

## Sámi and Scandinavians in the Viking Age

### Introduction

Though we do not know exactly when Scandinavians and Sámi contact started, it is clear that in the time of the formation of the Scandinavian heathen culture and of the Scandinavian languages the Scandinavians and the Sámi were neighbors. Archeologists and historians continue to argue about the place of the original southern border of the Sámi on the Scandinavian peninsula and about the place of the most narrow cultural contact, but nobody doubts that the cultural contact between the Sámi and the Scandinavians before and during the Viking Age was very close. Such close contact could not but have left traces in the Sámi culture and in the Sámi languages. This influence concerned not only material culture but even folklore and religion, especially in the area of the Southern Sámi. We find here even names of gods borrowed from the Scandinavian tradition. Swedish and Norwegian missionaries mentioned such Southern Sámi gods such as *Radien* (cf. norw., sw. *rå, råhare*), *Veraldén Olmai* (<*Veraldar goð, Frey*), *Ruona (Rana)* (< *Rán*), *Horagalles* (< *Þórkarl*), *Ruotta (Rota)*. In Lule Sámi we find no Scandinavian gods but Scandinavian names of gods such as *Storjunkare* (big ruler) and *Lilljunkare* (small ruler). In the Sámi languages we find about three thousand loan words from the Scandinavian languages and many of them were borrowed in the common Scandinavian period (550-1050), that is before and during the Viking Age (Qvigstad 1893; Sammallahti 1998, 128-129). The known Swedish Lapponist Wiklund said in 1898 »[...] *Lapska innehåller nämligen en mycket stor mängd låneord från de nordiska språken, av vilka låneord de äldsta ovillkorligen måste vara lånade redan i urnordisk tid, dvs under tiden före ca 700 år efter Kristus. Dessa urnordiska låneords mängd visar, att lapparna redan vid denna tid måste ha stått i en mycket intim beröring med skandinavierna, så intim, att de båda folken bör ha bott i hvarandras omedelbara närhet och icke endast kommit i beröring med hvarandra under några sällsyntare handelsresor e dyl.* (unpublished oral presentation in 1898, quoted after Fjellström 1985, 118).

Nobody denies the fact of a large Scandinavia influence on the Sámi in the Viking Age. But if we ask whether this Sámi-Scandinavian contact is reflected in Scandinavian culture, we get as a rule a negative answer. Scandinavian historians and linguists are, with very rare exceptions, unanimous in this case. The Scandinavian influence on the Sámi languages and on the Sámi culture on the one hand and stigmatization of the Sámi in the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, which has been extrapolated to the whole period of the Sámi-Scandinavian contacts on

the other, has made the assumption about Sámi influence on the Scandinavians impossible. The proposed low social prestige of the Sámi and even their stigmatization determined the assumption about the influence only in one direction<sup>1</sup>. The traditional opinion at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century was that everything in the Sámi religion was borrowed from the Scandinavians<sup>2</sup>. Respectively, Sámi influence on the Scandinavian languages has been rejected.<sup>3</sup> In the new very thick compendium on historical Scandinavian linguistics, where a special chapter is devoted to Scandinavian language contact, we shall look in vain for something about the Finnic-Ugric influence on the Scandinavian languages. The only information about the matter are the words of Koivulehto that such an influence “does not seem very probable”. (Koivulehto 2002, 590-591). Thus the possibility of a Sámi influence on the Scandinavian culture and on the Scandinavian languages was rejected from the very beginning. But was it really so that the relation between the Sámi and the Scandinavians in the Viking Age was the same as it was at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and excluded every Sámi cultural and language influence on the Scandinavians? In this paper I try to show that the cultural influence in the Viking Age was not one-sided. The cultural impulses went not only from the Scandinavians to the Sámi but even to a very strong degree from the Sámi to the Scandinavians. My sources will be archeology, onomastics, Old Norse literature and Scandinavian languages.

## **Archeology**

The present Sámi territory stretches from Idre Parish in the Swedish province of Dalarna to the Kola Peninsula. However, during the Viking Age, the Sámi territory reached much further south than has been assumed up to today. The traditional point of view that the southern Sámi did not appear in central Norway and central Sweden until the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries (cf. Sandnes 1973, Haarstad 1992) has been revised recently. The latest archeological and historical studies give evidence of a Sámi population that possibly reached as far south as the Mälardal region in present central Sweden and eastern Norway, see the maps in Zachrisson 1997; 2004; 2006.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> cf. "The cultural way was usually a one-way street from the Germanic people to the Finns or the Lapps" (Einarsson 1986, 43).

<sup>2</sup> cf. "Det vil være ørkesløst at regne med en hjemmefødt lappisk kultur." (Oirik 1905, 44)

<sup>3</sup> cf. "Only few Finnish or Sámi loanwords concerning special Sámi and Finnish matters and some marginal features in the outmost northern Swedish and Norwegian dialects are the only possible Sámi or Finnish influence on the Scandinavian languages" Jahr 1997, 943; cf. also Sköld 1961, 64.

<sup>4</sup> cf. "Samene har vært i sørsamisk område langt tilbake i førkristen tid" (Salvesen, 1980, 147); The authors of the latest Sámi history Hansen and Olsen affirm: „der er lite grunnlag for å se den historisk kjente sørsamiske tilstedeværelsen som et resultat av ”innvandring” fra nord. Det er tvert om grunn till å anta at det samiske bosetningsområdet i sør var langt større enn hva dagens situasjon og nyere historiske kilder antar” (Hansen, Olsen, 2004, 109 ). Cf. Also Sammallahti 1990, 441. Zachrisson's map has not been accepted with unanimous approval of

Zachrisson assumes a large zone of Sámi-Scandinavian cultural contacts during the Viking Age in central Scandinavia including in Trøndelag, Oppland, Hedmark, Jämtland, Härjedalen, Ångermanland, Värmland, Dalarna, Medelpad, Hälsingland and parts of Buskerud, Telemark, Akerhus, Västmanland and Uppland. For this contact zone she proposes “en viss kulturell symbios” (Zachrisson 1997, 218). Hansen and Olsen write about ”en ikke ubetydlig grad av kulturell kreolisering” in this area (Hansen, Olsen 2004, 107 ).

But the connection between archaeological culture and ethnic identity and language is very problematic. That people wear jeans does not mean that they are Americans and speak English. We do not know what language was spoken by the representatives of the mixed Sámi-Scandinavian culture, or what folklore they had. Was it so that the Scandinavians adopted Sámi features or the Sámi took on Scandinavian cultural features and language? Moreover there is a tendency in the latest archaeology to deny a connection between archeological culture and ethnic identity at all.<sup>5</sup> Indeed in some cases we cannot find a connection between material culture and ethnic identity as e.g. in the case of the Sámi, who have a Sámi self-identification but do not speak Sámi, are not involved in reindeer herding and live in Stockholm. Many other cases show us the lack of an obligatory connection between material culture and ethnic identity. In many cases however this connection is obvious. That means that the archeological data could be used only in connection with the data of spiritual culture and with the linguistic data. Fortunately we have at our disposal not only archaeological sources but also other sources, particularly Old Norse literature and onomastics.

### **The Sámi in Old Norse literature**

A very important source helping us to understand the role of the Sámi in the Scandinavian society is Old Norse literature<sup>6</sup>. The usual cliché features of Sámi are that they were good hunters, archers, skiers, fishers, sorcerers, magicians and healers.<sup>7</sup> We can read about the quality

---

archaeologists, cf. Baudou 2002, 31. But even Baudou in his early book has drawn the movable border between two cultures in Gästrikland and along the Dalaälven (Baudou, 1995, 53), which is not so far from the southern border of Zachrisson's contact area.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. „Etnicitet eller kulturell identitet lämnar sällan spår i den materiella kulturen” (Werbart 1999, 341) or even stronger ”Det finns ingen relation mellan etnisk grupp och arkeologisk kultur” (Werbart 2002, 29, 102).

<sup>6</sup> Both in the classical (from Tacitus, 1. A. D.) and in mediaeval Latin sources as well as in Old Norse literature, the Sámi were called “finns” (*fenni* in Tacitus, *finnar* in Old Icelandic and Old Norwegian written sources). This name for the Sámi has been used until now in some Norwegian dialects. The traditional etymology connects the name *finnar* with the Germanic root \**finþ-* (cf. Engl. *find*). According to this etymology the name *finnar* designated wanderers, gatherers and hunters (“finders”). Literature in Svennung 1974, 136-139.

