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Vanishing Lapps, progress in action. Finnish lappology and representations of the Sámi in publicity in the early 20th century¹



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Abstract. The article examines how the representations of the Sámi were constructed in Finnish studies on Sámi in 1920 and 1930s. The role of racial studies in the Finnish lappology remained a short-period influence, while the dominant scientific field of interest, the Finno-Ugric research, had its own hierarchies concerning the Sámi, implied in the multi-disciplinary field from linguistics to folkloristics and ethnology. This branch was challenged by the

human anthropological or cultural geographical position, emphasizing the cultural adaptation to the environment as the guiding force formulating Sámi societies. Besides purely scientific knowledge, the article studies the extensive field of other Sámi descriptions, which spanned from travel guides to newspaper articles. It suggests that this mixture of scientific and political interests together with stereotypical representations of the Sámi forms the context for the poor reputation of lappology among the later researchers.

Keywords: *Finnish lappology, Finno-Ugric research, human anthropology, representations of the Sámi*

Lappology (early research on Sámi carried out by outsiders) has often been discredited by current Sámi research. According to the encyclopaedia on Sámi (2005) published in Finland, lappology “was vitiated by numerous scientific and social prejudices, such as a search for the exotic, a Romantic concept of man, social Darwinism, and so on”. [1, Pulkkinen R., p. 189] The Norwegian researcher Stein R. Mathisen points out that lappology was originally a neutral concept but which now carries implications of research controlled by the ruling class, social Darwinism, physical anthropology and the politics of assimilation. [2, Mathisen S.R., pp. 104–105]

The image of Sámi that was created by lappological research has been criticised, with reference to Edward Said, as a northern version of orientalism [3, Hirvonen V, pp. 33–34]. Lappology is considered an opposite to modern Sámi studies [4, Seurujärvi-Kari I., p. 356], the development of which has been described even as an apparent paradigm change [5, Pääkkönen E., p. 106]. In contrast with these arguments, historian of science Pekka Isaksson concludes in his dissertation [6, Isaksson P., p. 325] that the views of Finnish racial researchers at the beginning of the 20th century cannot be regarded outright racist. Isaksson claims that their views did reveal ethnocentric and stereotyping attitudes towards Sámi people but no racist accentuations. Some philologists, on the other hand, have stated that Sámi linguistics has not undergone any revolutionary developments. [Researcher Ante Aikio, personal communication.]

¹ Translated to English by Jouko Salo.

These divergent and partly contradictory views on lappology reflect the fact that the history of Sámi research in Finland has not been analysed in any great depth. Apart from linguistics, which is covered well in terms of research history [7, Sammallahti P.], and some basic articles on Sámi research history in Finland [8, Müller-Wille L.], discussions on the development of research on Sámi have largely been based on assumptions and, I would argue, even prejudices about the nature of lappology. Based on those assumptions, the shift from the "era of lappologists" to modern Sámi studies has been considered a dramatic change.

In his article on the researcher profile of the Norwegian J.K. Qvigstad, professor Lars-Ivar Hansen formulates a fruitful model for examining lappological research. He examines the issue from three perspectives, that is, those of science, minority politics and cultural conceptions. According to Hansen, Qvigstad's merits as a representative of the empirical lappological research tradition are quite indisputable, whereas his cultural views are clearly tied to their time. Hansen regards Qvigstad's minority political influence the most problematic: as an expert on Sámi issues, he influenced decisions about Sámi politics, based on cultural conceptions that had clear connections with colonialist power [9].

Thus, Hansen's model connects the work of lappologists with the general scientific frameworks (paradigms) and with the effects that research and views regarding Sámi had on practical Sámi politics and representations. This setup makes research and texts an intricate part of the relationships between Sámi people and majority populations in a time when there was a demand for expertise and knowledge about Sámi in the colonialist government. Although J.K. Qvigstad, in the same vein as his Finnish colleague T.I. Itkonen, for instance, wished to regard research as "pure science" that had nothing to do with politics or colonialism, their findings reflected the needs of outsiders and were welcomed by decision-makers as well as the general public in colonial situation [10, Rautio Helander, p. 121].

Recent studies have shown that the expert role (*experternas roll*) that lappologists gained was contradictory: Qvigstad, for example, benefited from Norwegianisation in that it offered him a position in which he was able to pursue his academic ambitions and his interest in Sámi culture; however, at the same time it made him a part of the politics of assimilation that was harmful to Sámi people. There are hints that he sometimes pondered his contradictory role but he was also convinced to do invaluable work when documenting the "last traces of a vanishing people" [11, Lehtola V.-P., pp. 47–49].

This mixture of scientific and political interests with the representations of the Sámi in general seems to form the context also for the poor reputation of lappology among the later

researchers. In my article, I examine how the representations of the Sámi were constructed in Finnish studies on Sámi in 1920 and 1930s, and how accurate the concept of lappology seems to be to evaluate them. Besides purely scientific knowledge, I have studied the extensive field of other Sámi descriptions, too, which spanned from travel guides to newspaper articles and which also seem to be reflected in the critical lappology comments I quoted at the beginning.

In addition to scientific descriptions and media representations, my interest focuses on the views of civil servants working in Lapland; they were in a significant position in the administration of Sámi and wielded background influence in decisions concerning Sámi. Consequently, “knowledge” on Sámi emerges as a focus in my article: what kind of information sources were available on Lapland and Sámi, and what starting points was new knowledge produced from? My purpose all along is to outline the vague “lappology” term more accurately.

