that cured one does not, the shaman will save only himself. He [will sacrifice for himself and] finish with that. From himself alone he will take it off! But that person, who has not done it, will fall ill and die. [*Sewens*] will attack that person who was treated from that shaman, if he has no sacrifice." Acting this way, shamans realize that they are killing their patient by means of that. But they are not usually able to resolve their own torments and death in order to shield the bad behaviour of their congregants. "I'll stop being sick, but that one [who did not sacrifice] will fall ill. Then he will remember!" "Should I die for them, should not I? I also want to live! To be alive! It is too bad to talk in vain [to break promises]. If I am keeping silence [about my sickness] nobody cares about me. If they would have come [for sacrifice] on time, there were not be any grief neither for them nor for me!"

Another method, shamans use to defend themselves, from the negative consequences of a failed sacrifice, is to perform a ritual, which represents an inversion of the ceremony, during which the promise to bring the substitute offering was given. In this ritual, shamans orders their *sewens* actually to grade the results of the previous healing, that is to return their *panyans* to that place of the invisible world, from where they had been taken in the previous healing ceremony. "I returned two persons back." Olga Yegorovna said. "They did nothing [after recovery]. Let them, who act like that, take their words back! I told my *sewens*: "As they do not care to bring [a sacrifice animal], let all the previous stuff go back to them!" I did it like that and those two persons died. They lived over there in Bolan.[12]. [People] blame me now. But what could I do? It was necessary to relieve me of my promise to the 'god'! I had conjectured, how to heal them, kneeling before the 'god'. And then my knees began to hurt, and my legs began to hurt. If it was going to be like that, I could fall ill myself! Only two persons did I return back! How can I hold an alien disease? I cannot! If for me, nobody will rescue me! [*Sewens*] will punish me to death! But it is not actually my fault! I merely asked [my *sewens*] to feel sorry for those two persons and promised them a sacrifice. But then they [my patients] were sitting in silence! Bolon inhabitants criticized me severely after that. Well, shall I help you [next time], if you are criticizing me?"

[12] Officially: Bolon.

Robbing congregants caused by sympathy for them

One can assume that sacrifice evasion (which is a common phenomenon now) seldom occurred in the past. Probably Bogdan Oninka's congregation came under communist propaganda, and he was one of those shamans who first came into collision with mass rejection of sacrifice. As a result of such a rejection, Bogdan fell seriously ill. We can judge, how badly the shaman suffers in such a situation, from Lindza' complaint to her patients who do not carry her offering: "Do I need much other's stuff? If I want [something], I will find it anywhere! If I'll be dying because of that [failed sacrifice], nobody will be able to save me! Only I do save all the people! Nobody will really feel sorry for me? Is not it possible to come here, to bow [to my *sewens*] for me? Is it only me, who should feel sorry for people? Only must I alone? Do not love me! It is always bitter in my mouth. It is as if I am covered with scales!" It is a custom in Nanai tradition that in case of the shamans' disease all their congregants bring them animals for sacrifice trying to heal them by means of that. Ivan Torokovich said: "They ask the shaman to dance [in shamanic way on sacrifice] and stop being ill through it. If they did not do it, it would be too bad for a shaman. It is a very bad, serious thing! That's why it is so. Where will the shaman find [an animal for sacrifice] each time?"

But Bogdan was left on his own. His disease was so serious that he was near death. Olga Yegorovna narrates: "Bogdan went around Ulchi district and shamanized there. Nobody gave him anything, and he fell ill. He was about to die because they did not offer him [a sacrifice]. For several days, he was at home without consciousness. There were no doctors at that time. Who could help him? And the elders began to talk that he must be helped. An animal was necessary!" Trying to revive Bogdan, they decided to perform an unusual sacrifice for his *sewens* not actually from the debtors, but from that part of his congregation which was still devoted to him. Olga Yegorovna continues her story: "Bogdan was sick. There were some kind people in the village. They nevertheless revived him. Someone gave a pig, another one offered a rooster. He shamanized for himself and recovered. That is shamanic law like this! If nobody gives … He has shamanized all over the village but nobody has given him anything. [Shamans] have children *duhom* [spirits], they must be fed. If nobody offers anything, the *sewen* gnaws us [shamans] instead. That is such a law!"

As Bogdan had recovered, he could stop with that. But he came to Ulchi district and began to 'rob' his intractable patients. "He inflicted this as if a robbery." Olga Yegorovna narrates. "Who had two or three pigs, he

took them away! Who had some good dressed materials, he seized them. Well, he did it purposely. In the presence of the owners he did it. Then he said: 'Do not say that I am guilty! The other people revived me [from being sick]. I was near death." "He had cured people but they gave him nothing." "And then he began to take it himself?" "Yes! But they complained [to the administration] as if it was a robbery!" That Bodgan's deed was evidently nothing else but the compelled sacrifice. Bogdan wanted to make the situation, regarding his own health, more stable. But it would have been possible either if his Ulchi congregants had agreed to offer sacrifice or if he would have returned their *panyans* to those bad places, where they had been before, that is if he would have doomed them to death. The choice, Bogdan made, says that he apparently felt sorry for his ill-starred patients. Having robbed them, he probably decided to protect them at last for a while from a much more serious misfortune.

Conclusion

According to traditional ideas, Bogdan's Ulchi congregants were under a serious threat of misfortune or even death, because of their rejection to bring the promised sacrifice to his *sewens*. One can assume that Bogdan was directed with a wish to protect them from his disappointed *sewens*. He could return their *panyans* [souls] back, which could kill them but protect Bogdan himself, but he preferred to take those things, which could be use for sacrifice by force and to leave them alive. From the traditional point of view, one can also see that not Bogdan, but his Ulchi congregants caused the conflict. Because it was they who resorted to his help, assumed the certain obligations and then put him in the state of emergency. According to the worldview of his atheistic judges, use of the criminal code was a routine crime. Ulchi appellants were innocent victims, and Bogdan committed a robbery with a goal of trivial enrichment.

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The Role of Soviet Ideology in the Transformation of Komi Traditional Holiday Culture in the 1920s

Irina Kotyleva

Introduction. Setting the problem

A holiday, which is "a primary and constant category" of culture related to an entire complex of vital and aesthetic realities, assists in the formation and preservation (Baiburin 1993), of the structure-building mytho/ideologems of the newly created world model. Therefore, it is not incidental that in crucial epochs the holiday appears to be in the epicentre of transformations. A number of researches (e.g., Glebkin 1998; Yevzlin 1993; Korotayev 1993, etc.) have pointed out that examining holiday culture, during crucial epochs, allows us to elicit the most significant tendencies in the development of society and highlight the main structural components of the world view.

Research into the changes in Russian holiday culture, during the period of establishing the Soviet power through juxtaposing the traditional holiday culture with the novel Soviet culture, may serve as a basis for the analysis of the world view and world perception of the people of this period. This article is devoted to the problem of co-existence of the traditional and novel holiday cultures in the transition period, which resulted in the final transition to the administrative-repressive governing system in 1929.

The reports of the agitation and propaganda departments of the district committees of the Komi oblast, from the years 1923–1931, serve as the basis for the analysis of the Komi-Zyrians' holiday culture in the 1920s. During this period, the reports on the work of district organizations of the C(B)PSU (Communist (Bolshevist) Party of the Soviet Union) still represent a rather complete and non-formalistic characterization of current events and phenomena, while it can be observed that, by the year 1929, the reports increasingly acquire the characteristic features of "accounts of progress and achievements". Certainly, when examining these sources it is necessary to take into consideration the

specific features of such documents; the same should be done when using, as sources, the regional and central newspapers and magazines.

So, the central and regional newspapers *Yugyd Tuj* (Shining Path), *Zyryanskaya Zhizn* (Zyrian Life), *Komi Sikt* [Komi Village], *Pravda* (Truth) and magazines *Krasnaya Derevnya* (Red Village) and *Bezbozhnik* (Atheist) served as the basis for the analysis of the Komi-Zyrians' holiday culture in the 1920s. References, namely to these publications, can be explained by the fact that these issues comprised varied materials on the topic that we took interest in, and they were also recommended for use in propaganda work, therefore these sources provide a basis for the analysis of the mec-hanism of introducing new holiday culture by the authorities. At the same time, these sources allow us to trace the peculiarities in the existence of the traditional holiday culture during this period. The calendars of that period provide a special source connected with the subject of our research – *Peasant Table Calendar*, *Calendar of the Communist* and some others enable us to elicit a whole range of problems connected with the trans-formation of the chronotope. The minutes of the proceedings of parish church councils could have served as an interesting source concerning our topic, but unfortunately the numbers of such archives that have been preserved are rather negligible. The minutes of the Ib Church Council, used in the research, enable us to trace a whole range of aspects in the confrontation between the "new" and "old" churches in the region. The diversity of the used sources allows the applying of the principle of supplementation in the interpretation of facts.

Soviet calendar of the 1920s: semiotic fight between the "old" and the "new"

Holiday culture and ceremonial rituals of the Komi people, at the beginning of the 20th century, were determined by the Orthodox world view; at the same time, the researchers of the late 19th – early 20th centuries noted that Christian holidays comprised a whole range of rituals that revealed more archaic conceptions (Dukart 1975; Dukart 1978; Konakov 1993; etc.). The annual cycle in folk culture was interpreted namely through a number of Orthodox holidays and, first and foremost, the progress of time was determined by Great Holidays, which included the Holy Week, Easter Week, Ascension Day, two days of Holy Spirit, and local church holidays.

Great Holidays, being especially significant, had pre-celebrations and post-celebrations and revealed the sacral character of holiday time.

From the point of view of the Orthodox world outlook, these holidays determined the life of a person, family, community; it was namely these dates that the birth and eternal rebirth of the world were related to (Zelinski 1993; *Pravoslavnaya…* 2001; Bogdanov & Panchenko 1999).

In traditional culture, the holidays position themselves as system-making axis-makers. It was the holiday, connected with the calendar and family rituals, that organized and reformed the time of individual and collective life, coordinated it with the rhythm of social and historical development and the rhythm of outer space, determined the entirety and succession of the socium. The sacral character of holiday time was connected with the unfolding of space, which had an especially significant status (a temple, the way of religious processions, a house, a road/river, a village fence, etc.) with built-up symbols, texts, speech formulas – everything that was provided by observing a number of fixed rites and rituals.

Beginning from the early 1920s, in the region, as well as throughout the whole territory of Russia, an active "building of socialist culture" started, which was supposed to "create a new person, a new world view". The transformation of holiday culture became one of the most important directions in the work of the "builders of the new world". Yuri Stepanov, in his contemplation of the concepts of Russian culture after 1917, made a pertinent remark, pointing out that "…the notion "new world" itself placed this "world" not so much in the space, but more in time". "The new world" – it is the world that does not exist yet, but that will certainly come into existence" (Stepanov 2002: 236).

A great number of researchers of Russian culture, in the first third of the 20th century, noted that in the communist way of thinking the notion of "time" predominated.

