A baseline study of socio-economic effects of Northland Resources ore establishment in northern Sweden and Finland

Transnational history and language barriers

Lars Elenius

Luleå University of Technology
Department of Human Work Sciences

2008
A baseline study of socio-economic effects of Northland Resources ore establishment in northern Sweden and Finland

Transnational history and language barriers

Lars Elenius

Department of Human Work Sciences
Luleå University of Technology
Summary

The peace treaty of 1809 between Russia and Sweden divided the Torne Valley into two different nation state projects and modernization projects. The Finns on the Finnish side now composed a vast majority of the population and the Finns on the Swedish side a little minority. Since then there have been many institutional arrangements considering the Torne Valley.

Co-operation cross the nation border has became an important part of a common regional identity, as well as the common vernacular called “meän kieli” (our language) on both sides of the river. Agriculture, iron works and forestry form a common tradition of the economic life in the region.

After a lead in industrialization phase on the Swedish side in the beginning of the 20th century time has changed in the 21st century. Now the Finnish side are the leading part considering heavy industries as well as the tourism industry.

Culturally there is a near connection between the Sámi and Finnish people. One of the most salient cultural features of the Torne Valley is the Laestadian revival, a militant and anti-modern revival launched in the 1840’s.

A political feature is the polarization between non-Left and Left parties, taking form in the beginning of the 20th century. The region has been a stronghold for the Left bloc.

In present time there are contradictory changes. In one way the differentiation between the Finnish and Swedish Torne Valley appears in the form of lack of contacts. On the other hand the transregional co-operation cross the border is more alert than ever since the division in 1809.

In the long run since 1809 the Finns on the Finnish side has been part of a majority population, but living on the poorer side of the border, while the Finns on the Swedish side have been a minority on the wealthy part of the border, but exposed to an assimilation policy which caused week self-esteem. The latter group is, since the year 2000, recognized as a national minority in Sweden. The municipalities of Pajala and Kolari in Sweden and Finland are part of these complex circumstances.
# Table of contents

1. Introduction ............................................................................................................................ 7  
   1.1 Extent and delimitations ..................................................................................................... 7  
   1.2 Objectives .......................................................................................................................... 7  
   1.3 Methods and theoretical framework .................................................................................. 8  
2. From one nation state project to two .................................................................................. 9  
   2.1 Institutional arrangements considering the Torne River .................................................. 10  
3. History of industrialization ................................................................................................. 15  
   3.1 The first and second wave of industrialization ................................................................. 15  
   3.2 The transition to postmodern industrialization ............................................................... 16  
4. Cultural values ...................................................................................................................... 19  
   4.1 The cultural role of the Sámi people ................................................................................... 19  
   4.2 The Torne Valley as a cultural unit .................................................................................... 20  
5. Language policy and changing identities ......................................................................... 25  
   5.1 The language policy of Sweden and Finland ................................................................. 25  
   5.2 Language and changing identities ................................................................................... 26  
   5.3 Cultural revitalization and transnational contacts ........................................................ 28  
6. Regional and local history ................................................................................................. 31  
   6.1 Population changes in the Torne Valley ............................................................................ 31  
   6.2 The municipalities of Pajala and Kolari ........................................................................... 31  
      6.2.1 Regional political preferences ............................................................................... 32  
   6.3 The villages of Kaunisvaara and Äkäsjoensuu ................................................................. 33  
      6.3.1 Local political preferences ................................................................................... 33  
      6.3.2 Archaeological findings ......................................................................................... 33  
7. Conclusion: Transnational attitudes in the light of history .................................................. 35  
   7.1 Region building as means of co-operation ..................................................................... 35  
   7.2 Attitudes to mining and tourism as means for development of the region ..................... 35  
   7.3 Language revitalization and identity change among young people ................................. 35  
   7.4 Language and identity in a European perspective ........................................................ 36  
   7.5 The Torne Valley vernacular language in the future .................................................... 36  
8. Key indicators ...................................................................................................................... 37  
9. Important stakeholders ......................................................................................................... 39  
List of references ...................................................................................................................... 41
1. Introduction

This study is a part of a baseline study of the socio-economic effects of Northland Resources’ planned mining activities in Pajala and Kolari communities, in Sweden and Finland respectively. The baseline study was carried out during October 2007 – April 2008 by a research team led by Professor Jan Johansson, Department of Human Work Science, Luleå University of Technology, Sweden. The baseline study is a project ordered by Northland Resources Inc. and is based on a tender dated September 5, 2007. The project in total includes the following 11 part-studies: Demography, Labour Supply, Local trade, Infrastructure, Governance, Work environment, Gender, Preferences interviews, Preferences questionnaire, Transnational history, and Indigenous people.

The complex regional history of the Torne Valley is the subject of the sub-project Transnational history and language barriers. The special feature of the Torne Valley is the peculiar nation state history and the cultural mixture of Finnish, Swedish and Sámi culture. The region belonged to the same Kingdom for more than six hundred years. Thereafter the two parts went into different nation states for two hundred years and now they are part of the same multi national federation, the European Union. After two hundred years the two parts are approaching each other, but now on a regional level and with two varieties of Finnish culture and language. That is the complex background of the Torne Valley which forms the content of this report.

1.1 Extent and delimitations

In the investigation the relation between the Swedish and Finnish part of the Torne Valley is described in a long time span in order to explain the historical background of the region. Within that framework the focus was on the development of industrialization, modernization and cultural change after World War II until present time on both the Swedish and Finnish side of the national border.

In the investigation the Torne Valley is treated as one single region, but complicated by pointing out both similarities and differences between the Swedish and Finnish side. The feature of the Torne River as a border river is illuminated in the context of institutional arrangements for mutual usufruct in Finland and Sweden.

Of special transnational interest is the issue of changing cultural features and identifications on both sides of the Torne River. Central to this is the language issue which is analyzed out of the historical national language legislations in Sweden and Finland, but also out of the post-modern minority legislation in the framework of the European Council. The latter includes The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and The European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages. The Swedish legislation of minority languages, which affects the Meänkieli, Finnish and Sámi language, is also part of the study.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the investigation is:

• to analyze whether and in which way the planned mining activities might affect culture and language issues of the region;
• to analyze the effects by language, culture and other transnational issues on activities planned in the area.
The villages of Kaunisvaara and Äkäsjoensuu are put into the context of the Torne Valley as a historical region. The municipalities of Kaunisvaara and Kolari are put into a transnational context were the Laestadian religious revival, political peculiarities, the minority language policy of Sweden and the tradition of industrialization are investigated, analyzed and described.

There are both differences and similarities between Finland and Sweden considering social circumstances, national history and cultural values, which have influenced the two parts of the Torne Valley. In the sub-report historical matters relevant for present transnational co-operation will be described and analyzed.

1.3 Methods and theoretical framework

A historical approach has been used as a method of analyzing cultural change over time. In this context it mainly means an analyze over time with an extensive review of literature. Both qualitative and quantitative sources have been used. In the study focus has also been on comparative investigations, comparing the Finnish and Swedish part of the Torne Valley. In order to get a similar study on the Finnish side of the Torne Valley two Finnish historians has been engaged, Ph. Mag. Essi Tiittanen, the University of Oulu, and Ph.Mag. Johanna Vaattovaara, the University of Helsinki.

The theoretical framework is within modernizing and post-colonial theories, in order to analyze the transformation from a period of modernization and uniform nation state building to a period of post-modernization including particularistic cultural revitalization, political mobilization of ethnic groups and transnational regional building.

The transnational creation of identity is put into a post-colonial discourse were old power relations are renegotiated, and identities deconstructed and revitalized in new contexts (Young 2001; Loomba 2006). Industrialization is regarded as a long term process of three revolutions:

1. The first industrial revolution may be described as the transition from an agrarian to an industrial and urban society.

2. The second started in the end of the 19th century with standardised mass products manufactured for a mass market.

3. The third is the one we are experiencing today, with the new information and communication technology, electronics and biotechnology (Lundgren 2006, 35 p.).

Often the name of the rural district/municipality, parish and the urban centre is the same in the Torne Valley, for example in the case of Pajala and Kolari. In the below text Pajala and Kolari refers to the rural district/municipality and central Pajala respective central Kolari refers to the urban centre. The sub-report is written in a thematic way in order to trace some important features of the transnational history of the Torne Valley.
2. From one nation state project to two

The Torne Valley was integrated in the Kingdom of Sweden in the 14th century, as part of the expansion of the Kingdom eastwards and northwards. The southern part of the valley was in that time populated by a Finnish speaking population which had colonized the eastern side of the Gulf of Bothnia. On the western side a Swedish speaking population was established far up to the north. The Sámi people populated the inland round the Gulf of Bothnia quite near the coast.