<sup>7</sup> Even in Scandinavian medieval and later written monuments in Latin, we can see a lot of information about the Sámi, cf. *Historia Norvegiae* (12th century, cf. Bäärhielm, Zachrisson 1994), Saxos *Gesta Danorum* (13th century, Saxo 1886) and an especially large amount in Olaus Magnus (16th century), who himself visited the Sámi areas in

of Sámi archers in Icelandic sagas and very often these archers are called *Finnr*. In this connection the name *Finnbogi* (*Finn+bow*) is very interesting. The element *-bogi* (bow) in personal names is possible only with two nations Sámi and Hunns (*Hunbogi* and *Finnbogi*). There are no *\*Danbogi* or *\*Gautbogi* or *\*Gotbogi* among Scandinavian personal names. The component *-bogi* was possible only with people who were known for their archery skills. The bow was a typical Sámi weapon. In a Faroese ballad even Odin appears with a Sámi bow cf.

*Hár kom máður á völlin fram*

*engin íð hann kendi,*

*eyga hevði hann eitt í heysi*

*finskan boga í hendi.* (Hammershaimb, 1851, 11).

The Sámi bow in the hand of Odin points not only to the quality of the bow but also to the capacity of Odin to perform magic. The connection of Odin as magician with the Sámi shamans is clear not only for students of the Scandinavian religion, but even for Loki, who accuses Odin of striking on a drum on *Sámsey* island as a prophetess, cf. Lokasenna 24:

*Enn þik síða kóðo Sámsey í/ok draptu á vétt sem völor.* The usual interpretation of *Samsey* as the Danish Island Samsø is hardly correct. In this case we are not dealing with a place name Samsø but with an appellative “a Sámi island”. The Sámi word for self-designation *sámi/sápmi* was known in the Scandinavian tradition. In an Icelandic saga the Sámi sorcerers called themselves *semsveinar*, the son of the Scandinavian goddess Skadi is called *Sæming* and the Old Icelandic adjective for “swarthy, blackish” *sámr* is considered to have been borrowed from the Sámi self-designation *sámi*. *Sámsey* in Lokasenna can be interpreted as a later reinterpretation of an appellative a “Sámi island”, which must have originally had the form *samey* (without *-s-*, cf. *Finney*). In this case the original version could look like (“You are known to prophesy on a Sámi island and you stroke on a drum as prophetesses”). But even if the form *Sámsey* in Lokasenna 24 is original, it is hardly a coincidence that Loki mentioned its name in connection with a typical Sámi procedure - striking the drum during prophesying.

The Sámi capability to prophesy was a very important feature of the Sámi that was attractive to the Scandinavians. The Sámi appear as advisers to prominent Scandinavian personalities, both mythological and historical. Saxo tells us that when Othinus (Odin) asks fortune-tellers and priests to give him advice how to avenge the death of his son Baldrus (Baldr), the Finn Rosiophus (Rostiophus Phinnicus) gives him advice how to do it (Saxo 1886, cap. 3, 78). Old Norse sources tell us that even historical Norwegian kings had Sámi as friends and advisors, such as e.g. a Sámi from Hadaland with whom Harald Fairhair flees from his father. Even the

---

Sweden. The characteristics of the Sámi in these sources correspond to their characteristics in the Old Norse sources.

first Christian Norwegian king Olaf Tryggvason (d. 1000) visited a Sámi to hear prophecies about his future after his arrival in Norway (*Flateyrbók* 1, 231). The practice of learning magic and asking for the prophecies of the Sámi was preserved until the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In two church laws for Eastern Norway (*Eidsivapingslag* and *Borgarþingslag*) one can read that it was forbidden “to go to Sámi” (*fara till finna, gera finnfara*), “to believe in Sámi,” (*trúa á finna*), “to go to Finnmark to ask for a prophesy” (*at fara á Finnmerkr at spyrja spá*)<sup>8</sup>, which indicates that in the 13<sup>th</sup> century this custom was spread in eastern Norway.

The usual adjectives characterizing the Sámi in the Old Icelandic sagas *margfróðr*, *fjölkunigr*, mean not only “much knowing” but also “knowing how to perform magic”. To perform magic and to prophesy was not a negative capability before Christianization. On the contrary, it played a very important role in the heathen life of the Scandinavians. The prosaic preface to the *Völundarkviða* indicates that even the ability to be a wonderful smith could be connected with Sámi magic power. The preface in prose informs us that the father of the wonderful smith Völundr was a “Finish (that is Sámi) king” (*finnakonungr*). The name of one of Völundr’s brothers was *Slagfinnr*. All the brothers had a typical Sámi occupation: “they skied and hunted for animals”.

The Sámi performance of magic influenced the Scandinavians to a very large degree. In 1935 Strömbäck assumed that “*sejd*”, the special kind of Nordic shamanism, as it was described in the saga of Erik the Red, had been borrowed from the Sámi (Strömbäck 1935). It is possible that even the word *seid* could have been borrowed from Finno-Ugric into the Scandinavian languages.<sup>9</sup>

The tradition of Sámi magic can be found even in an Icelandic (possibly Norwegian) rune inscription from the 12th century, where the word **boattiat** in the inscription on a spade shaft **boattiat mik inkialtr kærþi** was interpreted as an infinitive with imperative meaning from the Sámi verb with the meaning “to come” (North Sámi *boahitit*). The inscription was interpreted as a spell “come back (when stolen or lost)” (Olsen, Bergsland 1943: 5-7). To use a Sámi magic formula in a spell was quite natural because the Sámi were regarded as the foremost authority in this field.

Archaeology shows that representatives of the both cultures could marry each other (Zachrisson 1997). Old Norse written sources confirm archaeological findings. The name *Halffinnr* “Sámi by half” (formed after the same pattern as a much more known name *Halfdanr*) indicates the Sámi

---

<sup>8</sup> For the texts of these laws see e.g. in Meißner 1942.

<sup>9</sup> The word *seið(r)* had many Finno-Ugric parallels, cf. Sámi *sieidi* „site“ cf. Finn. *soida* ”klingen”, *soitta* ”play on a musical instrument“, Hanty *sui*, Mansi *sei* ”voice”, Ung. *zaj* ”noise”; Nenets *sjadai* „wooden Idols“. It is possible that in this case we are even dealing with a much older Finno-Ugric borrowing into the northern Indo-European languages, cf. Lithuanian *saitas* ”sorcery”, *saisti* (1. Pers. *saitu*) ”to read (and interpret) signs“, Welsh *hud* (<\**soito*) ”magic”.

origin of a person, as a rule it was someone who was *finnskr at móðurkyni* (Sámi after mother) (Pálsson 1999, 31). Old Icelandic sagas tell us that the Sámi women could be wives of legendary and even of historical Swedish and Norwegian kings. A very interesting example is the marriage of the Norwegian king Harald Fairhair to a Sámi woman. *Heimskringla* of Snorri (13<sup>th</sup> century) tells us that Harald (d. 933) married a Sámi woman Snöfrid. They had four sons, to whom Harald gave the provinces of Ringariki, Totn and Hadaland (Snorri Sturluson 1941, Ch. 25, 33). There is also a *drapa* (a verse), which is considered to have been written by Harald after the death of Snöfrid.

The motif of marriage of Scandinavian kings to Sámi women can also be found in *Gesta Danorum* of Saxo Grammaticus. The Danish king Gram declared a war on Finnish king Sumblus (*Sumblus Phinnorum rex*), but when he saw his daughter he turned from an enemy into a suitor (Saxo 1886, cap. 1, 18-19). In another story the king of Halogies (*Halogie rex*) seeks to marry Thora, daughter of the king of Finns and Biarms Cuso (*Finnorum Byarmorumque principes*) and with the help of his friend Høtherus (Höd) succeeds in marrying her (ibid., cap. 3, 72). It is not important whether these stories reflect historical truth or are fiction<sup>10</sup>. It is much more important that for a Scandinavian still in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when *Heimskringla* and *Gesta Danorum* was written, it was possible to imagine that a Scandinavian king could have a Sámi wife. It was quite possible even in the 13<sup>th</sup> century to acknowledge that one of the wives of Harald Fairhair was a Sámi woman. However, to imagine in the 16<sup>th</sup> century King Gustav Vasa marrying a Sámi woman was already absolutely impossible.