The calendar shift in post-revolutionary Russia from the "old" to the "new" style should have inevitably become one of the main directions in the concept of world transformation. The Calendar as a definite way of measuring time, as a system of establishing time periods (days, months) for all kinds of activities, and as a system of a time-fixing characteristic of one or another culture, is always related to a number of symbols and concepts. The substitution of the Gregorian calendar for the Julian one, proclaimed by the decree of January 24 (February 6), 1918, gave impetus to the "splitting" of the unitary chronotope. The decree was drawn up by the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs and the People's Commissariat of Education. The People's Commissariat of Education suggested that "due to the altered character of social and

industrial relations" the Christian era should be substituted for by the socialist era. November 7 was supposed to become the beginning of the new era (Kamentseva 1969: 161–162). The proposal of the People's Commissariat of Education reflected the desire of the creators of the state of soviets to change the 'WORLD, Time, and Space'. The proposal was not approved of; yet, November 7 became the "main" date in the Soviet holiday calendar and the year 1917 became the beginning of the new system of chronology in Russia for many decades and one of the central mythologems of Soviet ideology.

The shift from the old to the new style caused confusion among the believers, including priests, and became one of the reasons, alongside the recognition of the Soviet power, for the confrontation between the so-called Vvedensky's (Renovated) Church and Tikhon's Church.[1] Therefore, it is only natural that the acceptance or rejection of the new style became one of the key issues in the confrontation between Tikhon's and Vvedensky's adherents. The issue, of unifying the Gregorian calendar with the Orthodox one, became a subject for a special discussion during the 2nd All-Russian Council of the Orthodox Church, which took place in Moscow from April 29 to May 9, 1923. The Council was summoned by the "new" church for denouncing Patriarch Tikhon's actions. The report "On Calendar Reform" was heard at the meeting on May 5. The shorthand report reads as follows, "Having considered the Julian and Gregorian calendars in terms of their historical perspective, Metropolitan Antonin proves the necessity of agreement with the West, totally accepting the Gregorian calendar, and suggests a project for the practical introduction of the new calendar." The Church Conference resolved "…to transfer to the Gregorian style as of June 12, 1923, and for this purpose combine the two following Sundays into one on May 21, and, besides that, join two Sundays into one on June 10 (*Deyaniya*… 1923: 12).

In officially published calendars, the Orthodox holidays were marked in accordance with the Renovated Church; yet, there are also calendars

[1] In August 1917 Patriarchate was restored in Russian Orthodox Church and Tikhon who was elected as a Patriarch followed openly anti-Soviet line. In 1922 central offices of the Patriarchate were closed by the government and Tikhon was sentenced to the home arrest. Central administration of the church was taken over by the Renovated Church (*Obnovlencheskaya Tserkov*; sometimes Living Church (*Zhivaya Tserkov*), leaded by reformist priest Alexander Vvedensky. In 1923 Tikhon withdraw his anti-Soviet position and the social basis of Renovated Church started to weaken. Renovated Church vanished during the World War II, when Soviet authorities went to co-operation with official Russian Orthodox Church.

where Orthodox holidays are marked according to the old style, for instance, "Calendar-Diary, Reference Book of District Statistician and Correspondent of the Komi Autonomous Region (Oblast) in 1924". The aforementioned situation lasted until 1930, after which Orthodox holidays were no longer marked in the published calendars. At the same time, Tikhon's followers celebrated Orthodox holidays according to the old style, whereas the Vvedensky branch ("Living Church") – kept to the new style. The new priesthood held festive religious services in honour of revolutionary holidays, which were the first to be correlated with the new style.

The introduction of the "new" church was carried out directly with the support of the communist authorities, in this respect a remark made by Felix Dzerzhinsky is quite noteworthy: "In my opinion, the church is breaking down, that is why we have to help; yet, by no means, revive it in its new form. It is the All-Russian Special Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage, and not anybody else that should supervise the policy of church destruction. Official and semi-official relations with priests are prohibited. We stake on Communism, not on religion. Only the All-Russian Special Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage can manœuvre with one aim in view – the demoralization of priests" (*Arkhivy Kremlya* 1997: 9). The new power intended to destroy the church administration. To achieve this aim a separate organization, under the certain protection of the Soviet power, was formed out of a group of priests.

The conflict between the traditional and new churches was typical of the whole territory of Russia (Zhuravski 2000: 282–283), and the Komi Region was not an exception. The administration used this conflict for propaganda purposes. In this respect, a characteristic remark can be found in the report of the Komi Regional Committee about the party, Soviet, industrial and cultural conditions in the region in 1925: "… the conflict between the followers of the Living Church and those of Tikhon's Church is gradually aggravating, which was especially clearly demonstrated in Ust-Sysolsk in February during the re-elections into a church council in the settlement of Kirul, where people, witnessing the fight among priests, were presented another proof of the priests' extremely selfish interests. Most of the population now stands for terminating the activities of congregations and is interested in the issues of anti-religious propaganda, which is organized in the village reading-houses on the initiative of city communards (KRGAOPDF fund 328, descr. 1, file 104, p. 134).

The most fierce confrontation between Tikhon's and Vvedensky's adherents occurred in Ust-Sysolsk, where the support of the authorities for the "Living Church" was best organized. The division into the new and old churches also took place in other districts. By 1925, the followers of the new church had consolidated into one independent Eparchy of the Komi Region, whereas the followers of Tikhon's church remained under the subordination of the Eparchy of Veliki Ustyug. The priests of Izhma-Pechorsk district preferred to preserve their connections with the administration of Tikhon's Eparchy, which existed side by side with the eparchy of the new church in Arkhangelsk (Gagarin 1978: 246).

The believers had a very mixed (or sometimes even negative) attitude towards the new calendar. This was also mentioned by the church leaders. At the 3rd Meeting of the Local Church Council, this issue was specially brought up by Archpriest Krasotin and his report and opinions were both represented in the Meeting Bulletin, which said, "we agree with the 2nd Local Church Council in the expediency of taking into use the new calendar in Russian Orthodox Church, yet, at the same time, considering the conditions of Russian everyday life, under which the immediate transition to the new style may often cause unfavourable relations, the 3rd Local Church Council gives its blessing to the use of both the new and old styles, depending on local conditions. We are of the opinion that the authority of the forthcoming All-Russian Church Council will finally find a solution to this problem and establish a uniform church calendar for all Orthodox churches (NARK, fund 1326, descr. 1, file 4, p. 8).

The people's negative attitude towards the calendar shift found its reflection also in the reports of district committees. For instance, in the information report of Sysolsk District Committee of the C(B)PR (Communist (Bolshevist) Party of Russia) from 1923, which touched upon the results of organizing anti-religious activities, we can find the following, "… as the clergy organizes different religious groupings through meetings and conversations with people with the aim of finding out religious…(illegible)… the believers are not satisfied with divine services performed according to the new style, and some believers complain that priests take money from people, but at the same time serve Communists – this opinion is expressed mostly by elderly people; yet, it is difficult to define with what this situation can end (KRGAOPDF, fund 353, descr. 1, file 31, pp. 23–24).

The conflict between Tikhon's adherents and the followers of the new church also occurred within parishes, which only aggravated the

situation. The preserved documents of the Ib Church Council very eloquently testify to the situation. This issue also remained on the agenda throughout 1929, the minutes of the meeting of the church council and groups of believers from January 14, 1929, read as follows: "El. S. Tomov, Chairman of the Church Council, was heard on his dismissal from the position of the Chairman, which he had held for two years, as mutual reproaches are voiced by Tikhon's adherents and the followers of the new church (NARK, fund 1326, descr. 1, file 6, p. 3).

The co-existence of two calendars resulted in the destruction of the cultural constants. V. Tan-Bogoraz, precisely and thoroughly, described this situation in the introduction to the book "Revolution in Village" (1924), "Faith in the village is built up in three directions, even four: the first direction is the Orthodox religion, Living Church and dead church, Tikhon's Church and Vvedensky's Church, because Vvedensky's church penetrates into the village. The main thing is two styles of the calendar, the old and the new one… In those calendars, fasting and holidays do not coincide. People are confused. Yet, it is even more complicated with Zyrians. Old men celebrate according to the new style, old women stick to the old calendar and young people do not celebrate at all. The Council has lost its patience, gathered for a meeting and resolved that: in order to avoid disagreements, we have to close down churches and not disturb God until we decide which direction is correct" (Tan-Bogoraz 1924: 9). The conclusions of Tan-Bogoraz, concerning the acceptance of the new style by Zyrian people, are based on the information provided by Georgi Startsev in the same book in the article "Revolution and Zyrian People", which reflects the main political and cultural tendencies of the 1920s. In a manner typical for that time, Georgi Afanasievich observes: "You can see only old men and women in church. Due to the fact that dogmas have changed, the new style has been established and holidays are celebrated in a new way, the latter sympathize with the Living Church". During holidays, three directions are formed in the village: young people who do not recognise any holidays, old men who celebrate according to the new style and old women who support the old calendar. This kind of situation leads to the complete disintegration of both churches, the "living" and the "old" one (Startsev 1924: 119).

Parallel with the disintegration of the church, the introduction of the new style was carried out. From the analysis of calendars of 1918–1930 ("'Table Peasant Calendar", "Calendar of the Communist" and a number of other specialized calendars served as the basis for analysis) it was possible to trace the tendency of gradual "ousting" of Orthodox holi-

days from the calendar. For example, in the "Table Reference Book for Peasants and Calendar of 1926" Orthodox holidays (Easter, Ascension Day, Whitsun (Whitsunday), Whit Monday, Assumption, Christmas – the names of Orthodox holidays in this calendar are written in capital letters) and are marked equivalently to the new Soviet holidays (January 9, 1905; Lenin's Memorial Day, the Overthrow of Autocracy, Day of the Paris Commune, Day of Internationale, Constitution Day, Day of Proletarian Revolution). In the calendar for 1927 holidays, "days-off" are already classified: in the beginning there is a list of Soviet holidays, which is followed by a list of Orthodox holidays. In the calendar of 1928, "days-off" are marked, both the "new" and "old" holidays (but already written in small letters), and also "special days", which included the anniversary of Lenin's Death, Red Army Day, the Day of Working Women, Day of the International Society for Helping Revolutionaries and Political Prisoners, Memorial Day of the Lenin Shooting, Day of Press, Day of Red Navy, Day of Adoption of the Soviet Constitution, International Day of Cooperation, Day of OSOAVIAHIM (Society for Assistance to Defence and Aviation-Chemical Construction of the USSR), and International Youth Day. The gradual "renewal" of names of holidays from the church calendar can also be traced, i.e., new revolutionary names or names from Greek mythology, etc., gradually occupy their places in the calendar. The arrangement of information inside the calendar became especially important and special attention was paid to the events from proletarian history, "scientific" information about the origin of Orthodox holidays was presented, etc.

