

## **A cosmopolitan, Sami-friendly scholar? Väinö Tanner on the best way to treat the Sami**

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**Abstract:** The topic of this article is Väinö Tanner's views on Sami policies, which are searched from numerous contexts, including his personal career and Nordic Sami policies. Also the discursive resources, which he re-produced, are charted. Of the contemporaneous Sami policies, he advocated the Swedish variant, which suited better his agendas in his scholarly production on the Skolt Sami. The origin of the choice can be located in a longer professional contact with Swedish experts on the Sami and the expert-role provided by the Swedish discourses of the Sami. The anti-Finnish agendas in his scholarly production and the consequent wish to lift the Sami in the timely hierarchies turned the more aggressive Norwegian rhetoric on the Sami as unusable. In addition, he showed signs of a cultural sensitivity, which turned him suspicious of assimilative policies.

**Keywords:** Väinö Tanner, Sami research, History of Sami policies, History of minority policies.

### **Introduction**

Of the famous Nordic researchers on the Sami society and culture Väinö Tanner (1881-1948) has aroused relatively little scholarly interest as a research object [See, however 1, passim; 2, passim; 3, passim; 4, passim; 5, passim]. Despite the numerous positive references to and the status as a "classic" of his seminal work on the Skolt Sami, *Antropogeografiska studier inom Petsamo-området. 1 Skoltlapparna*, (Human Geographical Studies in Petsamo-region. 1, Skolt-Lapps, 1929, in the following *Antropogeografiska*), the man himself has remained mostly unknown. References to his "cosmopolitanism" and "Sami-friendly" grip in his studies are numerous and he enjoys a reputation as one of the first scholars, who lifted the Skolt Sami intention and rationality into focus in his synthesis on the Skolt Sami *sijt* adaptation (Siida, the Sami village in Skolt Sami). He is also praised of avoiding the most aggressive racializing discourse on the Sami, which attributed the Sami, for example, lesser mental capacities.

The political Tanner is unknown: Very little is written about his political and ideological views in the earlier studies on him. One of the few instances, when he explicated his political views was after his voluntary exile from Finland to Sweden in 1944, which he meant was because of frustration against the anti-Swedish policies of the Finnish nationalists, the "True-Finns" ("Aitosuomalaiset"). He developed also strong anti-Nazi sentiment during the Continuity War (1941-1944). There is a similar lack of knowledge on his stance on Sami policies, on how the states' should treat their Sami minorities. His critical stance on introduction of agriculture to the Sami is well-known. During his active age as state-official and scholar, the minority policies of Finland were in the making and even though the Sami enjoyed a special, yet un-formalized status as an indigenous minority of Finland, the Skolt Sami were an exception as a "new" and more "foreign" minority within the borders of a young nation-state, as Pechenga/Petsamo was annexed to Finland in 1920. The *Antropogeografiska*, in actuality, is also vague on the matter, since the book contains numerous, even contradicting ponderings on the way the Skolt Sami are to be helped into the modernity [3, p. 18]. So far, a study on the theme based on archival sources is lacking.

One of the scholars to lift up questions concerning this white spot of knowledge is professor on history Astri Andresen, who discussed shortly Tanner's ignorance concerning the Norwegian treatment of the Paččvei-Sami (in Russian Pazreka) in the border negotiations between Finland and Norway 1922-1925. Favoring of the Norwegian population had led to disruptions in Paččvei-Sami usage rights from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The negotiations resulted in the Skolt Sami salmon fishing rights being revoked on the Norwegian bank of the Pasvik river, something which Norwegian officials had wished for since the 1890s, fearing a "Russian" minority in their turf. Tanner participated in the negotiations as a delegate of the Finnish ministry of Foreign Affairs. Andresen wrote how Tanner appeared unaware of in retrospect more sinister traits of the Norwegian Sami policies. In addition, in the *Antropogeografiska*, Tanner echoed the Norwegian standpoints on the issue: he found the reason for the low catch in the lower quality of the fishing device, as such true, but he denied the Skolt Sami testimony that they had been driven away from fisheries, which had happened in actuality [6, p. 17-25, 75-81, 85, 119-122, 157, 160; 7, p. 146-147, 171].

