

Dictionarium Sueco-Lapponicum, Eller en Orda-Bok. I hwilken The förnämste Swäniska Ord efter Alphabetet upsökas kunna/ och på Lapska gifne finnas. Vppsatt Af Petro Fiellström, Pædag. Lykselens. Tryckt hos Kongl. Antiquit. Arch. Boktr. Joh. L. Hornn. Stockholm, Anno 1738. Umeå Universitetsbibliotek og Litteraturbanken.se.

Det sydlapska bokspråkets livsspann

Sammandrag: Det så kallade Sydlapska bokspråket är ett samiskt skriftspråk som utvecklades i Sverige under mitten av 1700-talet. Målet var att skapa ett standardspråk som kunde användas av präster i missionen bland samer i Sverige, eftersom religionen vid tiden var ett viktigt verktyg i Sveriges koloniala strävanden. Prästen Pehr Fjellström (1697-1765) var initiativtagare till skriftspråket och en tidig version av det finns i hans arbeten från 1738. Andra präster var också involverade i utvecklingen och vid två konferenser, en i Lycksele 1743 och en i Umeå 1744, omarbetades skriftspråket. En vidareutvecklad version av språket återfinns i den omfattande samisk-latinsk-svenska ordboken *Lexicon Lapponicum* från 1780. Språket dominerade samisk tryckt media till andra halvan av 1800-talet. Genom att ge en översikt över utvecklingen av OLSS i förhållande till olika typer av publikationer syftar artikeln till att svara på hur utvecklingen och användningen av det sydlapska bokspråket har återspeglats i tryckta medier över tid. Analysen tar utgångspunkt i begreppen val av bas, kodifiering, expansion och acceptans.

Nyckleord: Sydlapska bokspråket, samisk tryckt media, missionslitteratur

The lifespan of Old Literary Southern Saami

Abstract: *The so-called Sydlapska bokspråket, henceforth OLSS (Old Literary Southern Saami), is a Saami literary language which was developed in Sweden in the middle of the 18th century. The objective was to create a standard language that could be used by priests in their missionary work among the Saami in Sweden, religion being an important tool in Sweden's colonial endeavours at the time. The clergyman Pehr Fjellström (1697-1765) was the initiator of OLSS and an early version of it appears in his works from 1738. Other clergymen were also involved in the development of the language, preparing a revised version of OLSS at two conferences, one held in Lycksele in 1743 and one in Umeå in 1744. A more developed version is found in the 1780 comprehensive Saami-Latin-Swedish dictionary *Lexicon Lapponicum*. The language dominated Saami print media until the second part of the 19th century. By providing an overview of the development of OLSS in relation to different types of publications, the article aims to trace how the development and use of Old Literary Southern Saami is reflected in print media over time. The analysis is based on the concepts of selection, codification, expansion and acceptance.*

Keywords: *Old Literary Southern Saami, Saami print media, mission literature*



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Introduction

The introduction of Saami in print media is closely connected to the Swedish Lutheran Christian church and its mission among Saami. This mission, which intensified and became more organised during the 17th century, is not the first instance of contact between the Saami and the Christian church. Contact between Saami and Christianity goes back to at least the 11th century. Crucifixes from as early as that century have been found in Saami sacrificial sites and the Ave Maria monograms that are part of the Saami costume bear evidence of rather close contact in the Catholic era.¹ These earlier contacts exerted some influence on Saami customs, but they never posed a threat to the indigenous Saami religion, even though some Christian symbols were partly integrated into the indigenous belief system.

The Saami's relation to Christianity would eventually change in connection with the Reformation, which was gradually implemented in Sweden during the 16th century. The process started with Gustav Vasa, who was crowned in 1523, but was not completed until the last years of the century. In Sweden the Reformation had strong economic and political overtones. Its implementation eventually led to a new order, with a concomitant shift of power from the church to the crown.²

In Sweden Karl IX initiated the ecclesiastical organisation of the Saami areas, known as Lapland, in the

beginning of the 17th century. The boundaries of the nation-states in northern Sápmi were still unclear and there was a race between Denmark-Norway, Russia and Sweden to incorporate as much land as possible into their own nations. Religious and geographical expansion went hand in hand. In the beginning of the 17th century, churches were built in Lycksele, Arvidsjaur, Jokkmokk and Enontekis.³ In 1632 the Skyttean school, whose purpose was to prepare Saami boys for missionary work, was moved from Piteå to Lycksele, where it became the centre for the education of Saami in Sweden.⁴

One strong incentive for the creation of Saami print media was the Reformation idea that biblical texts should be available in the vernacular languages and that priests should give their services in the local language, not in Latin. The linguistic prerequisites for creating a standard Saami language suitable for the Saami in Sweden in the early modern era were particularly demanding, considering the areal variation of Saami. The fact that there are five different official Sami languages in Sweden today (South, Ume, Pite, Lule, and North Sami), each with its own orthography and linguistic merits, serves as an example of this variation. Apart from this, the Saami languages in general have complex phonological systems which include sound changes, such as umlauts and consonant gradations,⁵ which have different manifestations in different varieties.