Multifaceted Lapland research

The period from the 1910s to the 1930s seems to signify the golden age of “classical lappology” in Finland, because many subsequently renowned researchers of Sámi culture established their career during that period. At the turn of the century, the leading Finnish lappologists were the linguist Frans Äimä and the geographer J. E. Rosberg, who published the first modern monograph on the Sámi in Finland, *Lappi (Lapland)* in 1911. Also T. I. Itkonen, Väinö Tanner and Samuli Paulaharju started their research before the independence of Finland in 1917. In the Tartu peace treaty in 1920, the Pechenga region was annexed to Finland, and Finland acquired a new Sámi group, Skolt Sámi. Because of the closing of the Russian border by Soviet Union, the Finno-Ugric researchers had to turn their field trips to the north instead of the east, which had been very important direction this far [12, Vahtola J.].

Applying the division of Ludger Müller-Wille, it’s possible to perceive three perspectives in cultural studies concerning the Sámi in the 1920s and 1930s: Fenno-Ugric research, the human geographical approach and the racial studies. [8, Müller-Wille L.] The dominant scientific field of interest for the Sámi in Finland was the Finno-Ugric research, characterized by multi-disciplinary perspectives from linguistics to folkloristics and ethnology. Itkonen, for example, started his research on the Skolt Sámi and tradition already in his student years in the 1910s and by the 1920s he had become one of the leading Sámi scholars. Apart from linguistics, he was educated in ethnology and he also made studies in folklore, religious science and history.

Following the ideals of Finno-Ugric research, Itkonen accumulated extensive collections in material culture as well as in tradition and language samples in order to construct an overall picture of Sámi culture. In addition to the desire of Finno-Ugric researchers to preserve

information of vanishing cultures, Itkonen was convinced that the sufficiently large material would reveal the “true nature” of the primeval Finno-Ugric mentality and society. Similarly to Qvigstad in Norway and K. B. Wiklund in Sweden, Itkonen wrote numerous studies on the material and spiritual culture of Sámi for various scientific publications, crossing the boundaries of disciplines such as linguistics, folkloristics, ethnology, and even history. The wide output of articles constituted the foundation that Itkonen’s later magnum opus, *Suomen lappalaiset I–II* (Finland’s Lapps) (1948), was based on. [See 13, Itkonen T.]

Samuli Paulaharju, on the other hand, was not an academic researcher although he has also been known as a “lappologist”. In his ten quintessential works on Lapland and Finnmark in 1919–1939, which were very personal and stylised, as well as illustrated works, he guided the readers into the northern world on the levels of knowledge as well as emotion. Only two of his books actually focused on Sámi, because he considered Lapland’s history as an intermingling and overlapping of Sámi and Finns, as borderland culture, which was characterised by many special features in tradition, livelihoods as well as languages [14, Paasilinna E., pp. 299–300].

The strong branch of Finno-Ugric studies was challenged by the human anthropological or cultural geographical position, which already professor Rosberg represented with his “anthropogeographic perspective”. His followers geographers Väinö Tanner and Karl Nickul came into contact with Sámi as cartographers of Pechenga or “Finnish colony” and thus “mapped” the ethnic, demographic and cultural circumstances. In 1927, Tanner published a study of how to benefit from the economic possibilities of Pechenga. He accepted Finnish colonisation in the region, but wanted to divide the Finnish and Skolt Sámi livelihoods with a border similar to Swedish *odlingsgräns*. However, Tanner’s position was that the development had to be based on the local population and its livelihoods. In his human anthropological or cultural geographical study on Skolts in 1929, he emphasised that a traditional Skolt society, despite of its “unorganised” nature, was best-equipped in its adaptation to the environment. It was also multi-layered, because the existence of the *siida* was essentially connected with nature and land use. [For Väinö Tanner, see 15, Massa I.; 16, Susiluoto P.; 17, Nyysönen J.]

Also Nickul came to the north as a representative of the Finnish state, as geodesist, who became acquainted with Skolts and their culture during his land surveys. Like Tanner, he wanted to make Finns aware of the special nature of the Skolt culture and strongly contributed to public debate. Nickul’s scientific interest in Sámi culture started from Skolt place names and he also started to collect material on the *siida* system and its land use. Similarly to Tanner, he wanted to study the historical and local variations of Sámi culture as well as the different ways to actively

adapt to the environment. Geographers introduced an interesting viewpoint of environmental history into Sámi studies beside the mainstream ethnological research [18, Lehtola V.-P.].

Contrary to other Scandinavian countries, racial theories were not largely implemented in Finland until 1910s, because in European theories Finns themselves were generally counted among the undeveloped Mongolian race [19, Kemiläinen A., p. 136]. Partly the tendency of the Swedish-speaking intelligentsia to emphasize their Germanic roots started to provoke Finnish researchers to initialize a project of racial studies in 1910. However, it was the independence of Finland in 1917, intensifying Finnish national rhetoric and anti-Russian sentiment, even a downright Russophobia, which enhanced the desire to dissociate from the eastern or Mongolian roots in 1920s and 1930s [6, Isaksson P., pp. 189–198, 269–272].

