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SWEDISH CONTRIBUTIONS TO LAPP ETHNOGRAPHY¹

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I. RESEARCH IN THE XVIIITH AND XVIIIITH CENTURIES

Swedes began to study the Lapps as early as the seventeenth century. Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie, a Chancellor of Sweden with wide cultural interests, commissioned the clergymen Rheen, Graan, Tornaeus, Tuderus and others, who at that time were zealously engaged in converting the pagan Lapps, to record all they could discover regarding the Lappish religion, customs, family life, social conditions, industries, and the material equipment used to combat the hard climate. The clergymen carried out this task, which was additional to their ordinary parochial duties, very well. A large number of factual accounts were received. The treatment of religious matters was naturally influenced by the authors' opinions on dogma, but in general their notes reveal keen powers of observation and genuine "explorers' joy." These records were not collected and printed until fifty years ago (Wiklund, 1897-1909), but shortly after they were written most of the information was used by the German-born Professor Johannes Schefferus of Uppsala in his classic *Laponia* (1673), which for centuries remained the basis of scholarly opinion

on the area. Schefferus' book was first published in Latin, then in English (1674), German (1675), French (1678) and Dutch (1682); but a Swedish edition is only now in contemplation.

There are some still older Swedish documents on the Lapps, but as a rule they cannot be considered products of systematic research. An exception is the list of questions on the Lapps sent out by Johannes Messenius, then a prisoner in Kajaneborg Castle, in Finland, but previously Professor and Royal Archivist. He received exhaustive replies in 1620, referring especially to the Lapps of the Kemi district, and they are assumed to have been written by the Finnish-Swedish clergyman Mansuetus J. Fellman². Messenius seems to have drawn up his questions after a close study of the famous *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* by Olaus Magnus (1555), as Docent John Granlund has recently shown (1952). But as Olaus Magnus' chronicle was written before any scientific inquiries had been made regarding the Lapps, the first Lapp research in Sweden may properly be dated from Messenius' questionnaire.

In the eighteenth century we note in the first place Carl von Linné's Lapland journey, undertaken in 1732 and documented in the MS *Iter Lapponicum*, now in the library of the Linnean Society in London, of which an English edition was published in 1811. In these remarkably comprehensive travel notes students and "quotation hunters" can still make new discoveries in practically every branch of knowledge, material and spiritual, technical and sociological. The most important of the other Swedish eighteenth century documents are a general description of Swedish Lapland by the "Apostle of the Lapps," Pehr Högström (1746); Dean Pehr Fjellström of Lycksele's account of the Lapp bear-cult (1755);

¹ The extensive scientific literature, largely in the Scandinavian languages or Finnish, dealing with the ethnography, language and folk-lore of the Lapps is almost unknown to anthropologists outside Scandinavia. The Institute therefore requested a number of scholars to review the studies carried out in their respective countries, the series being edited by Dr. E. J. Lindgren.

"Norwegian Contributions to Lapp Ethnography," by Prof. G. Gjessing, appeared in the *Journal*, 78, Part I, 1947, pp. 47-60. It was accompanied by a "Map showing present distribution of Lapps and earlier southern limits" (Fig. 1). "Norwegian Research on the Language and Folklore of the Lapps," Pt. I, "Language," by Prof. K. Bergsland and Pt. II, "Mythology and Folklore," by Dr. R. Th. Christiansen, appeared in the *Journal*, 80, 1950, pp. 79-95.—ED.

² See Isak Fellman, 1910-1915, Vol. I, pp. 308 ff.

and the comprehensive survey of Norrland carried out by the topographer Abraham Abr:son Hülphers, 1771-97, one volume being devoted particularly to the Lapp districts (see Hülphers, 1922).

About 1830 Petrus Laestadius, a missionary to the Lapps, wrote his famous *Journal* in the Pite Lapp district (printed 1831-1833). Like Linné's notes, this is a never-failing source of study concerning contemporary conditions among the Lapps. To the same century belongs J. A. Linder's chronicle (1849-54) and the large folio volume, *Lappland*, by the geographer Carl Anton Pettersson (1866), containing many plates of documentary value.

II. THE DEBATE ON THE ORIGIN OF THE LAPPS

By the middle of the nineteenth century the great debate on the origin and descent of the Lapps began. The subject had, of course, attracted some attention earlier, but the question was now seriously taken up. The zoologist and archaeologist Sven Nilsson and his followers maintained that the Lapps were the original inhabitants of Scandinavia, and that the "Arctic" Stone Age finds, chiefly schist and quartz objects, were their relics. In his work on *The Aborigines of Northern Scandinavia* (1866) Nilsson certainly made a very creditable effort to prove, on the basis of the archaeological, anthropological, and folk-lore material then available, that the Lapps were descended from a polar tribe of small stature living there, supposedly the prototypes of the dwarfs of Nordic mythology. In the 1870's, however, the anthropologist Gustaf von Düben, reacting against this thesis, thoroughly explored the problem in his comprehensive monograph, *Om Lappland och lapparne* (1873), in which he came to the conclusion that the Lapps had by no means been living so long in the Scandinavian North, but had immigrated from the East, although before the present era: "The arrival of the Lapps," he wrote, "was perhaps connected with the large migrations between 700 and 400 B.C., when the Scythians were careering about in central and eastern Russia; this may have been the reason why the westward advance guard of the Lapps entered Scandinavia and have ever since called their enemies 'Tjudeh'" (1873, p. 402).

Until the 1930's this hypothesis was generally accepted by subsequent students, though in a modified form based on new material, more systematic primary research and sounder arguments. The chief representatives of this school were the philologist K. B.

Wiklund and the archaeologist Gustaf Hallström. On the basis of the oldest Teutonic loan-words found in the Lapp language, Wiklund stated that the Lapps met the Northmen in northern Scandinavia not later than at the beginning of the Iron Age, i.e. about 500 B.C. As to their previous history, he considered that the Lapps had probably, in the course of hunting wild reindeer, followed the retreating inland ice northwards and westwards from their presumed original home in the eastern parts of Europe, i.e. in the Ural region of Russia, ultimately reaching Scandinavia.

Hallström tackled the archaeological aspects of the problem most resolutely and with keen judgement. After making a comprehensive inventory of all the remains and carrying out some thorough field work in an ever-widening area of prehistoric Norrland, he eventually formulated a theory which may be briefly summarized here. The Stone Age finds in North Scandinavia, that is the "Schist and Quartz Culture" previously considered arctic and other finds ascribed to the Stone Age, are in his view all of Nordic origin. From time immemorial the peninsula had thus not been inhabited by either immigrant or aboriginal Lapps, but by a Nordic race from western and central Europe, in other words by the ancestors of the Swedes and the Norwegians. According to Hallström the Lapps first arrived at the time of climatic deterioration which has been proved by A. Blytt and Rutger Sernander to have set in at the beginning of the Iron Age, and which Sernander (1926) identifies with the "Fimbul winter" of the Eddas. This was approximately the time when the first Nordic loan-words made their appearance in the Lapp language. During the following centuries, with a colder and more humid climate, the Northmen retreated southwards, as indicated by the absence of any archaeological finds from that time, while the reindeer, finding the new climate favourable, immigrated in large numbers from the east, followed by the Lapps.