In some non-central publications, the co-existence of Orthodox and Soviet holidays can be observed until the year 1929. At the same time, for instance, in the "Notebook and Calendar-Reference Book of Regional Statistician and Correspondent of the Komi Autonomous Oblast in 1925" Orthodox holidays are already not mentioned; these holidays, to be exact, also the dates, are marked in the general table calendar as days-off. It is noteworthy that in the calendar, that is preserved in the National Museum of the Republic of the Komi, some Orthodox holidays are marked in pencil.

The discussions concerning the eligibility of Orthodox holidays in the new Soviet calendar gradually intensified in 1929. That same year, a number of public speeches were made, which focused on the inadmissibility of the co-existence of Orthodox and Soviet holidays (at least, within one "calendar", which had formerly been a widely spread practice). For example, Minkov in the article "Calendar Must be Soviet",

which was published in the section "Reader's Voice" in the 11th issue of the magazine "Revolution and Culture", in 1929, writes indignantly: "Church Orthodox holidays in our calendar occupy far more place than our revolutionary and Soviet holidays. The Soviet calendar comprises 6–7 Soviet holidays, which are marked in red in the calendar. But there are dozens of religious Orthodox holidays. 52 days a year are "Sundays" (!!). There is a dozen of other church holidays, some of them last two or three days… With what purpose, for whose pleasure does our Soviet calendar mark "Sundays" in red? Isn't it high time to oust all those "Assumptions", "Epiphanies" and the like from our calendars? Including such holidays in the calendar and marking them out in red colour we do a great favour to priests, we spread *religious* propaganda. In establishments, schools, higher educational institutions, in houses for workers, peasants and office workers such calendars remind people of old religious holidays, preserving them in people's minds and even strengthening their belief in these holidays. Schoolchildren, members of the Komsomol, pioneers, atheists, workers and progressive collective farmers resolutely demand to clean up the Soviet calendar from religious trash" (Minkov 1929: 75–76). The "Reader's Letter" finishes with some suggestions:

1. Before the publication of the next issue of the calendar (for 1930) it is necessary to cross out all the religious holidays, including (and above all) Sundays.

2. Only revolutionary and Soviet holidays should be marked out in red.

3. Corresponding government bodies are to establish a corresponding number of days-off (instead of the religious ones), conforming them to the fixed cultural and political events and days: "Forest Day", "Harvest Day", "Sowing Day", "Day of Science and Engineering", "Re-Election of Soviets" and anniversaries of establishing Soviet Republics as well as other cultural events. We have made progress in all aspects, even in everyday life. The calendar must reflect our cultural development and satisfy our cultural and everyday demands. The calendar must be Soviet!" (Minkov 1929: 75–76).

Beginning from 1930, Orthodox holidays were no longer marked in Soviet calendars. The new division into holidays and working days, which from 1930 regarded only new Soviet holidays as "official" ones, declared "the victory of the new world".

Introduction of Soviet holidays in the Komi Oblast (Region) in the 1920s

Throughout the 1920s, religious holidays officially existed side by side with the newly established socialist holidays. The communist administration paid special attention to the celebration of new Soviet holidays, whereas, in the early 1920s, these kinds of holidays were created spontaneously. For instance, the report of Platon Kerzhentsev, one of the leaders of Soviet culture, declared, "… with the aim of further work in the sphere of celebrating public holidays, it is necessary…to establish, apart from October 25 and May 1, some other major holidays, for example, Labour Day (in the autumn), which would coincide with the harvest season and would signify the union of the town and the village, as well as a number of local holidays" (Kerzhentsev 1923: 170–171).

By the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution, the following "main" holidays of the year (i.e., the days when people did not have to work) had been established: January 22 – Execution of Workers in St. Petersburg and Day of Mourning (Lenin's Death); March 12 – Overthrow of Autocracy; March 18 – Day of the Paris Commune; May 1 – Day of Internationale; July 3 – Day of the Ratification of the Constitution of the Soviet Union; November 7 – Day of the Proletarian Revolution.

The creators of the new culture focused on the break with the past; yet, consciously or unconsciously, the traditional holiday culture was preserved on the level of "syntax". The programme for celebrating Soviet holidays with lectures, performances, sports competitions and other events was planned for several days, reminding of a system of new pre- and post-celebrations.

It is self-evident that November 7, as the main day of "world creation", had a special programme of celebration with its own "pre-celebrations" and "post-celebrations". For instance, the programme for celebrating the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution in Ust-Sysolsk was divided into several days, and included a "pre-holiday" lecture, holiday processions and "post-holiday" theatricals with solid ideological content.

The orientation of Soviet holiday organizers to traditional holiday culture manifests itself in staging demonstrations. The most vivid example of this is the organization of revolutionary holidays in the first years of the "new era". In this aspect, the reports about the celebrations of the October Revolution in 1918, published in the newspaper *Zyryanskaya Zhizn* (Zyrian Life) (later on extracts from this newspaper were published in the magazine *Komi Mu* (Komi Land) in 1925, in the section

"Cultural Life of the Region") present certain interest. The report about celebrations in the village of Syuzyaib reads: "On the day of celebration, November 7, at 6 o'clock, all people gather in front of the building of the Local Executive Committee. The students of local schools and the members of the Communist (Bolshevist) Party also come. After a short speech of greeting, the celebrations begin. People line up and march along the street to the village with red flags and banners, singing revolutionary songs, accompanied by the toll of bells (*Zyryanskaya Zhizn* 1918: No. 14: 3).

New Soviet holidays were connected with reinterpreting of village/town space from the positions of the Communist world view, it was the holiday time when the new sacral character of spatial loci was established. For instance, the resolution of Ust-Sysolsk Committee of the Russian Communist Party concerning the celebration of the Day of Internationale from April 21, 1920, specially emphasized: "On May 1, the foundation of the public garden of the town should be started in Ust-Sysolsk, which will be called "The Garden of May 1" (KRGAOPDF, fund 274, descr.1, file 25, page 31). Actually the city garden had been founded already earlier, in 1880, and it was situated near Troitski Cathedral Church, so it also constituted a part of sacral space. Therefore, it was not occasionally that the idea of founding a new garden developed, which was supposed to clearly symbolize the establishment of a new world outlook.

The elaboration of new sacral loci, to a greater extent, occurred during demonstrations on "great Soviet holidays". A vivid example is provided by the demonstration in honour of the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution, which was organized in Ust-Sysolsk on November 7, 1927. First of all, the plan for the arrival of participants to the main square of the city – Red Square (its former, pre-revolution name was Stephanovskaya Square) was outlined:

1. People from Kodzvilskaya commune and from the 1st, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th and part of the 4th tenth (десяты) gather to the building of the District Executive Committee (1 Internatsionalnaya St.) at 9.30 a.m., from where they march with their flags and banners, led by the Chairman of the Regional Executive Committee; along the Internatsionalnaya and Respublikanskaya Streets up to the building of the Regional Trade Union Council, where at 10 o'clock they join the columns of the representatives of trade unions.
2. Factory and office workers of Ust-Sysolsk and Elektroles gather at 9.30 in their enterprises and institutions, then they march with their

flags and banners, under the lead of jubilee committees, or specially appointed comrades up to the building of the Regional Trade Union Council (the corner of Respublikanskaya and Lenin Streets), where the representatives of trade union organizations greet each other and march to the accompaniment of a brass band, led by Comrade A. N. Kosyrev, member of the Presidium of the Regional Trade Union Council, along the Respublikanskaya, Sovetskaya and Kommunisticheskaya Streets and come to Red Square by 11 o'clock.

3. Pioneers and students gather at their schools at 9.30 and proceed under the direct leadership of school headmasters with their flags and banners by 10 o'clock in the morning to the building of the Regional Komsomol Committee (the corner of Respublikanskaya and Sovetskaya Streets), where they also greet each other, and when the columns of trade unions pass them, they jointly march to the square.

4. The citizens of Ust-Sysolsk 2nd, 3rd and part of the 4th tenth gather at 10 o'clock near the building of the City Council at the corner of Sovetskaya and Kommunisticheskaya Streets, from where, under the leadership of the Presidium of the City Council they proceed with their flags and banners to the parade-rally by 11 o'clock, on the way they join trade unions and citizens of Kodzvilskaya commune.

5. The population of the 1st, 9th and 10th tenth of the villages of Kirul, Kochpan, and Chit (Kodzvilskaya commune) gather near the reading house in Kirul at 10 a.m., then with their flags and banners they proceed along Sovetskaya and Kommunisticheskaya Streets, heading for Red Square by 11 o'clock (*Yugyd Tuj*, November 6, 1927).

In the programmes of celebrations special attention was paid to the procession (all in all 14 columns), which started after the rally; it was specially emphasised that "… columns are formed so that four people are in one line, during the demonstration each participant should always keep to the fixed place, it is not allowed to enter the column from the side", the procession "… makes its way to Kommunisticheskaya Street, the first eight columns turn left to Sovetskaya Street and proceed along Rabochaya, Naberezhnaya, Trudovaya, Sovetskaya and Kommunisticheskaya Streets up to the Common Grave. The other columns (9–14) proceed along Kommunisticheskaya Street to Sovetskaya Street, where they turn right and march along Trudovaya, Naberezhnaya, Rabochaya, and Lenin Streets up to the Common Grave. Note: the columns greet each other when they meet". Then further on according to the plan: "… they stop at the Common Grave, listen to the reminiscences about the fighters who died for the dictatorship of the proletariat (*Yugyd*

Tuj, November 6, 1927). It was namely Kommunisticheskaya, Sovetskaya and Lenin Streets that happened to be included in the celebrations of proletarian holidays, the reasons being their location (central streets) and their new significance, which they had acquired through renaming in 1918, on the eve of the 1st anniversary of the October Revolution. On November 6, 1918, the streets and squares of Ust-Sysolsk were renamed as follows: Spasskaya Street became Sovetskaya, Market Square became Narodnaya, Trekhsvyatitelskaya was renamed into Kommunisticheskaya, Predtechenskaya – into Trudovaya, Pokrovskaya – into Respublikanskaya, Troitskaya – into Lenin, Georgievskaya – into Internatsionalnaya, Nikolskaya – into Proletarskaya, Sukhanovskaya – into Rabochaya, Yuzhno-Zagorodnaya – into Krestyanskaya, Stephanovskaya Square – into Red Square (Zherebtsov et al. 2002: 93).

The evaluation of the new holiday culture by the local population was varied, which was reflected in documents up to the middle of the 1920s. In the report from the village of Votcha, (November 12, 1920) it is said that "the local committee of Votcha informs the regional **committee** that the celebration of the anniversary of the October Revolution lasted for three days, and that, in the morning of November 7, a play was performed for schoolchildren, and after the performance there was a mass meeting dedicated to public education, with the emphasis on the 3rd anniversary. A play, entitled "Under the Red Banner of Freedom", was staged in the evening and afterwards there was mass meeting under the slogan sent out by your committee... The attitude of the population to all these events was difficult to understand. The requests of the propagandist and the military commissar to keep silence were like voices in the wilderness. Afterwards comments of some participants could be heard, who said, "We do not need any performances and mass meetings" (KRGAOPDF, fund 274, descr.1, file 35, p.15).