Yrjö Kajava's extensive research project on the racial properties of the Finnish population in the 1920s and 1930s was largest survey of the time, including also Finnish tribes, as well as criminals, because of their interesting racial traits. A total of 37 percent of Finnish Sámi were measured between 1926 and 1934, 795 persons altogether. Research groups traveling with technical equipment caused various negative sentiments in Sámi territory. "Sometimes it turned out that a whole village population went into hiding when they heard the researchers were coming", lamented Näättänen. Special discontent among the Sámi caused a Finnish anthropological expedition in 1934, which exhumed 70 skeletons on the old Inari cemetery island, to be benefitted in scientific studies in the anatomical department of the Helsinki University [6, Isaksson P., pp. 250–257; also 20, Itkonen T. I. I, pp. 138–139, 144; 21, Itkonen T., pp. 330–331].²

Finnish racial studies quite soon ran into the same problems that were causing a scientific crisis elsewhere in Europe. The general picture was drowning into the "shoreless infinity" of measurements, vast numbers of characteristics and an almost limitless number of variables which made it impossible to make reliable conclusions. In addition to purely scientific reasons, social and political causes also influenced in the 1930s. The leading authority at the field, professor Väinö Lassila, dissociated himself from racial theories. He regarded them as outdated and scientifically inconsequential, but he also criticised politically strived racial hierarchies which were "artificially contrived and lack any scientific basis". He attacked the doctrine of racial hierarchy in 1935, which was justifying "to the inhumanities and cruelties" and served as a theoretical basis for European expansion and imperialism [6, Isaksson P., pp. 297–302].

The crisis of racial research did not, however, appear suddenly in the views of other

² In 1995, the skulls exhumated from the Inari cemetery islands were repatriated and buried again in their finding places, see 22 Lehtola, V.-P.

researchers, not to mention the public discussions. In *Suomen maantieteen käsikirja* (General Handbook on the Geography of Finland) in 1936, for instance, geographer Kaarlo Hildén still presented Sámi in the light of racial hierarchies. He interpreted the long skull and vertical teeth of the European and Finnish race as a sign of advanced development, while the small stature, short skull and small teeth of Lapps reflected underdevelopment [22, Hildén K., pp. 449–450].

Stronger and weaker cultures

The racial theories remained a short but prominent phase in Finnish research. However, they did not initiate the idea of Sámi inferiority compared with Europeans and Finns. The idea of hierarchies between cultures was already an old classification convention of Finno-Ugric research, which can be considered the other theory based on evolutionism. Cultural development was there understood as a gradually ascending and progressing phenomenon.

It was clear to many Finnish researchers that more developed peoples had displaced weaker ones, such as Sámi, who were forced to retreat to the north. The way natural peoples “remained” on the hunting culture level indicated that they had come to a standstill in their development. They represented an ancient Finno-Ugric cultural form, which had always remained the same. This gave rise to a view of some ethnologists that when studying the Skolt Sámi *sijid* system, for instance, the researcher could reconstruct an image of the ancient Finnish society at the same time. Similarly, Erik Therman stated that many memories from “the childhood of our people” lived in Sámi tradition [23, Therman E., pp. 109].

The reverse side to stagnated development was the conviction that Sámi were “a people without history”. The Hegelian idea was adapted in Finland by a well-known fennoman, J. V. Snellman with the idea that only a people on a level capable of forming a state can talk about its own history. With a natural people remaining on a tribal community level, it was a case of folk culture, which had been influenced by external factors at most. For example, for the author of *Suomen historia* (1926, History of Finland), K. O. Lindeqvist, there was only one significant event in Sámi history: conversion to Christianity. This was also the only reference to Sámi in the whole book [24]. Schoolbooks on history ignored Sámi completely.

Describing Sámi as a people without history was easy from the European viewpoint. They had not waged wars, built cities or fortresses, and they had no written history. And there was no trace of an organised society in the Sámi past. It was typical to talk about “wandering Lapps” who, in J. W. Ruuth’s words, “roamed back and forth in boundless wilds and erected their simple ‘huts’ now here, now there. When they had stayed long enough in some area, they disappeared again completely” [25, p. 1033].

Apart from attitudes, the conceptions of researchers in the 1920s naturally reflected the amount of knowledge on Sámi at that time. It was not until the studies of Väinö Tanner and Karl Nickul from 1920s and 1930s that the diversified social organisation, which was highly advanced also among Sámi, started to become discernible. Instead of simple "roaming" and "wandering Lapps", new research revealed that the annual cycle of Sámi took place in strictly limited areas according to strictly agreed rules.

The underlying conclusion in the concept "wandering Lapps" was clear: Sámi had never had permanent dwellings, not even usufructuary territories. This was a matter of owning land and proving the ownership, which came up also in purely historical studies. J. W. Ruuth, for example, commented that Sámi "can hardly be taken into account when talking about settling the land, in the proper sense of the word" [25, p. 1033]. Kaisa Korpijaakko has considered this notion unfounded, but points out that it has become crystallised as the foundation of wide literature on the history of settlement and law in Finland in the 1920s and 1930s [26, pp. 47–71].

The view of Sámi history reflects the fact that many conceptions of Sámi were born as some kind of by-products when national sciences tried to fathom the special national character of Finns. The studies of Jalmari Jaakkola and Väinö Voionmaa, for example, did not in any way focus on Sámi history, which these two nationalist historians discussed only inasmuch as it was involved in Finnish national benefits. The image of Sámi was therefore constructed in relation to Finnish identity, as a reverse side of sorts.

As the heterogeneity of perspectives implies, the field of Sámi research was by no means homogenous in the 1920s and 1930s. Lappologists include such researchers as Itkonen and Nickul, who did their central life's work on Sámi subjects, and such researchers as Eliel Lagercrantz, Kustaa Vilkuna, Ilmari Manninen and Uno Holberg (Harva), who made only some studies on Sámi. Some of them were solely linguists (Paavo Ravila, Erkki Itkonen), while T.I. Itkonen, for example, was characteristically a multidisciplinary scholar. Finnish research activities were liveliest in Pechenga, where representatives of almost all possible disciplines from geologists to archaeologists and botanists to folklorists worked especially in late 1920s. The Skolt Sámi issue was, however, the most central [12, Vahtola J.].