The theories which Wiklund and Hallström exemplify represent fairly correctly the scientific attitude to this question at the end of the 1920's. But since then the number of Stone Age remains found on the arctic coast of Norway has greatly increased, thanks mainly to the Norwegian Anders Nummedal, and these, which have been called the "Komsa Culture" after Mt. Komsa, were soon seen to have relevance to the discussion. Most of them were quartzite objects of a very primitive nature, and some of them had so far been strangers to Nordic archaeology.

According to Nummedal and his colleagues they were of Palaeolithic type, chiefly from the epoch known in western and central Europe as the Aurignacian, and partly also from the preceding Mousterian and succeeding Magdalenian epochs, all of which may be referred to the time before the last Glacial epoch. The geological evidence did not, however, date them so far back, but, on the basis of the find levels, only to the melting stage of the last Glacial epoch, i.e. to a time when the Mousterian and Aurignacian cultures had long since disappeared southwards. These forms had thus been left behind here in the far north.

Hallström (1929), while still regarding the alleged early age of these finds with some scepticism, acknowledged that they might have a revolutionary effect on previous theories. Wiklund was less doubtful, and thought that the finds might well be connected with the Lapps. In 1930 he wrote: "If the Stone Age settlements now being investigated on the coast of northernmost Norway can be ascribed to the ancestors of the Lapps, these must have reached the Arctic Sea already by that time, probably by the route east of the Baltic and the Gulf of Bothnia" (p. 44).

Further research has confirmed an early dating for the Komsa culture, but the original estimate has been greatly modified and the finds are now ascribed to the late Magdalenian epoch, when the hunting tribes of western Europe were still painting or cutting their wonderful animal pictures in the caves of Spain and France, the period of the Baltic ice lake and the Yoldia Sea of the north. The inland ice had by then withdrawn far enough from the arctic coast to leave a broad passage for all living things. This means about 10,000 or possibly 12,000 years B.C. The Komsa culture thus constitutes the oldest trace, so far, of human beings in Scandinavia; no other finds of approximately the same age have been discovered further north than Denmark.

It was now suggested that the Komsa culture was connected with some other, more recent Stone Age finds of approximately the same kind, but slightly less ancient, e.g. the "Fosna" culture on the Tröndelag and Söndmöre coasts, as well as with some finds at Raö and Varberg on the west coast of Sweden. These latter, being doubtful, have since been dropped from the discussion. It has further been noted that the districts where these finds were made coincide very strikingly with the occurrence of a racial element foreign to the Nordic type, characterized by short skulls, dark hair, and short stature. These typical Lapp characters can be fairly distinctly traced in the

population of Söndmöre, and have also been observed on the west coast of Sweden.

Numerous theories have been propounded, and Norwegian students have in particular taken an active part in the discussion. Nummedal contented himself with assigning the Komsa finds to their proper place among the archaeological epochs, as described above. This appeared to indicate an inter-glacial culture, recalling a theory mooted earlier by the brilliant but incalculable Andreas M. Hansen (1907), namely that men living in these parts before the last Ice Age had wintered on the west coast, where traces of them could still be observed in the relatively brachycephalic population. Nummedal's colleague Anathan Bjørn (1930) regarded an inter-glacial culture as theoretically possible, but questioned the wintering in Norway. As an alternative hypothesis he suggested that the Komsa culture was the result of a migration from Asia at an early post-glacial stage, a migration which had later followed the coast southwards to Fosna. One of the most notable and revolutionary contributions to the discussion was made by the botanist Rolf Nordhagen (1933), who maintained that the Komsa culture was native, and produced strong biological evidence that local conditions had permitted wintering. Nordhagen's studies of several species of the *Papaver*, or mountain poppy, proved very conclusively that many endemic plants have survived from the inter-glacial period. The fact that the Swedish zoologist Sven Ekman had as early as 1922 produced good evidence that at least one species of land animal, the mountain lemming, also survived the Ice Age in sheltered coastal "refuges" favoured Nordhagen's assumption, according to which an inter-glacial race of preponderantly Aurignacian culture, surviving along the coast, had in its isolation there retained its cultural forms until Late-Glacial or Post-Glacial times, and left the Komsa culture behind them. J. Bøe (1936) was, like his predecessors, of the opinion that the finds were Palaeolithic, but rejected the hypothesis of their inter-glacial origin. He agreed with Bjørn that the Komsa culture had probably been brought in by a migrating people at the end of the Ice Age, but considered that this invasion came, not from Asia but from the south, along the eastern flank of the inland ice, whereas the Fosna culture was envisaged as having followed the west coast, also from the south.

So far very little had been said of the Lapps in this discussion. Väinö Tanner, a Swedish-Finnish geologist and ethnographer, had however been inclined

(1929) to regard the Komsa culture as an original Lapp culture of the Post-Glacial age, but derived from the Palaeolithic. He thought that the "proto-Lapps" might be "considered an off-shoot of a semi-pygmaean and hyperbrachycephalic race that had survived the last ice age in some isolated district of central Europe, from which they emigrated while the inland ice still covered the interior of Fenno-Scandia, and occupied such parts of the land in front of the inland ice as were then rising above the Late Glacial sea. The many settlements on the arctic coast where palaeolithic implements have been found—and probably also some of the petroglyphs—must thus be accepted as evidence of these 'proto-Lapps.' The culture of the 'proto-Lapps' ought then at the time of this immigration to have agreed closely with that of the Late Palaeolithic reindeer hunters of central Europe. . . . The peculiar natural features of the invaded districts would then preserve the anthropological genotype of the 'proto-Lapps,' as well as parts of their original culture, with the strength of the stability generally characterizing cultural districts in the arctic" (p. 287).

In 1936 Astrid Cleve-Euler published a small book in which she tried to identify the Komsa people with "the palaeoarctic race from which the Lapps have been supposed to be descended." With reference to the data on geological age, she wished, like Nordhagen (but in opposition to Tanner), to refer the Komsa culture to the inter-glacial period. She summarized her theory in the following reconstruction: "During the recession of the Intermediate (Saale) Glaciation, the ice front was followed from some starting point in Russia or central Asia up to Varanger Fjord by an old arctic race, which survived the last inter-glacial period in north Lappland and was by the next glaciation period driven down towards the ice-free coast, where it remained throughout that period. As the long winter became milder, the Komsa people again wandered inland, first along the bared shores of the fiords, and eventually into the highlands of the interior. And what happened to it there? Presumably it is still surviving in the form of the present day Lapps" (p. 16).

