

**SAMI TEXTS FROM KEMI SÁPMI RECORDED
BY JENNY AND SAMULI PAULAHARJU**

MICHAL KOVÁŘ

ABSTRACT

Among the folklore texts collected by Jenny and Samuli Paulaharju in the 1920s and 1930s there are a few Sami texts from the area of Kittilä and Sodankylä. The texts are partly macaronic Finnish-Sami, only one or two might be considered authentic Sami. However, due to their small extent it is questionable whether it can be regarded as Kemi Sami, the language that has been believed to disappear about 200 years ago.

Keywords: Kemi Sami; Jenny Paulaharju; Samuli Paulaharju; Sami folklore

According to their grammatical and lexical features, the Sami languages are divided into two groups – the Western and the Eastern. Three Sami languages are nowadays spoken in Finland: North Sami, belonging to the Western group, Skolt Sami, and the endemic Sami language of Finland, Inari Sami, both belonging to the Eastern group. Another, namely the Kemi Sami language, belonging to the same group and nowadays extinct, used to be spoken in the territory of Finland between the Kittilä and Kuusamo localities.

There is not much data available about Kemi Sami. The most significant representatives are the authentic Sami songs written down by the Sami clergyman Olaus Sirma in the early 1670s.¹ Sirma's translation of Johannes Gezelius's Catechism from Finnish (probably from 1716)² and a short glossary compiled by Jacob Fellman during the 1820s³ show the differences between dialects from Nuortti/Nuortijärvi (Skolt Sami), Imandra (Skolt Sami), Kuolajärvi (Kemi Sami), Sompio (Kemi Sami), Inari (Inari Sami), Enontekiö (North Sami) and Utsjoki (North Sami), as well as the dialect continuum between Kemi Sami and the bordering Sami languages (Skolt, Inari, and perhaps North Sami as well). Another text in Kemi Sami is a translation of the Lord's Prayer in the dialect of Sompio recorded by Anders Johan Sjögren and published in 1828 in his *Anteckningar om*

¹ Published by Johannes Schefferus in his *Laponia*, Francofurti, 1673. 282–284.

² Wiklund, K. B. "En kemilapsk text från år 1716." *Le monde oriental* 7, 1913. 82–96.

³ Fellman, Jacob. *Anteckningar under min vistelse i Lappmarken III*. Helsingfors: Finska Litteratursällskapet, 1906. 19–21.

församlingarne i Kemi-Lappmark,⁴ again including the parallels with Inari, Utsjoki and Sami languages from the Russian side.

The term Kemi Sami, uniting all conceivable dialects from the so-called Kemi Lappmark, is a late exonymic designation, most probably originating from Wiklund's 1913 article, in which Sirma's translation of the Catechism was published. To the best of my knowledge there is no data supporting any collective identity of the Kemi Sami distinguishing it from the other groups of the Sami people. One possible criterion, the livelihood, cannot be applied. A similar way of living has been shared by speakers of different Sami languages and therefore it would not distinguish the group of the Kemi Sami, settled down in homesteads in the forest zone of Finland's Sápmi, from the Inari Sami, the Skolts and many speakers of North Sami in Finland and Sweden.⁵ The possible fact that Kemi Sami was a dialect continuum between North Sami, Inari Sami and Skolt Sami, differing from these languages in a combination of features and likely having no specific, or at least no considerable and collective isoglosses, would speak against any linguistically based Kemi Sami identity covering speakers from Kittilä, Sodankylä, Kuolajärvi etc. These speakers might have considered themselves as speakers of Sami, perhaps perceiving some dialectal or regional affinity towards the speakers outside Kemi Lappmark, i.e. speakers from Hetta, Inari, Nuortti/Nuorttijärvi etc. However, since there is no satisfactory evidence, it is rather like looking into a crystal ball and speculating what would have happened to the form of the local Sami dialects, if it hadn't disappeared.