Until 1809 the valley was an economic, political and cultural unit in which the dominant spoken language had been Finnish since the 11th century. The variety of Finnish spoken belongs to the dialect group of the Far Northern dialect area (e.g. Wande 1982; Paunonen 1987). In the war 1808-09 Sweden lost Finland to Russia and the new border was drawn along the Torne River. This border, that in a political sense was a compromise, was a violating act from the point of view of the local linguistic community. The borderline cut the Finnish dialect area in two halves were 8 000 of the 19 000 people of the Torne Valley were left to live at the territory of Sweden and 11 000 people were now part of the Russian Empire. (See Klockare 1982: 1–3; Winsa 1998: 15–16)

The Finnish side became a Grand Duchy of the Russian empire. The Swedish side became a Finnish speaking minority district, a relict from the six hundred year period of a united Kingdom. The Torne River was in the same time transformed from uniting water between a common culture and well known people to be a national border with a new custom system and the parishes being divided into different states. The opposite sides of the Torne Valley were from now parts of two different modernization and nation state projects, the Finnish and the Swedish.

The peace treaty turned out as significant for the political and cultural emancipation of Finland. During the Russian rule Finland enjoyed a great autonomy that laid the foundation for the State of Finland. During the Swedish rule Finnish had not had an official status, and at first Swedish retained its position as the official language of the country. Gradually it lost its dominant position as Finnish got a status of an official language. The Finnish national epic, the Kalevala, was published in 1835 and the work of J.V. Snellman played a great role in the process of Finnish reaching a dominant position as a language (Latomaa & Nuolijärvi 2005: 97). During the first part of the 19th century the Finnish nation strived to establish her self as a nation in a cultural sense.

In Sweden a coup d'état took place in 1809 as a result of he military and political catastrophe of the lost war. The power of the king was reduced and in 1865 a parliament was formed with two chambers. Three years before count councils was established which strengthened the power of the local authorities within each country. The Finnish speaking minority in northern Sweden was spread out on a large area along the Torne and Kalix River with affluent, isolated by the lack of communications such as roads. The area was up to the middle of the 1970’s called The Finnish District (Swe. Finnbygden) as to remain that it was a relict from the former kingdom were Finland had constituted the eastern part of the kingdom. Gradually The Torne Valley came to be used as the name of the district near the border to Finland, the Grand Duchy of Russia. Anyway the Finnish culture remained. In the same time the principal political rights of the Finnish speakers were strengthened by the political reforms done in Sweden in his first part of the 19th century. In practice the political influence was limited by
the fact that the majority of the Torne Valley people only spoke Finnish and the administrative and official language was Swedish.

In the turmoil of the Russian revolution 1917, and the failed Finnish revolution following at the same period, Finland became an independent state. The people at the Finnish side of the Tone Valley became citizens in a state where the Finns both culturally and politically had the same rights and the same status as the Swedes. They also made up the vast majority of the population.

The people on the Swedish side were at that time in the process of integration into the Swedish nation state, both culturally and politically. They constituted a tiny minority of Finnish speakers living in a peripheral part of the country. The integration process was part of the modernization of northern Sweden. Therefore Swedish became the official language in the Swedish part of the Torne Valley when people were engaged in political issues, administration, public service appointments, trade unions, the public sphere of media etc. In the same time a language policy was carried out within the school system of northern Sweden, with the aim to make the Finnish and Sámi population learn Swedish and to internalize Swedish culture. By definition it was a language policy for bilingualism, but in practice it turned out to be an assimilation policy.

2.1 Institutional arrangements considering the Torne River

The river came to be the new nation border. According to international praxis the so called royal stream, the deepest and most streaming part of a river, was to constitute the border line between two countries if the border went along a river. Therefore most of the islets in the Torne River came to belong to the Swedish side (Hederyd 1992, 33; Gullnäs mfl. 1975). It was not before 1825 that the negotiations about exchange of lands cross the border resulted in a final solution, but still there was an exception for some islets on the opposite side of the border. If the peasants had exchanged the territory of the islets with other areas they were allowed to use them by the right of disposal. These islets were called the sovereignty holms (Swe. suveränitetsholmarna) and the peasant had to pay a sovereignty fee for the right to use them (Hederyd 1992, 44-45; Gullnäs mfl. 1975, 12 pp.).

This institutional arrangement was of economic importance at that time and institutionalized the co-operation between Finland and Sweden considering the border territory. The institution of the sovereignty holms was the subject of continuing negotiations and revisions until 1986, when the right of disposal was changed to proprietorship for the one’s who used them (Gustafsson 1995, 147 pp.). Fishing, and later floating of timber, was other natural resources regulated through negotiations and agreements (Kommissionen för utredning 1897; Finsk-svenska gränsälvskommittén 1964).

The Nordic common, which grew as a politically unifying institution between the Nordic countries from the 1950’s, did also contribute to the stabilization of the border area, among others by doing investigations considering the potential use of power plants in the rivers of Torne and Kalix. The Kalix River is not a border river, but was involved in the investigation because there is a bifurcation, the Tärendö River, which connects the Torne and Kalix rivers. Therefore a Nordic commission was set up to investigate the connected rivers. The commission stated that the Torne River was not appropriate for the use of power plants because its status of a border river (Tornionjoki: vesistön tila ja kuormitus 2001; Nordiska vattenkraft-kommittén 1961 & 1962). In 1968 a Nordic committee investigated the border agreement considering the border river (Gränsälvsöverenskommelsen 1968) and in 1998 the Swedish
government investigated the Finnish-Swedish co-operation considering the border river (Gränsälvsutredningen 1998).

There has also since long time ago been a co-operation between planning local institutions on the Finnish and Swedish side. It started already in 1923 when Tornionlaakson kuntain toimikunta was launched as an organization for transnational co-operation and it was followed by Tornedalskommunernas Förbund launched in 1941. The co-operation involved cross-border shopping, ferry- and bridge issues, fishing of salmon, timber floating etc. Tornedalsrådet was founded in 1987 in Pajala as the official institution for co-operation between the municipalities of the Tore Valley (www 1).

Based on the background of the work in Tornedalsrådet and the background of a previous Interreg co-operation between Pajala, Kolari and Muonio from 1996 a new transnational administrative project was launched in 1998. It came to be a co-operation between the urban and rural districts on both sides of the Torne River considering general plans, and especially plans effecting the river as a common resource. During two years the eleven municipalities in Sweden, Finland and Norway, encompassing the Torne River, met to exchange their environmental plans, cf. Map 1.
A driving force behind the enhanced co-operation in the 21st century is no doubt the membership of Finland and Sweden in the EU that has totally changed the prerequisites for co-operation. Another background is the environmental work within the UN, especially the Agenda 21 document which was decided in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The aim of the project has been to promote a long-term sustainable development of the valley, and the project has also been called a local Agenda 21 (www 2). The project has been followed up by the project Meän väylä (Eng. Our river), described on the website of Pajala.

As a conclusion one might say there has been many Nordic, national, transnational and transregional investigations considering the joint use of the Torne River. Despite the wide range of uses of the river there has been no big conflict between Finnish and Swedish interests. The aim has been to solve different opinions by negotiations and compromises and
the Torne River and its surroundings have been called, in a symbolic way, for “the most peaceful border in the world”. A general feature of the cross-border contacts and institutional arrangements is a long term training in negotiations following “the Swedish model” or “Nordic model” as a special form of political culture.
3. History of industrialization

The industrialization of the Torne Valley should be regarded in a common context of northern Scandinavia. The oldest trade in northern Scandinavia is the trade with products from hunting, fishing and reindeer herding. It influenced very many other branches such as agriculture, mining and forestry in its initial phase. In a European perspective Scandinavia was an underdeveloped periphery up to the 1860’s. Thereafter the lead was reduced at a fast rate. The industrialization of Sweden and Finland was characterized by the central role of agriculture and the big share of timber production in the export. From the late 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century the industrial production grew rapidly in Sweden compared with Finland, especially within iron mining and the engineering industries. The growth was especially fast in the northern part of Sweden. In Finland agriculture and the products of forestry did still dominate (Berend & Ránski 1982, 17, 56; Jörberg 1977, 446). The difference in both character and pace of the industrialization lasted far into the end of the 20th century.

3.1 The first and second wave of industrialization

In the northern part of both Finland and Sweden the industrialization started in the early 17th century with mining and the foundation of different kind of metal factories. In northern Sweden both silver- and ironworks were founded in the beginning of the 17th century and in Finland ironworks were established about the same time.

The Torne Valley was one of the pioneering areas of mining and manufacturing in northern Fennoscandinavia. In the 1640’s iron was found in Svappavaara and soon after an iron work was established at the Torne River. Some ten year later also copper was found a bit upstream. The persons engaged were the townsman Arendt Grape from Stockholm and the Dutch brothers Momma. They also established the iron- and copper work in Kengis not so far from the village of Pajala. In the beginning of the 17th century ironwork was established in Svanstein, down streams from Pajala (Ahlström 1966).

In Kolari iron ore-mining have been conducted from the 17th century. In Rautuvaara iron was mined from 1962 till 1988 and in Hannukainen from 1978 till 1990 (www 3). The first ore and mineral findings which led to a production in Northern Finland were made in the beginning of the 20th century when mining of black granite was started in Kalajoki.

The most important period for the development of the industry of Northern Finland was the 1920s when new metal and wood processing plants were founded in Northern Finland. Industrialization of the area was left behind of the development of Southern Finland between the World Wars (Järvenpää 1995, 18–21, 24–26, 28).