The man who drew the most far-reaching conclusions in this respect from the Komsa finds was the otherwise so critical Wiklund. In a broadly planned investigation, which his death (1934) unfortunately prevented him from completing, he dealt with the entire question, fully adopting the theory that the Komsa culture was an aboriginal glacial and inter-

glacial Lapp culture; like Tanner, he here calls the Komsa people "proto-Lapps." They were said to have lived in Scandinavia during the last inter-glacial period, contemporary with the old Palaeolithic tribes of central Europe, and were presumably, like them, hunters. Later they were forced down towards the coast by the ice, which has destroyed all traces of them inland. They gradually re-occupied the country as the ice receded, and eventually came into contact with Finnish tribes, the "Tschudes." In the south they—as the "Fosna people"—encountered the invading Indo-Europeans on the west coast, and amalgamated with them to form the mixed population now found in Söndmöre. The proto-Lapps from the Komsa district were not considered to have met the Northmen until much later, and their isolation preserved their purity of race; possibly they did not have much intercourse with the strangers until the time in the early Iron Age, indicated by their Nordic loan-words, from which their immigration used to be dated. Wiklund expected new archaeological finds in the interior of Scandinavia which would prove the inland migration of the Komsa people after the melting of the ice, and identify them with the Lapps.³

The possibility of explaining by this new theory the Lapps' unique position among physical anthropological types was apparently what gave Wiklund the first impulse to plan his last work. He had previously faced the problem of understanding how this people could have retained their primitive racial characteristics to such an extent for thousands of years despite the foreign influences to which they must have been exposed, if the prevalent opinion were correct, since they left their supposed original home in eastern Europe. This could not have happened unless the Lapps had been isolated for a very long time, and even in 1932 Wiklund could find no place nearer than the Carpathians or the Urals where this would have been possible. The best conceivable spot was now seen to be in the Lapps' own country, i.e., in the boreal world, surrounded by ice and sea, where the Komsa culture was discovered. Wiklund's isolation hypothesis coincided completely with Nordhagen's.

The new theory threw fresh light not only on the Lapps' anthropological peculiarities, but also on their entire culture. This shows many connections with

³ This theory is expounded in posthumous publications (1937-38 and 1947).

the sub-arctic cultural circle around the polar region, and has presumably borrowed much from Nordic culture, but it nevertheless possesses a large number of unique features of its own. Wiklund therefore immediately began to study the old problems in the light of the new theory. Unfortunately he did not have time to tackle all of these, and his untimely death was a great loss to Lapp research. What he did complete constitutes a permanent gain, whatever fate awaits the main thesis.

The Stone Age finds which Wiklund hoped would be made in the interior of north Scandinavia were soon forthcoming. Although they have not given quite the results Wiklund expected, they have nevertheless brought much to light that points to an early appearance of the Lapps. In 1934 an amateur archaeologist, Knut Tinnberg, discovered some "primitive artefacts" at Torneträsk which were at first believed to be of Komsa character but were presently discarded—like the Råö-Varberg finds—as natural formations. Tinnberg had better luck later, when he located in the mountains a great many settlements and individual finds from the Stone Age, which the professional archaeologists accepted after weeding out all doubtful items. A large asbestos clay vessel found at a Stone Age settlement near Kultsjön in 1941 attracted special attention: so many pieces were found that the whole vessel could be reconstructed. Fragments of a second vessel, almost exactly like it, had earlier come to light when a Stone Age settlement at Luleluspén, also discovered by Tinnberg, was excavated in 1939 by Axel Bagge. Another find of great interest was made, again at Kultsjön, about 100 metres from the spot where the clay jar had been found: an oblong slate 17 cm. long, on which had been carved a figure later identified by Hallström as a whale. Bagge (1943) sees no reason to doubt that this carving was from the Stone Age, and the find may therefore be accepted as evidence that cultural associations between the Norwegian coast and northern Swedish mountain valleys obtained already at this early stage. The fishermen on the coast regarded the whale as a highly desirable quarry, and some of them must obviously have left this carved slate behind them on one of their hunting and fishing trips to the mountain lakes.

Practically all these finds are from a Lapland Stone Age which does not appear to be sufficiently old to be directly connected with the Komsa culture. That Stone Age is assumed to have been contemporary with the "Dagger" or "Cist" period of the younger Stone Age in South Scandinavia, and may possibly

have lasted throughout the Bronze Age to the early Iron Age. In short, we have here the "Arctic" Schist Culture, characterized in particular by schist and quartzite implements, asbestos ceramics, and articles made of horn and bone.

A Norwegian archaeologist and ethnographer, Gutorm Gjessing, who in the last decade has done more than anyone else to keep his contemporaries informed of archaeological progress in this field by a number of papers rich in information as well as in stimulating ideas, has among other things successfully attacked the dogma that the Nordic Stone Age culture is an immigrant from the South, characterized by the substitution of schist for flint. Instead he has maintained (1941*a*), on good grounds, that this culture represents, on the whole, a fairly independent Arctic culture. As to the Lapps, he asserts that theirs is not an exclusively inland culture, but also, and perhaps primarily, a coastal one. He agrees with O. Solberg in regarding the finds made on Kjelmö in the Varanger Fjord in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, which include many implements made of reindeer horn or asbestos ceramics, as Lapp relics dating from the beginning of the Iron Age. He also considers that he can trace the Lapps still further back by means of a number of subsequent finds in Finnmark (at Nesseby, Storbukta, and Vardöhus) and on the Kola peninsula (Reindeer Island and Jokanga), all of which are probably from the final stage of the Stone Age, or from its transition into the Iron Age (1935); for no intervening Bronze Age can be traced in these Arctic districts. At first Gjessing took rather a favourable view of the "wintering" theories of Nordhagen and Wiklund, but he has lately become increasingly sceptical. His colleagues have been even more cautious; in fact some of them say absolutely nothing about such theories, and Gjessing has written, a trifle pessimistically: "In the meantime the age of the Lapps is as far from being solved as ever. Etymology makes no bid, but leaves it to archaeology, which, on its part, is not particularly keen to take the trick. It, too, has 'passed'—at any rate for the time being. Nor can [physical] anthropology at present make any positive contribution. As a cultural phenomenon in the North, the Lapps are lost in apparently impenetrable darkness" (1941*b*, p. 70).