The Swedish linguonym *Sydlapska bokspråket*, which in the article is referred to as OLSS,⁶ does not refer to what today is known as South Saami; instead, the modifier *Syd-* 'south' is used in contrast to *Nord-* 'north' in the linguonym *Nordlapska bokspråket* (Literary Northern Saami), a language based on Lule Saami created by Lars Levi Læstadius in the middle of the 19th century.

This article aims to describe how the development and use of OLSS have been represented in print media over time and to what extent publications in OLSS were tailored to, or focused on, Saami-specific themes by surveying different publication types in relation to different phases and by presenting instances of orthographical and grammatical changes. Bibliographical data concerning publications are from Qvigstad and Wiklund's 1899 bibliography of (older) Saami literature⁷ and Forsgren's 1988 survey of Saami church and educational literature in Sweden from 1619 to 1850.⁸ Data for analyses of examples of orthographic development were obtained from three translations of *Swebelii Explanation*⁹ and of grammatical development from *Lexicon Lapponicum*,¹⁰ the New Testament of 1755 and the Bible of 1811. In the analysis the terms *selection*, *codification*, *expansion* and *acceptance* are used to describe the different development phases. As used by Hansegård,¹¹ *selection* pertains to the choice of variety as a base for the literary language and *codification* to the standardisation of orthography, grammar and lexicon. The term *expansion* refers to the spread of the literary language into different types of print media. The term is comparable to *elaboration*, which Hansegård, following Haugen,¹² uses to denote the process in which the functions of literary language expand to become a 'bearer of Western high culture'.¹³ The term *acceptance* refers to the recognition of the literary language as the general benchmark among its potential users.

Earlier publications in Saami

Before the establishment of OLSS in the 18th century, only a handful of books had been published in Saami. The clergyman Nicolaus Andreae's publications in 1619, an ABC book and a missal, constitute the first instances of print media in Saami and they were followed by around ten other publications in the 17th century. The quality of the language in some of the first publications has been criticised, especially that used in Nicolaus Andreae's books of 1619 and Niurenus's catechism of 1633.¹⁴ The language in the different publications is based on different Saami varieties: Olaus Stephani Graan, who published a catechism 'for the youth in Lyckzela, Uhmeå Lappmarck' in 1668 and a church manual in 1669, based the language in the publications on Ume Saami,¹⁵ with elements of more southern origin, whereas Johan-

nes Torneus used North (Torne) Saami as the base in the church manual *Manuale Lapponicum* (1648). However, Torneus attempts to linguistically include several Saami varieties by using and mixing their linguistic features.¹⁶

From the first book published in Saami in 1619 and up to the 18th century, the practical usability of printed Saami publications increasingly became a focus. The need for a standard Saami language that priests could learn and use was recognised. Especially important was the creation of a Saami translation of the New Testament. The Ume Saami priest Lars Rangius was appointed for the task, which was completed in 1713.¹⁷ A test print of the Gospel of Mark was made and was sent out for review by Georg Wallin the younger, then active as a lecturer at Härnösand upper secondary school. However, the translation was never printed, partly because Rangius did not agree to the orthographic simplifications that Wallin advocated.¹⁸

It was suggested that the New Testament would get published¹⁹ in connection to the Swedish school reform of 1723, but it is unclear whether this pertained to a revised version of Rangius' manuscript or a completely new translation. The New Testament was not published until 1755 (see below).

Pehr Fjellström and OLSS

Pehr Fjellström (1697–1764) laid the foundation of OLSS. He was born in Silbojokk in 1697, where his father, Petrus Noræus, was priest. After his father's death in 1706, he was sent to school in Piteå. His studies continued later at a Stockholm trivial (second grade) school and eventually at Uppsala University. It seems he heeded the words of his teacher in Uppsala, the dean Daniel Djurberg, who urged him to devote his life to the education of the Saami.²⁰ In 1718 he was appointed schoolmaster at the Skyttean School in Lycksele, where, in 1739, he also became priest. In Lycksele, at the instigation of the Umeå priest Zacharias Plantin, he engaged in the work of creating a Saami grammar and a Swedish-Saami dictionary. When the governor of Västerbotten County, Garbiel Gyllengrip, visited Lycksele in 1734, he became familiar with Fjellström's work and urged him to draw up a report and present it to the Swedish Parliament. This resulted in Fjellström being commissioned to continue the work, and he also received a grant to travel to different Saami-speaking areas to familiarise himself with the local Saami varieties there. When this phase of Fjellström's work was completed in 1738, he had written three volumes: a Swedish-Saami dictionary (*Dictionarium Sueco-Lapponicum*), a grammar (*Grammatica Lapponica*) and a translation of Olof Svebilus' explanation of Luther's Small Catechism from 1689²¹ (*Olai Swebelii Förklaring öfwer Lutheri lilla catechismum, steld genom spörsmål och swar. Then lappska ungdomen til tjenst och befordran i christendomens kunskap*²²) (Figure 1).