The whole story of Harald's marriage is interesting in two aspects. On the one hand we have the information about his marriage to a Sámi woman, on the other hand it is interesting how this event is interpreted by Snorri as a Christian author. The Christian Snorri explains this marriage solely as a result of Sámi magic. Snöfrid cast a spell on Harald Fairhair when he drank a jar of mead poured by Snöfrid. The spell was so strong that the king married the Sámi woman and "he loved her so madly that he neglected his might". The spell had an effect on him even after her death. The king sat at her corpse and "sorrowed her death for three winters but all the people in the country sorrowed over his madness". Only when Torleif the Wise "restrained the madness" could Snöfrid's corpse be burned in a fire. And when snakes and lizards, frogs and toads and all kind of evil came out of her corpse "the king regained his consciousness and came out of his madness" (Sturluson 1941, chap. 25). The story of Snöfrid is full of literary motifs. Even the name Snöfrid ("Snow-peace") has a fairy tale character, in contrast to the name of her father Svasi which in *Ágrip* is called *finnakonungr*. In the Snöfrid episode, we find two motifs which

---

<sup>10</sup> In *Ágrip* (c. 1190) only one son of Harald and Snöfrid is mentioned. *Historia Norvegiae* tells us about a son of Harald who was born to a Sámi woman, but it does not mention her name.

were characteristic of mediaeval literature: great sorrow over the death of the wife so that the king (or the prince) could not be separated from her corpse (cf. Fritzner 1877, 162, note 3) and a clear Christian motif with all kinds of evil coming out of Snöfrid's corpse, reminiscent of the representatives of the same fauna coming out of the thrown heathen idols at the victory of the new faith over the old one, a theme that we can also see in Snorri's *Heimskringla* (cf. Sturluson 1941, kap. 58). For Snorri, who lived in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and was a Christian, both the marriage of a Norwegian king to the Sámi woman and his great sorrow at her death could be explained only by her Sámi spell. Though Snorri knew that Harald was a heathen himself, the Sámi woman Snöfrid was for him a personification of paganism (cf. the motif of snakes and all kinds of evil). The attitude of Snorri to Snöfrid shows us a clear change in the attitude of the Scandinavians to the Sámi, who to a greater extent remained heathen in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. This change is reflected in the change of the name of the Sámi people. The Sámi who earlier were called *finnar*, a name with absolutely no negative connotations (see below), acquired another name in the 13<sup>th</sup> century - *lappar* "Lapps"<sup>11</sup>, with a clear negative connotation. Even if the earlier etymologies of this word did not prove true (*lappar* < *lapp* "lap" or < Middle Low German *lappe* "fool"), it is obvious that in folk etymology the connection with the word "lapp" and its negative connotation were present.

Old West Scandinavian literature shows that the relation between the Sámi and Scandinavians in heathen Scandinavia during the Viking Age and even later in the first centuries after the Christianization differed strongly from the situation in later times. The scholars in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries could not but see the discrepancy between a positive description of the Sámi in the Old Norse sources on the one hand and the stigmatization of the Sámi in their contemporary Scandinavia on the other hand. But their conclusion was very typical of the attitude towards the Sámi in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was assumed that the positive description of the *finnar* in Old Norse literature is not connected with the positive attitude of the Scandinavians to the Sámi, but is due to the fact that the word *finnar* in Old Norse literature did not designate Sámi but another people, an unknown Germanic tribe, whose name was later transferred to the Sámi (cf. Hellquist, 1993, 211; Svennung 1974, 139). The Norwegian historian Hansen wrote in 1907 that since the Old Scandinavians described the Finns with respect it is impossible to identify the Finns with the Lapps because „lapperne [...] ma ha stå som nu som bare en gienstand for nordmændenes foragt" (Hansen 1907, 134). Another attempt to explain the discrepancy between a positive description of the *finnar* in the Old

---

<sup>11</sup> The first time the name *Lappia* (Lappland) was mentioned was in *Gesta Danorum*, written at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Saxo 1886, cap. 5).

Scandinavian sources and the stigmatization of the Sámi in Scandinavian society was to declare that the word *finnar* originally meant sorcerers and not the Sámis because “it was little honourable to have a name which reminded of despised (*vanvyrde*) people which was not of noble birth (*ættsmáa*)”. (Koht 1923, 162). Both assumptions have their supporters even now. But there is no evidence that since the first mention of the Sámi in Tacitus in the 1<sup>st</sup> c. A.D. until now the word *fenni*, *phinoi* or *finnar* meant something different than Sámi and later (Suomi) Finns.

The discrepancy between the positive description of the *finnar* in Old Scand. Literature and the later stigmatization of the Sámi can be explained in a much more natural way. The attitude of the Scandinavians to their northern neighbors during the Viking Age and in the early Middle Ages was absolutely of another character than later and was characterized by respect and acceptance<sup>12</sup>.

## Onomastics

The absence of the stigmatization of the Sámi people in heathen Scandinavia is testified by the spread of the personal name *Finnr* and of a large number of compound personal names with *finn-* as the first or the second component. The form of the name *Finnr* corresponds to the usual Old Scandinavian pattern: Plural indicates a tribal name *gautar, danir, þrændir, finnar* – Singular = Personal name, *Gautr, Danr, Þrændr, Finn*. The name *Finnr* takes in this pattern the same place as the names *Gautr, Danr* and *Þrændr*. The name *Finnr* was not only etymologically related with the people name *finnar*, but the association *Finnr – finnar* was alive in the Old Icelandic sagas. A very typical case we can find in *Heimskringla* where Snorri tells us about an archer (!) in the army of Einar the Belly-shaker who “either was a *finnr* (Sámi) or was called *Finnr*” (Sturluson, 1941, cap. 57). In Old Norse literature and in younger runic inscriptions we find very many names with the component *finn-* (cf. *Finnbogi, Finnulfr, Finnbjörn, Þórfinnr, Þórfinna, Gúðfinnr, Hróðfinnr, Finnbjörg* etc.). The name *Finn* and the compound name with *finn-* can be found even in the West Germanic tradition, though much more seldom (cf. the name *Finn* of a Frisian ruler in the Old English Finnsburg fragment, Old English name *Merefin* and Old Frankish name *Fingast*).

The first record of the personal name *Finn* occurs in the older runic inscription from Berga (Östergötland) from the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The inscription consists of two personal names **saligastiR fino**. The name *SaligastiR* is a man's name, while the name **fino** (nom. sg. fem.) is interpreted as a female name corresponding to OI *Finna*, “which is originally a feminine

---

<sup>12</sup> Cf. especially Mundal 1996; 2004.

motivation to the personal name OI *Finnr* "Finn, Lapp" (Krause 1966, 193).

This inscription as well as the use of the name *Finn* and compound names with the component *finn* among West Germanic people before the Anglo-Saxons left the continent (cf. Old English *Finnsburg* - fragment) show a long tradition of use. It is obvious that PN *Finnr* or *Finna* did not mean that the person called so was of Sámi origin, though in some cases the Sámi origin of persons with this name in *Heimskringla* was obvious. It does however mean that there was absolutely no stigmatization of *finnar*. It is impossible to imagine that the Scandinavians could give names to their children which were connected with the name of stigmatized people and that such a name could be borrowed even by the West Germanic people. During the beginning of stigmatization (13th-14th centuries), when the Sámi had obtained a new name *lappar* (lapps), with a clear negative connotation, we cannot find examples for Scandinavian personal names corresponding to the name *lappar*.

Naturally, the spread of personal names and place names with *finn-* proves nothing about the spread of the Sámi. However, it can testify to the attitude of the Scandinavians towards the Sámi before Christianization, which differed strongly from the attitude in the time after Christianization.

### **The Sámi element in Scandinavian mythology**

Though neither Northern nor Eastern Sámi had names of Scandinavian gods, the traditional opinion at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century was that everything in the Sámi religion was borrowed from the Scandinavians (see above). Studies at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have shown however that the Scandinavian influence on the Sámi religion was not as big as it had been considered earlier and much in the Sámi culture was connected with the culture of the people of Northern Euro-Asia. However the Scandinavian influence on the Sámi religion and mythology cannot be denied. But the possibility of a Sámi influence on the Scandinavian world of gods and giants was, with few exceptions, rejected as a rule. However the acceptance of the Sámi in Scandinavian heathen society lets us assume that a Sámi influence on Scandinavian culture is not unexpected. The traces of Sámi influence on heathen Scandinavian culture can be found first of all in those fields where Sámi had good knowledge and were respected by the Scandinavians, that is in winter hunting, fishing and sorcery. I have already mentioned the possible Scandinavian borrowing of the Sámi shamanistic rite (*seid*). Now we shall look at three figures in Scandinavian mythology who can be connected with the Sámi gods of winter hunting and fishery; they are Thjazi, Skadi and Ull.

We shall start with the giant Thjazi, father of the giantess Skadi. The best-known myth about Thjazi tells us that he, in the shape of an eagle, steals the goddess Idun with her apples of rejuvenation from the Asgard. Loki succeeds in taking Idun back to the gods. Thjazi, in shape of an eagle, chased after Loki with Idun but the gods killed him when he was approaching Asgard. The daughter of Thjazi Skadi comes to Asgard and marries Njörd as a compensation for the loss of her father.