What did Tanner mean of the Scandinavian policies and what kind of Sami policies did he advocate? Which factors affected the favored choice of policies? Tanner was both a state-official and a researcher. From a methodological point of view, he could use and re-produce influences from numerous contexts and discourses. The contexts, and the discourses as well, both influence

and provide tools for the researcher/official; they can be used as a resource, employed for a variety of ends [8, p. 93, 110]. As a researcher he stood more free in employing his own choice of discourses, understood as ways of talking and writing about the Sami competing to become hegemonic and norm-giving, than as a state-official, bound to more rigid formalist, state-bound mode of talking about the Sami. Consequently, concerning methods, contexts matter as much as linguistic traces in the texts. Both context and discourse can be used to study the motivation, rationale [9, p. 103-104], intentions, influences, politico-ideological surroundings and transformations in Tanner's political thinking.

The availability and comprehensibility of politico-ideological influences embedded in the contexts varies for differently situated officials/scholars in the social structure and in time and place. There is no direct causality between the context of a scholar, nor there exists one tyrannical discourse guiding the pen of the scholar. While state officials have to echo the discourses articulated in the institutions they stand in service for, scholars may employ a conscious instrumental perspective in their work; their calculations may take into consideration goals pertaining to the wider society, or they may not. Significant contexts and discourses also derive partially from their life-histories, or from the position a single scholar occupies in the social structure and scientific community [8, p. 93-100; 10, p. 179, 197-198]. This motivation may not reveal itself, and interpretations thereof have to remain conditional. However, the motivation and the rationale behind Tanner's opinions on the best way to treat the Sami are at least tried to fathom in what follows. The contexts from which these are searched for, are his career, professional roles, and the politico-ideological discursive terrain, in which the Nordic Sami policies were articulated and practiced. The sources consist of his personal archive, located at the Tromsø University Museum and relevant parts of his scholarly production.

As is well-known, Russia/Soviet Union has a significant role in Finnish history. During Tanner's life-time the Finnish sentiments towards Russia changed from compliance to negative imagery, even hatred and finally to a necessity to establish a new friendly relation after the Second World War. The negative sentiments were a historical force and a factor, without which the Finnish ideologies would remain unfathomed. The political thinking of the era was permeated by ideas of differences between nationalities, placing author's nationality almost without exception as the highest and the most cultured/capable, as well as of opinions about Russians/Soviets. Therefore, the text that follows contains contemporaneous ideas of the "Other" of the Finnish, the Russians.

These are to be read contextually as historical statements, not as those held by the author of this article.

## **Tanner – background and early career**

Väinö Tanner was born in 1881 in Hämeenlinna, located in southern Finland. His father Richard Tanner was a tradesman and his mother Hildegard Karolina Kant was from Långtora, Uppland, Sweden. The home language in Tanner–residence was Swedish<sup>1</sup> [11, p. 187], and the family belonged to the small-town Swedish speaking middle-class. In 1914 Tanner married Jenny Salomon-Sörensen from Malmö, Sweden, so his connections to Sweden became even deeper [12, p. 143-144].

Tanner studied in two institutions of higher learning, which was typical for the time for those still not very numerous pupils, who went on to continue their studies in the few available institutes of higher learning in Finland [13, p.258]. Tanner graduated in 1905 from the Polytechnical Institute (Dipl. Inc. chemist-engineer) and showed intentions to pursue a career in research from early on, since he continued studies (Fil. cand in 1909) and defended a doctorate in 1914 with a thesis [14, passim] on geology at the Imperial Alexander University, an institution better geared for such a pursuit. His thesis was part of a larger series of publications on quaternary system, on the movements of the continental ice. Between 1903 and 1913, through his engagement in Geological commission of Finland, he participated in geological expeditions in Lapland. In 1908 he visited Kola and 1909 Nuortijärvi/Notozero and Suenjel/Songelsk. He started early to teach and research at the Geological Commission, Polytechnical Institute and from 1905 at the Imperial Alexander University, where he taught geology and mineralogy<sup>2</sup> [3, p. 10-11; 15, p. 166-167; 16, p. 45-46]. Tanner studied extensively abroad, cartography in Stockholm, geology in Russia, as well as languages in Switzerland, Germany and Russia. This is one source for his reputation as “cosmopolitan”.