The co-existence of the traditional annual holiday cycle with the newly created Soviet calendar failed to promote the strengthening of the basic ideologems/mythologems of the Soviet world view. Therefore, it is not accidental that, from the very beginning, party organs adopted the strategy of ousting the traditional holiday culture, and the implementation of this strategy was under special control.

From the middle of the 1920s, a tendency could be observed to organize different mass events, which promoted the new lifestyle, on the days of Christian holidays. From among Holy Holidays, special attention was paid to Christmas and Easter, less frequently to Epiphany and Transfiguration. The attempt to convert "old" holidays into new ones

was a kind of realization of the archetype of the "transformed world", which was newly incarnated in Bolshevist ideology and practice. It is natural and symbolic that special attention was paid to the transformation of Christmas and Easter – the holidays that most vividly revealed the idea of eternal rebirth, eternal renewal of the world, space, the human being in Christian culture. The transformed, "newly born" world, from the point of view of revolutionaries-"demiurges", had a principally new explanation for birth and was focused on different aims in its development.

A vivid example of this was the slogan, which opened the first page of the newspaper *Yugyd Tuj* on April 27, 1924 (namely, in 1924 Easter (Good Friday) fell on April 27): "Russian Proletariat acknowledges only one SUNDAY – the Victory of Labour over Capital – the Red October Day! Then comes the Universal Sunday of Working People – the INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION". The whole issue of the newspaper is devoted to the "unmasking" of Easter holidays and the Christian religion with the active presentation of "scientific" and satirical materials concerning the topic of the day. The materials were published both in the Russian and Komi languages. Several days earlier, the newspaper had published a detailed "Programme for Celebrating Komsomol Easter in Ust-Sysolsk" with a complete timetable of planned lectures, theatricals, concerts, and dancing parties. It was planned to start celebrations already on April 26, that is, on Holy Saturday; besides, on several stages, in addition to anti-religious lectures, it was planned to perform plays: "At the theatre, the play "Bourgeois in Hell" (in one act and two scenes) is staged by a group called Ilyich. The play is followed by a dancing party; in the school of the second stage "Trade House – God, Son and his Company" and "Joyful Slapstick – about How One Should not Live" will be staged. (*Yugyd Tuj,* April 25, 1924.) Already beginning from May 8, the newspaper started publishing reports about the celebration of Komsomol Easter in local centres. Here are some extracts from reports as examples: "Aikino. At 12 midnight, the members of Aikino Bolshevist Party cell, as well as the members of the C(B)PR, gathered in a vocational school to celebrate Komsomol Easter. The event was started by a "service", which was followed by numerous anti-religious lectures. It was already morning when all the papers had been read. Unfortunately, the audience was rather small, and obviously our fellow villagers are not yet absolutely free from religious daze... What surprised most was that the teachers of Aikino school were not present" (*Yugyd Tuj*, May 8, 1924). "Ust-Vym. At 9 o'clock on the evening of April

26, I went to the club "Zarya" to celebrate Komsomol Easter. There is the crossroads. People divide into two almost equal groups – some of them turn left to the club, and the others turn right to the church. I notice the disapproving glances of one of the believers at a young local man, who followed me and dared to go to the atheist, "evil" club, decorated with a coat of arms depicting a hammer and a sickle. Above the entrance there is a welcome sign in bright letters, which asks everybody to come in. I enter a half-open corridor and read a glittering slogan on the wall, saying, "Oppressors Need Religion". At 12 o'clock, the last bell rings and the public proceeds to the unusually lightened hall, decorated with slogans and caricatures. People curiously look at the walls with humorous pictures of priests. The evening is opened by Comrade Vezhev with a speech on the topic "Why the Komsomol Celebrates Komsomol Easter". The audience listens very attentively to the 15-minute speech, made by Comrade Grachev, about the origin of Easter.

Accompanied by the toll of church bells Comrade Lekanov reads his paper "about the new living conditions". At 10 p.m., the curtain goes up. An improvised play by Comrades Kharlamychev and Pyatiev is presented to the audience. It consists of songs and humorous four-line folk verses from the old issues of *Youth Truth* and *Atheist*. The hall, overcrowded with young people and office workers, is filled with joyful songs of the choir:

Komsomol has risen from the dead,
It does not acknowledge living churches,
And has driven away all Gods.

It looks like "matins". Two priests and a deacon appear on the stage. The latter says, "Let's all together fight against gods!" And the choir unanimously answers: "Death to all parasites". The "liturgy" continues in the same spirit, and it is finished by a choral song "Long Live International Komsomol!" During the performance part of the adult peasant population "deserted" from the church to the club, but some people managed to swap between the church and the club several times during the evening.

On April 28, with the same aim in view, an excursion was organized to the village of Ib. When the priest from the stage greeted the audience with the words "Komsomol has resurrected!", the people responded: "It has, indeed!" (*Yugyd Tuj*, May 10, 1924).

The anti-religious activities in the form of theatricals, lectures, parties, etc., were highly recommended at Easter time. In 1926, when

Easter coincided with the Holiday of the International (May 1–2), to be more exact, May 1 coincided with Holy Saturday, the fight against the old life style acquired more elaborated forms. Numerous exposing publications by specialists, letters from local people and caricatures were published in newspapers. Activists were suggested to use different forms of the already gained experience in organizing spectacular mass events. The ideal version was that all holiday celebrations would take place around the traditional sacral centre, i.e., the church, and sometimes even inside the church, and processions ("new" religious ones) were encouraged. The best illustration of putting this programme into practice is the play "The Old and the Young", which was published in the 17th issue of the magazine *Krasnaya Derevnya* (Red Village) (1926). This play, with great exhortation, shows how, through the transformation of the old sacral space (the church is converted into a club, a red flag appears instead of the cross) and both the world and the human being undergo great changes.

Performances became an obligatory part of the newly established holidays of the 1920s, a specific instrument of the authorities, which allowed of an active introduction of the mythologems of the "new" Soviet model of the world into the traditional one. The content of these performances was mostly of propagandistic character. In villages, they were staged in the Komi language. Sometimes certain plays "not topical, but with the purpose of attracting the audience" were staged (KRGAOPDF), because before the performances papers were usually read, which "explained the party guidelines". The performances were a powerful device for consolidating ideologems and symbols of the "new world" in people's minds in a vivid and active form. This common task and tendency is well reflected in the article about the tours of a group of amateur actors led by V. A. Savin, which was published in the newspaper *Zyryanskaya Zhizn* in 1920. The author of the article mentions, with satisfaction, that "the repertoire of the group consisted exclusively of Zyrian plays: "Шонді петігцн дзоридз косьмис" ("The Flower Faded at Sunrise"), a revolutionary drama in three acts..., "Ачым лоа большевичка" ("I will Be a Bolshevik"), a modern play in one act, a translation from Russian "Мича ныв" ("A Beautiful Girl"), a musical comedy in one act… (and a number of other plays are also mentioned). It was a diverse repertoire, consisting of performances, songs, music and recitations. Such performances were very enlightening for the village people. As they were performed in the native and understandable language, which aroused admiration, these plays, serving propagandistic purposes, opened the eyes of many

people, dispelled the ignorance and prejudice of Zyrians. In spite of the repertoire, propagandists also went on tours together with the group of actors in order to explain the tasks and aims of the new regime in simple Zyrian language. The group of actors achieved great success in bringing closer together the peasants and the Soviet government" (*Zyryanskaya Zhizn*, No. 19, March 10, 1920).

The theatricality and playful beginning of the holiday allowed the introduction of new lexis into the language, which served as one of the ways to involve Komi-Zyrian culture in the Soviet political discourse. One of the main tasks of the new holidays was to implant the symbols of the "prosperous communist world" in people's minds and to introduce "the revolutionary word" to the language.

The necessity of doing propaganda work, among the population in the native language, was emphasized in the plans and reports of propaganda boards. For instance, the report of the Sysolsk District Committee, from 1924, made a special mention of the fact that "educational work in party cells is carried out in the native Zyrian language, although with certain distortions, because we lack skills of translating phrases from Russian into the native language (KRGAOPDF, fund 353, descr.1, file 40, p. 3).

The stability of the traditional world view did not allow the ousting of religious holidays by the Soviet ones. The report of the Bolshevist Party cell of the village of Kokvino from 1927 reads as follows, "… the disposition of the population towards religion is still positive, except for a small part of them; yet, as regards rituals, nearly all people are religious and consider them as a necessary component... Most young people think that religion is unnecessary; yet, they stick to traditions under their parents' influence. Of course, it is just eyewash" (KRGAOPDF, fund 221, descr.1, file 270, p. 3). However, by the end of the 1920s, Soviet holidays had already become part and parcel of culture.

Revolutionary holidays (the holidays of the "new calendar" and "transformations" of traditional holidays) were supposed to constitute a breach separating two historic epochs. The aim of the new socialist holiday culture was to create the feeling of the birth of a new age, new space, new world, and a new human being in the minds of people, which found its reflection in the content of the performances and in the scripts of celebrations.

The combining of the traditional Christian annual cycle, which had been fixed in the course of centuries, with the new calendar was a complicated and dramatic process, which proved again that the "time

matrix" was directly connected with communication within society, with its mechanisms of physical life.

In 1929, N. Bukharin in his speech at the 2nd All-Russian Conference of Atheists emphasized that "… we have to intensify the connection of our anti-religious propaganda with practical, above all, economic tasks of the reconstruction period…" (Bukharin 1929: 11). "The connection of our anti-religious propaganda with… the tasks of the reconstruction period" has become one of the decisive factors in the intensification of pressure on the traditional holiday culture at the end of the 1920s.

Conclusion

The Soviet administration did not entirely succeed in transforming the traditional holiday culture into the "new" one, of which much evidence can be found. Even the repressions carried out towards clergymen, the closing down and demolishing of churches did not entail the total rejection of "old holidays" by the population.

At the same time, holidays of "the new era" promoted the formation of the new world view. The inculcation of the new holiday culture occurred side by side with the introduction of the new calendar, which was built up on the basis of the new style and sequence of Soviet holidays. A characteristic feature of the Soviet calendar, of the 1920s, is its formation of a new structure of the annual holiday cycle. The changes, which occurred in Russian calendars during the 1920s, were aimed at the re-orientation of the mind, both the public and the individual one, and the switching-over of the cultural code. One of the most significant tasks, which had to be borne in mind at the introduction of the Soviet calendar, was "ousting from liturgical time", which presented a powerful factor in the collective memory of the people and their culture, the organizer of the world model.

Beginning from 1930, the Soviet calendars did not mark Orthodox holidays any more. The new division into holidays and working days (whereas beginning from 1930 only the new Soviet holidays were considered as official ones) declared "the victory of the new world".