The connection of the Scandinavian giant Thjazi with the Sámi tradition was at first assumed by Rasmus Rask, who connected the name Thjazi with the Sámi word for water *tjaetsi* (Rask 1932-1933, 305-306). But though there is no better etymology for this word, the etymology of Rask is not mentioned in modern etymological dictionaries. The word is considered to have no sure etymology and is indicated as an etymologically difficult word (de Vries 1962, 612; Blöndal 1989, 1182). The obvious reason for the ignorance of the etymology of Rask is the proposed impossibility of a Sámi influence on the Scandinavian culture. However the etymology of Rask was supported by Lindroth, who proposed a connection of the Scandinavian giant Thjazi not only with the Sámi word for water, but also with the Sámi god Tjatsiolmai “water man” (Lindroth 1918). Though Lindroth himself rejected his own idea because of the very negative attitude toward his idea by the prominent Finno-Ugrist Wiklund (*ibid.*), this idea seems to me very instructive. There is clear evidence showing that the Scandinavian giant Thjazi could be a reminiscence of the Sámi god for fishing Tjaetsiolmai.

At the sites of the Sámi fishing god, where the sacrifice was made, idols of this god often look like great stones in the form of a man or of a bird. Hallström describes a site on the Kola Peninsula in following way: „I kvällsbelysning tycker man sig då se en jätte, som strävar framåt mot blåst och det vita ansiktet under luvan suggererar ovillkorligt fram en bestämd mening, ett slags obeveklig vilja“ (Hallström 1921, 186). These sites were considered to be alive and to go “de lever och kann gå“ (Reuterskiöld 1912, 49). A good example of a site for the fishing god is a site in the district of Kittilä (Northern Finland). It is a seven meter high stone standing on the shore of a lake (Itkonen 1946, 33, 35 fig.). The lake is called *Taatsi-järvi* in Finnish, which corresponds to a Sámi name *Tjaatsijauri* (“Tjatsi lake” or “Water lake”). It is clear that the word *tjaetsi* does not mean “water” in this case. It is hardly possible to imagine a lake without water. In this case, as in several other place names such as *Tjatsisoulo* (“Water island”), the word *tjaetsi* does not mean “water” but the personification of water, the god of water Tjatsiolmai.

By the transformation of the Sámi god of fishery Tjatsiolmai into the Scandinavian mountain giant Thjazi we can assume the following development: The Sámi site (idol) of *Tjatsi* in the form of a stone man or stone bird or even in the form of a big stone was reinterpreted by the Scandinavians as a mountain giant named *Thjazi*. But in the Scandinavian tradition this giant

preserves some features of the Sámi *Tjatsiolmai*. They are: a possible connection of the Scandinavian giant Thjazi with water: when Loki came to Thjazi to bring back Idun, Thjazi was not at home, he had rowed out on the sea. The Younger Edda gives us one more sign which confirms the connection between Thjazi und Tjatsiolmai: they both can accept sacrifices. As to Tjatsiolmai this fact does not need to be proved, this is his main function. But even the Scandinavian giant Thjazi appeared to accept sacrifices. In the Younger Edda in *Skáldskaparmál* we can find the following story. Oden, Loki and Hönir wandered over mountains and wastelands and they had no food. They saw a flock of oxen, took one of them, tried to cook the meat, but could not. Then they saw an eagle in the tree who said that if they gave him a bite of their booty, then their meat would be ready. They did so and had their meat cooked. This eagle was Thjazi. Gro Steinsland interprets this story as a reminiscence of the sacrifice to the giants (Steinsland 1986, 219). And really in that way that Thjazi takes a bite of the booty from Odin, Hönir and Loki, he reminds us of Tjatsiolmai, who often in the shape of a bird accepts sacrifices at his site. The god of fishing and water bird hunting was often represented as a bird or as a man with bird feet.

It is possible that even the theme of the robbery of apples of rejuvenation by an eagle was not a direct continuation of an Indo-European motif, but it could have come to Scandinavia from Indo-Arians through the Siberian people. In the Indo-Arian tradition the eagle Garuda steals the drink of immortality from the gods. In the mythology of many northern Asiatic people from Mongols to Samoyeds, we find a bird which corresponds to Garuda (and even the name of this bird in the languages of Siberian people has been borrowed from Indo-Arians, cf. Mong. *Khangarid*, Buryat *Khardig*, Altai *Kerede*, Tuva *Khereti*, Yakut *Khardai*, Samoyed *Kārī*). If we take into consideration the big Indo-Arian influence on Uralic mythology and on the Uralic languages (Katz 2003), we cannot exclude the following way of this motif spreading Indo-Arian > Turkic and Tunguso-Manjurian people > Uralic people (in particular Samoyeds) > Sámi > Scandinavians). In this connection it is important to stress that the Sámi word *bassi* (holy) as e.g. in *Stoura Bassi Sieidi* “the great holy god” (a god of hunt and fishing in one of the Sámi areas) is an Indo-Arian loan word in Finno-Ugric languages (cf. Avest. *baga* “luck, fate”, OInd. *bhagas* “luck”).<sup>13</sup>

The connection of the Scandinavian giant Thjazi with the Sámi god of fishing and water bird hunting Tjatsiolmai becomes even clearer if we remember Thjazi's daughter Skadi. Skadi has evident features which correspond to the cliché features of the Sámi in Old Icelandic literature. She goes skiing, hunts with a bow and shoots game. In skaldic poetry she is called *öndurdís*,

---

<sup>13</sup> For more detail about the connection between the Scandinavian giant Thjazi and the Southern Sámi god for fishing Tjatsiolmai see Kuzmenko 2006.

*öndurgoð* “ski goddess”. She is a giantess but she belongs to the gods. She was one of Njörd's wives, but according to the Norwegian skald Eyvind Finnson (!) she did not want to live with Njörd and did better by marrying Odin. She had many children with him. One of them, who was the ancestor of a very well-known person in the Norwegian history Hakon Jarl, was called *Sæmingr*.

Skadi's traditional occupations and the name of her son with Odin *Sæming* have given the idea to the known German philologist Karl Müllenhof that both Skadi and *Sæming* remind one of the representatives of the original Scandinavian population “*Sámi*” in Northern mythology (Müllenhoff 1906, 55), cf. also „jettedatteren Skade, som ferdedes på ski, kann godt oprinnelig stamme fra lappenes, „finnenes“ saguverden...” (Itkonen 1928, 79). Even the name *Sæming* is considered to contain the self-designation of *Sámi* (*Sámi/Sápmi*).

The question is what type of connection is characteristic of the relation between Skadi and the *Sámi*. Was it a pure coincidence that the features of Skadi coincided with the cliché features of *Sámi*? Or in this case are we dealing with the personification and mythologization of the northern neighbors of Scandinavians? Such mythologization of the neighbors is a usual thing. The *Sámi* for instance have also personified and mythologized Scandinavians in the shape of the giant Stallo. Or was Skadi borrowed from the *Sámi* “tale world”, as Itkonen assumed? We would then have to look for a correspondence for Skadi in the *Sámi* tradition.

Unlike Thjazi, Skadi does not have any formal correspondence among the *Sámi* gods. But she has a functional correspondence. Among the *Sámi* akkas “female gods” we find Juxakka, one of Maderakka's daughters. The name Juxakka can be translated as “Bow Woman”. Her attributes are a ski (or a ski pole) and a bow (she is always represented on the shaman drums with a bow and a ski pole). Her function in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was to be responsible for male children, i. e. for the future hunters. She could even transform a girl into a boy in the mother’s belly. After his birth she gives the boy to the god of hunting Leibolmai, who has the same attributes as Juxakka: a bow and a ski. Leibolmai (“alder man”) is a male correspondence to Juxakka.