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<sup>1</sup> Tanner corresponded with his grandmother from his father’s side in Swedish. E.g. Archive of Tromsø University Museum (ATUM), Archive of Väinö Tanner (AVT), Box 18, folder 3, Korrespondanse 1929, Letters from Hilli Tanner, 1929.

<sup>2</sup> ATUM, AVT, Box 18, folder 10a, Private documents, CV.

Tanner's quite fast rise in his early career was based on the general upwards rise in class-structures in swiftly modernizing Finland, as well as the need of educated specialists and experts in the service of the state. The number of students enrolled was low and employment prospects were good, especially in the science, and it was typical to get employment already before graduation [13, p. 230-232, 235-236, 239-240, 257; 17, p. 21]. Tanner's career took a short international turn, because of his engagement in the work of commissions working on the reindeer herding crisis in Torne Lappmark, the border region between Norrland in Sweden and Troms county in Norway (chairmanship in 1910-1912 and 1914-1917). These engagements meant an introduction to the Sami adaptation forms and rationalities, as well as numerous aspects of the cross-border nomadism. He received methodological lessons on the field-work and working with the Sami. Among the staff were also some of the first-rank Sami researchers of the era, e.g. Kristian Nissen, to whose production as well as to the expert role and expert advice Tanner was acquainted. The archive gives indications that he felt more natural alliance with the Swedish policies and members of the commission, than to the Norwegian members, who expressed openly doubts on the reliability and the worth on the Sami testimonies. In any case, Tanner, as the chairman of the committee took eagerly the expert-role, which he exhibited also in his later scholarly production on the Sami. [18, passim] This was the position he gave his educated opinions on the preferred Sami policies.

Tanner's brief engagement in the Ministry of Foreign affairs and diplomatic career (1918-1921) were most likely due to the fact that the administration of foreign relations was among the very few administrative branches with no administrative structures or own ministries in the newly independent Finland (the other being national defense, all the other administrative branches existed from the era of autonomy). Ministry of foreign affairs was established in 1918, and the permanent staff remained small. The recruiting to the diplomatic career and to the consulates and embassies (established from the year 1918 onwards) has been characterized as "random". There was a need to recruit men with command over foreign languages, so university was among the natural bases for recruitment [19, p. 170-171]. Tanner, with his experience in international cooperation and knowledge of languages, had the required characteristics sought after.

Tanner served in Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Greece. He also received other short engagements from the Ministry: In 1918, he worked as civil servant at the Department of Foreign Policy at the legation in Stockholm, Sweden [2, p. 202; 4, p. 12]. He appears as an expert in the peace negotiations between Finland and Soviet Union in Dorpat in 1920, and as political adviser concerning the state of Norway [20, p. 125]. In 1922 Tanner was headhunted from the Ministry of

foreign affairs by the Chief Director of the Commission of Geology to lead the mapping of the mineral deposits in Pechenga/Petsamo; this duty lasted the years 1924-1931, during which he, in the capacity of a state geologist, was engaged in geological studies (the sufficient extent of the ore in the deposits was detected in the drillings in the summers of the latter part of the 1920s, while the excavation works of the mine began in 1936. Production began in 1942-1943 [21, p. 112; 22, p. 285-290, 305]). In addition to his engagement proper, Tanner collected Sami place names and researched the geomorphology and shorelines of the Arctic Ocean. Possibly in 1928-1930 he conducted archaeological excavations localising stone-age dwellings based on analysis of the ancient shore-lines. The contact with the Skolt Sami, lasting the summers of 1924-1927, was among the factors resulting in gradual shift of interest towards human geography. During the 1920s, Tanner wrote his human geographical monograph on the Skolt Sami [1, p. 67; 3, p. 12-13; 4, p. 77, 87; 12, p. 143-144].

*Antropogeografiska* is a synthesis on the Skolt Sami history, the organization of the Sami *sijt*, its administration, the Skolt Sami adaptation and subsistence form, its' relation to the environment and on the ongoing subsistence crisis and the general condition of the folk. The book has a complex identity political agenda, meant to correct the erroneous and biased opinions on the Skolt Sami, renounce the Russian cultural, linguistic and racial influences, comment the unwise Finnish policies (Tanner begins to write favorably about the Russians as Finns enter Petsamo in the book) as well as to "promote the happiness of the people of nature" by producing critical and factual knowledge of the folk and forces at the extreme north. The book contains an unsolved tension between the effort to lift the Skolt Sami in contemporaneous hierarchies and the modern, which pushed the Skolt Sami back to the primitive position in the book. Also the belief in race as a scientific and a hierarchizing factor complicates the salvage agenda of the book [compare 4, p. 98; 7, p. 9 et passim].