The celebration of the revolutionary holidays was initially considered as an opportunity to influence the minds of wide masses, the inculcation of the basic concepts of the "new world"; therefore it is not incidental that the authorities insisted on recommending to "organise

[2] Called 1914–1924 Petrograd, 1924–1991 Leningrad.

festivities on the spot". The universal inculcation of Soviet holidays started already with the end of the Civil War. The reports of the meetings of propaganda boards of regional committees and the materials of periodicals testify to the fact that a systematic introduction of the holidays of the "red calendar" in Komi Oblast started already in 1921, whereas from the very beginning the basic structure and symbols were observed, which had been suggested by the ideologists from Moscow and St. Petersburg.[2]

Theatricals, which made it possible to actively form the mythologems of the "new", Soviet world model, became an obligatory part, a specific instrument of the newly-created holidays of the 1920s. These performances – "live newspapers" – were regarded by conceptualists of the "new world" as an antithesis to religious services.

The "revolutionary" tinge in the theatrical beginning of the traditional holiday culture existed only on the level of external form – syntax; yet, it gave an impetus to the growing interest of the public in propagandistic theatricals. An important role in the increase of this interest was played by the fact that the plays were performed in the native language. The aforementioned enabled the active implanting in people's minds of the ideologems/mythologems of Soviet culture, and introduce the new politicized lexis into the language. The theatricality and playful beginning of the new holidays and performances made it possible to actively introduce into the language the new lexis, which constituted one way for alluring "the masses" into the Soviet political discourse. The introduction of the "revolutionary word" into the language constitutes one of the most significant tasks of the new holidays.

Considering the fact that a great part of the peasantry did not manifest much interest in periodicals and different kinds of propagandistic literature, it was the holidays and propagandistic performances that became the main translators of communist ideology.

The implementation of the programmes for celebrating Soviet holidays assisted in the inculcation of new semantic loci in the general structure of the cultural landscape. It is also important that the inculcation of the new "sacred" …, sacred in the context of the developing Soviet world view, during the first stages, occurred through the use of already existing cultural traditions. The creators of the new culture tried to break the connection with the past; yet, the traditional world view continued to exist in the framework of the new structure, on the level of "syntax". The changing of names in topography became the beginning of the transformation of Christian tradition in the cultural land-

scape. Erecting monuments to revolutionary heroes and the destruction of the old ones also predestined the peculiarities of the formation of the new world view.

The inculcation of the new holiday culture was related to the destruction of the traditional chronotope and the construction of the foundation of the new historical mythology, which became one of the decisive factors in the formation of the new world view.

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Pravda = *Правда* (*Truth*).

Table Peasant Calendar = *Настольный календарь крестьянина* 1920–1930.

Yugyd Tuj = *Югыд тyj* (*Shining Path*) 1920–1929.

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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-obschina*, 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' – *pricha-schenie*) 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 Selivanov[1], 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 prophesies 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 prophesies used by the charismatic leaders, and later also in local village prophesies, 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 Dowe' 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 Starets (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 prophesies, 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-Christs' (*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* 260[5]) 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), "*Khozhdeniya Agapiya v rai*" (Agapii's Pilgrimage to Paradise) or "*Khozhdeniye 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 hoofed 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: Ruuttu 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., Dinzelbacher 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-lasted 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' (*hevoset 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 sisäst*); ' love will capitulate to the evil forces' (*tulloo suuri pahhuus ja ei jiä 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 jiä),* '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 jiä 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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Whom Should One Thank for a Narrow Escape? Lessons Drawn from a Perilous Journey from Vormsi and Noarootsi to Finland in 1796[1]

Jürgen Beyer

At the end of the winter, the Lutheran pastor of Noarootsi[2] made an entry in the parish register. Noarootsi was at the time probably still an island and not, as today, a peninsula. The parish had a mixed population of Swedes and Estonians,[3] whereas the nearby island of Vormsi, which will be repeatedly mentioned later, was almost exclusively populated by Swedes.[4]

The pastor wrote: "In the early morning of 13 March 1796, Dückers Matths, 48 years old, his son Anders, 19 years old, and Christians Christian, 17 years old, went together with Christians Matths onto the ice near Telise point, close to Paslepa, in order to hunt seals. However, a southerly wind arose, blowing the drifting ice away from the coast. Christians Matths managed, with great difficulty, to get back to the shore, the other three, however, were driven with the ice onto the open sea. Later, near Rooslepa and Osmussaar, they were seen and their cries for help were

[1] I am grateful to the Estonian Science Foundation for financially supporting the work on this essay (grant no. 4450).

[2] In the Northwest of present-day Estonia. In the following the current Estonian and Finnish place-names will be used. In the sources, this essay is based on, either German or Swedish place-names occur. Most of them can be found in Feldmann/Von zur Mühlen 1985, together with some information on the localities concerned.

[3] Cf. the lists of parish members in EHA: 3169-1-6; 3169-2-73 to 75. On the history of Noarootsi, or more precisely its schools, cf. Belovas 2000. It should be pointed out that the parish of Noarootsi also comprised areas on the mainland.

[4] EHA: 1252-1-5, fol. 246r (statistics dated September 29, 1794). On the history of Vormsi cf. Svärd/Hammerman 1998; Plaat 1999; Kanarbik 2003 (none of these publications mentions the events of 1796 dealt with here).

heard, but people were partly too slack, and partly it was not possible to help them because of the dreadful storm." *(Am 13. März 1796 frühmorgens gingen Dückers Matths, 48 Jahr alt, sein Sohn Anders von 19 Jahren und Christians Christian von 17 Jahren mit Christians Matths bei der Spitze Tälnäs unter Paschlep auf's Eis, um Seehunde zu fangen. Es erhob sich aber ein Südwind, der das Treibeis von der Küste entfernte. Christians Matths fand Gelegenheit, sich unter Noth und Angst an's Ufer zu retten; die andern drei aber wurden auf dem Eise in die offene See getrieben, und obgleich man sie später unter Roslep und bei Odinsholm gesehen und um Hülfe rufen gehört hat, so ist man doch theils zu saumselig gewesen, theils hat man ihnen wegen des furchtbaren Sturmes nicht helfen können.)*[5]

What had happened? On 13 March, very early in the morning, the men had gone on the ice near Telise point to hunt seals. At about lunch-time, the ice already had started to become detached from the land, but the weather was still nice and the sun was shining. They went towards Rooslepa beach and could come as close as would be the distance of a few stone-throws. They could discern the sheds for the nets and the road leading through the forest to the village, and they also saw a boy standing there. They cried for help. They could even see that the boy finally started to run to the village, but soon he stopped and hid behind the trees. They started again to cry for help.

They spent, all in all, two hours near Rooslepa, but they did not receive any help, and finally they could not stay there on the ice any longer. Therefore, they turned towards Osmussaar. They managed to get at about 500 metres' distance from the island. They cried and made signs to the people they saw on the shore, but they did not receive any help there either. Therefore, they turned back and made their way towards Põõsaspea point, but there was so much open water that they could not come close to the shore.

Now the weather began to deteriorate, and it started to get dark. Therefore, there was nothing else to do than to lie down on the ice and sleep. On 14 March, in the morning, they realised that they were only 250

[5] Rußwurm 1854: 27sq. ("aus dem Kirchenbuche auf Nuckö"). The original appears to be lost. It is not kept in the EHA, where for the period 1638 to 1926 the parish registers are preserved completely except for the years 1780 to 1799 and 1820 to 1833 (EHA: 3169-1-1 to 4, 23 to 26, 28 and 29, 34 to 36); and it is not to be found either in those parts of the Noarootsi parish archive which are held at the Estonian Historical Museum in Tallinn (information kindly provided by Aivar Põldvee).

meters from the West coast of Osmussaar, and at the same time they saw some figures on the ice. Originally they thought that these were seals – after all they had set out on a seal hunt – but these beings were no seals. They were five men from Vormsi sharing their predicament.

This time they seemed to have more luck in attracting the attention of the Osmussaar inhabitants. Some people came towards them in a boat, while others made signs that they should go towards the Easterly coast. However, it was impossible to reach this, and the boat could not come to them because there were too many ice floes in the way. At about 10 a.m. they were driven away from the Osmussaar coast and were led northwards together with the fast-moving ice. They walked for three hours on the ice until they found an ice floe, which was sufficiently large and strong. There they sat down and awaited their end. They spent another night on the ice, all the while the ice floe was getting smaller and smaller since parts were breaking off at the edges. When the next morning broke, they could see the lighthouse on Hankoniemi. They left their ice floe and walked over ice and water for most of the day until they saw some footsteps. Following these they reached the village of Täktom, about 25 km from Tammisaari. They found help and later also work. Six weeks later they got hold of a boat, which fugitive peasants from Vormsi had stolen,[6] and they returned home. On the evening of 23 April, they arrived on Vormsi. The three men from Noarootsi continued their journey home on 25 April.

The pastor of Noarootsi could therefore continue the entry in the parish register by writing: "N.B. For the time being, the three persons recorded as dead can be deleted again from the list of the deceased." (*NB! Für diesmal können die drei als verstorben angeschriebenen Personen noch aus der Todtenliste ausgestrichen werden.*) (Rußwurm 1854: 28.)

The parish register, however, is not the only source mentioning this remarkable journey. Of additional sources we have a letter sent by a

[6] Despite being legally free (unlike the Estonian serfs), the Vormsi peasants had a few years earlier been reminded that they needed written permission from their landlord if they wanted to leave the island, cf. the printed *Befehl Ihro Keyserl. Majestät …* 1792. Shortly before the journey on the ice-floe the printed *Befehl Ihro Kayserl. Majestät …* 1796 claimed that men from Sweden were roving through Estonia inciting peasants to leave illegally for Sweden. In the following year the surveillance of all boats was ordered (dated Tallinn, 2 October 1797, manuscript translation into Swedish from the Noarootsi parish archives, EHA: 3169-1-11, fol. 47r sq.). However, none of the eight men used the chance to stay in freedom in Finland. On Estonian Swedes fleeing to Sweden cf. also Jakobsson 1976; Kanarbik 2003: 22.

Finnish nobleman to the pastor of Vormsi (EHA: 1252-1-5, fol. 257r sq.), the Vormsi pastor's report about the event (EHA: 1252-1-5, fol. 258r), three letters from the Noarootsi pastor to his mother (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 33r sq., 41r sq., 44v-45v) and a copy of the announcement made by him in church on Sunday, 27 April (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 42r-43v). What I have reported so far is the basic course of events on which all texts more or less agree. In many details, however, the versions differ, and there are even differences between the texts penned by the Noarootsi pastor. These differences I shall discuss during the rest of this essay.