Water saws were first constructed along the rivers of the Gulf of Bothnia in the 18th century, but these activities were still modest. The utilitarian use of forests did not begin before the next mid century when steam saws were established. In that time the amount of water saws was half as many in Northern Finland compared with Northern Sweden. From that time up to the decade of 1910 the share of export volume of timber in Northern Finland raised from 39 to 87 percent compared with Northern Sweden. In a national context the centre of forestry in Sweden was in southern Norland (geographically in the middle of Sweden), while it was in the northern part in Finland. In none of the countries did the Torne Valley play any dominant role. The first steam saw in the Swedish part of the Torne Valley was established near
Haparanda in 1871. The forest industry has been one of the most important industry in the coastal Torne Valley during the 20th century (Meinander 1950, 35 f.; Danell 1998, 38 f; Ylimaunu 2001, 191; NU 4, 242).

The first big saw company of Northern Finland was *Puutavara Kemi Oy*, which was established at the area of Kemi and Tornio in 1893. The engineering industry of Northern Finland started with the establishing of *Oulun konepaja Oy* in 1873. As was the matter with the cultivation of wood- or metal firms in the beginning of the 20th century in Northern Finland, the efforts were concentrated to the town of Oulu. One of the noteworthy and big employers was *Weljekset Åström Oy*, a leather industry established in 1863. The first enterprise within chemical industries, *Merikoski Oy*, was founded in the same city in 1906 (Järvenpää 1995, 20, 22–23).

During Word War II the industry of Northern Finland escaped larger damages, while the war did not reach more important industrial areas at the shore of the Gulf of Bothnia and in Kajaani. The biggest war lost considering the industries of Northern Finland was the nickel ores of Petsamo and the lost of its income to the Soviet Union. After the post war electric crises followed the construction of many power plants in very short time. Forest industry expanded greatly in the 1950s due to the investments made by the old forest companies. Wood pulp factories were established in Kemijärvi in the 1960s. The industry of chemistry in Northern Finland was represented for example by a nitrogen factory that was established in Oulu in 1952 (Järvenpää 1995, 39, 89–95, 133, 138, 160).

The industrialization of Northern Sweden concentrated in the late 19th century very much on the enormous iron mines in the mountain area of Gällivare and Kiruna. With the building of the railway to the two mining areas and further to the Norwegian coast the industrialization went into a new phase in northernmost Sweden. In the same time forest industries were established along the river mouths, exactly as in Finland. With the new concentration on the mines in the mountain area the iron industry fell down in Torne Valley and the area lost its former importance as one of the first industrialized areas of Northern Fennoscandinavia.

3.2 The transition to postmodern industrialization

Forestry combined with daires formed the economic life of the Torne Valley well up to the 1960’s and 70’s. During the industrialization process the agricultural units were rationalized in a faster phase on the Swedish side than on the Finnish one (Ylimaunu 2001, 191). After the war the importance of industries in Lapland was stressed in Finland. Many political factions, for example president Kekkonen, stated that industrialization should be advanced in Northern Finland, which was concentrated on forest industry. Also people living in the area started actively to demand industrial plants and new working places coming with them to Lapland, where the population figures had begun to decrease dramatically in the 1960s.

In the 1960’s a ferro chrome fabric was established in Tornio, to which rocks were brought from a mine near Kemi. In 1976 the activity of the steel factory of *Outokumpu* begun in Tornio. It was in the 1970s the biggest Finnish industry enterprise. The government invested a lot of money in the construction of it (Särkikoski 2005, 88–89, 115–118, 327; Kontio 1991, 235–236, 240).

The iron mines of *Rautaruukki* and *Oy Partek Ab* cement factory was the biggest industry employers for the parish of Kolari up to the 1980s, but they decreased the number of employ-
ees substantially in the end of the decade and ended their enterprises in the beginning of the next decade (Alajärvi et.al. 1990, 81; www 4, PDF, s. 34).

The last two decades the share of industry of the jobs in the Finnish Torne Valley district, in other words in Pello and Ylitornio, has been about 7-8 percent. The biggest industrial employer during the 2000th century has been the mechanized wood industry. The share of food manufacturing was big during the 1990s, but it has definitely decreased coming to present time. The manufacturing of mineral products has increased considerably during the 20th century as an employer in the Torne Valley district (www 5).

The share of industry jobs in the area of Kemi-Tornio is greatly larger than in Pello and Ylitornio. In Kemi-Tornio every fourth working site is located in industry. The far biggest field of industry there is within basic metal and metal manufacture, which share has increased during the last two decades. The second biggest is manufactur of paper products, but its share has decreased after the 1990s (www 5). In the rural district of Kolari the share of industrial work sites of the total employment have been, in the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century, about 4-6 percent. The considerable industrial field, when regards to employment, is the mechanic forest industry (www 5).

One of the newest enterprise branches is the tourism business. It has been very expansive in the Finnish Torne Valley, attracting both international tourists and national ones from Finland.

The industrialization has followed slightly different roads in the Swedish and Finnish part of the Torne Valley. The concentration on modern steel factories in the surrounding of Torne has given the Finnish part of the lower Torne Valley a salient industrial profile. In Haparanda no such industrialization has taken part.

The largest private enterprises in Pajala are in the forest industry and eight percent of the employees are in the branches of forestry and agriculture. In the same time majority of the total number of employees are in health, care and education. The labour market has thus been polarized between traditional countryside trades and the public sector which grew as part of the Swedish welfare system.

In Pajala the industrialization in the beginning of the 1960’s was concentrated to traditionally rural industries. The biggest private employer in late 20th century are still companies like the forest company AB Krekula & Lauri Såg and the leader manufacture Keros Läder AB, both with under fifty employees each. In the late 1970’s the first computer firm was established in Pajala that was in fact the first one in the county of Norrbotten. It has been followed by other computer firms, the biggest in the 21st century being Mikromakarna AB with about forty employees (NE 3, 374; www 6). No such big scale tourism business as in Finnish Torne Valley has been seen at the Swedish side.

A recent phenomenon in Haparanda is the development of Haparanda and Torneå to a common commercial centre. It is especially the establishment of IKEA in Haparanda, symbolically located at the nation border, which has opened up for many new store houses and other kind of shopping enterprises to establish in the surroundings.

The line of industrialization in the Torne Valley followed for the most part the same way on the Swedish and Finnish side, concentrating from the 17th century on forestry combined with
milk cow housekeeping with the first companies within mining and iron manufacturing. In the end of the 19th century northern Sweden was industrialized in a faster phase than northern Finland, a pattern which is also relevant for the Torne Valley. After the World War II this caused many young people to move from Finnish Lapland to Sweden, not at least to the Swedish part of the Torne Valley.

In proper Torne Valley a shift has emerged from the 1970’s when the Outokumpu stainless steel company established in the surroundings of Tornio. The centre of heavy industry in the Torne Valley is located on the Finnish side at the shore of the Gulf of Bothnia. The launching of Levi in the middle of the 1960’s as a skiing resort in the rural district of Kolari, combined later with international tourism business in the Finnish Lapland, has made the tourism branch grow much faster in the Finnish part of the Torne Valley than in the Swedish part.
4. Cultural values

The Torne Valley has for many hundred years been a culturally borderland between Finnish, Sámi and Swedish culture. During a long historical period the valley has been the area of transition from a North-Scandinavic to a North-Finnish culture, but also a culturally mixed area of Sámi and Finnish speaking groups.

4.1 The cultural role of the Sámi people

The Sámi people are the people with the oldest cultural traditions in the area. A Sámi settlement was present both in northern Sweden and northern Finland in the time when peasant colonization by Finns and Swedes started in the early Middle Ages. In northern Finland a wide and fast colonization took place from the 16th century. During that process the Sámi population on the Finnish side were gradually assimilated into the Finnish population. This was the matter also for the population in the Torne Valley which consisted of almost solely Finnish speakers, except the priests and part of the population in the industrial communities established in Svappavaara, Masugnsbyn, Tornefors and the ironwork of Kengis.

In the Torne Valley the colonization process went on quicker than in the valleys along the Swedish coast. Already in the beginning of the 17th century there were colonists settling down far up in the northern part of Lapland. In the same time also Swedish speakers moved there for working in the mines and factories established from the middle of the 17th century. The culture of the upper Torne Valley was thus formed as a mixture of a Sámi, Finnish and Swedish culture with the dominance of the Finnish culture.

Far into Early Modern Time it was only the tiny coastal area of the old big counties of Västerbotten and Österbotten which was populated by Swedish peasants. The rest of the enormous inland area consisted of the so called lands in the most northerly parts of the Gulf of Bothnia, populated mostly by the Sámi people. It was only in the Torne Valley that the non-Sámi colonization at that time reached far up into Lapland.

Reindeer herding is the trade with the oldest tradition in the Torne Valley, as mentioned in the section about industrialization. In the Torne Valley there is a special kind of organizations for reindeer herding from the northern part of the region to the cost. They are administratively called Sámi villages but have nothing to do with ordinary villages with dwelling houses. It is a term used for the special form of herding and ownership called concession reindeer herding. The landowners earn part of the reindeers, but it is only the Sámi people who have the right to graze them (Jernsletten 2007).

The Muonio Concession Sámi Village, that is herding their reindeers in the area surrounding Kaunisvaara, is such a concession Sámi village. The system of concession reindeer herding has created an affinity between the peasants and the Sámi people on the Swedish side, but also in the whole area of the Torne Valley there has been such as social and cultural affinity.