Fjellström's works from 1738 provided the selection of base for the emerging literary language, but the main goal, a publishable translation of the New Testament, had not yet been achieved, and other priests still had opinions about the selection of base and Fjellström's orthographic representation.

The conferences of 1743 and 1744

The works of Fjellström from 1738 laid the foundation for the literary language, but the language had yet to be codified and implemented. The experience from earlier publications in Saami was that a text could not easily be used over a wide geographic area if the language stayed too true to one particular variety; nor did Tornæus's *modus operandi*, to include case forms from different Saami varieties, prove to be successful in that respect.

The codification of written Saami, based on the language in Fjellström's early works, was elaborated at two language conferences, one in Lycksele in 1743 and one in Umeå in 1744, where priests from different Saami-speaking areas were present. The first conference was attended by Pehr Fjellström, Pehr Högström (Fjellström's son-in-law) and Petrus Forsberg, who were priests in the parishes of Lycksele,

Gällivare and Åsele respectively. In Lycksele they also discussed a memorial from Johan Læstadius, who was priest in Arjeplog. The conference in Umeå the following year had a different set of participants: Læstadius, now in person; Henrik Ganander, priest in Sjundeå but formerly in Enontekis; lecturer Pehr Holmbom from Härnösand, also a trained priest, and Pehr Fjellström, the only participant who attended both conferences. The conference lasted for over a month (9 April–14 May).²³

The result of the conferences was a decision to keep Fjellström's language as the basis of OLSS. Læstadius had initially argued in favour of Pite Saami as the basis, but eventually he agreed to base the language on Fjellström's work. Whereas Fjellström's syntactic and morphological outline generally remained intact, Læstadius had much influence on the revision of the orthography (cf. Table 1). At the conferences, much effort was put into elaborating the lexicon to find words that were understandable in as large an area as possible. Ganander, with his North Sami perspective, was probably the most dissatisfied among the participants. He had already written a grammar in 1743 based on the North Saami variety he was familiar with, but the revised version of the literary language did not include distinctive North Saami features. The conclusion from the conferences seems to have been that it was impossible to create a literary language that addressed all varieties of Saami within the Swedish borders of that time. Pehr Högström, one of the conference participants, mentions that there is a need for books in both the 'northern dialect'²⁴ described in Ganander's grammar from 1743 and the 'southern dialect' described in Fjellström's grammar from 1738. There are visitation records from Jukkasjärvi, Kautokeino and Enontekis, in the North Saami area from 1750 showing that books written in OLSS were not useful there.²⁵

After the conference new texts were published in the revised language format. The publication of the New Testament, *Ådde testament same kiäli puoktetum* ('The New Testament translated to Saami'), in 1755 was a particular achievement. It is conceivable that the translation of the New Testament was of great importance for the elaboration, adaptation and expansion of the language. The translation was based on the so-called Karl XII's Bible from 1703, which, in turn, was based on the Gustav Vasa's Bible (New Testament, 1526 and the entire Bible, 1541).

Also, in 1755, a new Saami version of *Swebelii explanation* was published. Differences between Fjellström's early version of the language, found in his translation from 1738, and the revised version at the conferences, can be seen in Table 1. The excerpts from 1755 and 1790 have a quotation from John 1:17 in the New Testament which is lacking in the 1738 version, most certainly due to the fact that a formal translation of the New Testament was not yet at hand then.

1738	1755	1790	1689
3. Gän giada ulgos-waddi Jubmel Lageb?	3. Kutten tjada ulkoswaddi Jubmel lageb?	3. Kutten tjada ulkoswaddi Jubmel lageb?	3. Genom hwem utgaff Gud lagen?
Mosesen giada.	Mosesen tjada.	Mosesen tjada.	Genom Mosen.
	Joh. 1: 17. Mosesen tjada le Laga waddetum; armo ja sadnas le påtam JEsus Christusen tjada.	Joh. 1: 17. Mosesen tjada le Laga waddetum; armo ja sadnas le påtam JEsus Christusen tjada.	Exod. 20.19

Table 1. Excerpts from the translation of *Swebelii explanation* of 1738, 1755, 1790 and the Swedish original from 1689. A comparison between the excerpt from 1738 and those from the later versions reveals orthographic changes: Affricates represented by <gi> and plosives represented by <g> the have been changed to <tj> and <k> respectively. The change Gän 'whom' to Kutten is an instance of lexical change.



Figure 1. Book spread from Fjellström's Saami translation of Swebelii explanation from 1738. Each book spread has Swedish text on the left page and the corresponding Saami text on the right page. This bilingual approach was not used in the versions of 1755 and 1790, where the text is only in Saami.