The nobleman's name was Magnus Wilhelm von Törne. He was a captain in the Finnish army and participated in the Anjala conspiracy of 1788. He died in 1805 (Rein 1934: 492; cf. also Jern 1993: 412–415). It becomes clear from Von Törne's letter that he owned a manor house on Hankoniemi. He dates his letter "Tammisaari, 30 March 1796" (actually rather "Ekenäs d[en] 10. [April][7] 1796" – because the letter is written in Swedish and dated according to the new calendar, but since all other dates available follow the old calendar valid in Estonia at the time, I shall stay with that). Von Törne addresses the recipient as "the right honourable and learned pastor" *(Högärevördige och Höglärde herr Kyrkjoherde)*. The envelope or the address has disappeared. Maybe he did put the recipient's name there, but maybe he had not been told. He writes that five men from Vormsi – Christian Tomasson, Jacob Matsson, Lars Hansson, Anders Andersson and Petter Larsson – had arrived. Although they were frozen and hungry on arrival, none of them had been harmed or was ill. They were capable of working to earn a living until there would be an opportunity to return home. The five men from Vormsi were staying at different places in the area. Two of them were at Von Törne's place, and they had asked him to write to the pastor in order that their families on Vormsi could be informed. He also mentions that three men from Noarootsi had arrived at the same time, but he had not been told their names (EHA: 1252-1-5, fol. 257r sq.).

Did the Vormsi people really not know the names, or did they not care? Did they revert to their usual insular tribalism as soon as they had put their feet on firm ground again?

[7] Von Törne wrote "martsi", but this has been corrected, probably by the recipient, to "April N. St.".

Von Törne's letter is a matter-of-fact report. He does not mention any details of the journey across the sea, nor does he speculate about the reasons for their rescue. His letter can be found in a volume with papers from the Vormsi parish archive, now held at the Estonian Historical Archives in Tartu. Immediately following, actually on the same sheet of paper, which Von Törne had only used partly, the Lutheran pastor of Vormsi, Johann Matthias Orning, added a report about the events. He did so on 4 May 1796. This is the latest of all my sources. According to this report, the five Vormsi peasants lived at Kersleti. Four of them even lived on land belonging to the vicarage.

Orning does not mention the men's futile attempts at getting help from the shores, but he provides some information nobody else gives. After stating that parts kept breaking off the ice floe until the men hardly found space on it anymore, he continues: "In this plight they cried even more ardently to the Saviour for help, they reconciled themselves with each other, and they shared their distress and hope. As soon as this was done, a larger ice floe joined theirs and reinforced it in such a way, that they finally arrived at the shore with the most earnest thanksgiving for the very miraculous preservation." *(In dieser Noth schrien sie noch heftiger zum Erretter um Hülfe; versöhn[te]n sich unter einander, u[nd] theilten ihre Noth u[nd] Hoffnung unter sich. Kaum war dieses geschehen, so stieß ein größeres Eißstück an das ihrige u[nd] verstärk[t]e es so, daß sie endlich landeten mit eifrigsten [sic] Dank für die fast wunderbare Erhaltung.)* Orning writes that Von Törne's letter arrived just in time for Easter ("zum Osterfeste".) (EHA: 1252-1-5, fol. 258r.) According to information provided by the pastor of Noarootsi, it arrived on the Saturday before Easter, i. e. 19 April (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 45r). Orning read it aloud on Sunday after finishing his sermon. Tears of joy and thanks interrupted his words several times. The following Wednesday (23 April), the men arrived in the evening, and the following Sunday (27 April) he had them (i.e. the five men from Vormsi) sit together in church "while their journey and special preservation was commemorated in a very solicitous way and thanks was given to the mighty Saviour" *(da ihrer Reise u[nd] besonderer [sic] Erhaltung theilnehmendst gedacht u[nd] dem mächtigen Erretter gedankt wurde.)* (EHA: 1252-1-5, fol. 258r.)

Did Orning dramatise the events? At Easter, he obviously preached about the resurrection from the dead. When he was finished with this, he took the letter from Finland out of his sleeve and told his congregation that their fellow islanders, whom everyone assumed to be dead, could be welcomed back among the living – instead of letting the families know right away.

He mentions that the men had been crying to God for help, and when so many pieces had broken off the ice floe that it became too small, they reconciled all their differences. After this act of repentance God immediately sent help in the form of a larger ice floe. On reaching the shore they did not forget to thank God for their rescue.

Who was Johann Matthias Orning (cf. Carlblom 1794: 88; Paucker 1849: 319sq.; Birket-Smith 1912: 112; Nilsson 1932: 89sq.)? In 1796, he was 68 years old. Orning was of Norwegian origin. His father was a sexton. When he was 19 years old, Orning had a conversion experience. At 23 years of age, he started to study at the University of Copenhagen (there was no university in Norway at the time), but he only studied for a year. During this year, he conducted public prayer meetings at the church of the orphanage. He returned to Norway and worked first as a private tutor and later as a teacher at a charity school attached to an orphanage. Occasionally he would preach. His curriculum vitae, so far, clearly hints at an affinity to the Pietists who at the time ran most of the major orphanages in Lutheran countries.

In 1758, he left Norway for Germany, more precisely for several Moravian (Herrnhut) institutions, where he mostly seems to have worked as a teacher. At some time between 1762 and 1768, the Moravians sent him as a teacher to Livonia, where he taught at Kriimani (near Tartu), Vana-Kuuste (near Tartu), Kärla (Saaremaa) and (in 1768) Uuemõisa (near Haapsalu). Of these, certainly Kriimani was known to be a centre of the Moravian Brethren (Stryk 1877: 174; Feldmann/Von zur Mühlen 1985: 46). In 1769, he was called to become pastor of Vormsi, already 41 years old. With this transfer, he moved from the Estonian language area to a Swedish-speaking island. He was married to a daughter of Johann Caspar Meder, who, after studies at the Pietist University of Halle, served as pastor of Rannu (near Tartu) from 1729 to 1771 (Baerent 1977: 334). As a Norwegian, Orning probably quickly could learn to understand the Swedish dialect spoken on Vormsi. Normally, however, he wrote in German, and the report just mentioned is also written in this language. His German contains a few minor mistakes, but otherwise is quite good.

Before taking up the post on Vormsi, Orning was examined by the Estonian Consistory and was asked whether he was an adherent of the Moravian Brethren. Orning denied this, and later in life, in 1799, he even became rural dean of the area. He died in 1805 (Paucker 1849: 52, 320). His theological position can probably be characterised as Pietist with strong Moravian influences, but still within the limits of official Lutheranism.

Both the Pietists and the Moravians placed great emphasis on edifying

biographies and autobiographies (Lieburg 2000–2002). Pietists and Puritans enjoyed stories about "remarkable providences" – God's unexpected interventions (often in dangerous situations) leading to repentance. In the following, the people involved would live a godly life as an example for others (Walsham 1999; Lieburg 2001; cf. also Beyer 2000–2002). Even though these stories report about individual lives or specific events, they follow certain literary rules, or – to speak as a folklorist – they constitute a narrative tradition and can therefore be seen as a form of folklore with many variants. I do not necessarily want to claim that Orning deliberately falsified the story, but maybe the way he had heard it was somewhat unclear, and he just interpreted it according to the patterns he had been accustomed to for fifty years.

The different versions by the pastor of Noarootsi are maybe more difficult to explain. Gustav Carlblom[8] was 35 years old in 1796. He was born on Noarootsi where his father was a pastor. His father had immigrated from Sweden. Gustav Carlblom studied at Turku University from 1777 to 1779.[9] He obtained his first post in 1782, 21 years old, as an assistant pastor at Haapsalu, where his father was pastor at the time. In the following year, he became his successor, but in 1790 he moved to Noarootsi to become his father's successor's successor. In 1805, he succeeded Orning as rural dean of the area but kept residing on Noarootsi. Carlblom died in 1814. His writing in German is flawless.[10]

Carlblom wrote in three different contexts about the journey of 1796: (1) An announcement made to his congregation in church on Sunday, 27 April. This text is in Swedish (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 42r-43v). (2) The already mentioned entry in the parish register (in German) (Rußwurm 1854). (3) In letters to his mother (again in German) (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 33r sq., 41r sq., 44v-45v). Version (3) does not give a full account of the events, since Carlblom refers to version (1), which he sends to his mother.

[8] Cf. Carlblom 1794: 68sq., 71sq.; Paucker 1849: 30, 52, 292, 313–315; Recke/Napiersky 1859: 127sq.; Kõpp 1926–1929; Lenz et al. 1970: 143. Comparatively little information about Carlblom's life is provided by the anonymously printed funeral sermon: Bei der Beerdigung 1816.

[9] According to information kindly provided by Arvo Tering (Tartu), he received a scholarship from the Estonian Consistory from 1781 to 1783.

[10] The form "SüdenSturm" (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 45r) probably rather shows Low German than Swedish influence, cf. Grimm 1931–1942: 951 sq.

Versions (1) and (2) basically tell the same sequence of events even though sometimes one version is more detailed and sometimes the other. The two versions also agree on the last dangerous hours on the ice: The eight men were in great danger before dawn on 15 March. Their ice floe had already become too small, and waves were washing over it. They had great difficulty in clinging to the ice floe, and therefore they lay one on top of the other. Then finally the drift ice came to a standstill and the waves were less dangerous: They had reached Hankoniemi.

However, the narrative framing of the two versions differs considerably. The announcement in the church service begins with the following words: "I have also today the great pleasure to inform my congregation that the great almighty and merciful God has done an excellent work of grace, which nobody would have believed, and which we, our children and grandchildren will remember for ever after. Therefore we should thank Him and praise His miraculous power and grace." *(Jag har ock i dag det stora nöie, at berätta för min församling, det then store alsmäktige och barmhertige Gud har gjordt et dråpeligit nådenes wärk, som ingen menniska tro kunde, och det wi och wåra barn och barnabarn i alla tider minnas, och derföre wi honom tacka, och hans underliga makt och nåd berömma skole.)* (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 42r.) Carlblom continues to state that God has helped the three men of Noarootsi to survive the journey. During the last night on the ice they "cried, prayed to God and confessed their sins" *(greto, bådo Gud och bekände sina synder)* (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 43r). After mentioning that the waves washed over their ice floe he refers to Psalm 69, 2-4.[11] Then Carlblom states: "Where the need is the greatest of all, there God's help is closest." *(Men ther nöden är alrastörst, där är Guds hjelp alranärmast.)* God heard their prayers and they reached Hankoniemi (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 43r).

In the parish register – which was not available to the public – God's role in the rescue is played down. The introduction reads: "They told the following of their distress and the divine help." *(Von ihrer Noth und der göttlichen Hülfe erzählten sie Folgendes.)* (Rußwurm 1854: 28). When the men had selected a strong ice floe for the rest of their journey, Carlblom

[11] "I sink into deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am wary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fall while I wait for my God" (in the King James Version this is verse 2–3).

writes that they sat down, "awaiting death in prayer and with tears after having solemnly promised each other assistance until the last breath" *(unter Gebet und Thränen ihren Tod erwartend, nachdem sie sich feierlich versprochen, einander bis zum letzten Hauche beizustehn.)* (Rußwurm 1854: 29). About the church service of 27 April we can read that "God was thanked in church for this miraculous preservation with the entire congregation's heartfelt emotion." *(wurde in der Kirche Gott für diese wunderbare Bewahrung mit inniger Rührung der ganzen Gemeinde Dank gesagt.)* (Rußwurm 1854: 30). This is all – a rather low-key divine intervention. We can also notice the first steps towards a literary polishing: "Then finally the drift-ice began to come to a halt and to keep off the raging waves from their rotten ice craft." *(Da endlich fing das Treibeis an stehen zu bleiben und von ihrem morschen Eiskahn die tobenden Meeresfluthen abzuhalten.)* (Rußwurm 1854: 29.)