The poverty of the population during the colonization period, combined with inter-ethnic marriages and a religious affinity, created an egalitarian homogenous mentality among the people in the Torne Valley, both Sámi and Finnish speakers. The northern Finns, to which the Torne Valley belonged culturally, used the reindeer as a draught animal both in farming and forestry parallel to horses. In northern Finland the Sámi was to a high degree assimilated into the Finnish culture, even if the Finnish culture also brought up Sámi cultural elements. Only
in the most northerly part of Finland a Sámi culture has therefore remained, but in the
Swedish side of the Torne Valley the concession reindeer herding is kept down to the coastal
area.

With the coming of urbanization the near connections between the Sámi people and the
Finnish speakers have weakened also on the Swedish side, but still the Sámi culture means a
lot to the culture of the Torne Valley as an important element in the northern culture of
Fennoscandinavia. This is especially so in the remote areas were the daily contacts between
the Sámi and the Torne Valley people still are very close. The notion of Sámi stands symboli-
cally for something genuine northerly which symbolizes freedom, wilderness and independ-
ence from the central power.

In the same time the polarization between the Finnish speakers and the Sámi people has
increased and led to conflicts about land and water resources, in the same degree as the Sámi
people have obtained global indigenous rights (Elenius 2006a; Wallerström 2006). In a sense
you can say that the ethnic groups have changed places, a relation in which the Sámi people
have strengthened their position within both national and international legal and political
frameworks.

4.2 The Torne Valley as a cultural unit

The Finnish speakers in the Torne Valley have a dual approach to the region as a unit. During
many decades after the division in 1809, up to the latter part of the 19th century, the feeling of
a common Torne Valley permeated the people. The first ten years after the treaty the indi-
viduals continued to visit their former churches and they were also registered by the priest in
the parish register as before, but in the Swedish registers the individuals from the Finnish side
were now registered as a “Russian subject”. There was a common Finnish identity on the both
sides of the river.

The endurance and homogeneity of earlier culture was based on the manner of living in the
valley, to which belonged mutual confidence and recurrent stability. The development of the
culture was based on the continuity and the favouring of slow change (Repo 1994, 162, 164).
The historical affinity of the Torne Valley is an achievement of a common language, family
ties and a common cultural environment.

The Finnish variety spoken in the Torne Valley belongs to the Western Finnish dialects. The
name of the minority language of the Swedish side, in the year 2000 recognized as one of the
five national minority languages of Sweden, is Meänkieli (Eng. Our Language). Linguistically
Meänkieli is the very same variety that is also spoken in the Finnish Torne Valley as a
vernacular, there recognized as a dialect of Finnish. In the course of the past two hundred
years, the last hundred years in particular, Meänkieli in Sweden has gained a lot of Swedish
influence especially in the vocabulary (Wande 1982; Winsa 1987). But the varieties spoken
in Finnish and Swedish Torne Valley are still mutually intelligible, having a lot of features in
common. One of them is a very frequently occurring h in non-initial syllables (lähetthään
saunaan; in standard Finnish: läh(d)etään saunaan ‘let’s go into sauna’). The h is a marked
feature of still both of these varieties, described as one of the norms of Meänkieli. (Mantila

The urbanization in Finland also changed the dialect map of Finnish as people moved from
the countryside to the Helsinki area and other southern parts of Finland. However, as the
migration has not been towards North, the Lapland dialect area, including the Torne Valley
dialect, has remained relatively “conservative”, which is also it’s outer image if you ask people in other parts of Finland. People view the Torne Valley dialect and the dialects of the Far North in general “conservative” as well as “nice-sounding”, “friendly”, sometimes also “funny” or “weird” (e.g. Mielikäinen & Palander 2002; Palander 2005).

There is also a religious similarity between the two nation parts of the Torne Valley. In the 1840’s a revival took place within the protestant state church of Sweden. In started in the northernmost parish of Karesuando in northern Sweden by the parish priest Lars-Levi Laestadius and was therefore named the Laestadian revival. It was going to be the most influential religious movement of northern Fennoscandinavia during the next 150 years. The revival was based on a collective confession and an anti-materialist and anti-modern approach to modernization. An adoption of the religious secrets and the experiences of the mercy to the poor environment of the North was another feature of the revival. The Laestadian faith had a big influence on the life in Karesuando and it’s near rural districts, as in Muonio. The use of alcohol and criminality was reduced and the interest for reading increased. The revival determined the whole behaviour of living of the community (Raittila 1985, 273-275).

Most of the inhabitants of the Karesuando parish were Sámi people and the annual movement of the Sámi helped the spreading of Laestadianism to northern Finland and Norway. Other circumstances which helped the spread were the commercial connections over the nation borders, especially the opening up of freedom in trade and industry. When Laestadius moved to Pajala the revival did locate its spiritual centre to the middle part of the Torne Valley. Preachers coming from the Swedish part of Överorneå made the movement to be firmly established as far as to Simo in Finland from the middle of the 19th century. From there is spread out to other rural districts along the coast of Bothnia.

In Kittilä the Laestadius revival became the dominant one in the 1860s. The districts of Simo, Kittilä and Ylitornio became the most important centres for spreading the Laestadianism. The revival was spread out along the Torne River and its surroundings, and along the main coastal road of Bothnia and other main lines (Raittila 1985, 276–278). From Ylitornio the movement influenced mainly the Torne Valley and in southern direction, from Simo towards the North, East and West. The Torne Valley and the coastal area of Bothnia became the development area of the Laestadian revival in Finland. The nation border gave to it a special feature (Lohi 1997, 45-46).

In 1921 a so called folk high school, an independent adult education college, with Laestadian values was launched in Alkulla, Ylitornio, at the Finnish side of the Torne Valley. The establishment of such a religious folk high school on the Finnish side reflects the impact by the Laestadian revival on the Torne Valley as a whole. It also reflects the deep religious traditional values on the Finnish side of the nation border. The modernization process on the Finnish side was delayed compared to the Swedish side because of the different courses of the nation projects. Finland was part of the absolute Russian empire between 1809 and 1917 which was an obstacle for the development of popular movements and the civil society in general.

Until 1921, when Finland got a compulsory educational system, the religious schools at the parish level played an important role in education. This fostered traditional values and a reverential attitude towards religion and culture (Elenius 2001). The long lasting pattern was salient in the transnational investigations done by Finnish researchers in the late 1960s, comparing the Finnish and Swedish side of the Torne Valley. On the Swedish side the
modernization process had gone much further with more rational values and secularized attitudes towards traditional values such as religion (Studier kring gränsen i Tornedalen).

Even if the culture of the Torne Valley to a large extent is homogenous and cross the nation border, also differences are found. One concrete such differentiating practice is within the amusement arrangements between Finland and Sweden made by sports. On the Swedish side the national identity has influenced, so that some people there have experienced that they are not “real” Swedish, but not either Finnish (Pudas 2000, 112-116).

The changes in trade and industry in the 20th century, the influence by Word War II and the loss of population and also the change of the generation have caused the Laestadian activities to decrease in the area. In the Torne Valley people continued to cherish the tradition of the original revival when the Laestadianism was split into the new revivalists and the old Laestadianists in the end of the 19th century (Raittila 1985, 278, 280).

During the last decades, beginning in the structural change of society in 1960s, the culture of the Torne Valley has started to lose its feature. The special character of the area has begun to fade away. National and international influences have, for example, changed the building style of the Torne Valley (Repo 1994, 165-166). The international influence in Lapland has come with the increased number of tourists (Lessing 2000).

In present time the differentiation between the Finnish and Swedish Torne Valley appears in the form of lack of contacts. There are several studies showing that the cross-border contacts are friendly but not frequent as the people on both sides are attached to their own societies (e.g. Jukarainen 2000; Pudas 2005; Vaattovaara, forthcoming). The contacts were more frequent in the 1960’s and 1970’s when there was a mass migration from the Finnish to the Swedish part of Torne Valley. In the economic and educational sense Sweden was more wealthy and the standard of living in general higher (Haavio-Mannila & Suolinnna 1967). The post war period deepened the differentiation of the areas. During the Word War II the Finnish Torne Valley suffered from severe bombings and there were also a lot of men lost in the war.

In the cross-border marriages it has been almost without exception that the woman comes from Finland and marries a Swede, settling to Sweden. Nowadays the number of cross-border marriages, as well as the economic gap has diminished as the society in Finland has been through the modernization and urbanization processes. This has caused the economic structure to change. While in the 1960’s approximately 45 percent of the population of Finnish Lapland lived by agriculture and forestry, in the year 2000 the percentage was no more than 6 percent.

The Word War II divided the Torne Valley in two parts: the prosperous Swedish part and the impoverished Finnish part. It hampered an equal, social interaction in the area, and the uniform stile of the housing accommodation altered on the Finnish side by the divesting Lappish war. The firm cultural foundation of the Torne Valley did anyway hold: the cooperation cross the border continued and the devastations of the war was repaired by taking back the old traditions (Repo 1994, 162-164).