Lappologists represented different disciplines of science as well as different manners of approach. Itkonen's understanding wanted. Lappologists also had dissimilar attitudes in their (research) policies. Many researchers considered Sámi studies predominantly a scientifically interesting attempt to record the characteristics of a "moribund" kindred people. The opposite notion was represented by Karl Nickul, who felt that the Sámi issue was a "cultural problem" with

ethical undertones. He tried to influence the conditions of Sámi with his writings and practical political actions. He was one of the strongest proponents of the Suonikylä preservation project in the 1930s [For Nickul, see 18, Lehtola, V.-P.].

"A true Lapp never eats with fork and knife"

Scientific research published in the publications of different disciplines and in international arenas often remained out of reach from the general public. Tanner wrote in Swedish or French, Itkonen published in scientific periodicals, and linguists in their own publications. Samuli Paulaharju's works were popular, although the Sámi identity in them was often related to the old, even mythological past. Scientific studies were perhaps commented in the press, and researchers could sometimes publish popular articles in magazines or in national *Helsingin Sanomat* newspaper.

Content favoured by the public required more popularized expressions, which could represent science to audience in suitable forms, incouriging e.g. the prevailing national thinking. Thus the racial image of the Sámi, for instance, remained prevalent in spite of the crisis of racial theories in scientific spheres. The public image of Sámi was elaborated in a wider field than science and research. A great deal of ordinary Finns — even of civil servants heading for Lapland — adopted their notions from a quite diverse field of communication, from newspapers to fiction and travel guides, as well as textbooks, which could, in fact, have an inestimable importance through school teaching.

The Sámi representations were largely born as a by-product of the "Finnish national identity project". Sámi were scrutinised in the light of the Finnish national self-image and often as an antithesis. The "information" about Sámi in these sources could be permeated with many kinds of preconceptions and beliefs. Scientific concepts could easily change into simple evolutionary thinking, which was applied to the Sámi. Racial theories intermingled with notions of developmental differences between cultures, and Finnish national sentiment of grandeur dressed into exaggerated claims of the survival of the fittest. Furthermore, Finnish colonial thinking and Russophobia were added to the mixture in Pechenga.

When traffic connections to Lapland improved with the Arctic highway to Pechenga, ordinary Finns came increasingly into contact with Sámi. Apart from old stereotypes about Lapps, tourists had their own expectations and prejudices, which applied to the conditions of a "lower" and "undeveloped" people. The views expressed by the press and travel guides had a strong influence in attitudes of the travellers who, as T. I. Itkonen criticized, "somewhat arrogantly raised dust clouds along Lapland's roads" [20, p. 156]. A civil servant from the south could comment in

the *Rovaniemi* newspaper in 1923: "Lapland's culture is not as lowly as it used to be. A Lapp is already quite well informed of the conditions in our country. Literacy is already quite common and newspapers circulate in surprising numbers. But a lot of primitive and undeveloped still exists there, too."³

Many Sámi representations of the time reflected the culture and attitudes of their authors rather than expressed anything essentially new about Sámi. Lapland visitors could themselves come from any kind of one-horse town, but in Lapland they could act like lords, despising the Sámi and treating them arrogantly as if these were lower beings, although there was necessarily nothing commendable in their own housekeeping⁴. The difficulty was mutual, of course, when the conditions and knowledge level of the others was unknown, but usually only the statements of the majority became public. You can read, however, similar Sámi attitudes in some travel reports. The school counsellor Rauhamaa, for instance, was carried away by northern lights on a reindeer sleigh ride, and he wanted to share his enthusiasm with the driver boy. "Are these the northern lights then?" he chatted to begin with. The boy pointed to the sky and replied: "Well, when the sky flashes, it's northern lights, and those small white dots are stars and the big round one at the back is the moon!" [27, Hämäläinen, A., p. 78.]

Similarly, the prototype of a Reindeer Lapp, Juhani Jomppanen, could surprise tourists with accurate knowledge about the long plains and big cities of Germany. In 1910s, he had been travelling Middle Europe in a "lapp caravan", a Sámi group that introduced Sámi culture in the frames of colonialist ethnological shows [See 28, Lehtola V.-P.]. He considered Hamburg and Stettin to be grand cities, but the finest of all was Königsberg, where Juhani's son had been born. Jomppanen's knowledge of Helsinki and Vyborg may have surprised or even disappointed the tourist, who was perhaps prepared to ask if the Lapp had ever heard of streets or apartment buildings. Jomppanen had visited the Finnish Parliament already during the Russian rule and could discuss with the tourist about collections in the National Museum, for example [See e.g. 29, Pälsi S., p. 24].

The Finnish tourist was not far from the suspicion that this was not a genuine Lapp at all. The question of the authenticity of Lapps often preoccupied travel guide writers, because the established notion was that a Lapp should be a true child of nature with accompanying characteristics. A writer in search of genuine Sámi tradition may have been disappointed, when Laestadian Pjera Tornensis, for example, offered to sing hymns instead of the requested traditional yoik music [23, Therman E., p. 47]. Educated or otherwise modern Sámi brought

³ Rovaniemi 5.11.1923.

⁴ Suomenmaa 1931, pp. 263.

surprises to travellers who did not quite know how to react to them. Ernst Lampén wondered about the first "proper Sámi" he saw, an Inari Sámi boy assigned as his guide who, despite his purely Lapp appearance, started to sing "continental jingles" in the wilderness, melodies from operettas such as *The Merry Widow* and *The Count of Luxembourg*. The boy had been with Jomppanen's Lapp caravan and the stay in German cities had yielded many kinds of influences [30, Lampén E., pp. 78–80].