This line is further developed in Carlblom's letters to his mother. On 22 March, he informs her that eight men of Noarootsi and Vormsi had been carried away on the ice and that they were seen on 14 March from Osmussaar, "partly already dying and partly still alive" *(theils schon sterbend theils noch lebendig)*. He adds that all these men probably died in the most miserable way, either by starving or by freezing or by drowning. There was very little hope that they would reach Finland, since on 14 March there had been a terrible storm (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 33r sq., quotation fol. 33v). On 26 April, he tells his mother that the day before the three men had returned and that he is eager to speak to them and to learn about their "miraculous rescue" *(wunderbare Rettung)* (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 41v). On 3 May, he sends his mother a copy of his announcement in church. And he adds:

"According to my mind this true story would be sufficient material for a *bel esprit* to write a very entertaining and readable novel in many chapters. Just imagine how many moving scenes this story contains! To begin with the scene at Rooslepa, where they could have received help but nobody did help them out of irresponsible slackness. What kind of a scene again when they crawled out of their ice and snow huts and encountered companions in their misery! What kind of a scene near Osmussaar, where people wanted to help them but were not able to do it anymore! Furthermore, imagine the scene as the southerly storm tossed them on a rotten ice craft over the raging waves of the Gulf of Finland to the rocks on the other side! What kind of a scene, when this rotten ice boat was already so much destroyed, that it could not contain them anymore and they had to lie one on top of the other! Imagine finally the scene in which they, as

once Peter, walked an entire day across water and ice until they at last reached the shore!" (*Meines Erachtens liefert diese wahre Geschichte einem schönen Geiste hinlänglichen Stoff einen sehr unterhaltenden lesenswürdigen Roman in vielen Capiteln zu schreiben. Denn wie viele rührende Scenen kom[m]en nicht in dieser Geschichte vor. Zuvörderst welche Scene unter Roslep, wo ihn[en] geholfen werden konnte, niemand aber aus einer unverantwortlichen Saumseeligkeit es that! Welche Scene ferner, da sie aus ihr[e]n Eis- und Schneehütten hervorkrochen, und Gefährdten ihres Unglücks antrafen! Welche Scene unter Odensholm, da man ihnen helfen wollte, es aber nicht mehr zu thun im Stande war! Welche Scene ferner, da nun der SüdenSturm sie auf einem morschen EisKahn über die tobenden fluthen des fin[n]ischen Meerbusens an die dasigen felsen hinwälzte! Welche Scene da dieser morsche EisKahn nun schon so zertrüm[m]ert war, daß er sie nicht mehr faßte, und sie über einander liegen mußten! Welche Scene endlich, da sie, wie einst Petrus, auf dem Meer über Wasser u. Eis wanderten einen ganzen Tag, bis sie endlich die Küste erreichten!*) (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 45r sq..)

Unlike Orning, Carlblom hardly ever refers to God – apart from the announcement to his parishioners. For him, God does not seem to have actively intervened anymore in everyday life. Carlblom seems to have been a representative of the theological enlightenment.[12] The collecting of divine providences – actively pursued by Puritan and Pietist writers – was not the kind of literary work Carlblom would spend his time on. He seems to have been much more influenced by the fashionable novels of his day. Outwardly in his preaching, however, he still adjusted to the traditional theology in order not to shock his congregation. Maybe he even had a conflict with his mother along these lines.[13]

[12] This is no surprise given his studies in Turku, cf. Klinge et al. 1988: 601–615, 668–678, on the theological currents at the University.

[13] "Ihrer Aufforderung und Ihrem Beyspiele gemäß, meine theure Mutter! will ich mich immer zu dem Brunnquell des Lebens und der Wonne und der Seeligkeit, welches Jesus Christus mein Heiland ist, halten – und ich werd nie mit meiner Hofnung scheitern, alle[s] geduldig ertragen, was nur kommen mag" (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 46r; 4 May 1796); "Leben Sie recht wohl, liebe Mutter, und fahren Sie fort zu beten für Ihren Sie ewig hochschätzenden Soh[n] Gustaw Carlblom" (ibid., fol. 46v; 4 May 1796). The letter maybe answers his mother's concerns on this point, but no dated letter from her to Carlblom is preserved between 6 February and 28 August 1796 (EHA: 3169-1-30). In other letters to his mother Carlblom's references to God are more general: "Ist es Gottes Wille, daß meine Frau völlig genesen soll […]" and "Gott wolle fern[e]r helf[e]n" (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 39v; 9 April 1796); "Ach! der barmherzige Gott lasse es mit ihrer Genesung so fortgehen, so ist alles vorhergegangene Leiden bald ganz vergessen" (ibid., fol. 40v; 26 April 1796); "diesmahl haben Gottlob! Ihre nächtlichen Gesichte nichts bedeutet" (ibid., 44v; 3 May 1796).

In 1802, he certainly had a conflict with Orning, who had become rural dean in 1799. In a circular letter, Orning had proposed that pastors unite to fight more actively (e. g. by way of publications) for the Christian faith among people lacking this faith. Carlblom opposed this move (EHA: 1252-1-5, fol. 272r-273v). Here we can also observe Orning and Carlblom acting differently, according to their Pietist and enlightenment backgrounds.

Carlblom's prediction that posterity would remember the journey for ever after does not seem to have been fulfilled. Neither was the novel imagined by him ever written. However, a hundred years later, Latvian writer Rūdolfs Blaumanis published a short story about some men drifting on an ice floe which was later even turned into a film.[14] The short story was translated into German (Blaumann 1921) and Estonian (Blauman 1928) but seems to be entirely independent of the historical events of 1796. In the short story not all men are saved, and neither is the horse which took part in the journey. A few years before Blaumanis, in 1892, Estonian writer Juhan Liiv had published a short story about two men crossing Lake Peipsi and only reaching the shore with great difficulty, while the ice was breaking up.[15] One could mention yet another literary treatment, but it differs even more from the 1796 events. A 1937 novel by Estonian writer August Mälk contains a passage in which Saaremaa seal-hunters, only with great difficulty, manage to reach the Latvian coast in their boat heavily covered with ice.[16] This novel was also translated into German (Mälk 1940).

A bit older than these Baltic parallels is a story published in Sleswick-Holstein at the end of the nineteenth century, claiming to portray events of the middle of the eighteenth century. Two men had crossed the Flensburger Förde (now forming the border between Denmark and Germany) from Angeln to Als. When they wanted to return, the weather had changed. One of the men managed to jump over a large crack which had appeared in the ice, and he later reached the shore, but the other one had to drift on an ice floe until he was saved by fishermen near Fehmarn two days later.[17]

[14] Blaumanis 1925. I am grateful to Guntis Pakalns (Riga) for drawing my attention to the novel and the film.

[15] Liiv 1959. Tiiu Jaago and Risto Järv (both Tartu) had the kindness of refering to this short-story.

[16] Mälk 1937: ch. 10 and 11. I am grateful to Eda Kalmre (Tartu) for pointing this out to me.

[17] Thomsen 1871; a shortened version taken from "Volksblatt für Angeln" of 1897 has been edited in: Hubrich-Messow 2002: 80–83. I am grateful to Gundula Hubrich-Messow (Sterup) for providing me with copies of both texts.

I might add yet another event reported in the press at the time of finishing this essay. A Russian expedition between Spitsbergen and Greenland saw most of their research station being devoured through movements of the pack ice, leaving them homeless on an ice floe (Kurosz 2004).

All the literary treatments of similar stories were published a long time after the event under consideration here. However, one earlier account of an involuntary journey on an ice floe was indeed printed before 1796. In the description of his voyage to Gotland, published in 1745, the famous botanist Carolus Linnaeus prints the text of a votive painting in the church on Fårö, an island off Gotland, in Swedish translation (Linnæus 1745: 199sq. (29 June)). The original is in Danish verse, since at the time when it was made Gotland and Fårö belonged to Denmark. The painting was executed in 1618 and commemorates an accident in the year 1603. 15 men had set out to hunt seals, when they were driven out onto the sea on an ice floe. On passing Gotska Sandön, three of them managed to get to the shore. The others continued their journey, eating nothing but raw seal meat, until they, after two weeks, reached the Swedish mainland. Above the text, a painting shows an ice floe with 15 men and four seals on it.[18]

Linnaeus does not mention another votive painting with a similar story in the same church because the second accident happened about 25 years after his visit to the island. This time, the text is in Swedish verse. In 1767, two men were driven out onto the sea while hunting seals. On the third day, they were rescued by a boat.[19]

Orning probably never read Linnaeus' book, his education having been Danish and German and his theological orientation Pietist. Carlblom, on the other hand, might have come across it. He was educated at a Swedish university, in Turku, and he did historical research.

Folklorists tend to view a story as folklore as soon as they discover variants of it.[20] Historians start to question the authenticity of events when they

[18] Photographs of the painting are printed in Hedlund 1935: 10; Fröberg 1975: 64; Olsson 2001: 139.
[19] A photograph of the painting is printed in Fröberg 1975: 64. In 1939 Eric Fröberg retold the events depicted by the two paintings, adding many details out of his own imagination (Fröberg 1939: 75–86, 87–99). I owe some of the references concerning the Fårö stories to Ulf Palmenfelt (Visby).
[20] Cf. Beyer/Chesnutt 1997: 2: "Folkloristics is the science of variation (*Varianz*) in verbal art. Where there are no variants there can be no Folkloristics."

find similar descriptions of earlier events (cf. Erslev 1926). Is the 1796 journey therefore just another variant, and is it an account, which safely can be disregarded according to the rules of source-criticism?

I do not think so. Seal hunting on the ice was a common way to earn one's living on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea (cf. Rußwurm 1855: 24–34; Olsson 2001). Accidents must have happened rather frequently, and often they will have ended with the death of the persons involved. If the wind blew from the right direction, however, the travellers might reach the shore. For this kind of rescue story, we have to reckon with the possibility of polygenesis (cf. Wawrzyniak 1985: 87; Chesnutt 2000–2002).

The variants presented in this essay certainly do report differently about the same event in 1796, but they are probably not yet to be considered as variants in the folkloristic sense. They were all penned by men who had spoken with some of the travellers personally. The writers were second-hand witnesses, they did not just retell a story heard. The differences between the versions might be attributed to the writers' different backgrounds. In later tales about the journey of 1796, variants in the folkloristic sense might have developed, and also these variants might have been influenced by earlier experiences of the story-tellers – but this must remain speculation, since so far no other versions have come to light.