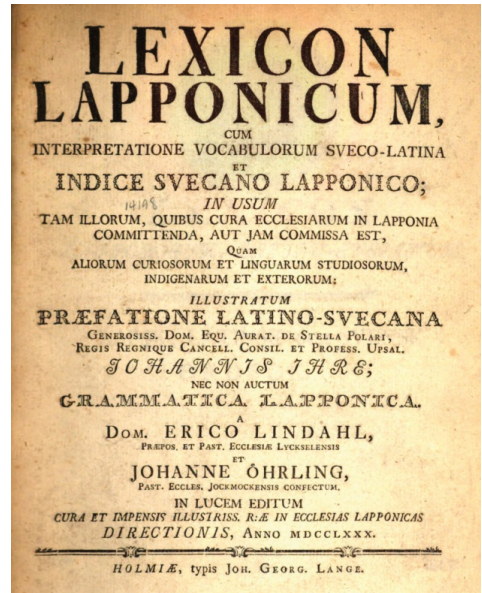


Figure 2. The title page of the dictionary *Lexicon Lapponicum* from 1780.

Lexicon lapponicum

The codification of the Saami language, including lexical changes made at the conferences and used in subsequent publications, did not imply that the language stopped developing. The men involved in the development of the literary language must have encountered new translation challenges as more texts were translated, which further refined the language. Lindahl and Öhrling's comprehensive Saami-Latin-Swedish dictionary from 1780, the *Lexicon Lapponicum* (see Figure 2), is a manifestation of this elaboration. The dictionary includes a Saami-Latin-Swedish section,²⁶ a Swedish-Saami section²⁷ and a grammatical outline²⁸ consisting of declension and conjugation paradigms and some example sentences to present syntactic features.

When the whole Bible in OLSS was published in 1811 (see Figure 3), more than a half a century had passed since the publication of the New Testament, and during that period, between 1773 and 1793,²⁹ the Swedish Bible commission had produced a test translation of the whole Bible that could serve as a model for the translation.³⁰ The work with the Bible did not consist only of the translation of the Old Testament, but it seems that the decision was taken to revise the outdated translation of the New Testament from 1755 to be in accordance with the language in the more recently translated Old Testament.

One clear outcome of the revised New Testament was the usage of the so called *aktivt particip futuru* 'future active participle', which is introduced in the *Lexicon Lapponicum*.³¹ The participle suffix, which has the form *-jassa*, attaches to verb stems to convey future meaning, e.g. *etse-jassa* 'who will love' (< *etset* 'to love'). Evidence of similar forms can be found in South Saami,³² and it seems that Öhrling, who

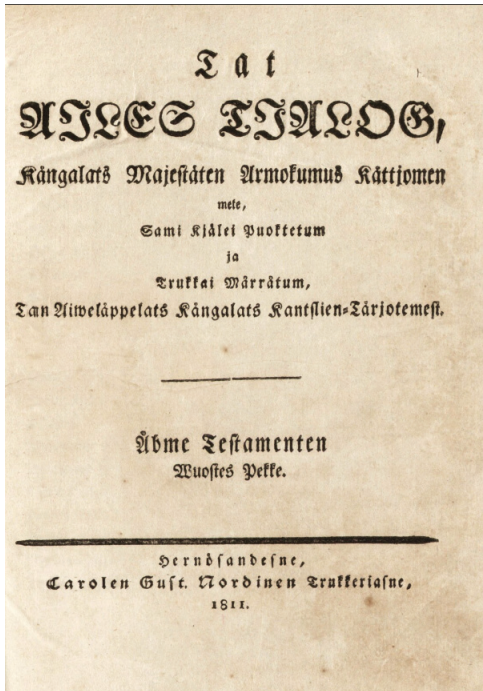
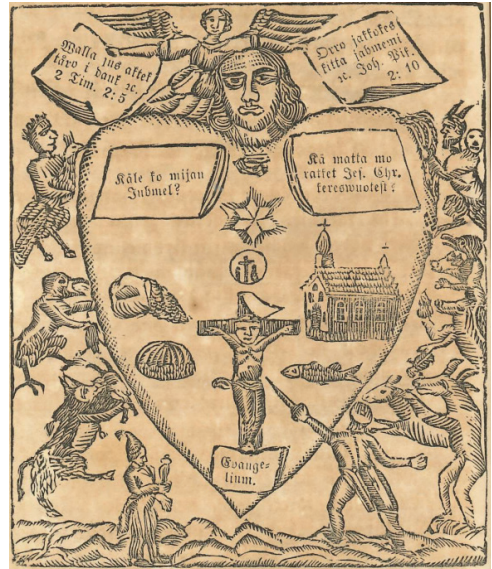


Figure 3. The title page of the first part of the Old Testament in the Bible of 1811, *Tat ailes tjalog* 'The holy script'.



Tan waimon wuoke, jukko tärosne ädtjen ja veralden wuost nanuos jakkosne ja kereswuotesne Christusi staika.

Figure 4. Illustration from *Almatja-waimo, akt Herran tempel jalla päreken wiesom-saije: sadnes ja jakkeje kristegasiti tsu-oikotum läkke käwi pakto* 'The human heart, a temple of God or a dwelling of Satan: shown to true and believing Christians by means of ten pictures'. The text is most probably a translation of a Swedish version of Johannes Gossner's *Das Herz des Menschen* (1812). The text under the illustration reads: *Tan waimon wuoke, jukko tärosne ädtjen ja veralden wuost nanuos jakkosne ja kereswuotesne Christusi staika*. 'The quality of the heart, which in the war against the flesh and the world, in strong belief and love remains faithful to Christ.'

was responsible for the grammar section in the *Lexicon Lapponicum*, found it suitable as the equivalent of the Latin future active participle, e.g., Latin *amaturus* 'who will love' (< *amare* 'to love'). The participle also appears quite frequently in the Old Testament of the Bible.