The incident was a funny curiosity to Lampén and it made an entertaining chapter in a travel guide. Sometimes modern Lapps could, however, make Finns even irritated. A Sámi sitting in the backseat of a Ford made Ilmari Turja snort that "a Lapp costume does not go with a car nor does a South Bothnian knife agree with a Lapp costume" [31, Turja I., pp. 58–70]. In the school children's book *Kotimaan kirja*, Salme Setälä disapproved of the Norwegian Sámi who drove "even bicycles in their regional costumes, which seemed quite a ridiculous victory of civilisation". Setälä criticised that Sámi had erected their souvenir kiosks along great travel routes and on the outskirts of such towns as Tromsø [32, Setälä S., p. 46]. Many visitors to Pechenga felt the same when they saw Skolts making "affairs" near inns along the Arctic road and the bus route. Although the poverty of Sámi was deplored by the travellers, such activity at the expense of tourists was not tolerated. Culture offered for money did not feel authentic.⁵

The claim for "authenticity" was closely connected to the traditional way of life and avoiding modern influences. In an article published in the *Suomen kuvalehti* magazine, E.N. Manninen put his own view indirectly to the mouth of his Sámi friend Post-Ovla (Guttorm). When speaking of the Sámi Hans Skaiti, who used to visit Helsinki, Manninen wrote in his characteristic light style: "Skaiti is not by far a real Lapp: he has visited Helsinki once and eaten with a fork in the Fennia hotel with gentlemen." [33, pp. 145–149]. Sakari Pälsi also commented at the turn of the 1930s that modern times with their haircuts, gold watches and polished nails had arrived to the Sámi [29, pp. 19–20].

Generally the Sámi who had acquired modern influences were considered "deserters" from their own culture. Travel guide writers solicitously regarded modern influences as harmful to the Sámi people. This was often expressed as a compassionate view that an authentic natural people was damaged by contact with civilisation. "Higher culture is contagious like pestilence", lamented Lampén [30, p. 122]. There was a social Darwinist idea in the background that a lower culture was not capable of merging into a higher culture. The Sámi "infected" by culture were believed to either deteriorate — as it was seen to have happened to many Skolts in Pechenga — or renounce

⁵ Kaleva 21.8.1924.

their culture and become Finnish. Even Armas Launis, who had a profound understanding of Sámi culture, stated: "They cannot thrive in better and more favourable conditions, they wither like a forest plant in a garden." [34, pp. 24–25]

Sámi were not considered to have chances to adapt influences into their culture. According to Ilmari Turja, they had been deprived of "all weapons in the fight against the world", and therefore their extinction as a people was just a matter of time. Turja advised Sámi culture to stand still: "... a Lapp is best suited to his original purpose, to roam in the fjells with their reindeer. There he can keep to himself like a child in a sandbox. Because a Lapp has a child's mind, a woman's memory, although he has a bearded manly face" [31, pp. 69–70].

There were quite few voices to oppose of this view in publicity. Karl Nickul continuously emphasised that, in the course of their history, Sámi had remarkably well adapted to quite drastic changes without losing their Sámi identity [35]. Erik Therman suggested the same in his comment that Sámi were among the most resistant peoples in the world and therefore most capable of development due to their old-fashioned character. In his view, the Sámi mind "constantly as water in its inflexible flexibility, obstructive in its receptivity, comprehends all experiences in its Lapp way and explains and interprets everything to Lapp" [23, p. 67].

"Skolt out!"

Road construction to Pechenga had many effects on the development of Finland's "new colony" and on Skolt Sámi, who were annexed to Finland in the peace treaty. Apart from settlers, civil servants and various researchers, the road brought tourists, who headed in masses to the Arctic Sea and Finland's unique fjords. While the most industrious Skolts erected souvenir booths or had their pictures taken together with tourists for money, tourists were seeking for "genuine experiences", in other words they wanted experiences and pictures of Skolts on their own and definitely without a payment.

So Skolts often received unexpected visitors — and what kind of visitors! Like Vaasan Jaakkoo, a known Finnish writer, they could come quite straightforwardly into Skolt homes and start appraising both the dwellings and the dwellers: "Skolt dwellings are measly looking and the door is so small that you have to stoop on all fours to squeeze yourself in. I was badly distressed when I pushed in, and when Hermanni started to come in through the same opening, his shoulders got stuck in the door." In this humorously intended description, the Ostrobothnian writer despised his hosts by picking at the motley interior as well as the dwellers, who were "crossbred Russians and Lapps" [36, pp. 96–97].

Vaasan Jaakkoo and Ernst Lampén, a travel writer, are perhaps extreme examples of the

arrogant insolence that reflected the attitude of Finns towards Pechenga. Despite the fact that Pechenga was one of the most multiethnic regions in Finland together with Vyborg, Finnish national circles had a very negative attitude towards the original populations of the region — Skolts, Karelians and Russians. They had an idealistic view of Pechenga as a gateway of the expanding Finland to welfare. In that light, Skolts appeared as an absolute antithesis of the dreamed industrial progress. Because the Finnish identity of the south constituted a point of comparison for development, old Finnish or Norwegian settlement aroused positive appraisals in visitors and also sympathy due to the severe conditions. In comparison, travel guide writers had an openly contemptuous attitude towards Skolt Sámi.