Still in the end of the 1960s there was an apparent economic and social difference between the Swedish and Finnish side: The lead of Sweden before Finland was seen foremost in the housing conditions and the ownership of different technical means. The difference was also apparent, for example in the field of work: in Sweden the share of gainfully employed was
bigger, in Finland the share of employed in agriculture was bigger (Haavio-Mannila & Suolinna, 1968, 181, 183).
5. Language policy and changing identities

The border between Sweden and Finland has always been considered as transparent, but since the split of 1809 the policies, such as the linguistic policy, have been basically different in Finland from Sweden. The difference is due to the nationalistic policy in the two different nation state projects, but also to the changed minority-majority relation. In Finland the Finns became the absolute majority of the population but still had a weak socio-political position. In Sweden the Finns in the Torne Valley became even more marginalized and isolated in the far North. The difference of national status between the Finns in the Swedish and Finnish part of the Torne Valley became clearer the more it went on.

During the first sixty years after the peace treaty the circumstances in terms of contacts across the border remained relatively stable, for instance the language of the first elementary schools in the Swedish Torne Valley was Finnish. Therefore, the Torne Valley area remained a linguistically and culturally relatively unite area till the last decade of the 19th century, and the Torne Valley Finnish in Sweden was not at first much affected by the Swedish influence (Salonius 1888: 258; Wande 1982: 48–49; Elenius 2001). One linguistic proof of the unity that we can still hear today is a particular sound change in the dialect, the metathesis of the h in non-initial syllables (such as saunhhaan > sauhnaan ‘into sauna’).

This shift of the h has it’s origins in the Swedish part of the valley, found in late 19th century, and this sound change reached the Finnish valley no later than in the early 20th century (Mantila 1992). Essential to mention is that it has never reached further east than sporadically the dialect of Kittilä and Tervola, being still in the 21st century a specialty of the Torne Valley dialect area and cherished even by the young generations (Vaattovaara 2002; Mantila 2004). From the middle of the 19th century the language of the Swedish and Finnish side started to diverge.

5.1 The language policy of Sweden and Finland

During the whole 19th century a political polarization took place between Norway and Sweden, on one hand, towards Finland, on the other hand. An assimilation language policy was introduced in primary school both in the Torne Valley and in the Finnish speaking area of Northern Norway. It reached its peak in the middle of the 1930s. After that it was decreasing, but was still practiced up to the 1960’s towards the Sámi and Finnish speaking population (Elenius 2001; Elenius 2006).

The rising of status of the Finnish language became a crucial part of the nation building project in Finland, starting seriously after Finnish gained the official status in 1863. One important part of Finnish nationalism was the aspiration to unite all Finnish speakers in Finland and adjacent areas of other countries. A similar kind of polarization as in Sweden and Norway was seen in the form of increased antagonism between Finns and Sweden-Finns. The antagonism in the field of language policy was so hard that it influenced the party formation in the country, which in the beginning followed the criteria of language policy. The active nationalists, so called Fennomans, generally also believed that the Swedish government systematically culturally suppressed the Torne Valley minority. It resulted in a verbal war between Finnish and Swedish elite groups in the newspapers, between student organizations and in other ways. It also resulted in the launching of folk high schools at the border of Torne Valley both on the Swedish and Finnish side of the border.
After the independence of Finland, Finnish and Swedish were declared as the national languages of Finland in 1922, Swedish being a minority language. The minority status of Swedish has often been considered to be an example of successful language policy (Mantila 2002: 52-52). The most recent language policy (2004) declares both Finnish and Swedish as national languages without any reference to one of them being in dominance. The Sámi languages were also pronounced as official languages in Finland by the declaration of 2004.

The post modern basis of the Swedish minority policy is found on the Government Bill about national minorities in Sweden (1998/99:143). It is also based on the two Council of Europe conventions: the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (the Framework Convention), and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Minority Languages Charter). In addition there are two national minority language legislations, only applies in some municipalities in the northernmost county of Norrbotten.

The Act on the Use of Sámi in Administrative Authorities and Courts of Law (SFS 1999:1175) are used in some mountain area municipalities where Sámi speakers’ lives. The Act on the Right to Use Finnish and Meänkieli in Administrative Authorities and Courts of Law (SFS: 1999:1176) is applied in the Torne Valley municipalities. In the year 2000 the languages of Sámi, Finnish and Meänkieli was chosen to be the official minority languages of Sweden, together with Yiddish and Romany chib. The recognition was made on the foundation of the above mentioned charters and laws.

5.2 Language and changing identities

The crucial difference between the Finnish and Swedish Torne Valley is the very different processes of identification that people have been through during the past 200 years. In the Finnish Torne Valley the dialect speakers never suffered from any discrimination policies. When the border was set to the Torne River, the people in the Finnish Torne Valley were ever since a part of the dominant culture where the dominant language came to be Finnish. Finland had become an autonomous Grand Duchy of Russia and the Finnish language was an important determinant of Finnish national identity.

Due to the earlier Swedish rule in Finland Swedish language remained to be a language of administration, media and education almost throughout the 19th century, but this century (1820–1880) has been called the time of “early modern Finnish”, a period when the written language was purified from Swedish loans and new terms in medicine and other fields were created etc. By the end of the 19th century the Finnish language had developed to be a fully cultural language (Mantila 2002: 50–51; Latomaa & Nuolijärvi 2005: 97.)

Due to the assimilation policy the linguistic identity of the Finnish speaking Torne Valley people of Sweden started to grow weak. The low status of the discriminated minority was most salient regarding their mother-tongue. It grew to be the minority’s most salient marker of inferiority with connotations to social stigmatization in notions such as “poor”, “uneducated” and “unemployed”. Since the early 20th century this vernacular was called Meänkieli (Eng. our language) by its speakers, reflecting perceptions of it’s inferiority to Swedish or to standard Finnish (Winsa 1998: 20).

Due to the low self esteem of the speakers of Meänkieli the variety has been struggling to survive, as many minority languages, such as the Kven, a Finnish variety in Northern Norway (See e.g. Lindgren 1998). The long history of stigma has caused the attitudes of the speakers to grow against their vernacular. Along with the new generations also the language shift has
emerged (See Winsa 1998). The Laestadian revival in the Torne Valley has been favourable for the preservation of Meänkieli, though. In the late 19th century the Laestadian revival became strong in the Swedish Torne Valley, soon spreading across the Torne River (Elenius 2001; Ihonen 2003).

Meänkieli was the language in common of the cross-border Laestadian community – the lingua sacra. Much due to the contacts of the Laestadians as well as the cross-border marriages, Meänkieli has preserved its status as one of the spoken varieties in the Swedish Torne Valley, but the language proficiency of the generations today is not very good. The revitalization process and the activity of the STR-T since 1980’s has helped to strengthen Meänkieli but the attitudes seem to change slowly (Winsa 1998; Arola 2006).

By contrast, the dialect in the Finnish Torne Valley has an exceptionally strong status. The identity of this dialect speakers has been very different from the one of the Swedish Torne Valley People, as they have been a part of the dominant culture since the dialect split back in 1809, and not minority (See the section Minority legislation). The levelling of dialects, which is a common feature of just about any dialect in Europe these days, has for some reason not affected the Torne Valley dialect as much as it has affected some other Finnish dialects (see Mantila 2004; Vaattovaara forthcoming). Vaattovaara forthcoming work suggests this is due to a combination of high linguistic security, positive image of the dialect and territorial consciousness, which much comes down to the location and the special history of the border area.

The preservation of the dialect, at the same time, seems to be a reaction against the new mass movement towards city centers. Those young people of the Torne Valley who value rural life style are heavy users of the dialect, in comparison to those who are willing to move to the southern metropolis and to adopt a city way of life. Oulu is one of the new attractive centers, and quite interestingly the form of 1st and 2nd person pronouns mää and sää, typical for the Oulu dialect, are now spreading to the Kemi–Torne region (Nurmesniemi 2004). Yet there are no signs of this trend outside the southern commercial centre of the Torne Valley. In Pello, for example, these forms are still always in the form of mie and sie, with rare exceptional occurrences of the standard minä, sinä that can be sporadically heard in any dialect.

The attitudes towards the vernacular have varied in Finland along the 20th century (for an overview see Koski 2002; Makkonen-Craig & Vaattovaara 2007), but nevertheless the variety spoken in the Finnish Torne Valley has maintained the same status as any other vernacular in Finland. In the late 20th century a “boom of dialects” has emerged, as a general European phenomenon, and lifted the status of dialects and regional identities which has been explained as a counterforce to globalization (Auer et al. 2005; Keating 1998; Paasi 2002). The urbanization in the 20th century has affected the dialect map of spoken Finnish, especially since the 1960’s, but the prediction that the traditional dialects would level off has not come true.

It is still relatively easy to recognize the geographical background of speakers in Finland. One of the rare dialect features in its vitality is the certain variant of the h (sauhnaan ‘into sauna’; tekehmään (‘to do’) etc.) which can only be heard in the Finnish, as well as in the Swedish, Torne Valley (See the section Cultural values). According to Vaattovaara forthcoming dissertation the identity of the Torne Valley is expressed by means of this linguistic element. The individual use of language varies according to the degree of “feeling of insideness” in the local community. Some of the young use the dialect more than the generation of their parents, which is a clear sign of a growing prestige of the dialect. Normally language changes towards dialect levelling from generation to generation, but not in this case.
In Sweden attitudes towards varieties of the Torne Valley dialect or language are more complicated due to the political history of the language. The official language of Sweden is Swedish, but since the year 2000 there are also five minority languages, of which three are spoken in Pajala, i.e. Meänkieli, Finnish and Sámi. They belong to the Finno-Ugric language group, which distinguish from the Indo-European language group to which Swedish hears. Meänkieli and Finnish are varieties of Baltic Sea Finnish, partly comprehensible between the speakers of the two varieties.