OLSS in the 1800s

The translation and publication of the Bible in 1811 was an achievement, which was followed by new publications in the 19th century, mostly catechisms, like earlier, but also other religious texts with morally edifying content,³³ such as *Almatjen waimo* 'The heart of man' from 1850 (see Figure 4), *Elsan Lauran neitan wuokokes wiesom ja salog jabmen* ('Elsa Laura's edifying life and blissful death'), and *Tat häjos Josef* 'The poor Joseph'. The latter two texts, both published in 1811, are religious moral stories, of which the first is one of the few OLSS texts whose theme directly involves a Saami. The story is a translation of Theophilus Gran's *Lap-Flickan Elsa Lars Dotters uppbyggliga dödssäng och saliga död* ('The Saami girl Elsa Lars Dotter's edifying deathbed and blissful death'). The latter is a translation of *Den fattige Joseph*, published in 1808 or 1809,³⁴ which itself is a translation of an English text.

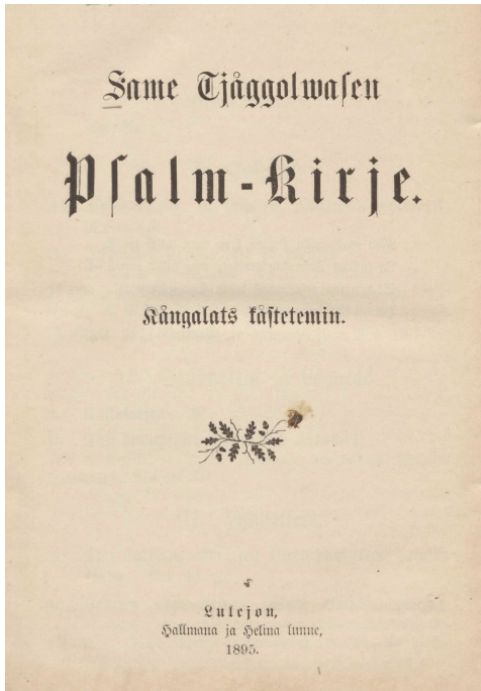


Figure 5. The title page of *Same Tjåggolwasen Psalm-Kirje* 'The hymnal of the Saami congregation', published in 1895.

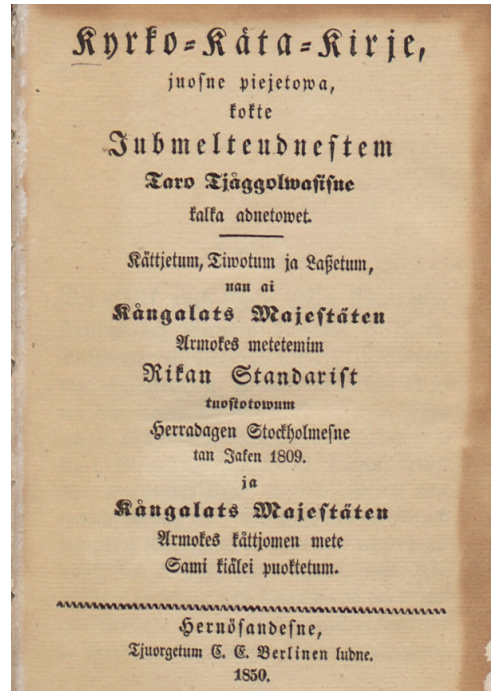


Figure 6. The title page of the Saami church manual from 1850, *Kyrko-Kåta-Kirje* 'Church Handbook'.

Hymnaries

An immediate result of the conferences in 1743 and 1744 had been the hymnal, *Psalm-Kirje*, published in 1744, which in addition to hymns also contains gospels, epistles and prayers. The hymnal is based on the Swedish hymnal of 1695. Most of the translations were made by Fjellström, Högström and Holmbom.³⁵ The hymnal was revised and a new version with more hymns was published in 1786,³⁶ which, in turn, was reprinted with minor alterations in 1876.³⁷ However, in 1849, another hymnal was published based on the Swedish hymnal of 1819. Of the 276 hymns, 111 are from the earlier hymnal. This hymnal was republished in 1895 (see Figure 5) with a new description of the church service procedure translated from the Swedish church manual of 1894.³⁸

Church manuals

Church handbooks with instructions on how to conduct the Mass in Saami were of course an important tool for priests whose congregation was in a Saami area. Already, Nicolaus Andreae's publications from 1619 include a missal with instructions and texts necessary for the celebration of the Mass in Saami. The first proper church manual in Saami was Torneus's *Manuale Lapponicum* from 1648: a translation of *Manuale Svecicum*, the Swedish church manual of 1639. In 1669, Graan produced a less extensive manual, the so-called *Manuale Lapponicum minus*,³⁹ which does not seem to have a distinct Swedish original.⁴⁰ The first church manual in OLSS was published directly after the language conference in 1744. In 1812 a new church manual was published, based on the Swedish manual published in 1809. In 1850 it was republished in a revised version (Figure 6).