Like Vaasan Jaakkoo, many Finns gawked at "these strange and funny-looking, small old dwarves" and wondered that "Russian faces there were in half-Lapp bodies". The Lapp huts also "had the same size and look as a pigsty in our parts". Lampén described a Skolt at a Trifonanniemi inn: "What a silly stump! — This descendant of Rasputin had a thick beard, matted hair, and looked like he was scaled down from bigger size. Face of a wild Russian, but stature in pygmy size. Could not watch him without laughing. Head size and shoulder width too big for his length. Tintamarresque creature!" [30, pp. 114–118, 122] Similarly, dressed in the cloak of humour, Vaasan Jaakkoo mocked Skolts for stupidity in his work when, for example, a Skolts child saw a train and asked "is a reindeer pulling the train". Jaakkoo was also amused when a Skolt slammed his money on the desk in a shop and said: "What do you give for these?" [36, pp. 101–102]

Contempt of the Finns towards Skolts can partly be explained by anti-Russian attitudes, which manifested themselves as downright Russophobia after independence. "Every Skolt is descended from a Pechenga monk from the father's side", Lampén commented. Skolt descriptions, however, were largely aligned with the old tradition of Sámi descriptions. They included untidiness, laziness, simplicity and primitivity as well as immorality. Travel guide writers were eager to interpret the dissimilarity of the Sámi in ways of life and cultural forms as a racial characteristic or as an indication of cultural inferiority. They did not even try to understand the contexts.

Astonishment and mockery could be aroused by such things as the fact that "the roadside Skolts" did not eagerly seize the developing livelihoods brought by the Finnish society, such as agriculture or wage labour in fish or mining industry. Travel writers considered this an example of the Skolt besetting sin, laziness. [37, Mörne H., p. 245]. Finns thought that Skolts should immediately have changed from declining natural livelihoods to new, "future livelihoods". Karl Nickul's view was that Finnish civil servants had the notion that all Skolts should start growing

potatoes and keeping cattle when they were asked to. However, Nickul had many negative examples of the difficulties that keeping cumbersome cows, for example, could cause in a semi-nomadic culture [See 18, Lehtola V.-P.].

Notions about Skolts as incurable reindeer thieves is a theme of its own in descriptions by Finnish writers. Already in 1920, Juho Koskimaa had published a short story, which depicts the guarding of a fence at the eastern border before World War I. In the short story, Skolts are considered such hopeless cases that the cruel killing of two Skolt thieves — father and son — is seen as a justified act [38, pp. 5–19]. The best-known example — perhaps the most racist book in Finnish literary history — may well be K.M. Wallenius' *Ihmismetsästäjiä ja erämiehiä* (1933), where the writer reminisced his punitive mission as commandant of Lapland's border guard to the Skolts in the aftermath of the civil war. Finnish soldiers in civilian clothes made a military attack against Skolts, who were suspected of reindeer thieving. In the manner of adventure books, Wallenius used many literary stereotypes of the Sámi of to enemize the Skolts, in order to justify the military action [39, Wallenius K.M., pp. 19–92; 40, Lehtola V.-P., pp. 227–241].

Erkki Ilmari, who admired Wallenius' book, also published a short story of Reindeer Skolt Kiureli, "the only honest Skolt", who at the end results to be dishonest [41, pp. 134–141]. Compared with descriptions written about Fjell Sámi or Tana Sámi, for example, which were admiring in a certain way despite their fatherly condescension⁶, the anti-Skolt sentiment of writers is striking. It is no exaggeration that there are no positive Skolt descriptions in fiction in the 1920s and 1930s. In non-fiction, you can find some more positive appraisals.

Folklore collector Armas Launis [34, pp. 28–29] and J.E. Rosberg sharply criticized the tourists about their prejudices. According to Rosberg, many visitors to the north — not to mention Southern Lapland — had not seen a real Sámi but mostly individuals belonging to the "degenerated class", who attract tourists or earn money by having their pictures taken [42, p. 113]. Even the opinion of Rosberg and Launis was that Skolts presenting themselves to tourist cameras were degenerated and had lost their "authenticity". This division into degenerated "roadside Skolts" and more advanced Suonikylä Skolt villagers was typical also among officials, such as the bailiff of Pechenga statements indicate.⁷

Due to the negative Skolt image and the national self-esteem of Finns, it was not surprising that even racist actions against Skolts are known to have taken place. Launis mentions that when a

⁶ Cf. e.g. 33, Therman, E., taking place in Enontekiö, and Manninen, E. N. 1933/1998: Lapin sarja VI: Lappalaispolitiikkaa. Helsingin Sanomat 5. 8. 1933, from Utsjoki. Published also in Manninen, E. N.: Kahdentoista härjän raito. Inari: Kustannus-Puntsi, 213–226.

⁷ Pechenga bailiff's situation report to the Oulu county governor 10.2.1927. OLKA Hc5:3.

Skolt entered an inn somewhere in Pechenga, the innkeeper could raise his arm and point to the door and command: "Skolt out!" [35, Launis A., pp. 24]. The attitude extended all the way to civil servants. Lapland civil servant Eero Lampio described Skolts in his hunting book among other "fauna" and other "creatures", wondering about their half-meter long paws and their meter-long shapeless body. On hunting trips, Lampio amused himself and his fellows by making Skolt boys bark at hares [43, Paasilinna E.].

Weakening population and Lapp racial noses

As examples from different scientific disciplines as well as from wider publicity indicate, ideas about racial and cultural hierarchies constituted the basis for extensive popular conclusions about Sámi culture. The chain of deduction they created, which was also internally inconsistent, painted a gloomy picture of Sámi future. It suggested that their lack of history was understood as a sign of a stagnated culture's incapability of developing to the level of agriculture. Development was seen to cause only degeneration to Sámi, as the "roadside Lapps" living on the outskirts of settlement proved. On the other hand, degeneration revealed that the tendency of Sámi to abandon culture belonged to the characteristics of their racial inferiority, which also included primitive social life and slack moral.