Skadi has also a male correspondence: Ull, a god who was called in the skaldic poetry *örvaráss* „arrow-ass“, *bogaáss* „bow-ass“, *veiðiáss* „hunt-ass“, *skíðfærr* “skier”. Even in this case the connection of the occupations of Ull with the traditional *Sámi* occupations could not but have caught one's eye. The German historian Golther stressed that Ull in his armament and his way of life as a hunter with a bow, who goes skiing on snow fields and snow mountains, reminds us of the Finns and the *Sámi* (Golther 2003 (1895) 13, 312). But it is assumed that the winter features of Ull were not original. In the Scandinavian tradition, Ull is a son of Sif, the wife of Thor, the woman with a golden hair. Though Icelandic mythological tradition does not give us much information about Ull, there are some places in the Eldery Edda that show that before the Viking

Age he was an important god in Scandinavia, cf. Grm. 42. *Ullar hylli hefr oc allra goða / hverr er tekr fyrstr á funa* “Who at first extinguishes the fire has the favor of Ull and of all the gods“ and Atlkv. 30, where an oath must be sworn at the southern sun, at the bourg of Sigtyr (Odin), at the horse of the bed of rest and at the ring of Ull “*at sól inni suðrhællu oc at Sigtýs bergi / hölqvi hvílbeðiar ok at hringi Ullar*. Vries indicates Ull as “die helle Seite des Himmelsgottes“, whose cult was spread among the Germanic people at the time of the roman emperors (Vries 1957, 159). Ohlmarks dates Ull to even more ancient time. He indicates he was the main god of the sky at the Bronze Age in Middle Sweden and Eastern Norway. (Ohlmarks 1975, 181). The OE and OHG personal names with Ull (>*Wuld-*), cf. OE *Wuldwine*, OHG *Wuldberth* indicate his earlier importance in the Germanic world. The runic inscription from Torsbjärg (around 200) **owlpupewar** is especially interesting; this can be interpreted as the servant (to the priest) of Ull (Vries 1957, 158-159). However, the northern features of Ull as a god of winter hunting form a contrast to his original function as a god of light.

The most popular etymology connects the name Ull with got. *wulþus* “glory, shine“ (Blöndal 1989, 1084). The original meaning of this word is assumed to be “light“. Not only etymology but also some places in the Eddic Edda (see above) have given rise to the assumption that Ull was originally a god of light and probably one of the most popular gods before the Viking age. Ull was not only connected with Skadi as a god of winter hunting, but this connection can be traced even to the time when he was the god of light. Two circumstances can testify to this. The etymology of the name Skadi, which is connected with got. *skadus* “shadow” and the etymology of the name Ull which is connected with the word for “light“. That the gods of light and shadow formed a pair seems very likely. The second reason for an earlier connection between Skadi and Ull is the geographical distribution of theophoric place names with Skadi (*Skadevi*, *Skädvi*, *Skädharg* etc.), which coincides with the distribution of the theophoric place names with Ull (*Ullevi*, *Ullaker* etc.) - (Lindroth 1919, 48; Kraft 2001, 14, 170, 208). The place names with Ull and Skadi are spread in middle Sweden and eastern Norway where hunting was one of the main occupations. Cults of two Sámi gods of winter hunt Juxakka and Leibolmai were spread in the same regions. Thus we have a clear parallel between two Scandinavian gods of winter hunting, a male and a female, Ull and Skadi, and two Sámi gods of winter hunting, a male and a female, Liebolmai and Juxakka. What was the reason for this parallel?

We can assume the following development. Before the Viking Age, the North Germanic people had a pair of gods for light (Ull) and shadow (Skadi) or probably for day and night or for sun and moon. It is now impossible to reconstruct the exact meaning of the pair, but it is clear that they formed a pair. The “shadow features” of Skadi have lead to her identification with the Sámi goddess of winter hunting Juxakka, cf. the semantic chain *shadow* > *coldness* > *winter*. Through

the identification with Juxakka, Skadi was reinterpreted as a goddess of winter hunting (cf. her attributes of a bow and a ski). Accordingly her pendant Ull also obtained the attributes of winter hunting (bow and ski) and also became a god of winter hunting. The transformation of the original god of light Ull into the god of winter hunting is connected not only with the parallelism with Skadi but also with the comparison of the Sámi pair Juxakka – Lieibolmai with the Scandinavian pair Skadi – Ull. In this way Ull received features which were characteristic for Lieibolmai.

Today it is hardly possible to say how Skadi (a goddess of winter hunting) became a daughter of the giant Thjazi (who originated from the Sámi god of fishing), but it is possible that the functional connection of their Sámi prototypes (Juxakka and Tjaciolmai) determined this development.

The influence of the Sámi on the Scandinavian sphere of fishing and winter hunting (hunting with skis and bows) must not be a surprise for us. As we have seen above, Sámi had a high authority in these occupations in Scandinavian society. And we must not forget that skiing came to Scandinavians from their northern neighbors (Manker 1971).

## **Language**

In the period which in linguistic terminology is usually called Common Scandinavian (550-1050) and which in Swedish historical tradition corresponds to the two historical periods Vendel period and the Viking Age, the Scandinavian languages underwent a radical change. At this time they developed several features which differ the Scandinavian language from the other Germanic languages but which typologically correspond to the features of the Finno-Ugric languages<sup>14</sup>. These features include the development of agglutination (suffixed article, suffixed negation, suffixed passive), the loss of the original Germanic prefixes and probably preaspiration and nasal assimilation<sup>15</sup>. These features have always been considered to be the result of an autochthon Scandinavian development. Even Kylstra, who wrote about a typological rapprochement of the Germanic and Finno-Ugric languages did not dare to admit that the typological affinity between the Scandinavian and the Sámi languages could be the result of Sámi interference in Common

---

<sup>14</sup> The increasing morphological affinity of the Scandinavian languages with the Finno-Ugric languages has already been attested to. Kylstra was the first to discover certain important Sámi-Scandinavian parallels. He wrote about “eine deutliche Annäherung des Germanischen an den finnisch-ugrischen Sprachtypus” (Kylstra 1967, 113). He names the following features, which “erinnern... an den Finnisch-Lappischen Typus”: 1. first position of the verb, 2. narrative tense changes, 3. loss of the object, 4. disappearance of prefixes 5. suffixation of the definite article, 6. suffixation of the reflexives, 7. postposition of the possessive pronouns. (ibid, 121). Though some of these features can hardly be connected with Finno-Ugric influence (N 1-3) and others have been named without mentioning possible Finno-Ugric sources of the corresponding Scandinavian developments (N 5-6), this article has made a very important contribution to the study of similar developments in the Sámi and in the Scandinavian languages, though Kylstra himself sees a possible Finno-Ugric influence only in the loss of prefixes (Kylstra, 1967, 121).

<sup>15</sup> The age of preaspiration can not be established with definiteness because it was never marked in writing.

Scandinavian. But if we take into consideration the usual principles of investigation of possible interference features (comparison with related languages, chronology, direction of spreading, degree of incorporation in the language system, typology of interference) we can say that all innovative Scandinavian features mentioned above could be interpreted as the result of Sámi interference in Common Scandinavian.

**The Loss of the original Germanic prefixes** was one of the first changes in this direction. The developed system of prefixes was characteristic of the Gothic (cf. prefixes *ga-*, *un-*, *dis-*, *fair-*, *twis-*) and of the Old West Germanic languages. A very rich system of prefixes is still characteristic of Modern German. Even in English, which has undergone the most radical changes since the Old English period, we find some original Germanic prefixes (cf. *become*, *begin*). Common Scandinavian appeared however to be “et praktisk talt prefixløst språk” (Christiansen 1960, 342-343)<sup>16</sup>. The comparison of the West Germanic languages with Old Norse testifies to this development very clearly; cf. Got. *haitan* “to be called”, *gahaitan* “to promise”, OI *heita* “to be called, to promise”. In some cases, verbs with prefixes in the West and East Germanic languages correspond to verbs with another root, cf. OHG *biqueman* “come up to, get at, become”, OE *becuman* “to reach, to become” – OI *fá* “to become”. In the position before sonorants, unstressed prefixes have not been completely dropped, they have only lost their vowels as the initial consonant has been incorporated into the root, as in OI *granni* “neighbour”, Got. *garazna*; OI *gnógr* “enough”, Got *ganohs* (vgl. German *genug*). The loss of the unstressed prefixes can be dated back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century, cf. the form with the unstressed prefix *un-* (**unnam**) in the inscription on the stone from Reistad, 6<sup>th</sup> century (Krause 1971, 136).

If we compare Common Scandinavian with the other Old Germanic languages having unstressed prefixes and Sámi with the other Uralic languages having no prefixes and if we take into consideration that the lack of prefixes (and lack of unstressed initial syllables in general) in Sámi is much older than the Common Scandinavian loss of unstressed prefixes, only one direction of borrowing can be assumed, namely from Sámi to Common Scandinavian. The loss of prefixes was originally characteristic of the Scandinavian language of the Sámi but it spread later into the areas without Sámi population. This development in Common Scandinavian corresponded to the main stress pattern of the greatest part of Germanic words which had initial stress.

Three other changes in Common Scandinavian (suffixation of *-inn*, *-s(k)*, *-a(t)* and *-gi/ki*) have also increased the number of iambic words in Common Scandinavian. The traditional hypotheses about the development of the suffixed definite article in Scandinavian languages connects suffixation only with the postposition of the original demonstrative pronoun (*maðr + inn góði* >

---

<sup>16</sup> The new unstressed prefixes of the Modern Scandinavian languages (such as *be-* and *an-*) have been borrowed from Middle Low German during the Hansa period.