Figure 7. The title page of the Saami primer of 1851.

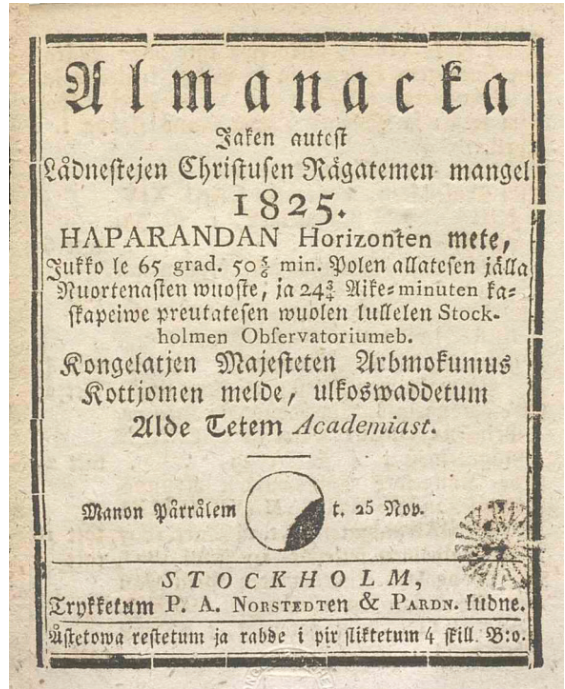


Figure 8. The almanac of 1825. *Almanacka Jaken autest Lådneſtejen Chriſtusen Rågatemem mangel 1825* 'Almanac for the year 1825 after the birth of Chriſt the Saviour'.

Primers

Starting with the first publications in 1619, the primer was a recurring genre of publication.⁴¹ Prior to the introduction of OLSS in the middle of the 18th century, primers were published in 1619, 1632, 1638, 1640, 1667 and 1726, and after the language conferences a primer was one of the first publications to appear. This 1744 primer was revised and published in new editions in 1779 and 1804. In addition, a different primer was published in 1804, and in 1844 the two primers were combined into one book, which was republished in 1851 (see Figure 7) and again in 1869. The primers typically contain the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and other short religious texts; a section with monosyllabic words and letter combinations for spelling and pronunciation exercises; information on weight, length and time units and a multiplication table.⁴²

Profane texts

There are few OLSS publications without religious motifs; this is not surprising, since the ultimate purpose of OLSS was to be used in the Christian mission among the Saami. Examples of profane publications are the Saami almanacs (see Figure 8), which the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences started to publish annually from 1795. Beside calendrical information the almanacs often contained concise information about the royal family members and their ages, a list of market days in the northern part of Sweden and the year of birth of men who may be enrolled for military service. Until 1805, each almanac also included a more general interest article on geography and history.⁴³ Thereafter, there were no new articles in the