Together these conclusions led to a clear result in scientific publications and travel guides: Sámi were a vanishing people. Sometimes it was commented with melancholy; more often it was used for promoting development and progress, which was to "displace the unimportant and inviable". Ilmari Turja stated: "Lapland's people are roaming towards their quick death" [31, p. 70]. According to Rosberg, the Sámi language was disappearing in the modern age which flattened all diversity, and nothing would remain of Sámi except "the name and some elusive tale" [42, p. 162]. This view was so self-evident that leading Sámi researchers expressed similar notions, starting from T. I. Itkonen.

Especially problematic these views became when civil servants in the Sámi territory adopted them as guidelines of their actions. The county constable of Utsjoki, jaeger captain E. N. Manninen, could therefore declare in a newspaper that Sámi were helplessly about to succumb and vanish as representatives of a weak cultural form. Manninen warned Finns not to spend any state funds on a dying language and vanishing culture. The boundary between the cultural world and Sámi culture was insurmountable in Manninen's thinking. The substance of a Lapp included natural livelihoods, non-literate culture, language and Lapp costume. They were all giving way to civilisation. When the Sámi absorbed new influences, they became corrupt and lost their authenticity. For Manninen, a Sámi appearing in the modern age could only be a "wonder on

display for money".⁸

Manninen represented a certain kind of social Darwinist thinking, according to which the actions of the society to help minorities were unnatural tampering with natural order and would prolong the inevitable development: disappearance of the weaker. The struggle for existence and natural selection worked also in societies, as a parallel to nature. Therefore, it was wrong for the society to direct supportive actions at groups that natural selection has doomed to extinction [For social Darwinism, see 45, Broberg G.; 19, Kemiläinen A.]. Many other civil servants thought that development imposed a barrier to the Sámi they were not capable of surmounting. For them, the cultural and racial weakness of Sámi signified an opposite to the development needs of the Finnish society. In a document addressed to the county governor, Pechenga bailiff W.F. Planting characterised Skolt culture as a stagnated primitive level cultural form, which had no place in the developing Finnish society. The drastic view was based on the bailiff's desire to develop Suonikylä with state funding as a showcase of Finnish development work, completely ruling out other Skolts from state care.

The fact that racial research was a focal area in medical research was also reflected in the views of physicians. The representative of the national board of health, L. F. Rosendal, expressed a typical view that Skolt Lapps were "in a rather primitive state". On the other hand, Finns explained the primitiveness of the Skolts with political arguments, for example that they had lived "in the far dark north under czar oppression and then with the Soviet-Russian sword of Damocles poised above them".⁹ One of the district nurses, Saimi Lindroth, still pondered in Utsjoki at the turn of the 1940s if the Utsjoki inhabitants fitted the racial characteristics. Reportedly they did not: some were too tall for a Lapp, some too blond [45, p. 43].

Sodankylä district physician Onni Laitinen saw racial weakening as the cause also for the spreading tuberculosis. The disease spread at the end of the 1920s to Lapland's jurisdictional district, which was inhabited by both Finns and Sámi, but Laitinen regarded it especially as a collapse of weaker races: "Tuberculosis bacteria does not infect healthy people. It targets those who have otherwise weakened and become susceptible to diseases." Basing on the stereotype that the reindeer herding was the original Sámi way of life, Laitinen stated that the Sámi had made a mistake by abandoning "the healthy nomadic life" and settling into log houses as permanent dwellers. According to Laitinen, hot Lapland costumes had a racially "weakening" effect especially to children who became susceptible to diseases. Decreased interaction and marriages between

⁸ Manninen E. N. Lappalaista ei ole tarvis sortaa, se sortuu itsestään. *Rovaniemi* 27.4.1929.

⁹ L. F. Rosendal's travel account in August 1921. Copy of social welfare administration poor relief inspector's register 1921 Ac:2. Ks. ALRK. University of Helsinki Archive.

racers also influenced the weakening of the race. Laitinen, the highest medical authority, declared:

"All senior scholars on Lapland have made the observation that the mental sharpness which was characteristic of the Lapp population still thirty years ago is now a thing of the past. There may still be exceptions, of course, but as long as they continue the unhealthy way of life that this previously vigorous nomadic people have adopted, the Lapp population will be continuously weakening and the race will vanish. The Lapp population lost their roots when they became estranged from their reindeer cattle and became settlers."¹⁰

For civil servants, development also meant promoting agriculture, which was the culmination of a rising development also in the Finno-Ugric theory. Next to it, reindeer husbandry was considered a livelihood of the past. This attitude was represented by important civil servants, such as master of laws Arthur Aspelin, who was elected member of Finnish parliament from the progressive party in 1922 in Lapland's electoral district. He argued "that reindeer husbandry in Lapland is a moribund livelihood and that it would be harmful for the province to try to revive it". Aspelin thought that subsidising nomadic life would just prolong the period of transition to agriculture. The influence of reindeer husbandry to human nature was "... reluctance to regular work, especially farm work, suspiciousness, shyness, and eradicating them takes decades, if not centuries. It is illustrative in this respect that only few Lapps have enrolled or are enrolling in jobs offered by the state or by companies, although the wages are fabulous these days. No, he will rather lie down at home and live in poverty".

The superiority and omnipotence of agriculture was a matter of fact beyond any doubt for Finns. Aspelin assured that "farming spirit is the only true value, saviour of the land and people, which has to be cultivated, inspired, revived". His view was that reindeer husbandry should be allowed to cease in natural death or it should be developed to a new level. His proposal was to change the reindeer-grazing association system into a cooperative, where the reindeer would be managed together, without private reindeer ownership.¹¹

The development could also be described reversely from the Sámi point of view. Samuli Paulaharju saw how the Reindeer Sámi of Kittilä and Muonio changed into settlers and considered it a demotion: "The nomad who had tended a thousand-head wild forest cattle has been forced to care for stupid and slow dung beasts. A forest dweller, who had grown sorrel for his own pleasure, has started to burrow his former reindeer pasture in sweat and blood to make a measly potato field and a tiny barley patch." [46, p. 76] Similarly, Karl Nickul commented that in many cases

¹⁰ Rovaniemi 7.2.1929.