Much has happened since to complicate the problem still further. A number of Stone Age building sites which, though definitely belonging to the Nordic Schist Culture, are of a type also found on Gotland,

Öland, and elsewhere and thus disclose some connection with the South, have been excavated at Traena in Nordland by Gjessing himself. But the ground plan and pole-holes of one of these building sites are in the main those of a Lapp *gamme* (turf-covered hut), and scattered finds in some caves are highly reminiscent of the Kjelmö culture. This points to the Lapps having been represented, but the actual settlement indicates another race. The Fosna culture has in addition been proved to be quite as closely related to the "Ahrensburger" culture in north Germany as to the Komsa culture. Remains of Lapp skeletons (but also a trepanned dolichocephalic skull which cannot have belonged to a Lapp) have been found at Nesseby. Anthropologists have moreover demonstrated the presence of strikingly "Lapponoid" racial elements in Poland and adjacent parts of eastern Central Europe, as well as in France. All this seems difficult to fit in with Wiklund's "wintering" and isolation theory.

But however tangled the skein of problems may be, we must not lose sight of the main points. A prehistoric culture has been documented in North Scandinavia which, whether Glacial, Late-Glacial or Post-Glacial, is the oldest and most primitive in the North. The bearers of this culture were distinctly a hunting and fishing people. In the same region representatives of a people displaying the most primitive racial elements in Europe still survive, namely the Lapps. In the interior these Lapps remained to a pronounced extent a hunting and fishing people until they began to domesticate the reindeer and became reindeer-herding nomads; on the arctic coast they remain hunters and fishermen to this day. It is but reasonable to see a connection between these two main facts, even if all the European races were at one time hunters and fishermen.

If Nordhagen, Cleve-Euler, and Wiklund are right in thinking that the Lapps are the residue of an interglacial people who were driven out by the inland ice to the coastal refuges and wintered there, this does not exclude the possibility of elements of the same race being left in the east and in the south, e.g. the said racial elements in Poland and central Europe. It would indeed be strange if the glaciation had driven *everybody* westwards or northwards. But those who were isolated in the refuges might well have retained and developed their peculiar characteristics, whereas the others may reasonably be supposed to have merged with neighbouring tribes to such an extent as to be traceable only here and there.

If, as was previously the general view (at one time shared by Wiklund), the Lapps did, in hunting the reindeer, follow the receding inland ice from their original home somewhere in the south-east, this does not necessarily prove that Tanner is wrong in assuming that they were the people who in post-glacial times were the bearers of the Komsa culture. They are hardly likely suddenly to have lost contact with the ice margin and its game fauna in Finland, and to have refrained from resuming their advance until several thousand years later. Is it not more reasonable to suppose that, retaining the special habits of an ice-margin people, they followed the ice to the very end? As we know, the ice had left a broad passage in the north to the Finnmark coast at a comparatively early stage. The supposed early migration northwards and westwards does not exclude the possibility of some groups, e.g. the Lapps that have been traced in south Finland and the adjoining parts of Russia as late as the Middle Ages, having been left behind in the general advance.

So far, all this discussion of the earliest stages has been entirely hypothetical, but the above-mentioned finds of a Lapp schist culture seem to bring demonstrable reality a little nearer. A number of contemporary finds (by Gjessing, Nummedal and others) along the coast of north Norway, which take us back to the Late Stone Age and are reminiscent of the Kjelmö finds both as regards material (schist, quartzite, reindeer horn, and bone) and shape, make a connection highly probable. The sites at Kirkehellaren on Traena in Nordland and Nyelv and Skjåvika in Finnmark should also be remembered. It thus looks as if the Lapp culture might be identified with the schist culture *via* Kjelmö (as well as Nesseby, Storbukta and Reindeer Island, etc.). This brings us dangerously close to the Kosma culture, which can hardly be genetically differentiated from the schist-quartz culture. Definite proof has still to be produced, however.

Finally a young Swedish archaeologist, Bo Hellman, has published (1946) a critical study of the schist-culture problem. Like Gjessing he definitely differentiates the northern schist-quartzite culture of a hunting race from the southern flint culture of an agricultural people. He points out that the communications of the former were better towards the north and east, and asserts that "no archaeological fact favours the view that the quartzite people were not of a different race from the population in the country further

south, nor is there anything to contradict the theory that they were Lapps" (p. 28).

At the moment, the situation seems to be as follows. The "wintering" theory is an unproven hypothesis. An inter-glacial population is probable, but nothing is known of it. That the conditions along the coast made a glacial culture there possible can hardly be successfully disproved, but not even the Komsa culture can prove that it actually existed. On the other hand, the trend of recent archaeology seems to move towards the belief that the arctic schist and quartzite culture, extending from Komsa to Kjelmö and the Lappland finds, is attributable to the progenitors of the Lapps. Like the reindeer, the Lapps may accordingly have lived here ever since the land became ice-free.

The dominant preoccupation of Lapp research has indeed been the debate about their origin; but it has by no means been the only one. The domestication of reindeer, the design of Lapp huts, the shape of their sledges and their skis, certain forms of dress and many other subjects and problems have been scientifically investigated and keenly discussed. Scholars of several nations have taken part in this work, and contributions from Sweden have naturally not been lacking, since the original nomad culture of the Lapps has been more fully preserved in Swedish Lapp districts than elsewhere.

III. THE DOMESTICATION OF REINDEER

The oldest documentary evidence of reindeer as domestic animals is derived from Chinese sources, which according to Laufer (1917) tell of reindeer-breeding tribes in the Baikal region in 499 A.D., and also in the eighth and ninth centuries. The Persian Raschid-Eddin at the beginning, and Marco Polo at the end of the tenth century mention reindeer-breeding in the same districts. Wiklund believed that these statements probably referred to the Soyots and possibly to the Tungus (1938, p. 386). We have, however, also important early historical evidence of reindeer-breeding by the Lapps in the account rendered by Ottar to King Alfred of England at the end of the ninth century (Bosworth, 1859). Certain statements in Egil Skallagrímsson's saga point to reindeer being kept as domestic animals at approximately the same time. The tales of the tax-collecting and trading journeys of Torolv Kvällulvsson in north Sweden during the winters 884-886 A.D. appear to

imply a fairly advanced state of reindeer-breeding and nomadism, particularly in what are now the Asele and Lycksele Lapp districts. The extent to which the Lapps had domesticated the reindeer by the ninth century indicates that the process had been going on for several hundred, perhaps a thousand, years.