*maðrinn góði* (Grimm 1989 (1898), 447), or *maðr inn* > *maðrinn* (Nygaard 1905). The *inn*-suffixation is traditionally dated to the Viking Age (Noreen 1913). But the postposition of the original demonstrative pronoun is a necessary but in itself insufficient condition for suffixation. It cannot explain the development of suffixation in the Scandinavian languages because in the Old West Germanic languages the postposition of the pronouns was also possible. It seems that there is reason to look for other sources of article suffixation.

All the Uralic languages have possessive suffixes which have the same function as possessive pronouns in the Indo-European languages. These possessive suffixes can have not only possessive but also emphatic semantics and semantics that correspond to the semantics of a definite article. On the other hand a definite article very often has possessive semantics, cf. Germ. *Ich stecke die Hand in die Tasche* vs Engl. *I put my hand in my pocket*. If we compare languages with possessive suffixes with languages with definite article we can see a clear parallelism between these categories, vgl. Germ. *er hat das Bein gebrochen*, Sw. *han har brutit benet* but Finn. *hän on murtanut jalkansa*, N.Sámi *son lea doadjan juolggis*. In the Finnish and Sámi sentences the noun for “leg” has a possessive suffix (*jalkansa*, *juolgis*), cf. Engl. *He has broken his leg*. If we compare the semantics of the first cases of *inn*-suffixation in the Old Scandinavian languages, when the definite article was not yet grammaticalized and the semantics of the suffixed *-inn* was first of all emphatic and possessive, then the affinity between the Sámi possessive suffixes and the Scandinavian suffixation becomes even clearer.

The development of Scandinavian suffixation can thus be reconstructed as follows. Proto-Scandinavian and the start of Common Scandinavian were characterized by free word order in the noun group. The original Scandinavian demonstrative pronoun (*h*)*inn* in postposition was interpreted in the Scandinavian language of the Sámi as a suffix corresponding to the Sámi possessive suffixes which had the same (possessive, determinative and emphatic) semantics. Thus the pronoun (*h*)*ið* in the Common Scandinavian sentence *han hefr brotið bein (h)ið* or *han hefr bein (h)ið brotið* (“he has broken leg the”) was interpreted as a suffix corresponding to the Sámi possessive suffix *-s* (cf. *son lea doadjan juolggis*). It was not the borrowing of a suffix but the reinterpretation of a Scandinavian word as a suffix accordingly to the semantics of the Sámi possessive suffixes. The *inn*-suffixation, which originally was a characteristic of the Scandinavian language of the Sámi, was later spread to the areas of the original Scandinavian population. *Inn*-suffixation developed in central Scandinavia, in the main zone of the Sámi-Scandinavian contact, and from there it expanded into the southern Scandinavian area, but

suffixation did not reach the southern and western Danish dialects, where the definite article is prepositive.<sup>17</sup>

The following evidence testifies to the Sámi origin of *inn*-suffixation: (comparison with related languages) - the presence of the possessive suffixes in all Uralic languages and the absence of article suffixation in the West Germanic languages; (age) – a much younger development of the *inn*-suffixation in Common Scandinavian compared with the development of the possessive suffixes in the Uralic languages; the spreading of the *inn*-suffixation from the north to the south (south-west Denmark was not affected by this development). The grammaticalization of the *inn*-form as a definite article took place later, when the usage of this form with definite semantics became regular.

Another case of reinterpretation of Scandinavian postpositive pronouns as suffixes in the Scandinavian language of the Sámi which spread over the whole Scandinavian area is **the suffixation of the original reflexive pronouns**. The Scandinavian languages, in contrast to the other Germanic languages, have a synthetic passive or middle voice form with the suffix *-s(k)*. In the Old Scandinavian languages and in Modern Icelandic, which has best preserved the original status, there is a semantic difference between the middle voice and the analytical passive as in Old Icelandic *opnaðisk* "opened (by itself)" - *var opnaðr* "was opened (by someone)" on the one hand, and a semantic difference between the reflexive and the middle voice (cf. Mod. Icelandic *meiða sig* (refl.) "to get hurt by oneself" *meiðast* (med.) "get hurt (e.g. by falling)"; *baða sig* (refl.) "to wash (oneself to become clean)" *baðast* (med.) "to bathe (e.g. in the sun)" (Kress 1982, 198) on the other hand.

The grammaticalization of the *sk*-form indicates that the semantic difference expressed earlier by the same form has acquired morphological significance. The full and the syncopated forms were originally free variants *meiða sik – meiðask* "to get hurt" (the state that in some cases is preserved in Modern Icelandic *setja sik – setjask*), but after the grammaticalization of the middle voice, they began to indicate two grammatical categories. The full form began to indicate reflexivity, while the suffixed reduced form was used for middle voice. Scandinavian suffixation can be connected with the reinterpretation of the reduced form of the postpositive Scandinavian reflexive pronoun *s(k) < sik, sér* as a suffix in accordance with the semantics of the suffix *-s* in the Sámi languages. The Sámi suffix *-s* indicates that the action happened by itself (without an agent), cf. Northern Sámi *dahpat – dahpasit*, (Sw. *stänga – stängas*), *rahpat – rahpasit* (Sw. *öppna – öppnas*) - (Nickel, 1990, 228-229). Such a reinterpretation was conditioned not only structurally as in the case of Scandinavian *inn*-suffixation, but also formally (cf. the phonetic

---

<sup>17</sup> For a detailed study of the rise of the Scandinavian suffixed article and about the article suffixation in other Indo-European languages, see Kusmenko 2001, 2005).

affinity of the Scandinavian *-s(k)* with the Sámi *-s*). The Sámi suffix *-s* is considered to be an autochthon Finno-Ugric suffix (Itkonen 1980, 25) which has correspondences in many Finno-Ugric languages (Estonian and Karelian dialects, Veps, Livian, Voti, Komi-Permiak – Ariste 1968, 74-75; Äjme 1978, 268; Lytkin 1962, 262-266).

The Sámi origin of the Common Scandinavian *-s(k)* suffixation can be testified by the structural affinity of the Sámi and Scandinavian voice system (reflexive, middle voice and passive in Common Scandinavian and reflexive, medial and passive verbs in Sámi), the semantics of the *-s(k)* forms which correspond to the semantics of Sámi medial verbs (especially verbs with the suffix *-s*), comparison with the related languages (no synthetic voice forms in the West Germanic languages but corresponding forms in other Finno-Ugric languages) and finally the date of the development of the *s(k)*-form in Common Scandinavian (8th century A.D.), which is much earlier than the development of the corresponding suffixes in the Finno-Ugric languages. Even in this case we can assume that the appearance of the *s(k)*-suffixation was initially in the Scandinavian languages of the Sámi in central Scandinavia and later this feature spread to the South.<sup>18</sup>

Another possible Sámi interference feature in Common Scandinavian is **the development of suffixed negation**, which is dated to the 8th century. The sentence (verbal) negation suffix was *-a(t)*, the sentence constituents negation was *-ki/-gi* (cf. forms of the Norwegian skalds from the 9th century *letrat* "does not let", or younger runic *munat* "shall not" from the 10<sup>th</sup> century or forms *aldrigi* (<*aldri-gi*) "never", *eigi* (<*ei-gi*) "not", originally "never" from the same time. Suffixed negation distinguishes Common Scandinavian not only from the other Germanic languages but even from the other Indo-European languages. The traditional explanation of this suffixation connects the suffixation with the postposition of the reduced reinforcement elements and with the loss of the original prepositive negation particle *ne* (e.g. *\*ne verðR ainata, aina, aiw* "does not become anything, ever" > the reduced forms *\*ne+verðR+ a, at* > *ne verðrat* > *verðrat* "does not become". We have to understand why this development was possible only in Common Scandinavian. The suffixation of the reinforcement elements in Common Scandinavian could have been caused by the reinterpretation of the Common Scandinavian negation construction *\*ne* (negative particle) *etR* (verb) *at* (reinforcement) "does not eat" as a construction with a suffix (*ne etR a(t)* > *ne etRa(t)*) in correspondence with the Sámi negative construction consisting of a negative auxiliary verb and of a special indefinite (negative) form of the main verb with the original suffix *\*k > t > 0* (*\*ejä porek* > *ej borat* > *ij bora* "does not eat"). Thus the Common Scandinavian reinforcements *-a* (<*\*aiw* "ever") and *-(a)t* (<*\*einata* "ein") were reinterpreted in the Common Scandinavian of the Sámi speakers as suffixes corresponding

---

<sup>18</sup> For more detail about the development of the *s(k)*-form in Common Scandinavian see Kusmenko 2001; 2005.

to the Sámi suffixes of the indefinite negative form of the main verb (cf. *borat* and later *bora*). The phonological affinity of the Scandinavian reinforcement elements with the suffixes of the Sámi indefinite (negative) form (*-at, a*) contributed to such a reinterpretation (cf. the development of the middle voice suffix above). Later the negative particle *ne* was dropped and the former reinforcement elements became the only markers of negation.