The Sami languages of the Kemi area and the areas surrounding it had probably not been yet divided to such an extent back in the 17th century. Only a few basic tendencies could be found. The local dialects interfered more with the Finnish language due to the topographical position of Kemi Lappmark. The conditional marker *-si* (? Finnish *-isi*) or the alveolar [ts] (*kätze*, 'look' < ? Finnish *katso*) in Sirma's songs can perhaps be considered as examples of such interference,⁶ as well as the words *tuomio* ('judgment', < Finnish *tuomio*), *armo* ('mercy', < Finnish *armo*) and other specifically religious loanwords in Sirma's translation of the Catechism. Similar influences can be seen within Sjögren's examples of the Lord's Prayer; cf. the word *ijankaikkisest* ('for ever and ever' < Finnish *iankaikkisesti*) etc. However, the religious context is too specific and has enforced a relatively large extent of loanwords and calques (in Sjögren's parallel texts: *váldegodde* 'realm' < Finnish *valtakunta*, in Inari, Sompio, Utsjoki, and *tsarstvo* < Russian *tsarstvo*, in Semiostrov (probably Kildin Sami), Nuortti/Nuorttijärvi; *vuoiyme* 'power' < Finnish *voima*, in Inari, Sompio; and *fábmo* in Utsjoki, etc.). In addition, the major part of the juxtaposed translations might have been made by non-Sami people.

Regarding the time of the probable extinction of the Kemi Sami dialects, there is no precise data either. According to the realistic estimates based on documents from that

⁴ Sjögren, Anders Johan. *Anteckningar om församlingarne i Kemi-Lappmark*. Helsingfors, 1828. 253–254.

⁵ Lehtola, Veli-Pekka. *Saamelaiskiista. Sortaako Suomi alkuperäiskansaansa?* Helsinki: Into, 2015.

⁶ Again, we don't know, what the actual pronunciation was. As for the conditional, the marker *-si* could be found only in one of the two songs, in the other the marker *-dzi* is used. The difference can only be in the orthography, as is the case with the difference between the digraph *ao* in the song *Kulnasatz niraosam*, and *o/oo* in the song *Pastos paivva*, both standing for the same vowel (cf. Schefferus 282–284).

time, describing the massive Finnish colonization,⁷ the final extinction came during the first half of the 19th century. However, among Samuli Paulaharju's folklore records from the southern parts of Finnish Sápmi from 1920s and 1930s, stored in Samuli Paulaharju's archive in the Folklore Archive of the Finnish Literature Society, some Sami texts can be found. Perhaps these texts were narrated in a descendant language of what we call Kemi Sami? Can we consider it as an evidence of the survival of the Kemi Sami dialects until the 20th century?

The Finnish writer Samuli Paulaharju (1875–1944) was one of the last Finnish folklore collectors of the National Romanticism era. He collected folklore from Karelia, areas with Finnish population outside Finland, and from the central and northern areas of Finland including Sápmi. His numerous books were mostly travelogues⁸ with incorporated parts of the material, which Paulaharju and his wife Jenny collected during their journeys. The extensive material was archived in the Finnish Literature Society in Helsinki. The language of the folklore texts is predominantly Finnish with roughly noted dialectical features. The philological interest of the Finnish revivalists seems to be over in Samuli Paulaharju's time.

The texts in Sami are very rare in Paulaharju's archive. We know about a possible Sami origin of many other texts recorded in Finnish, i.e., about the ethnicity of a particular informant, from Paulaharju's notes attached to his informants' names. However, the switch of a code could have caused also the switch of a cultural domain. And since Sami people were familiar with both – Sami and Finnish too – they could have talked about Finnish facts in Finnish. The proof of Sami “authenticity” of a tale could be found in intertextuality, by comparing it with another folklore text, or in terms of intratextuality, if, for example, a Sami word was used as a signal. This is the case, for example, of the material collected from talking to Risto Ahkila (Grigori Kimof), a Sami customs officer from Akkala, about the concepts of nature phenomena among the Kola Sami (texts No. 13691, 14019, 14020, 14021).