Meänkieli is the all-embracing minority language spoken among the middle aged and aged population, especially in the countryside. It can still be regarded as the vernacular language of the area, but is often mixed with Swedish. The younger people more often speak Swedish. Also Finnish is a rather large minority language due to the near location to the nation border to Finland. There has, since the industrialization process begun, been a constant migration from the Finnish to the Swedish side of the border.

The North Sámi variety of Sámi, spoken in this part of Sweden, is not intelligible for the speakers of Finnish varieties, and vice versa. The Sámi language is much smaller than the other two minority languages in the municipality. The dominant public language is Swedish, because it still is the only official language of Sweden, and the language which has been used in administration, politics, associations etc.

Discussions about the status of the Torne Valley minority are still constantly at issue. The research on how the minority groups themselves, as well as the society at large, are influenced by the new national minority policy would be needed (Huss & Spiliopoulo Åkermark 2005.) A recent study from Haparanda indicates that Finnish and Swedish are beginning to be in equal prestige, but Meänkieli is not as highly favoured as a second language (Savola 2007).

Another study from Haparanda about the use of the minority languages of Meänkieli and Finnish in the public administration shows a strong position for the two minority languages. Among the asked personnel about 60 percent answered that they could understand and talk the language quite well. The corresponding number for Finnish was 60 percent. When asking all authorities in the Torne Valley 60-100 percent told that they had personnel who could speak Finnish or Meänkieli. Among 103 interviewed middle aged Sámi, Finns and Torne Valley people 87 percent used their vernacular at home every day, but in contact with authorities only 30 percent. The principal obstacle for using the vernacular in contact with authorities was linguistic obstacles followed by psychological obstacles (Elenius 2004).

5.3 Cultural revitalization and transnational contacts

The European framework of minority rights together with the declining power of the nation state and growing regionalism has fostered a cultural revitalization in the Torne Valley. It is also influenced by the postcolonial deconstruction of former power relations and means of reinterpreting different kind of identities (Elenius 2006). As mentioned before the cultural revitalization has been expressed in different ways on the Finnish and Swedish side of the valley considering language issues.

On the Swedish side Pajala have been one of the most influential parts in the revitalization movement for the vernacular Meänkieli in culture, literature and media. It has also been the centre for the ethnopolitical mobilization of the Torne Valley people after 1981. In the same time new kind of tensions between the Sámi people and Torne Valley people have appeared.
It has its roots in the legislation considering the Sámi people as an indigenous people, especially the UN-convention ILO 169, which regulates their right to self determination as indigenous people over the natural resources within their area of residence (SOU 1999:25). Finnish speaking ethnic groups in northern Sweden, Finland and Norway are organizing cross the nation border and they claim to be regarded as a common Finnish speaking indigenous group called The Kven people. Another feature is that the movement mobilizes through Internet home pages or web-based discussion forums. In this sense the pattern of organisation breaks with the traditional pattern of political minority organizations (Elenius 2006 b).

The transnational association Kvenland Association (Swe. Kvänlandsförbundet) was founded at a constituent meeting in Pajala. After the initial meeting the movement spread over the North Calotte (Lundmark 2005). The aim was widened to embrace the entire North Calotte region (except the Russian Kola peninsula), and the Kvenland Association demanded recognition as an indigenous people and indigenous rights associated with that status. From the very beginning the tone of the Kvenland Association was very aggressive towards the politically organized Sámi people, especially the reindeer herding Sámi. (Lundmark 1999 & 2001; Kvist 1999; Kvenangen 2002; Ryymin 2003). The background for the movement is the problematization and deconstruction of the ethnic content of the nation state, which has led to changed power relations between different ethnic groups. The other is the post modern problematization of the cultural content of the state, which has opened up for recognition of the nation state as a multicultural unit. This has entailed cultures to be regarded as mixed instead of monolitical units. In this way different kinds of hybrid identities have obtained normative status. At the same time the large narratives of the nation-state have been challenged by the accounts of ethnic groups and national minorities (Castells 1997; Young 2001). This has opened up for new kinds of identifications and constructed identities for political purposes.

The polarization between Sámi and non-Sámi people can be seen as a result of lesser intimate relations between Sámi and non-Sámi people on the local level, due to the modernisation process. Another important reason is the political strengthening of the Sámi people through the Sámi Parliament and the connection to the global movement of native people.

All in all it has led to a deterioration of the co-operative climate on the local level in the municipalities. In the Muonio Sameby the tensions between landowners and the Sámi reindeer herders are manifested, for example, in discussions considering alleged reindeer damages on afforested areas.

There is very little research on the linguistic attitudes towards the opposite side of the river, but some insights are provided from the viewpoint of a young generation of the decade of 2000 (Arola 2006, Arola & Vaattovaara 2005 and Vaattovaara, forthcoming). The present day young speakers of Meänkieli in Pajala consider the national Finnish standard variety of Finland as a prestige variety. Evidently, due to such prominent attitudes and the relatively low linguistic security or self esteem of heir’s, they believe the Finns would regard the Meänkieli variety as an ugly “chickenshit” dialect, inferior to the national Finnish standard. However, this is not the dominating attitude in Finland in the light of data collected from Pello.

The young in Finnish Pello possess a positive attitude towards Meänkieli, which they have a high respect for as a “genuine”, i.e. the “real” Meänkieli. An interesting thing is that the Finnish Tornio Valley People call also their vernacular “Meänkieli”, although it is perceived as being different from the Meänkieli in Sweden. This is due to their high linguistic security
and respect for the dialects in general (Arola & Vaattovaara 2005; Vaattovaara, forthcoming.) The general “renaissance of dialects” or “dialect boom” (see the next section) in Finland has undoubtedly supported their self confidence and attitudes towards their vernacular, and linguistic identity.

The dominant view of the young in Pajala probably comes down to the fact that in the Swedish Torne Valley there are also Finns that have settled the area as immigrants from Finland. Unlike many Meänkieli speakers of Pajala these immigrants are familiar with the standard Finnish, and the standard languages generally are perceived by non-linguists as “better” varieties than dialects, to which also Meänkieli compares (e.g. Preston 2002: 64). The general non-professional, or naïve, speaker’s view is a challenge in terms of attitude change towards the minority language, which original status is that of a vernacular.

Finnish youngsters generally possess a negative attitude towards Swedish language and lack of motivation to learn it (Latoma & Nuolijärvi 2005: 31). Many of the young in Finnish Torne and Pello have also expressed their unwillingness to move to Swedish speaking regions in Finland and elsewhere (Vaattovaara, forth.; see also Jukarainen 2000: 119–129). The negative attitude is evidently due to the long history of Swedish as an obligatory subject for Finnish-speaking pupils in Finland, starting generally in the 7th grade. Similarly, Swedish speaking pupils have Finnish as an obligatory subject. In the Haparanda-Torne region there seems to be a better atmosphere for linguistic diversity, as both Finnish and Swedish are in equal prestige among the young (Savola 2007). The attitudes in the more rural parts of the Finnish Torne Valley, like Pello, are however not yet as favourable for bilingualism of this kind. In the upper Torne Valley the respect is more towards Meänkieli than Swedish. The global dominance of English is generally preferred as a voluntary language that pupils like to choose at school everywhere in Finland, but it is not at present a serious threat against the vernaculars.
6. Regional and local history

6.1 Population changes in the Torne Valley

The Finnish side of the Torne Valley is a centre for tourism, business, shopping and service in northern Finland (Repo 1994, 162). Yet many people moved from Finland in the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century to the Swedish side of the Torne Valley. In 1930, for example, two third of the population was of Finnish descent (Onnela 1995, 256). The change in population during the 20th century is divided into two directions: the period of increased population in the first half of the century, and the period of decreased population in the later part (Annanpalo 1986, 109). In Finland the growth phase was present especially in the region of Ylitornio, Pello and Kolari.

On the Swedish side the turning point in the change of population happened already in the beginning of the 1950’s, in Finland not before the middle of the 1960’s. The reason is that the areas were in different phases of development after the war. The general trend of development in society, especially the rationalization of agriculture and the growing industrialization, pulled the population from the Swedish side of the Torne Valley to the Swedish speaking towns of Luleå and Piteå. The mines of Kiruna did also pull people from the Torne Valley region as a whole.

The change of population structure in the early second part of the 20th century affected the Swedish part of the Torne Valley: youngsters moved to a great extent away and the birthrate decreased. On the Finnish side the decrease of population was lesser than on the Swedish side. The reason behind is the later break up of society and also the faster implemented regional policy than in Sweden (Annanpalo 1986, 109-113).