The development of Common Scandinavian constituent negation can be also treated as a reinterpretation of the Common Scandinavian reinforcement particle *ki/gi* in postposition as a suffix corresponding to the Sámi particle *-gi*, which often appears as a suffix in constructions with the negative verb (cf. Northern Sámi: auxiliary negative verb + *goassege* “never” ; + *guhtege* “nobody”, + *mihkkege* “nothing”). If we compare these forms with the semantically corresponding Common Scandinavian forms we find that they have also *-gi/-ki* suffixation cf. OI *aldrigi* < \**ne aldrē-gi* “never”; OI *engi(nn)* < \**ne ainaR-gi* “nobody”, OI *ekki, etki* < \**ne einata gi* “nothing”.<sup>19</sup>

Two phonological features can be interpreted as Sámi interference in Scandinavian: preaspiration and assimilation of the nasals. Preaspiration is now spread not only in the West Scandinavian area, where it is the well known and well described (cf. Modern Icelandic *drekka* /*drehka*/) but everywhere in Scandinavia<sup>20</sup>, except Denmark, where we have possible traces of preaspiration in the form of a short vocalic *stød* in some Danish dialects. Though the age of the preaspiration is a matter of debate, it is quite possible that it developed before the colonization of Iceland during the Common Scandinavian time (Hansson 2001, 197). Preaspiration is lacking in the other Germanic languages but occurs in some Uralic languages<sup>21</sup> and it plays a very important role in Sámi stadium gradation. A Sámi origin of Scandinavian preaspiration is therefore very plausible (Kuzmenko, Rießler 2000, 219; Rießler 2004).

It is possible that even Scandinavian nasal assimilation (*nk > kk, nt > tt, np > pp*, as e.g. in *drikka* < \**drinkan*) which occurred in the 7th-8th centuries (Moberg 1944) and which differed the Scandinavian languages from West Germanic languages could also be connected with a corresponding Sámi development (cf. *ng > gg, nd > dd, nb > bb*<sup>22</sup>) which corresponds to the development in some Uralic languages (cf. in Enets – Mikola 2004, 65-66).<sup>23</sup>

We can see that before and during the Viking Age, Common Scandinavian was strongly influenced by Sámi. The obvious connection between the Scandinavian developments and the Sámi features has always been neglected with the simple reason that the spread of Sámi

---

<sup>19</sup> For more detail about the development of suffixed negation see Kusmenko 2002.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. "Non-normative preaspiration does occur in the speech of many speakers across Scandinavia..." (Helgason 2002, 94).

<sup>21</sup> As e.g. in Mansi (Kannisto 1919, xii-xiv) and Forest Nenets (Sammallahti 1974, 44, 118, 133).

<sup>22</sup> Majusculae indicate voiceless lenes plosives.

<sup>23</sup> Kylstra, who indicated these parallels between the Sámi and the Scandinavian languages, did not make conclusions about Sámi interference in Scandinavian (Kylstra 1983).

interference features was not possible due to the low prestige of the Sámi. But we have seen above that relations between the Sámi and the Scandinavians before and during the Viking Age was characterized by mutual respect and acceptance, and did not prevent the spread of Sámi interference features in Common Scandinavian.

## Conclusion

When we look at the relation between the Sámi and Scandinavians in the Viking Age without being prejudiced, we can conclude that the traditional opinion that Sámi cultural influence on the Scandinavians was impossible or minor is false. On the contrary there are many elements in Scandinavian heathen culture and in Scandinavian languages which were borrowed by the Scandinavians from their northern neighbors before and during the Viking Age. We can even suppose that the formation of the Scandinavian culture and of the Common Scandinavian language in the period between the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> centuries was conditioned by Sámi-Scandinavian contacts to a very high degree.

## Literature

- Aime Kiahrik, 1978: O formirovanii paradigmy vozvratnyh glagolov v vepsskom jazyke. In: *Sovetskoje finnougrovedenie*, t. 14. 267-276.
- Ariste, Paul, 1968: *A Grammar of the Votic language*. Bloomington.
- Bäärhielm Göran & Zachrisson Inger, 1994: De Finnis, om samerna ur Historia Norvegiae ca 1190 e. Kr. In: *Fornvännen* 89, 161-162.
- Baudou, Evert, 1995: *Norrlands forntid – ett historisk perspektiv*. Stockholm.
- Baudou, Evert, 2002: Kulturprovinsen Mellannorrland under järnåldern. In: *Namn och bygd* Bd. 90. 6-36;
- Blöndal, Magnusson, 1989: *Íslensk órðsifjabók*. Reykjavík.
- Christiansen, Hallfrid: "De germanske uaksentuerte prefixer i nordisk." In: *Norsk tidsskrift for sprogvidenskap* 19 (1960), 340–382.
- Einarsson, Stefán, 1986(1963): Harp song heroic poetry (Chadwicks). Greek and Germanic Alternative singing. In: *Stefán Einarsson, Studies in Germanic Philology*. Ed. by Anatoly Liberman. Hamburg. 62-78
- Fjellström Phebe, 1985: *Samernas samhälle i tradition och nutid*. Värnamo.
- Flat.= *Flateyjarbók* 1860-1868: Unger, Carl Richard: *Flateyjarbók: En samling af Norske Konge-Sagaer med indskudte mindre fortaellinger om begivenheder i og udenfor Norge samt Annaler* 1. Christiania.
- Fritzner, Johan, 1877: Lappernes hedenskab og troldomskunst sammenholdt med andre folks, især nordmændenes, tro og overtro. In: *Historisk tidsskrift*. Bd 4. 135–217.
- Golther, Wolfgang, 2003 (1895): *Handbuch der germanischen Mythologie*. Rostock.
- Grimm Jacob: 1989 (1898): *Deutsche Grammatik* 4. 1. Teil. Besorgt durch Gustav Roethe und Edward Schröder. Hildesheim – Zürich – New York.
- Haarstad, Kjell, 1992: *Sørsamisk historie. Ekspansjon och konflikter i Rørostraktene 1630-1900*. Tapir: 1992.
- Hallström, Gustaf: 1921: Gravplatser och offerplatser i ryska Lappmarken. In: *Etnologiska studier tillägnade Nils Edvard Hammarstedt*. Stockholm. 183-212
- Hammershaimb, Venceslaus U., 1851: *Sjurdar kvædi* (Færöiske kvæder, 1 = Nordiske Oldskrifter 12). København 1851 S. 11 ff.).
- Hansen, Andreas M., 1907: *Oldtidens Nordmænd. Ophav og Bosætning*. Kristiania.
- Hansen, Lars. I., Olsen, Bjørnar, 2004: *Samenes historie fram til 1750*. Oslo.
- Hansson, Gunnar Ó., 2001: Remains of a submerged continent. Preaspiration in the languages of Northwest Europe. In: *Historical Linguistics 1999*. Ed. Laurel J. Brinton. Amsterdam/Philadelphia. 157-173.
- Helgason, Pétur, 2002: *Preaspiration in the Nordic languages. Synchronic and diachronic aspects*. Stockholm.