In the archive, I counted twelve texts at least partly recorded in Sami by informants from Kittilä, and four from Sodankylä. Most of the texts are nevertheless told by Finns, who knew them by hearsay from visitors, or remembered them from other local (?) people: (10105, Sodankylä) “The old Ponku-Matti always used to sing this when he was drunk while visiting Sodankylä.”⁹ (10104, Kittilä) “59 years old housewife of Muotkan Mikko. Heard this song once from Herra-Matti.” (10106, Sodankylä) “Aarnetti Oinas was taught this song by a Sami girl.” (10114, Kittilä) “The girl Anna Heikkilä was taught this poem by a Sami girl.”

There are also texts preserving Sami in direct speech surrounded by a Finnish narrative with either a correct or an incorrect translation: (12635, Kittilä) “[in Sami or ‘Sami’]

⁷ Tegengren, Helmer. *En utdöd lappkultur i Kemi lappmark – studier i Nordfinlands kolonisationshistoria*. Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1952; Lehtola, Veli-Pekka. *Saamelaiskiista. Sortaako Suomi alkuperäiskansaansa?* Helsinki: Into, 2015.

⁸ The books based on records from Paulaharjus' journeys in Sápmi are, e.g., Paulaharju 1922, 1923, 1927.

⁹ “*Kal mun valten kuusa ja sautsi,
i leh ku tääh kila irtapaatni.
Kusan pora suini, sautsi pora laihipi,
koitni pora patski, paatnaski natski.*”

I got a cow and a goat,
there is nothing but the mocker from the village. (?)
My cow eats hay, the goat eats bread,
However eats also ... (?), his tooth is awry (?).

Paarnet vuolkit kainutta, paarnet vuolkain kainukoita. [In Finnish] *Pojat menit tauoitta, pojille vien taukoja.*” A probable translation of the Sami text is: “Boys, go on the road (?). The boys left ... (the word *kaunukoita* is unclear to me).” The translation of the parallel Finnish sentences is: “The boys left without nets. I’ll bring them some nets.” (8366, Kittilä) “*Kost mun herkkani? Kost mun lautsini? Kost mun kierris? Kost mun karppuni? Kost mun kahper? Kost mun rahput? Kost mun aksun? Kost mun niihpen? Kost mun stuorra kolppun? ... Kost mun stuorra kuöllin, johka must valttin?*” A probable translation of the Sami text is: “Where is my bull? Where is my leash? Where is my sleigh? Where is my package? Where is my cap? Where is my mitten? Where is my axe? Where is my knife? Where is my big dagger? ... Where is my big fish, which was taken (?) from me?” What is specific for these texts, beside the relative pronoun *johka* contaminated by the Finnish *joka* ‘which’, is the use of Finnish morphological markers (pl. partitive in “*kainuko-ita*” and 1st person sg. possessive suffixes in “*herkka-ni*”, “*lausti-ni*”, “*karppu-ni*”, contrary to Sami possessive suffix in “*niihpe-n*” etc.; the abessive case, *kainu-tta*, most probably influenced by Finnish, can be found in Inari Sami as well) on Sami words, or misinterpreting Sami morphology through the Finnish one (the Sami imperative form *vuolki-t* vs. the Finnish indicative *meni-t*).

Paulaharju himself explains the occurrence of Sami words and whole songs in the 1920s and 1930s Kittilä as follows (10103): “The inhabitants of Kittilä have often been in touch with Lapps and learnt to speak broken Sami. They have learnt from them also some *juoiggus*-songs,¹⁰ to some extent, both lyrics and melody, and other songs and rhymes, too ...”¹¹ It is unclear whether this explanation serving as a preface to a relatively long (18 verses) Sami song, reproduced by a Finnish wizard (“*tietäjä*”) Tuomas Lomajärvi, could be applied also for six short texts from Kittilä area, which remained *sine nomine* (10108, three short *juoiggus*-songs from Sirkka and Köngäs; 10111, one lullaby from Kaukonen).¹² Two *juoiggus*-ditties sung by a Sami Pikku-Hannu’s boy (10109, 10110) probably do not fall into the category. Paulaharju perhaps just heard and wrote down the anonymous texts without a possibility to reveal the informants, or he did not attach greater importance to note their names and other personal data. However, the ditties sung by a Sami boy seem to provide the first of the two rather convincing pieces of evidence of the Sami language in Kittilä area in Paulaharju’s times. On the other hand, we must keep in mind that Pokka, due to its northern position near to Hetta, could have been inhabited by speakers of North Sami, and also that the texts are too short to provide us with any decisive material: “*Jouvni Niilas vuöraas, Muotki-tuoddar nauti, maattaaste nunni, tseytsijes kuttsaa.*” “Jouvni Niilas, the old man, the beast from Muotki Mountain, nose towards south, pissing on his heels.” Paulaharju’s translation of the sentence, added to the record in the archive, is: “Jouvna’s Niila, the old man, the beast from Muotki Mountain, sniffing to the south, pissing on his legs.” Paulaharju’s translation of the sentence, published in 1922,¹³ is: “Jouvna’s Niila, the old man, the beast from Muotki Mountain, sniffing to the