¹¹ Aspelin A. "Tulevaisuuden elinkeinot Lapissa." *Kaleva* 27.2.1921.

southern farmers, importing livelihoods that were developed in different circumstances, suffered smarting losses in the barren nature of Northern Finland: "They often won at first, but usually the second generation subsided." He thought that the cultural form developed in northern regions was better suited to the local requirements than a foreign "road settlement":

"The road partly liberates settlement from the local limitations of the region and enables it to interact with the regions where it originated and which supply material prerequisites through the road. But its machinery does not work in different conditions where economic shortages and other weaknesses afflicting the technical culture and its organisation disrupt its smooth operation; then settlement must suffer distress, and needs acquired in more prosperous regions are not fulfilled, its living standard decreases, it must receive emergency help" [36; 47, p. 65].

The understanding of the survival chances of Sámi culture was not dependent on whether the writer had a positive or negative attitude towards Sámi. In its fatherly condescension, a positive or admiring opinion could contain the same notion of a primitive or childish level natural people, which did not have the qualifications to survive in the modern world. One of the most full-blooded examples of this attitude was Erik Therman, a Swedish-speaking writer from Helsinki, whose works combine the astuteness of a researcher with social Darwinist views. In his main work, *Bland noider och nomader* (1939), Therman showed that he was good at observing everyday life and listening to people, while his keenness to collect stories of witchcraft and the mythical Sámi history indicated a romantic tendency.

Therman's interest on racial theories led him to observe the head shapes of Sámi, the small stature of Lapps and the noses of representatives from different clans with a seemingly scientific manner. When integrated on his fatherly condescending attitude towards Sámi, Therman's conclusions were quite folksy applications of the race theoretical ideas that were cultivated in press and general non-fiction. Therman's references to racial theories were just frosting on a more traditional Sámi image, which included hierarchies between cultures, as well as beliefs of the primitive character of a natural people [30, pp. 152, 163, 223, 290, 369].

Conclusion

The critical or even disparaging appraisals I quoted at the beginning of this article illuminate how lappology fell into disrepute especially at the onset of new Sámi research from the 1970s. Research activity by the Sámi themselves emerged in a clearly articulated form in 1973 at the latest when Sámi University College started in Koutokeino in Norway. The Sámi-administered research institute emphasised the Sámi right to define their own starting point for research. Among the best-known manifestos was Alf Isak Keskitalo's 1974 critique on the asymmetry

between research on the dominant population and the minority, and demand for the "samification" of research on the Sámi.

The radical Sámi movement also introduced the concepts of colonialism and imperialism into the sphere of research, and it was "lappology" that represented them best. As in other sectors of society, the radical and antithetic attitude resulted in problems before long; they came quite close to the notions of lappologists that they wanted to dissociate from. The idealised Sámi culture and our own information systems were contrasted with "western culture" and "lappology", which were understood stereotypically. This antithesis was necessary in the phase where questions were formulated.

As research on the Sámi developed, many positions have turned out to be more complex than it was believed earlier. Ethnographic, linguistic ja geographical research has been complemented by research methods of archaeology and history, research methods of social anthropology and education theory, and strong influences from research on indigenous peoples have also had an effect on their reception. Antagonism between external and Sámi researchers becomes a subject of discussion from time to time, but the result has often been a statement that both are needed. Sámi research has its own starting points, which are linked to the needs of the Sámi community. Research conducted by externals reflects the interest and considerations of the dominant population, and it is also important to respond to them from the viewpoint of interaction between the majority and the minority.

Although the image of Sámi research has become more varied, the image of lappology has remained quite controversial and dualistic. When emphasising that the current Sámi research also rests upon the results of earlier research, some people emphasise the significance of lappology quite uncritically, unwilling to scrutinise their work in relation to day-to-day political reality. Contrary to this view was the attitude that lappologists were minions of colonialism, who did not in any way understand Sámi notions and conventions, but wanted to assimilate them into dominant cultures.

Lappology is often understood as a consistent way of thinking and a system with researchers as its agents. My article indicates already in the case of Finland that the so-called lappologists represented different branches of science from linguists to geographers and ethnographers. They represented many scientific trends, and the traditions of human geography and Fenno-Ugric research were clearly separate in Finland. Researchers had various ideas of what role research had in majority-minority relationships, i.e. were they just practicing "science as science" or did they see their own research activities as part of social, even political debate.

The approximate nature of the term lappology is an even trickier issue. In my article, I have suggested that many later statements, scientific texts, semi-scientific or popular Sámi descriptions as well as publicly made provocative claims have been grouped under the concept of lappology. A nationalist presenting his prejudices in travel guides or a civil servant with poor knowledge of local circumstances is called a “lappologist” just like a researcher, although the “-logist” suffix of the term basically refers to a person who produces scientific knowledge.

The vagueness of the concept reflects, however, the vagueness of the “knowledge” on the Sámi more generally. Be it Lapland’s civil servants, columnists in national media or decision-makers on different levels, it seems that the “knowledge” concerning Sámi that they drew upon was not necessarily based on scientific views. In addition to facts, the image of Sámi included plenty of conceptions, myths and stereotypes that had evolved over centuries and that had been enforced by the then prevailing ideas of development theory and even social Darwinism. This image of Sámi was elaborated further in the press, textbooks, travel guides and other popular publications. These views may have laid the basis even for decisions that concerned Sámi people about legislation on reindeer herding, educational politics and local government.

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