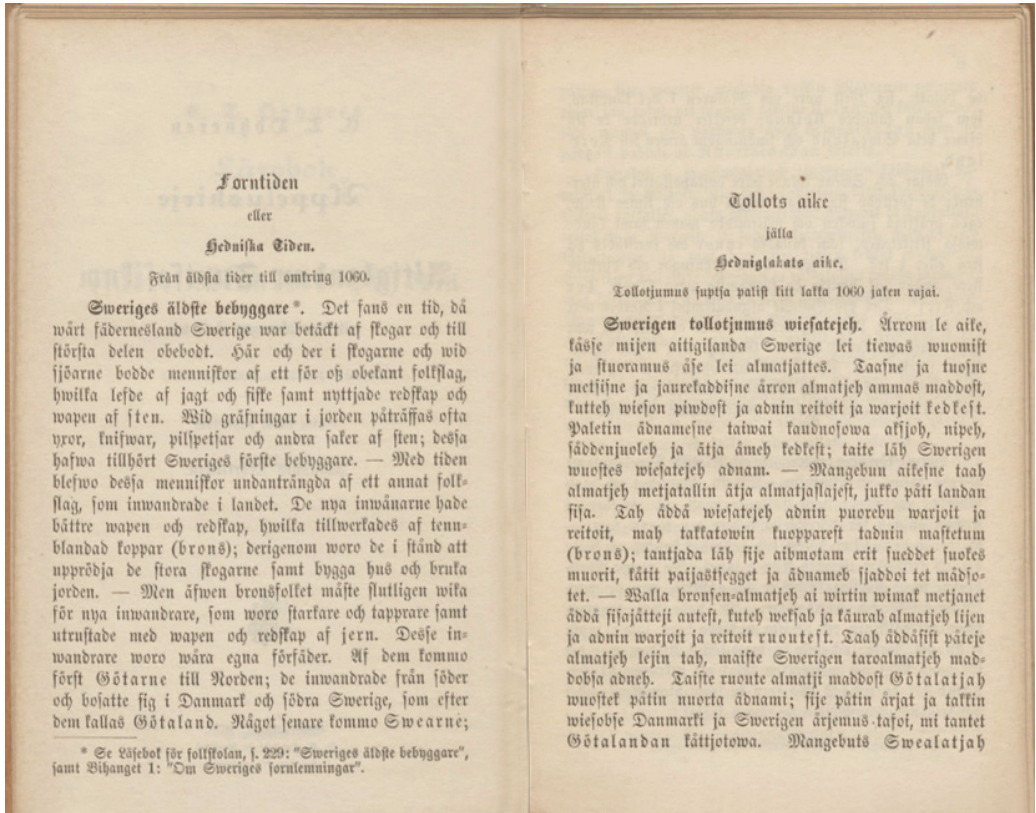


Figure 9. Book spread of the first page in the initial chapter of the Saami version of Odhner's history textbook, published in 1878. The title is C.T. Odhneren Äppetuskirje Aitiglandan Suptsasikum reitetum almogen skoli tet 'C.T. Odhner's textbook 'The History of the Fatherland designated for the Public School'.

almanacs; instead, earlier articles were reused. In the almanacs of 1798 and 1799 there is, for instance, an article with the title *Änekes Äppetus Mijen Aitigi Landen pir* ('Short Lesson about Our Fatherland'), which treats the Swedish provinces of Västergötland and Jämtland. In the almanacs from 1821 onwards, there is no such article at all. The publication of almanacs ceased by the end of the 19th century.

Another profane text is Johannes Mörtzell's mathematics textbook, *Läkkokirje – same-skoli tet tjaletum* ('Calculation book – written for the Saami schools'), which was published in 1876. The book, which is one of the few publications originally written in OLSS, was clearly aimed at Saami pupils, not only in terms of language but also pedagogically. In the foreword, Mörtzell emphasises the importance for teachers to learn the Saami expressions for mathematical concepts and to use them instead of the Latin ones, when teaching, meaning that since the purpose of the book is to explain the art of calculation to pupils, it is important that the language be understandable to them. Another publication originally written in OLSS is J. E. Ågren's *Sitah kus salogen sjaddet?* ('Do you want to be blessed?') from 1885.

Mörtzell was also involved, as translator, in the creation of the Saami version of Clas Theodor Odhner's

Swedish-language history textbook from 1870, intended for public schools (see Figure 9). The book is bilingual, with Swedish to the left and Saami to the right on each book spread, and retells Swedish history from antiquity (*tollots aike*) to recent times (*åddåsubu aike*), in a nationalist spirit typical of the time. It is remarkable, although maybe not surprising, that the word Saami is not mentioned other than on the title page: *Same kiälai puoktetum* ‘translated to Saami’.

Sermon manuscripts

Whilst there are several texts published in OLSS, I have come across very few instances of the language being used for manuscripts that were not intended for publication in print. Petrus Læstadius’s sermon manuscript from 1827⁴⁴ and that of Gustav Westerlund from 1839 are exceptions, which show that priests indeed composed texts in OLSS in preparation for their sermons. Westerlund’s manuscript was intended for the third day of prayer in 1839 (Sunday 7 July). The Saami text was translated into Swedish by Tryggve Sköld and published by Nordberg in 1983 together with a transcript of the Saami text. Westerlund’s text appears to be a compilation of phrases and sentences copied directly from the Bible without much rephrasing, if any. He does not attempt to translate or interpret the Swedish manuscript which he used for the same sermon, and which contains a rather deliberative text based on James 2:8. Nordberg is surprised and appalled by the content and tone of the Saami text. Westerlund, who came from humble beginnings, was known to be a fairly pious priest with an understanding of the people in his congregation. The language in the Saami text, however, includes ‘hard-worn phrases about sin and grace’ and does not reflect the tone of the Swedish text.⁴⁵

The Saami and OLSS

Even though the purpose of OLSS clearly was to reach the Saami-speaking population in Sweden, I have found little information about how the Saami themselves perceived the literary language. However, Tryggve Sköld⁴⁶ mentions that his experience from linguistic fieldwork in Norra Gällivare in the late 1940s and early 1950s was that the Saami understood the language with some difficulty, whilst the Saami in Arvidsjaur, further south, where Sköld also did fieldwork, understood it well, ‘which indeed was expected, since it is based on their dialect.’