¹⁰ About the *juoiggus*-genre cf. e.g. Tamás 62–76.

¹¹ “Kittilän asukkaat ovat useasti joutuneet kosketuksiin lappalaisten, ‘tuhkalappalaisten’ kanssa ja oppineet heidän kieltään solkkaamaan. Ovat he lappalaisilta oppineet joitakuita joikauksiakin, sekä sanoja että säveleitä, samoin myös muutamia muitakin lauluja ja loruja.”

¹² “Iiton kalkkaa, majolkkus lee.” “Kuortti peesi velkunas, nun-nun-nuu, nan-nan-naa.” “Iih kalkkaa, maajala puohtii, tuohkus mannan lei.” “Valla koo, neita koo, hortna juu.”

¹³ Paulaharju (1922) 128.

south, falling down on his legs.” “*Vuoijan uhtsa skamppees, nuunu, nuunu, nuunu ...*” “Oh, the small poor man, nuunu ...” (Paulaharju’s translation).¹⁴

The second evidence is a “Sami translation by a Sami” (“*lappalaisen lapinnos*”) – of the Finnish song *Eikä se vene vesillä kulje ilman soutamatta* (10113): “*Eikä ja vaanas tsaatsien golka ilma suhah kiehte. Eikä ja irki herra lee, luhkir ikke pahpa.*” “The boat doesn’t float on water without a rowing hand. The fiancé is not a lord, nor a sacristan or a priest.” The translator and the singer was a 30 years old “Lappish woman” Elle Laakso from Hanhimaan near Kittilä. The language of the translation is comprehensible and, in some details, distinct from the topographically closest North Sami language, or at least from its standard form (*luhkir* versus North Sami *luhkkár* and Inari Sami *lukkár, eiká* versus *iige, ige*).

Among the texts collected by the Paulaharju couple in the region once called Kemi Lappmark only a few might be taken into consideration as a prospective and indirect evidence of (Kemi?) Sami still being alive at the beginning of the 20th century. The texts recorded in Sodankylä, the central part of the Kemi Sami region, are second-hand information, just as the majority of the other texts from its westernmost part, the Kittilä area. It was learnt – and quite often incorrectly – by Finnish farmers on various occasions from Sami from various regions. Only very few Sami texts from the northern part of the Kittilä area were most probably told directly by Sami informants. Among these texts, one – ironically just a translation of a Finnish song – seems to differ from the surrounding Sami languages appearing to be a descendant of what we today call Kemi Sami. The text is, however, so short that the few differences found in its languages may have been caused by a later radical language convergence of different Sami languages with Finnish, or any other factors including idiosyncrasy. It seems to be pointless to compare the fragments from the 20th century with texts from the 17th and 18th centuries, also due to their different cultural contexts. While the oldest records are mainly translations of religious texts and probably auctorial “high” poetry, the fragments from the early 20th century are a mixture of genres varying from mere idioms or collocations to occasional ditties.¹⁵

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¹⁴ Cf. also Paulaharju (1922) 124.

¹⁵ This work was supported by the European Regional Development Fund-Project “Creativity and Adaptability as Conditions of the Success of Europe in an Interrelated World” (No. CZ.02.1.01/0.0/0.0/16_019/0000734).

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Michal Kovář
Charles University
E-mail: michal.kovar@ff.cuni.cz