The development of population at the Finnish side of the Torne Valley in the 20th century was, compared to other parts of Finnish Lapland, yet moderate. The reason behind is maybe that the society of Torne Valley was older and more stable. Both the early phase of population growth and the decrease of population from the decade of 1960 were slower than in other parts of Lapland. The special feature of the population change in the Torne Valley is that the big devastation caused by the Word War did not significantly effect the amount of population. The development of population at the Finnish side does not differ, concerning the causes by war, from the Swedish part of the Torne Valley. The war could not force the population to leave the Torne Valley, but the return to one’s home district was evidently (Annanpalo 1986, 114-115).

6.2 The municipalities of Pajala and Kolari

The municipalities of Pajala and Kolari were once united in the old chapel parish of Pajala, founded in 1725. The church was used together with the iron work parish of Kengis, but Kengis was incorporated in 1783. Kolari on the Finnish side was already before 1812 broken out to the parish of nowadays Muonio. The main village of Kolari was founded in 1867 and the amount of population grew during the 20th century until the middle of the 1960s, when the sum of inhabitants reached nearly six thousand. Thereafter the development of population turned to a decline (Annanpalo 1986, 109-11). Until that time the migration to Sweden was done in large scale from the whole of Finland – especially from Lapland.

The rural district of Kolari was, for example, in 1968 at the top of the emigration statistics of the whole Finland - on the fourth place. The main part of the emigrants to Sweden was in the
ages fit for work. The reasons for the migrations were, among others, the weakening possibility for work and chance of earning money, and also the striving of big age classes towards the labour market. The working places in forestry decreased due to the mechanization (Majava, 1973, 150–152).

The move back from Sweden brought people back to Kolari in the middle of the 1980s, when the population of the district reached five thousand. The end of the production within Rautaruukki and the manufacture of Partek, which made the number of working places decrease in the end of the 1980s, made the population figures once again make a steep fall (Alajärvi et- al. 1990, 81). In 1990 the number of population was 4 726, and it decreased even 19 percent until 2005 when the number was 3 828 (www 7). In Pajala the population has steady declined in the late 20th and early 21st century as shown in other parts of the report.

Pajala has always had its main employment within forestry, among other things logging, floating timber, tar production, forest industries. From the 17th century until 1932 there was an iron work in Kengis which produced different kind of wrought-iron goods. Most of the time the iron work had a low production and involved a loss (Ahlström 1966; NE 2, 326). During the 1950’s and 60’s Pajala was subjected to the big structural changes at the Swedish countryside. About half of the working population was at this time working in agriculture and forestry. The total population declined in the same time as the field of activities grew. Therefore the unitary authority of Pajala was formed in 1971 through the merger of Pajala, Korpilombolo, Tärendö and Junosuando municipalities.

6.2.1 Regional political preferences

In the municipality of Kolari the political support for the Centre party and leftwing has traditionally been strong. The other parties have gained much lesser sites in the elections of the municipality. The SKDL, which politically represented the leftwing, was the biggest party in the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, when the support for the leftwing was bigger also on a national level. The Centre party became bigger than the leftwing in the last part of the 1980s (Kunnallisvaalit 1988, 21; Kunnallistilasto 9/1995, 55; Kunnallistilasto 6/2001, 120; Luoteis-Lappi 20.10.1988). In the elections of the municipally in 2004 the Centre Party gained 39 percent voices and kept the most part of sites. The Left Federation got 29 percent of the voices (Luoteis-Lappi 20.10.1988).

As seen in another part of the report there has from the 1960’s been a big support for the leftwings in the municipality elections in Pajala, but the situation has not always been like this. In the elections of 1911 in constituency of Pajala (in that time much smaller geographically than today) the Social democrats got 48 percent of the votes and the non-Socialist groups 52 percent. In 1921 the Communist party was established as a result of the split of the Social democratic party. This led to a flight from the Left bloc. In 1921 and 1928 the Left bloc only got 9 respective 19 percent of the votes. This shift has been explained by the strong influence from the Laestadian movement, but also the polarization in general in Swedish policy at that time (Lindström 1983, 87 pp.). In the 1930’s the leftists, especially the Communists grew very strong in Pajala, in the same time as the right wings also grew strong. The polarization had to with a delayed break through of the working movement in the upper Torne Valley (Lundmark 1985; Isaksson 1987).

The Laestadianism has belonged, politically, to the resistance against the Left movement, especially the vision of a Communist future. This has very much effected the political climate of both northern Finland and Sweden. In northern Finland the main part of the Laestadian
representatives have given their political support to the centre. This phenomenon began already in the political break of 1919. After the World War II the party representing the leftwing, SKDL (Suomen kansan demokraattinen liitto), increased strongly in Lapland, but the Laestadianism moderated its vigour action. In Finland the Laestadian movement has had some influence on the national policy, in contrast to the state of things in Sweden and Norway (Talonen 2000, 91-92; Lessing 2000). The Laestadianists have in general been seen as hardworking people who respect the powers (Talonen 2000, 91). The revival has influenced the moral values in its spreading area. The special features of the religious doctrine of Laestadianism are prohibitions and exhortations, for example considering looking at television, practising dancing and birth control bans (Linjakumpu 2000, 104). It has had a large influence on the set of values in the whole of the Torne Valley.

6.3 The villages of Kaunisvaara and Äkäsjoensuu
The villages of Kaunisvaara and Äkäsjoensuu follows the same pattern as the Torne Valley as a whole, both on the Finnish and Swedish side.

6.3.1 Local political preferences
Politically Kaunisvaara has been a leftist village after World War II. The political mobilization followed the same way as in other leftist Pajala villages, starting with the woodman strike in the floating work along the Upper Kihlanki River in 1927. It was followed by other strikes in the beginning of the 1930’s and the in the founding of a section of the Swedish Communist Party (Isaksson 1932). The electoral statistics from Kaunisvaara between 1944 and 1998 shows a continuing aid for the Left bloc. In 1944 about 80 percent of the voters voted for the Social democratic or the Communist party. In 1998 more than 85 percent voted on the Social democrats or the Left party (Kaunisvaara 1800-2000).

6.3.2 Archaeological findings
There are some archaeological findings in both Kaunisvaara and Äkäsjoensuu. In Kaunisvaara the findings has much to do with new scientific efforts adressed towards the north. The archaeological picture of northern Sweden has changed very much during the last 25 years, due to the fact that general archaeological surveys have been worked out during this period. In the near surroundings of Kaunisvaara there are ancient remains found 2-6 kilometres west of the Tapuli site. They consist of catching traps, dwelling place pits and dwelling places. About 3, 5 km east of Kaunisvaara, following the tributaries of Kaunisjoki, there are findings of ancient dwelling places, see the attached map above. No archaeological findings of old mining sites are found in the area.

In the program for preserving the values of nature and cultural environment in the cultural landscape in the county of Norrbotten, from the beginning of the 1990s, the village of Kaunisvaara and Shaver are depicted as representative examples of agricultural villages located in the forest area in the inland of northern Norrbotten. No known meadows or enclosed pastures of significant interest are pointed out. No sites of national interest are pointed out. Inside and near the village of Kaunisvaara there are some remains registered as other remains of cultural interest.

They are located on the southern side of the lake Kaunisjärvi and the northern hillside of the village of Kaunisvaara. There are also other remains of cultural interest some kilometres west of the Tapuli site, cf. the account above about the cultural heritage. The descriptions of the different remains can be found in accounts by the museum of Norrbotten. In Map 2 the inventory made in the 1990s, of findings near Kaunisvaara, is depicted.
Small, separate archaeological findings – mostly some remains of ancient settlements have been made in the surroundings of the village of Äkäsjoki. Of value from a cultural historical point of view is also the cement factory founded by Partek Oy in 1968, which activity has ended. Cultural relics which are of national value, areas of traditional landscapes or valuable landscapes of importance for the county are not really found in the surroundings of Äkäjoensuu (Oksala 1997-2000; www 4; www 7).
7. Conclusion: Transnational attitudes in the light of history

As described above the transnational attitudes for co-operation cross the nation border between Finland and Sweden are complex processes following specific stages of history. There has been contacts across the nation border since it was drawn by the Tsar after the treaty of 1809 between Sweden and Russia, but the contacts, as for example the cross-border marriages, seems to have diminished within last decades. The co-operation across the border was, however, not a specific feature of the Torne Valley culture, but it came to be when the valley was divided in two nation states.

7.1 Region building as means of co-operation
The ability to co-operate became an important part of a common identity, as described in the section about institutional arrangements. This was strengthened first by the establishing of the Nordic common as a transnational institution in the 1950’s and a decade later by the establishment of the North Calotte as a borderless area of co-operation in the northernmost part of Fennoscandinavia. The geographical vicinity of the polar circle determined which counties belonged to the North Calotte. The Torne Valley as well as the Sámi people came to play symbolically important roles in the establishment of the North Calotte. In the political rhetoric of the North Calotte the Torne Valley was called “the words’ most peaceful border” (www 4, 76).