Laufer, Sirelius, Wiklund, Hatt, Itkonen and other scholars have held varying opinions as to the origin and development of reindeer-breeding: that it began in imitation of the cattle- and horse-breeding of neighbouring tribes, or independently thereof; that the actual domestication began by their taming a few reindeer for use as decoys in hunting or as draft animals; or that a wild herd had been half tamed by being not only driven into a *vuobman* (a kind of corral with convergent arms) for convenient hunting, but also looked after to some extent, etc. On one essential point Wiklund, almost alone, has strongly opposed his fellow students, namely the question whether the different forms of domestication are of a common origin, or have originated more or less independently in different districts. Wiklund takes the latter view, maintaining that reindeer-breeding must not be considered as a uniform concept; the circumstances in which it has arisen, the influences it has undergone and the forms it has taken in different tribes are far too different. The reindeer-breeding of the Lapps probably originated fairly autochthonously in Scandinavia, and as far as the mountain reindeer are concerned cannot have begun until the Lapps met with the species in this area. In the course of its subsequent development, however, the Lapps have borrowed certain features from the cattle-breeding of the Northmen.

The latest contribution to this discussion has come from another scholar, Israel Ruong (1944), Lecturer in Uppsala University and himself a Lapp, who in dealing with Wiklund's thesis that reindeer have been domesticated on different lines, varying with the purpose, points to the well-known difference between the "intensive" system of reindeer-breeding among southern Lapps and the "extensive" methods adopted by those in the north, drawing some interesting conclusions from the distinction. Thus he writes: "It seems to me that one might assume as a working hypothesis that their (the southern and Forest Lapps') reindeer herds had developed by gradual breeding from the few original decoy and draft animals used in hunting the wild reindeer, and for bringing home the catch, into small herds—possibly

in conjunction with having learned from the Northmen to milk them. While still obtaining their meat by hunting, they would use tame reindeer exclusively, or almost exclusively, as decoys, draft animals, and for milking. Wild reindeer caught by means of a *vuobman* were, on the other hand, originally used for securing their meat supplies, and their domestication was accordingly not carried very far." Ruong thinks it likely, therefore, that the "extensive" reindeer-breeding of the northern Lapps "is a relic of the time when whole flocks of reindeer were still held with the aid of the *vuobman*, and a certain herd of reindeer gradually came to be regarded as the private property of the captors, who tamed it slightly and began to follow its wanderings, adapting their work and their lives to these." (p. 182).

To this argument one may object that the actual taming, i.e., breaking to harness, of reindeer had proceeded as far among the northern as among the southern Lapps, and that the difference between the two principles is of importance only in the summer, and is probably to some extent connected with differences in topography. There is also the documented fact that the Ottar herd, whether kept in a southern or a northern district, contained *both* decoy animals and a large number of half-tamed reindeer. But these considerations will hardly affect the essential part of Ruong's working hypothesis, which seems very plausible.

Lately, however, new zoological facts have been added, which may possibly throw fresh light on the question of how the domestication of reindeer by the Lapps originated. It is suggested that our mountain reindeer is descended from a glacial breed on the western and northern coasts of Norway, which accordingly did not—like the forest reindeer—immigrate from the south or east when the inland ice melted; these reindeer could live in the ice-free refuges under approximately the same conditions as the wild reindeer do in Spitzbergen and Greenland to-day. Further, due notice has only recently been taken of certain old statements indicating that the wild mountain reindeer used to remain in the mountains throughout the year, and did not migrate regularly to the forest country as mountain reindeer now do.⁴ The periodical migrations of the tame reindeer would thus be a consequence of their domestication.

Until definite conclusions have been reached on

these zoological problems, it seems hardly worth while to discuss their significance for reindeer-breeding; but we may in any case say that if it can be proved that the mountain reindeer, like the lemming, are endemic and used to live exclusively in the mountains in their previous wild state, this would undoubtedly support the theory of the autochthonous origin of Lapp reindeer-breeding.

IV. DWELLINGS

The Lapp hut (*kåhte*, known in Swedish as *kåta*) is one of the most original and ingenious of all the primitive types of houses found by ethnographers in the four quarters of the globe. The hut of the "bent-pole" type is, like the Lapp sled, unique.

A number of fairly varied types of hut are designated *kåhte*, but all of them have one essential feature in common. They are all conical, pyramidal or cupola-shaped, with a smoke vent at the top and a fireplace in the centre of the floor. The most primitive, and presumably most original, is the forked-pole *tsagge-kåhte*, the framework of which consists of poles set up in a circle and leaning against a support of, usually, three forked poles meeting at the top. This is a variant of the bell-tent made of poles found in all parts of the sub-arctic region, using the simplest possible device for erection. The framework may be covered by cloth, birch-bark, or birch-bark and turf. In the north the Mountain Lapps only use this type sporadically in the fjord and mountain valleys, where timber is available. Further south, in Jämtland and Härjedalen, Lapps usually cover such a framework with brushwood and turf. It is the most common type in the Forest Lapp village of Vittangi and in the villages of the Torne Valley Lapp Concession, where it is covered with cloth or turf, while birch-bark is used in the Forest Lapp village of Gällivare. As reindeer herds became more thoroughly domesticated and the portable tent type of dwelling disappeared, this more primitive type came into more general use also among the Mountain Lapps, as it allowed them to leave the framework standing and transport only the covers.

The bent-pole hut also has a circle of stakes to carry the covering; these are not joined at the top, however, but rest on a specifically Lappish bent-pole frame, forming a truncated cone. This frame consists of two pairs of thick bent poles (*bäljek* or *åtnårasah*) usually made from naturally curved tree trunks and put up in the form of two parallel arches

⁴ See Ekman, 1944, pp. 40f. and 129ff.

connected at the top by a pan-pole. In front this structure is supported by a pair of sheer-legs, also serving as door posts, which are fastened to the pan-pole, and at the back by a corresponding single pole, similarly attached. Besides the pan-pole, the two arches are usually connected by cross-bars mortized into the bent poles on either side. The same construction is used for both turf- and cloth-covered huts, although no doubt originating in the simple and heavy timber structure appropriate for the turf hut, from which the slender and more elaborate framework of the cloth-covered hut has probably developed as an improved design. For both turf- and cloth-covered huts the basic design has the advantage of making the walls more vertical and the hut more roomy than any forked-pole hut could ensure, even with the use of very long straight poles, which would be difficult to find in the arctic forests of dwarfed mountain-birch. The drawback of the forked-pole hut, i.e., the fact that rain water may collect in the crossed stakes above the vent-hole and run down into the hut along the stakes, is also eliminated. For cloth-covered huts the bent-pole framework has also the great advantage that, thanks to the ingenious way in which it is assembled, it can be made very slender and light, and yet be firm and well able to carry the requisite weight. It is also very easily put up or taken down. The easily portable bent-pole cloth-covered hut no doubt developed from the bent-pole framework of the turf-covered hut at the stage when the Lapps first began to follow reindeer herds across the higher timberless mountains, where they had to carry a dwelling with them.