The literary Saami language OLSS continued to be used until the late 19th century but was gradually replaced by the Lule Saami-based *Nordlapska bokspråket* (Northern Saami literary language) in the later part of the 19th century. Even though OLSS was created in a colonial context it was seemingly appreciated by Saami who spoke the varieties of the Saami language on which OLSS was based. Karin Stenberg (1884–1969), a Forest Saami from Västra Kikkejaur in Arvidsjaur in the Ume Saami area, who advocated for Saami rights makes this comment in her manifesto *Dat Läh Mijen Situd* ‘This is our will’:

Otherwise we had – and thank God still have – a literary Saami language, which we understand in the whole of Sápmi and which certainly has the greatest potential among us Saami to become our literary language, namely the ‘South Saami literary language’. This language had been used for almost 200 years when the Swedes discovered that it was not ‘real Saami’. It was so natural by the way, we were not ‘real Saami’, so our language could not be ‘real Saami’.⁴⁷

It is worth noting that Stenberg, long after publication in OLSS had ceased, still considered the literary language her own. Stenberg’s remarks and the replacement of OLSS by *Nordlapska bokspråket* can be seen in the context of the Swedish social Darwinist *lapp-ska-vara-lapp* policy (Swedish for ‘Lapps should

be Lapps') which prevailed in the late 1800s and far into the 20th century and promoted a prejudiced stereotype of the Saami as merely a reindeer-herding nomadic people who must be kept away from the benefits of civilization. The Forest Saami's more sedentary and multifaceted *genre de vie* challenged this stereotype and as a consequence, the Forest Saami were deprived of their Saami rights.

Concluding remarks

Old Literary Southern Saami was the first Saami literary language used in print media and was generally accepted by translators and writers who published in Saami; the quote from Stenberg above also points to acceptance among Saami. OLSS was used in Saami publications for over 150 years until the late 1800s, when it was superseded by Literary Northern Saami. Its main purpose was to provide a language to be used by priests in their Christian Lutheran mission in Saami areas, hence the focus on texts related the catechism and central biblical texts, and for practical purposes, church manuals. Another objective was to promote literacy in Saami, for example by means of primers, which largely went hand in hand with the missionary endeavours.

Fjellström's preliminary version of OLSS from 1738 provided the selection of base for the literary language. The orthographic codification was settled at the conferences in 1743 and 1744, where lexical changes were also made. However, the development of the language continued along with the translation work. The *Lexicon Lapponicum* from 1780 provided an updated version and a thorough *codification* of the language.

After the publication of the Bible in 1811, Saami-language publications became somewhat more variegated. In this expansion phase, a number of publications, still with Christian content and edifying religious motifs, but less closely linked to the traditional texts, appeared, in addition to more profane publications such as almanacs and public school textbooks.

Even though the publications in OLSS were aimed at the Saami, very few of them have Saami themes or content that specifically addresses the Saami, and very few were originally written in OLSS, most being translations.

Endnotes

- 1 Lundmark 2016
- 2 Wetterberg 2020: 135–131
- 3 Forsgren 1988: 1
- 4 Korhonen 2016: 742
- 5 Koponen 2022: 106
- 6 Cf. Qvigstad & Wiklund 1899: 27; Wiklund 1915: 301–303
- 7 Qvigstad & Wiklund 1899
- 8 Forsgren 1988
- 9 Fjellström 1738, 1755, 1790
- 10 Lindahl & Öhring 1780
- 11 2000: 35–37, 86–88
- 12 1972
- 13 2000: 36
- 14 Wiklund 1922: 22
- 15 cf. Qvigstad 1947: 37; This Olaus Stephani Graan from the Ume Saami area should not be confused with his namesake, who was born in Uppland and served as vicar in Piteå between 1656 and 1689. The latter Olaus Stephani Graan published three books in Saami (Qvigstad & Wiklund 1899: 20–22; Forsgren 1988: 14–19).
- 16 Larsson 1997: 103; cf. Qvigstad 1899: 12–13, 1933; Koponen 2010
- 17 Wilson 2008

- 18 Korhonen 2016: 749
 19 Forsgren 1988: 22
 20 Hildebrand 2024
 21 Enfaldig förklaring öfwer Lvtheri lilla catechismum, stält genom spörsmähl och swar 'A simple explanation of Luther's Small Catechism, compiled by questions and answers'
 22 'Olaf Svebilii Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism by way of questions and answers. To serve the Saami youth in their advancement in knowledge of the Christian faith'
 23 Forsgren 1988: 38; 2001: 85
 24 Högström 1747: 71
 25 Forsgren 1988: 41
 26 1-584
 27 585-692
 28 xii-lxi
 29 Selvén 2022
 30 Læstadius 1833: 147
 31 xlviii
 32 Hasselbrink 1981: 158
 33 Forsgren 1988: 61
 34 Qvigstad & Wiklund 1899: 43
 35 Ibid. 42
 36 Ibid. 48
 37 Qvigstad & Wiklund 1899: 66
 38 For a thorough survey on Saami hymnals and their authors, see Hasselbrink 1958.
 39 Forsgren 1988: 20
 40 Qvigstad & Wiklund 1899: 23
 41 For a thorough discussion on the educational aspects of early Saami print media see Lindmark 2014.
 42 cf. Qvigstad & Wiklund 1899: 35-37, 46-47, 65
 43 Qvigstad & Wiklund 1899: 36-37; Forsgren 1988: 47
 44 Læstadius 1827
 45 Nordberg 1983: 106-107, 109
 46 1986:22-23
 47 Lindholm & Stenberg 1920: 82. I would like to thank Olle Kejonen (Uppsala) for bringing the this to my attention.

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