While one probably should not call the texts of 1796 "folklore", because no variants had yet developed through a process of retelling, Orning's version certainly does contain folklore elements, i. e. motives from the Pietist narrative tradition. Telling stories as matter-of-fact reports in no way excludes a folklore content. It actually appears that most of the folklore told is much rather transmitted in this form than as fairy tales or legends. This is not at all a new development due to the so-called urban legends. This way of story telling was also very common in pre-modern society, both in urban and in rural areas and in written and in oral form (cf. Beyer/Hiiemäe 2001).

Even though there seems to be no literary influence from other accounts of ice floe travels on the reports of 1796, the texts do show literary influence none-the-less: edifying literature in the case of Orning and fictional novels in the case of Carlblom. Carlblom's report from the parish register was edited in a Tallinn almanac for the year 1855 (Rußwurm 1854). The edition might have influenced some of the later literary treatments, but this need not be discussed here, since we are concerned with the events of 1796.

Unfortunately, I cannot say anything about how the eight travellers

themselves spoke about their journey. Apparently, they did not commission a commemorative painting as on Fårö. Neither for Vormsi, nor for Noarootsi parish, are accounts preserved from this time, and therefore it is impossible to tell whether any other votive gifts were made to the church. In any case, the conditions probably were unfavourable for this. On Noarootsi, Carlblom assumedly had no understanding for this kind of expenditure, and on Vormsi financial support was probably not available, since the tenants there were not really on speaking terms with their landlords (cf. Kanarbik 2003).

We know rather little about the eight men themselves. "Dückers Matths" was Mats Hansson, born 1 July 1750, died in 1826. He lived on the farm "Dykersgården" (hence his name)[21] in Paslepa village and was married to Mari Christiansdotter. Their son Anders[22] Matsson also took part in the journey. He was born on 30 October 1776 and died on 4 November 1831. In the records from a parish visitation probably conducted around 1800, Mats Hansson's reading skills are described as "good", those of his wife as well, but those of their son Anders only as "fair" ("zieml[ich]") (EHA: 3169-2-74, fol. 134v). "Christians Christian" can be identified with Christian Johansson,[23] born 22 January 1779, died 28 November 1801, living on the farmstead "Christiansgården" in Paslepa. In the visitation records just mentioned,his reading skills are stated to be"fair" ("zieml[ich]"); his wife read well.[24] "Christians Matths", the only one of the men managing to escape before the journey started for good, might be identified with the farmhand Matths Andersson from another farmstead called "Christiansgården", located in the district "Gamlas-gårdarna" in the Paslepa area (born 4 September 1782, reading skills "good") (EHA: 3169-2-74, fol. 111r), but it seems more likely that he came from the same farmstead as Christian Johansson, and in that case he cannot be identified.

The five men from Vormsi were all from the village of Kersleti. One of

[21] The Swedes of Vormsi and Noarootsi were called – just like the Estonians at the time – after the farmstead they lived on; unlike the Estonians, however, they also had a more official patronymic.
[22] In Carlblom's announcement to the parish he is called "Andres" (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 42r).
[23] In Carlblom's announcement to the parish he is called "Christians Johansson Christian" (EHA: 3169-1-32, fol. 42r).
[24] EHA: 3169-2-74, fol. 134r. I am grateful to Göte Brunberg (Hägersten) for providing data on these three persons.

them lived on land belonging to the manor house. This was Christian Tomasson. He was born around 1751 and grew up on the farmstead Backesa in the village of Rälby. On 27 December 1772, he married Marie Hansdotter from the village of Borrby (both places are located on Vormsi as well). Between 1784 and 1795, the couple moved to the farmstead Tomasa in Kersleti, where Christian Tomasson was head of the household until his death in 1804. They had no children reaching adulthood.[25]

The other four travellers were living on land belonging to the vicarage.[26] Petter Larsson was born, on 6 March 1771, in Kersleti. He lived on the farmstead Hanasa. On 29 December 1788, he had married Gertrud Andersdotter from Kersleti. Petter Larsson died in 1814. The couple had six children of whom only one was born before 1796, but it was still-born.

Jacob Matsson was born on 28 September 1757 in Borrby on Vormsi. On 9 December 1778, he married Katarina Larsdotter, a stepsister of Petter Larsson, and moved to the farmstead Hanasa in Kersleti where he later became head of the household. He died in 1809. The couple had seven children, all born before 1796.

There are two possibilities each for identifying Lars Hansson and Anders Andersson, but if we assume that they both lived on the same farmstead, they were the following men from the farmstead Andorsa: Lars Hansson, the future head of the household, was born around 1748. He was married to Maria Larsdotter and died in 1817. The couple had six children (five in 1796). Anders Andersson was born on 27 October 1768. On 4 December 1793, he married Maria Larsdotter from Saxby on Vormsi.

For some Vormsi parish members, data about reading and catechism skills are available for earlier years but unfortunately not for our travellers.[27] Probably their skills resembled those of their colleagues from Noarootsi. The fact that they asked the Finnish nobleman to write back home does not mean that they could not read. At the time, writing was taught independently from reading. Reading printed matter (primarily the catechism) was a basic skill. Only some advanced further and learned to read handwriting or even to write themselves. While the men might not

[25] I am grateful to Bo Nyman (Stockholm) for identifying the men from Vormsi.

[26] Lists of persons living on the vicarage's land in 1782, 1794 and 1795 can also be found in EHA: 1252-1-5, fol. 167r-168v, 181r-182r, 249r-252r.

[27] EHA: 1252-2-4, fol. 261v-268r (data for Kersleti).

have actively participated in the culture of writing, they certainly took part in it passively. They might even have read penny-dreadfuls with stories about survivors of shipwrecks or penny-godlies with tales about how God in the end always saved His children.

We do not know either how the journey influenced the travellers' later lives. Did the miraculous preservation lead – in the Pietist tradition – to repentance and a changed life lived in an exemplary way? Or were the memories of the days and nights spent on the ice floe only rekindled by the fire-side in order to while away the time with thrilling stories?

One lesson to be drawn by folklorists from the 1796 journey could be the following, which is rather banal: All archival texts have authors. If one wants to understand what the informants were saying, one first has to analyse how the authors were thinking. Putting things into context obviously involves assumptions about relevance (cf. Dilley 2002), and one such assumption should be the need to study how the folklorist's sources came to be written down.

A lesson to be drawn by historians is just as banal: This would be a re-evaluation of narrative sources and narrative history. For 25 years, historians now have discussed the "revival of narrative". How should we tell about memorable events of the past? Are events the most important objects of historical research? Does an analytical or structural approach necessarily lead to an undistinguished prose style? Is history a social science? How important are narrative sources? Should historical narrative research be left to folklorists and philologists, or should historians also be engaged in it (cf. Stone 1979; Høvsgaard 1999; Graf 2001; Beyer 2002)?

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Figure 1 (p. 194). The following geographical names mentioned in the article appear on the map as given in italics: Estonia (*Estland*), Gulf of Finland (*Finnischer Meerbusen*), Haapsalu (*Hapsal*), Hankoniemi (*Hangö Udde*), Kärla (*Kergel*), Lake Peipsi (*Peipus See, Osero Tschudskoje)*, Noarootsi (*Nuckö*), Osmussaar (*Odensholm*), Rannu (*Randen*), Saaremaa (*Ösel*), Tallinn (*Reval, Kolywan*), Tammisaari (*Ekenäs*), Tartu (*Dorpat, Jurjew*) and Vormsi (*Worms*) (Andree 1893–96: 91).

Figure 2 (p. 195). The following geographical names mentioned in the article can be found on Ludwig August Mellin's map as given in italics: Borrby (*Borby*), Gamlasgårderna (*Gamlas Gardarna*), Haapsalu (*Hapsal*), Kersleti (*Kerslätt*), Noarootsi (*Nuckö*), Osmussaar (*Odensholm, Osmesaar*), Paslepa (*Paschlep*), Rälby (*Röhlby*), Rooslepa (*Roslep*), Saxby (*Saxby*), Telise point (*Tolnas Spitze*), Uuemõisa (*Neuhof*) and Vormsi (*Worms, Hiorootsi Saar*) (Mellin 1798: Der Hapsalsche Kreis).


FINNISCHER MEERBUSEN
Bucht v. Narwa
RIGAER
ESTLAND
LIVLAND
Peipus See
(Osero Tschudskoje)
Wirz-Järw
HELSINGFORS
REVAL (KOLYWAN)
Baltischport
Hochland
Hangö
Nargö
Odensholm
Worms
Hapsal
DAGÖ
ÖSEL
Arensburg
Moon
Pernau
(Pernow)
Kühnö
(Kynö)
Runö
Wesenberg
Weissenstein
Fellin
DORPAT
(JURJEW)
Walk
Wenden
Kimito
Ekenäs
Kunda
Tolsburg
Mehikorem
Lavensari
Tütters
Salismünde
Hainasch


41
Feuerbake
I. Odensholm
Oomesaar
Jesus Kapelle
Sundstein
Sunist
Apollon
S E E
Tschernewa
Dirhamb Spitze
Roslep
Bergeby
Oitbek
Rostad
Rikul
Rikholz
Stapelboden
Bösgrund
Yördgrund
Ankergrund
I. Nuckö
Tölnas Spitze
Byshohnn
Jnsel Worms
Hiorootsi Saar
Fischgrund
Dibi Tiukan
Saxby Näse
Saxby
Kerelatt
Borby
Röhlby
Dibi
Torby
Tallane
St. Olai
Söderby
Swiby
Forby
Magnushof
Hiorootsi Saar
Feldwächter
Rumpo
I. Pasta
Ostergrund
Westgrund
Onerahho
Papis Laid
St. Katharinen
Paslidep
Birkas
Enby
Osterby
Birkas
Bürgermeisterholm
Hapsal
Neuhof
Weissenfeld
Linden
Assokul
Pargel
Rotha
Kebbelhof
Berghof
Kiwidepä
Kidepä
Die Einw
Sastama
Moiskül
Kertel
Kertla
Hinso
Löppe
Sakla
Vomba
Pardas
Williwalla
N
Tammiselja
Undama
Kerrema
Grossenhof
Pühhalep
Kennis
Waimel
Orriak
Kassar
Hassar
Saare Laid
Suur Saer
Ziegenhafen
Kakkar
Vorgeb: Serel
Uxholm
Kaddaka Laid
Rampi Rahho
Hellama Rahho
Gross Harris
Hosti Holm
Kohhilaid
Erick
Suur Erika Kiwwi
Heinalaid
Vorgebirge Sarwe
Sarwe
Leppist
Saarnak I.
Warres Laid
Kanwatse Laid
Heinalaid
Villanikatz
Korgelaid
Kowerlaid
Krugholm
Ahkilaid
Sea Kiun
Kallast