- Hellquist, Elof, 1993: *Svensk etymologisk ordbok*. Malmö.
- Itkonen Erkki, 1980: "Über einige lappische Verbalsuffixe". In: *Suomalais-ugrilaisen seuran aikakauskirja/Journal de la Société Finno-ougrienne* 76. 23–41.
- Itkonen, Toivo Immanuel, 1928: „Fennoskandia-skiens oprindelse“. In: *Tromsø museums skrifter*; 2. Oslo. 77–87.
- Itkonen, Toivo Immanuel, 1946: *Heidnische Religion und späterer Aberglaube bei den finnischen Lappen*. (= Suomalais-Ugrilainen seuran toimituksia; 87). Helsinki.
- Jahr, Ernst H. 1997. Norway. *Kontaktlinguistik*. Ed. by Hans Goebel et al. Berlin. 937-948.
- Kannisto, Artturi, 1919: *Zur Geschichte des Vokalismus der ersten Silbe im Wogulischen vom quantitativen Standpunkt*. Helsinki.
- Katz Hartmut, 2003. *Studien zu den älteren indoiranischen Lehnwörtern in den uralischen Sprachen*. Aus dem Nachlaß herausgegeben von Paul Widmer, Anna Widmer und Gerson Klump. Heidelberg.
- Koht, Halvdan, 1923: Var ”finnane” altid finnar? In: *Maal og Minne*. 161-175.
- Koivulehto, Jorma, 2002: Contact with non-Germanic languages 2. Relation to the East. In: Bandle Oskar et al. (Ed.) *The Nordic languages. An international handbook of the history of the North Germanic languages*. Berlin, New York. 583-594.
- Kraft, John, 2000: *Hednagudar och hövdingadömen i det gamla Skandinavien*. Uppsala.
- Krause, Wolfgang, 1971: *Die Sprache der urnordischen Runeninschriften*. Heidelberg.
- Krause, Wolfgang, mit Beiträgen von Herbert Jankuhn, 1966: *Die Runeninschriften im älteren Futhark*. Göttingen.
- Kress, Bruno, 1982: *Isländische Grammatik*. Leipzig.
- Kusmenko Jurij, 2001a: Die Ursachen der Suffigierung des bestimmten Artikels in den skandinavischen Sprachen. In: *Language and Language Behavior*. V 4 N 1. St.-Petersburg. 184–206.
- Kusmenko, Ju. (2001b): Den nordiska *s(k)*-formens uppkomst. In: Jurij Kusmenko und Sven Lange (Hrsg.) *Nordiska språk – insikter och utsikter. Föredrag från det 5:e studentkollokviet i nordisk språkvetenskap*. Berlin. 127-139.
- Kusmenko, Ju. (2002): Utvecklingen av suffigerad negation i urnordiskan. In: Jurij Kusmenko und Sven Lange (Hrsg.) *Strövtåg i nordisk språkvetenskap. Föredrag från det 6:e studentkollokviet i nordisk språkvetenskap*. Berlin. 102-118.
- Kusmenko, Jurij, 2006: Jätten Thjazi och det samiska elementet i nordisk mytologi. In: Andrea Amft & Mikael Svonni (red.) *Sápmi YIK – Livet i samernas bosättningsområde för ett tusen år sedan*. Umeå. 11-28.
- Kusmenko, Jurij, Rießler, Michael. 2000: Traces of Sámi-Scandinavian Contact in Scandinavian Dialects. In: *Languages in Contact*. Gilbers, Dicky et. al. (Hrsg.). Groningen. 209–224.
- Kuzmenko Yury, 2005: Saami influence on the development of morphological innovations in Common Scandinavian. In: *Finno-Ugric people in the Nordic Countries. Roots V: The roots of people and Languages of Northern Eurasia*. Ed. Birger Winsa. Hedenäset. 11-31.
- Kylstra, Andries Dirk, 1967: Zur Substratforschung. In: *Orbis* 16 N 1. 101–121.
- Kylstra, Andries Dirk, 1983: Skandinavisch-Lappische Parallelen. In: *Suomalais-ugrilaisen seuran toimituksia* 185 (*Symposium saeculare Societatis Fenno-Ugricae*). Helsinki. 159–177.
- Lindroth, Hjalmar, 1919: En nordisk gudagestalt i ny belysning genom ortsnamnen. In: *Antikvarisk tidskrift för Sverige*. Bd 20, N 2.1-76.
- Meißner, Rudolf, 1942: *Bruchstücke der Rechtsbücher des Borgarthings und des Eidsvithings* bearb. von Rudolf Meißner. Weimar.
- Mikola, Tibor, 2004: *Studien zur Geschichte der samojedischen Sprachen*. Aus dem Nachlass herausgegeben von Béata Wagner-Nagy. (Studia uralo-altaica 45). Szeged.
- Moberg, Lennart, 1944: *Om de nordiska nasalassimilationerna mp>pp, nt>tt, nk>kk med särskild hänsyn till svenskan*. Uppsala.
- Müllenhoff, Karl, 1906: *Deutsche Altertumskunde*. Bd 2. Berlin.
- Mundal, Else, 1996: The perception of the Samis and their religion in Old Norse sources. In: *Shamanism and Northern Ecology*. Pentikäinen, Juha (Hrsg.). Berlin/New York. 97–116.
- Mundal, Else, 2004: Kontakt mellom nordisk og samisk kultur reflektert i norrøne mytar og religion. In: Ju. Kusmenko (red.), *The Sámi and the Scandinavians. Aspects of 2000 years of contact*. Hamburg. 41-53.
- Nickel, Klaus P., 1990: *Samisk grammatikk*. Oslo.
- Noreen Adolf, 1913: *Geschichte der nordischen Sprachen*. Strassburg.
- Nygaard, Marius, 1905: *Norrøn syntax*. Kristiania.
- Ohlmarks, Åke, 1975: *Fornnordisk ordbok*. Stockholm.
- Olrik, Axel, 1905: Nordisk og lappisk gudsdyrkelse. In: *Danske studier* Bd 2. 39-57.

- Olsen, Magnus, Bergsland, Knut, 1943: *Lappisk i en islandsk runeinskrift*. (Avhandlingar utg. av det Norske Videnskapsakademi i Oslo, II kl. 1943 Nr. 3). Oslo.
- Pálsson, Hermann, 1999: The Sami people in Old Norse Literature. In: *Nordlit. Arbeidstidsskrift i litteratur*. Det humanistiske fakultet. Universitet Tromsø. N 5, vår 1999. 29-53.
- Qvigstad, Just, K., 1893. *Nordische Lehnwörter im Lappischen*. (Videnskaps-Selskabs Forhandlingar, 1893:1.) Christiania.
- Rask, Rasmus, 1932-1933: En Udsigt over de lappiske og finiske Stammers Historie. In: *Rasmus Rask: Ausgewählte Abhandlungen 2*. Kopenhagen. 285-320.
- Reuterskiöld, Edgar, 1912: *De nordiska lapparnas religion*. Stockholm.
- Rießler Michael, Präaspiration im Nordgermanischen. In: Jurij Kusmenko (Hg.) *The Sámi and the Scandinavians*. Hamburg 2004, 199-213.
- Salvesen Helge, 1980: Sørsamene i historisk perspektiv In: *Jämten* 1981. 127-148.
- Sammallahti Pekka, 1974: *Material from Forest Nenets*. Helsinki.
- Sammallahti, Pekka, 1990. The Sámi Language: Past and Present. In: *Arctic languages*. Ed. by Dirmid R. F. Collins. Paris. 437-458.
- Sammallahti, Pekka, 1998: *The Saami languages. An Introduction*. Karasjok.
- Sandnes, Jørn, 1973: Om samenes utbredelse mot sør i eldre tid. In: *Hiistorisk tidsskrift* Bd 52. 113-137.
- Saxo Grammaticus 1886: *Saxoni grammatici gesta danorum*. Herausgegeben von Alfred Hodler. Strassburg:
- Schöld, Tryggve, 1961: *Die Kriterien der urnordischen Lehnwörter im Lappischen*. Uppsala.
- Snorri Sturluson, 1941: *Noregs konungasögur*. Bjarni Aðalbjarnason bjó til prentunar Reykjavík.
- Steinsland, Gro, 1986: Giants as Recipients of Cult in the Viking Age? In: *Words and Objects. Towards a Dialogue between Archaeology and History of Religion*. (ed. by Gro Steinsland). (Instituttet for sammenlignende kulturforskning Serie B: Skrifter 51). Oslo 1986. 212-222
- Strömbäck, Dag, 1935: *Sejd. Textstudier i nordisk religionshistoria*. Stockholm.
- Svennung, Josef, 1974: *Skandinavien bei Plinius und Ptolomaios*. Uppsala (Skrifter utg. av k. humanistiska vetenskapssamfundet i Uppsala 45)
- Vries de, Jan, 1957: *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte*. Bd 2. Berlin (2. Aufl.).
- Vries de, Jan, 1962: *Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Leiden.
- Werbart Bozena, 2002: *De osynliga identiteterna. Kulturell identitet och arkeologi*. Umeå.
- Werbart, Bozena, 1999: De mänskliga kontakterna i Östersjöområdet. Yngre stenålders fångstamhällen. In: Göran Burenhult (red.). *Arkeologi i Norden 1*. Stockholm. 336-342.
- Zachrisson, Inger et al. (red.), 1997: *Möten i gränsland: samer och germaner i Mellanskandinavien*. Stockholm.
- Zachrisson, Inger, 2004: Samiskt-nordiska kulturkontakter i mellanskandinavien under 6-700-talen e. Kr. (vendeltid) – utifrån det arkeologiska materialet. In: Ju. Kusmenko (red.), *The Sámi and the Scandinavians. Aspects of 2000 years of contact*. Hamburg. 9-16.
- Zachrisson, Inger, 2006: För tusen år sedan – en resa bland sydsamer. In: Andrea Amft & Mikael Svonni (red.) *Sápmi YIK – Livet i samernas bosättningsområde för ett tusen år sedan*. Umeå. 75-84.