The same construction has indeed been used much longer for the turf huts, which also occurred of old on the arctic coast, where they are known by the Norwegian designation, *gamme*. Gjessing (1942) has suggested that this type of dwelling belongs to the prehistoric hunting and fishing culture, having originated in the use of whale-ribs for the framework of earthen huts. This would take the bent-pole type back to the time of the Komsa people, and its use by the Lapps might then conceivably have been a combination of the assumed whale-bone framework of the *gamme* and the straight-pole tent of the eastern sub-arctic tribes, who might have changed over from the rib framework to frames made from crooked mountain-birch trunks of similar shape.

This theory has several attractions, and does not seem too improbable; but the origin of the Lappish bent-pole framework can be adequately explained

without introducing the hypothetical use of a whale-bone framework into the argument. If one observes how crookedly the trunks of mountain-birches grow throughout these parts, very often producing the shapes required for these structures, one recognizes that the Lapps only needed to make use of material which nature had almost completely prepared. The way in which the poles are joined together certainly presumes inventiveness, but this capacity is as highly developed among the Lapps as among any other people. Similar jointing problems have been solved by the Lapps in other constructions, in which practically the only difference is that the builder is using forks instead of bored holes. Ruong has pointed this out (1937), and I myself have repeatedly, both before and after his statement, suggested such a development.

Whale-bone is known to have been used as a building material in various parts of the Arctic, but that does not necessarily mean that it is the origin of the bent-pole structure of the Lapp hut, for that structure has not developed elsewhere where whale-bone had also been used. If, however, this principle of construction can be demonstrated to have been used in the prehistoric coastal culture at a stage preceding the post-glacial arrival of the mountain-birch in the fjord valleys, the whale-bone theory would be confirmed.

V. SLEDS AND SKIS

The Lapp sled (*keris* or *akja*) is quite unlike any other known type. It is built like a boat, with keel, stem, frames and outer planking. It "floats" like a boat on snow or slush, but on a hard crust or firm road it will glide on its keel as a sled on its runners. Only those who have seen this vehicle in its proper environment can realize how "functional" it is. The *akja* does not get stuck on stones or trees as a more or less rectangular sled will do, but overcomes the topographical hindrances everywhere, and if it does turn upside down will right itself. All its inside space can moreover be utilized for the load, which, if properly packed and tied, is well protected however much the *akja* may be tossed about in travel.

The *akja* seems to be of Nordic origin; there is nothing like it among the reindeer-herding tribes of Siberia, who all use sleds on two runners. It has been suggested that its prototype was a primitive hunter's sled, pulled by hand (Sirelius, 1913; Berg, 1935), and boats built on frames have probably

also served as models. But even if the idea was borrowed from their neighbours, the Lapps have made exceedingly good use of it.

The Lapps enter into the light of history literally with skis on their feet. The earliest documentary evidence suggested that the ski was a specifically Lappish item of equipment, and wonder was constantly expressed at this means of progress. Subsequently it has been discovered, mainly from the many prehistoric Fenno-Scandian bog finds, that the Lapps were not the only ski-runners of those days. It was, however, chiefly the Lapps who preserved the art of ski-ing until the time when it was taken up as a modern sport.

The type of prehistoric ski which I have held to represent the ancient Lapp ski is that which has hitherto usually been called the "Bothnian" type, though by this I do not mean that it was the only one used by the Lapps, nor that they were the only ones to use it. The Bothnian type is short and broad, pointed at both ends, without any groove underneath, and has a slightly raised place for the foot, a little narrower than the actual ski, with a horizontal hole for the binding. In spite of having no groove, it is, in contrast to other types, definitely like the Lapp ski known all through historical times to our own day. All the specimens excavated have moreover been found in districts frequented by Lapps (one in a Lapp grave in Finnmark). The dating of these skis is thus of great interest. Pollen-analysis has proved that the type was used in the period 1500 B.C.-A.D. 1000. The oldest dated specimen (1500-1200 B.C.) was found in 1945 in a bog near Lomsjökullen, 10 km. north of Vilhelmina (Manker, 1946*b*). Most of the finds are from a period when the Lapps had undoubtedly reached the area, but until the Lomsjökullen ski was found the oldest specimens caused ski historians to question whether they were of a Lapp type. There is now, however, every reason to drop the rather obsolete opinion that the Lapps did not enter North Scandinavia until just before the beginning of our era. Even if Wiklund's "wintering" theory is not accepted, the Lapps may have been in the region (see Section II) for a very considerable period, and there is no clear evidence that they did not, in following the wild reindeer, arrive in early post-glacial times. As hunters, and more particularly when minding their reindeer herds, they must have been in great need of some means of getting rapidly over the ground.

The only Scandinavian find of the "Arctic" type

of ski,⁵ which is known in several Siberian tribes, was made at Kalvträsk in Västerbotten. It is chiefly characterized by having two vertical holes for the binding on either side of the foot. This ski is dated to about 2000 B.C., and is thus about 500 years older than the oldest Bothnian ski. It seems to be definitely of eastern origin, but it was found together with a ski-ing stick, the upper end of which was shaped like a long narrow spade, just like the ski stick the Lapps use to this day for examining the lichen pasture underneath the snow. It is not inconceivable that this type of ski was also brought from the east by the progenitors of the Lapps.

Some features of the Lomsjökullen ski, the age of which approaches that of the "Arctic" ski in question, are also reminiscent of this type. Like the Arctic ski known from Siberian tribes, its upper and under sides are both quite plain, it is short and broad, and relatively blunt at the ends. A direct connection between the Bothnian and the Arctic types of ski is thus suggested.

Snow-shoes are unknown among the Lapps, as among several of the more exclusively reindeer-herding Siberian tribes, but were used in, for example, north-east Asia and by the Eskimos and Indians of North America. Probably they had preceded skis among the reindeer-herding tribes. The need of greater speed over the ground is likely to have led to the invention of the gliding ski as an improvement on the "treading" snow-shoe.

VI. SOCIAL LIFE AND GENERAL PROBLEMS

I have given only a few examples of the problems which are now being investigated and discussed by students of the Lapps, particularly in Sweden. Much more could be said. But the Swedes have paid most attention to the material culture of the Lapps, and have done relatively little to clear up problems in the social and spiritual sphere.⁶ Many contributions to the knowledge of Lapp religion have certainly been made by Wiklund, Reuterskiöld, and others, and my own monograph on the Lapps' magic drum (1938-1950) may perhaps also be included among these. But social conditions, and a number of aspects included in the concept of sociology, have been rather

⁵ See K. B. Wiklund, "Den nordiska skidan, den södra och den arktiska", *På Skidor*, 1931.