7.2 Attitudes to mining and tourism as means for development of the region
The manufacture of mining is part of the long tradition of the Torne Valley. It gives a good basis for the future mining projects. A new mining manufacture, for example in the municipality of Kolari, does not necessarily mean a threat against the local culture, while during the long period of incomes in history the mining belongs to the field of cultural traditions. The manufacture of mining and the metal industry have offered working places to the residents in the Torne Valley, so the future mining manufactures may also be met with open minds. From another point of view the valued nature of Lapland, which on one hand is a matter of proudness for the inhabitants, and on the other hand by the triumph of tourism brings the means of living, the mining plans may be felt as a threat to the region. Both sides of the Torne Valley, but especially the Finnish side, has become dependent of showing up an unspoiled countryside for international tourists a an image of the virgin Lapland.

7.3 Language revitalization and identity change among young people
The cultural development of the Swedish and Finnish Torne Valley has been mainly national processes for the last two hundred years. There has been a growing pressure for young people to move out from the Torne Valley for education and work, both at the Swedish and Finnish side. For the Swedish Torne Valley minority this, ultimately, is not very supportive, because the strength of local identity seems to have a clear connection to linguistic security and language attitudes. Despite the active revitalization, Meänkieli still has some stigma as a marker of a lower status.

Changes in the economic conditions and employment in the area might, however, lead to a change of linguistic attitudes. Increasing job opportunities would offer the young Torne Valley People better options to stay in the area instead of moving out. It is difficult to predict
what the mining activities, planned in the Kolari–Pajala region will mean in terms of actual linguistic situation, there are many alternatives. It is possible that the economic growth in the area will strengthen the feeling of a collective Torne Valley identity, which would strengthen the linguistic security of the Torne Valley People as a whole, causing attitudes towards Meänkieli to grow more positive as well. In that case it will possibly embrace the Meänkieli varieties on both side of the nation border. In Sweden Meänkieli is under the threat of extinction, in Finland it is not.

7.4 Language and identity in a European perspective

The European Union has not remarkably changed the national influence on the culture of the Swedish and Finnish Torne Valley, but it has opened up for new kind of transnational cooperation in a way that was not thinkable before. The striving to merge the towns of Tornio and Haparanda and the IKEA-boom in shopping business is one example. The newly announced desire to unify the municipalities of Kolari and Pajala is another example.

If the unification of Pajala and Kolari will come true, the knocking down of the border could effectively support the status of different languages of the area: the multilingualism of Finnish, Swedish and also Meänkieli. Another alternative is that the growing mining and tourism industry will cause the identity of the area to change, so that the domains of English will expand in the area. This might be a threat against Meänkieli as a minority language. However, a lot will depend on the overall planning policies and the forms the tourism industry will take, such as ecotourism, which can also be supportive for the diversity of languages. The positive image and “exotism” of the local dialect and minority language Meänkieli could be a resource for local marketing etc.

7.5 The Torne Valley vernacular language in the future

Linguistic attitudes do not have “a life of their own”, but they are always reflections of the cultural and socio-economic situation in one way or another, usually in many ways. Ultimately, attitudes towards a spoken variety are directly connected to attitudes towards its speakers, and thus the effect of stereotypes comes into play. The low status of the speakers of Meänkieli has, during the long history of discrimination policy, led to a low self-esteem of the speakers, their spoken variety being the marker of this minority identity.

Today, Meänkieli is still not highly valued as a second language at least according to Haparanda data. An upturn of the employment of the Torne Valley might lead to a growth of the real linguistic diversity, along with the improvement of the labour situation and changed pattern of migration and cross-border contacts. The positive attitudes towards vernacular and Meänkieli from the shores of the Finnish Torne Valley may hopefully in the long run affect the attitudes and linguistic identities in a positive way also on the opposite side of the shore.
8. Key indicators

The transnational co-operation has already started in Torneå and Haparanda as a result of the weakened nation state and strengthened regions in the context of the EU. A similar kind of co-operation is now announced between the municipality of Swedish Pajala and Finnish Kolari as a direct effect of the planned mining activities. Also considering language issues there has been a stronger co-operation cross the nation border in recent time. Some key indicators to be followed over time might be:

a) The institutionalization of transnational co-operation in the Torne Valley on a municipality level. This could be done by monitoring the different kind of agreements made up over time. The level of transnational co-operation can also be traced by monitoring the agreements on a national and EU-level and the way they are implemented on the municipality level.

b) Another kind of transnational co-operation to follow is the migration figures cross the nation border, related to the number of employments in the opposite country. This could also be followed over time.

c) The development of Meänkieli as a joint Finnish dialect, but in the same time regarded as a minority language at the Swedish side. This parameter is not so easy to measure. The focus should be on the development on the Swedish side, especially how the strategy to develop the Swedish variety of Finnish will change over time. This can be traced by following the statements and measures done by the language activists in Sweden. In a future investigation the percent of people in the Torne Valley identifying themselves with meankieli, differentiated according to age and nation, could be a key indicator for tracing changing attitudes to Meänkieli.
9. Important stakeholders

As this is a historical analyzes in a long time span it’s not so relevant to present stakeholders, but there are some important stakeholders considering the transnational cultural issues. In the upper part of the Swedish side of the Torne Valley the minority issues are of importance, both regarding the Sámi people and the Torne Valley minority. On the Finnish side there are any such minority issues of importance. Of importance for the Torne Valley as a whole are the organizations for transnational co-operation.

**Sweden**

*Svenska tornedalingars riksförbund – Tornionlaaksolaiset (STR-T).* This is the national organization for the Torne Valley Minority with its centre in Pajala. A person with a long continuity in the organization, and also well informed about language questions, is Kerstin Johansson, Kangosfors. The chairman is Tore Hjort (tore_hjort@bredband.net).

Svenska Tornedalingars Riksförbund -Tornionlaaksolaiset, STR-T,

Aapua 6, 957 94 Övertorneå

Tel. 0927 - 24074
Fax 0927 - 24085
E-mail: strt.aapua@swipnet.se

*Kaunisvaara byaförening* (Eng. Kaunisvaara Village Association) is the most important cultural association at local level in Kaunisvaara. One of the driving persons is Gertrud Uusitalo, Kaunisvaara.

Kaunisvaara 262, 98491 Pajala
Tel. 0978-501 23 Mob. 073-057 32 86

*Sametinget.* This is both the authority and parliament for certain Sámi issues, especially concerning language and culture. The chairman, Anders Baer, is very well informed about the state of the art in Sámi issue and also about the history and status of Muonio Concession Sámi Village.

Sametinget, Adolf Hedinsvägen 58, 981 33 GIRON/KIRUNA
Swichboard: 0980-780 30
Fax: 0980-780 31

*Svenska samernas riksförbund (SSR)* is the organization for the reindeer herding Sámi in Sweden. The office is located in Umeå. The chairman is Per Gustav Idivuoma, Lainiovuoma sameby, (idivuoma@same.net ). A well informed person at SSR is the lawyer Malin Brännström.

Magasinsgatan 7, 903 27 Umeå, Sverige
E-mail: info@sapmi.se
Telephone: 090 - 14 11 80

*Muonio sameby* (Eng. Muonio Sámi Village) is the local organization for the reindeer herders that are most affected by the mining activities in Kaunisvaara. The chairman is Thomas Sevä, who is eager to be in contact with the mining company in an early stage of the planning process, for the purpose of avoiding conflicts further on.

Muonio sameby, Kitkiöjoki 7, 98499 Pajala
Tel. 0978-410 33
Finland

*Tornionlaakson Maakuntamuseo* (Eng. The Landscape Museum of Tornio), is the main museum of the Torne Valley. The director Henri Nordberg has a good knowledge in cultural issues both on the Finnish and Swedish side.

Tornionlaakson Maakuntamuseo, Head Henri Nordberg.
Keskikatu 22, 95400 Tornio
Telephone, museum: (016) 432 451, fax: (016) 432 453
Telephon: +358 16 432 448 or +358 400 589 679
E-mail: henri.nordberg@tornio.fi

Finland and Sweden

*Tornedalsrådet* (The Council of the Torne Valley) is a transnational council consisting of all the rural districts on both sides of the valley. A person with a long continuity in the organization is the chief executive officer Peter Hagström.

Tornedalsrådet, Vd. Peter Hagström
Telephone: +46 922 156 41, Mob. +46 703195641, Telefax. +46 922 101 12
Box 76. S-953 22 Haparanda.
E-mail: peter.hagstrom@haparanda.se
List of references

Literature


Gullnäs, Ingvar mfl., *Suveränitetsholmarna i Torne, Muonio och Königsmä älvar*, sid 7 ff. (Utdrag ur fredsfördraget i Fredrikshamm 1809, Artikel X, bilaga i *Suveränitetsholmarna i Torne, Muonio och Königsmä älvar 1975*.


Pudas, Petra, ”Veteen piirretty viiva. Kansallinen identiteetti Tornionlaaksossa”.


Newspapers
Luoteis-Lappi 1988, 2004
Pohjolan Sanomat 2000
Statistics
Tilastokeskus, vaalit 1988
Kunnallistilasto 9/1995
Kunnallistilasto 6/2001

Unprinted sources

Electronic sources
www 1: http://www.tornedalen.org/sv_verks/historia.htm
www 2: http://www.kolari.fi/toma/swe/innehol.htm
www 4: *Meän väylä – kuntakatsaus, Älvlandet – kommunöversikt,* luonnos 6/2 2006 Pajala Kolari Muonio,
www 6: http://www.ad.se/ (Affärsdata)