⁶ I exclude here research into Lapp language and folk-lore, which will be dealt with in another article.

neglected by Swedish research. Lapp family conditions and kinship thus still await a thorough investigation, and nobody has yet seriously tackled a task so tempting as the Lapp *sita* concept (a *sita* being the group of people moving with their herds in a particular grazing district, a peculiarly Lappish form of community).

It must be acknowledged nevertheless that the more or less comprehensive accounts of the Lapps in general, or of those living in a specific geographical area, which have been published in the course of years have also had something to say of their social and spiritual culture. The work of Baron von Düben (1873) is thus an all-round monograph, excellent for its time. The author collected his primary material during two expeditions to Lapp districts, in 1868 and 1871. His wife accompanied him as photographer, and the engravings in his book were made from her photographs. Baroness Lotten von Düben must thus be regarded as the pioneer of Lapland photographers, and many of her original plates, which are preserved partly in the archives of the Northern Museum, compare favourably with modern camera studies.

In the 1890's Hugo Samzelius travelled extensively in the Swedish (Torne), Norwegian and Finnish Lapp districts, where he made excellent collections for the Northern Museum, but no appreciable scientific treatise resulted directly from these. Early in the twentieth century K. B. Wiklund and Gustaf Hallström undertook many journeys and investigations which, in addition to their specialist philological and archaeological work, provided material for a large number of ethnographic and ethnological studies. About the same time the Danish painter Emilie Demant Hatt visited Lapland, where she met the Swedish Lapp Johan Turi, whose creative work she inspired, besides helping him, in various practical ways, to attain literary fame. Lapp research was thus enriched by such a brilliant and authentic document as Turi's *Muittalus samid birra*, edited by Mrs. Demant Hatt, first published in 1910 and later translated into English (1931). Mrs. Demant Hatt herself was a very keen observer of the Lapps, as is apparent in her own work (1913), which includes a collection of folklore. Later her interest in the Lapps was shared by her husband Gudmund Hatt, a professor of Cultural Geography (Copenhagen), who has made important contributions to the study of several problems, e.g. reindeer domestication, forms of sled types, and arctic fur garments.

An extensive compendium of ethnographic data from the Västerbotten Lapp district was published in Sigrid Drake's doctor's dissertation on *The Västerbotten Lapps in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century* (1918), after which ethnographic interest centred for some years on the artist Ossian Elgström's government-subsidized research in the Torne Lapp district. This produced much material for the archives of the Northern Museum, and a splendidly illustrated book, *The Karesuando Lapps* (1922). Criticisms, some justified, have been directed against aspects of the text, which is not always quite scientific and logical, but Elgström's factual information and excellent sketches, correct to the minutest detail and of high artistic merit, supply an inventory of permanent value.

H. Lundborg and S. Wahlund published in 1932 a monumental demographic work on the Lapps, which was followed in 1941 by an anthropological volume by Gunnar Dahlberg and Wahlund. Other Swedish scientific literature on the Lapps includes a number of short papers, e.g. a study of Lapp idols by the Rev. Erik Daunius (1926), a Lapp clergyman in the State Lutheran church, a paper on turf huts by Ernst Klein (1926), a study of the cultural geography of the Gällivare Lapps by Filip Hultblad (1936), and a similar study of the Jukkasjärvi Lapps by Ruong (1937). Considerable ethnographical material from the Pite Lapp district, collected in 1932 and 1936 by Edvin Brännström, is still unpublished.

In 1933 a Jokkmokk Lapp called Anta Pirak completed an ethnographical document in autobiographical form, called *A Nomad and His Life*.⁷ Pirak was only the narrator of the tale, however, the folklorist and lexicographer Harald Grundström having recorded it in a very conscientious and attractive manner. Pirak does not possess the same lyrical strain and charming style as Johan Turi, but his account is nevertheless full of life, and from a factual point of view probably better than Turi's. Another man of Lapp descent who must be mentioned in this connection is the notary Torkel Tomasson (1940), who in 1919 founded *Samefolkets Egen Tidning*, a quarterly organ containing news items, essays and leading articles expressing, in Swedish, the social aims of the Lapps, to which he himself

⁷ An authorized English translation by Mrs. Mary Dixon, M.A.(Oxon.), still awaits a publisher.—E.J.L.

often made excellent contributions of a scientific nature.⁸

Among the sources available to students of the Lapps before the latest World War we also note the mass of official papers published by the Swedish Government's Lapp Administration: the bulky *Minutes* of the Reindeer-Pasture Commissions (reviewed in English by J. G. Elbo, 1952), the *Report* of the 1930 Lapp Committee, etc. All these were written with practical, financial, and social Government measures in view, but they also contain a considerable amount of most useful ethnological, demographic and sociological information.

VII. RECENT RESEARCH

Swedish ethnographic research on the Lapps between 1939 and 1947 has already been summarized by myself in *Man* (1947*b*). I mentioned there that questionnaires covering various aspects of social as well as material culture had been prepared at the Northern Museum and sent out to some 50 informants, representatives of all the *Lappbyar* (communities), who have shown a keen interest in their work and have thus furnished a rich source for future research. The enlightened understanding shown by our Lapp collaborators in this matter exceeded all expectations and a large number of files have been filled with their often marvellously well-written replies.

The other activities reported in 1947 have continued, and to them should be added mention of Samernas Folkhögskola (Jokkmokk), the Lapps' Folk High School, not only for its pedagogical achievements in adult education but for the conferences which it assembles, for old students and others, on many topics, and its encouragement of various Lappish movements. The enthusiastic headmaster is a Lutheran clergyman, Lennart Wallmark.

Among subsequent publications is my own survey of the Mountain Lapps (1947*a*), an historical ethnographic study of the relations between the nomads and settler-colonists of Norrland by Åke Campbell (1948), a general work on the Lapps, in English, by B. Collinder (1949), and a brief autobiographical account of North Lapp reindeer-breeding by Mikel Utsi (1948). A loss to research has been the death of Anta Pirak, and of the gifted Lapp painter Nils Nilsson Skum, whose most famous

series of paintings was designed to teach the younger generation of his people the traditional methods of reindeer-breeding, which he feared were falling into decay (1938).

"Lappologists" in Sweden have in recent years been stimulated by contact with the wider field of international research work, which despite wars and afflictions is bridging both national and ideological schisms. One who has done more than anybody else to promote that contact is Ethel John Lindgren of Cambridge University, who both before and since the war has made repeated visits to Swedish Lapp districts.

In conclusion we may say that, in spite of the gaps remaining, Swedish research on the Lapps has been pursued rather actively in recent years. And it is high time indeed. The influence of modern civilization is affecting all aspects of life, even that of the Lapps. The Lapps have not preserved their old peculiar nomad culture for so long on account of any pronounced conservatism, but simply because their old cultural forms—the result of adaptation over a thousand years to natural conditions and to the cultural influences which have proved beneficial to this process—have so far shown themselves to be the best for the existence of the race. But the revolutionary technical progress of recent decades has produced means of communication and commerce at a pace formerly inconceivable, as well as accessible modern equipment for all purposes, enabling them to change their manner of living in many important respects. They have not yet done so everywhere: in some places people are still living in almost the same way as before. But most reindeer-herding Lapps are adapting themselves to modern times, eagerly accepting new ideas and methods. They are thus exchanging their old self-contained life of intensive reindeer management for the more rational "extensive" reindeer-breeding orientated towards the production of meat for cash returns. They have also to a large extent acquired, as permanent residences, farms with modern buildings where the family lives the year round, only the actual herdsmen following the reindeer, they in turn being provided with typical Swedish sport clothing and equipment. While, therefore, the old and peculiarly Lapp culture has not yet quite disappeared, time is undoubtedly running very short for the ethnologists.

Postscript

Since I wrote this article five years ago a number of developments have occurred in Swedish research

⁸ This quarterly still appears, with the Lapp clergyman Gustav Park as Editor and powerful spokesman for his people's interests.

into Lapp culture. In 1948 the Northern Museum started, in collaboration with the State Antiquary's Office and the Provincial Antiquaries in Norrbotten, Västerbotten and Jämtland, a comprehensive ethnographical-archaeological investigation of the earlier Lappish cultural remains, and this is still in progress. It has been concerned principally with old camping places and dwellings; migration routes; trap-hole systems and other traces of reindeer hunters before the reindeer herders' day; with graves, cult sites and so forth. In 1951 the investigation was extended to Norwegian Finnmark, in collaboration with the Tromsø Museum. This field-work has yielded significant material, some of which is ready for the press.

Still unpublished research on reindeer-breeding by Israel Ruong and Carlo Rönnow should also be mentioned, as well as Filip Hultblad's study of nomad settlements in Jokkmokk parish; Åke Hult-

krantz's religious-historical survey of the *seite* concept; Carl Johansson's study of wild reindeer trapping (1951) and Birgit Laquist's review of Lapp clothing. In two new physical anthropological contributions Bertil Lundman has illuminated Lappish race questions. Finally two research workers from the West, Robert Niel Pehrson of Chicago and Ian 'R. Whitaker of Cambridge, are energetically pursuing sociological problems.

One of the next volumes of the Northern Museum's *Acta Lapponica* will be devoted to a posthumous work by the Lapp artist, Nils Nilsson Skum, on *Herding Reindeer*, and another to a Swedish translation of Schefferus' classic *Laponia*, appearing thus for the first time in the language of its country of origin.

Stockholm, 1 June, 1952.

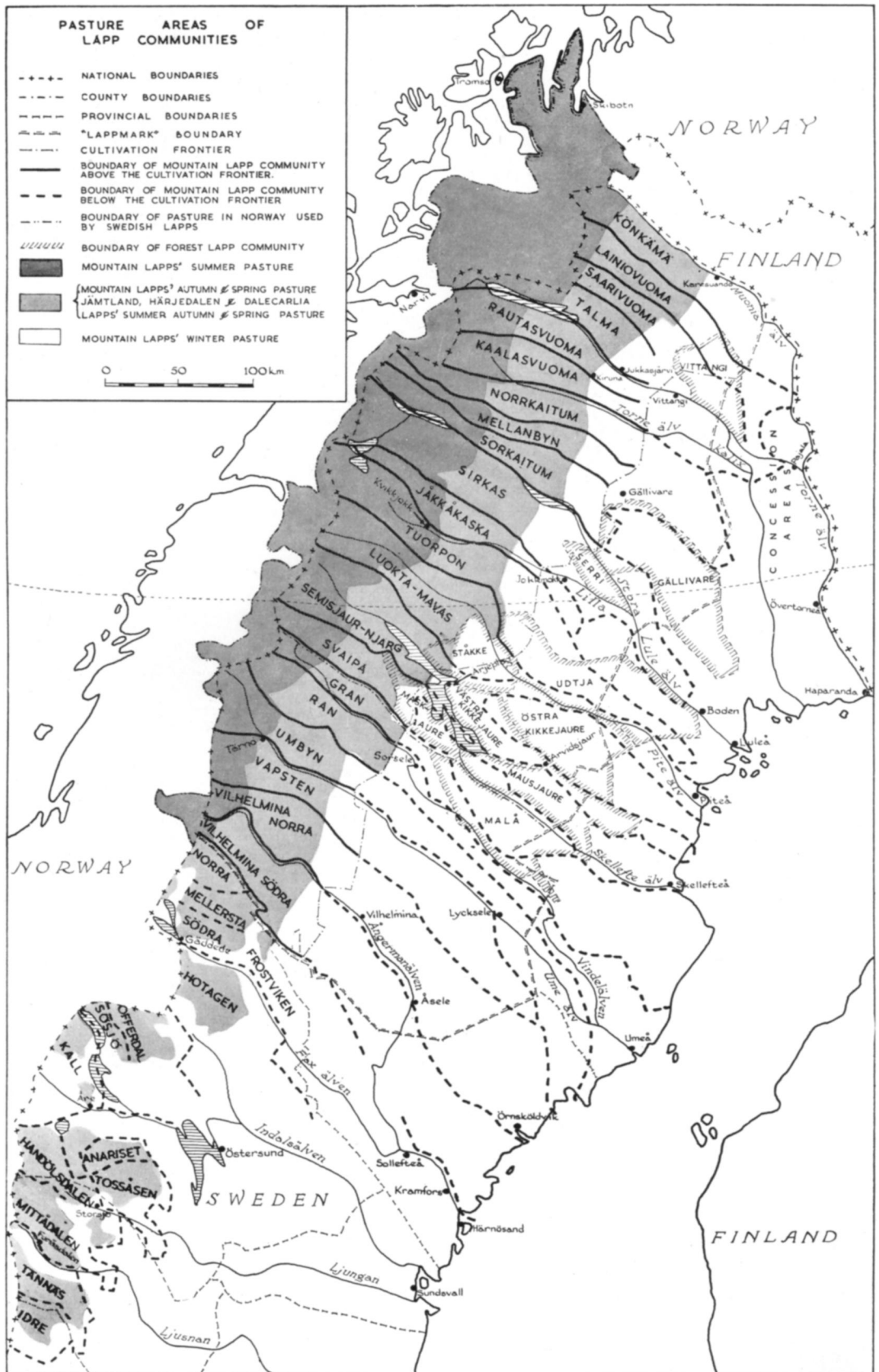
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