Already before the publication of *Antropogeografiska*, Tanner was in possession of a position and the acquired knowledge to air opinions on the Scandinavian and the preferred Sami policies. He never rose to a position to decide over the policies, though, but what did he meant about them?

### **Tanner on Scandinavian Sami policies**

As mentioned, Tanner did appear as uninformed about the true force of the Norwegianization-policies in the early 1920s. The archive does provide more ample thoughts on the topic: In an archived manuscript, Tanner meant that the annexation of Pechenga/Petsamo meant that Finland had received a “Lapp-question”. In a draft dealing with the mentioned issue he conceptualized the ways Norway and Sweden had approached the problem: Sweden had practiced humanistic-sentimental “protectionistic” policy by forcing the Sami to carry on reindeer herding. Norway had practiced “national-economic” and “social-political” policy, where the Sami were given same rights and duties all citizens possessed, and where they were expected to stand in the reserves for the same labor-market as everybody else.<sup>3</sup> Tanner’s perspective grasped the state rhetoric, and shows better knowledge on the Swedish policy. Concerning the Norwegian variant, the conceptualization lacks the highly critical Finnish way to characterize the policies towards the Finno-Ugric minorities in Norway, especially those of “Finnish” extraction or Finnish-speaking minorities, the Kvens – but that had become the domain of the Finnish nationalists from the mid-1920s onwards, who protested against the poor economic, linguistic and educational condition of the Kvens, and blamed the Norwegian policies for it;[23, p. 104-113] Given his negative opinions on the True-Finns, Tanner most likely felt aversion to join those ranks.

When it came to the best possible Finnish answer to the Lapp-question, Tanner was in favor of the Swedish alternative. First argument was that it would not be advisable to left the Sami to compete on their own against the interests of the other professional groups, implying relative weakness of the Sami. Second, the natural conditions were not suitable for the chosen policy, cattle raising, explicating a critique of the chosen Finnish policies so far in Lapland and in Petsamo. There were enough pastures and the disposition of the Sami was most suitable for reindeer herding, ended Tanner his discussion on the subject.<sup>4</sup> The benevolent, humanistic, paternalistic, protective and normative gaze does, in its turn, position the Sami without exception as the lowest, as those with least possibilities, or capacities to act for their own benefit in the terrain manned by stronger, more capable groups of actors. The state of Finland receives a role of a threat as well as the instance, which has to take action to save the Skolt Sami: these roles do not have to negate one another, since the successful protective role of the state of Finland was dependent on that the

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<sup>3</sup> ATUM, AVT, Box 6, folder 2, Petsamon alueen paikannimiä, I Lappalaisia paikanimiä, koonnut V.Tanner, undated manuscript «Med Petsamo-området...»

<sup>4</sup> ATUM, AVT, Box 6, folder 2, Petsamon alueen paikannimiä, I Lappalaisia paikanimiä, koonnut V.Tanner, undated manuscript «Med Petsamo-området...»

state officials followed Tanner's expert advice. Tanner had a habit to lift the Scandinavian as an example to the region; this bias and its Finnish antipode, is another reason for the policies recommended. What can be said with more certainty is that Tanner did not re-produce the more aggressive Norwegian racializing discourse on the Skolt Sami [e.g. 6, p. 155]. These did not suit his Sami-friendly agendas.

The most recent research describes the Swedish Sami policy as paternalist, one that acknowledged and sustained the cultural hierarchies, but was protecting and conserving in rhetoric. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the social Darwinist conviction of the disappearance of a weaker folk was coupled with ideas of Christian and humanistic help to prolong their existence as long as possible. Exposure to civilization and the modern would mean pauperization and increase of welfare costs as well as potential loss of the nomad occupation, which was considered injurious and a misfortune to the Sami. It would be humanitarian to keep the Sami in the nomad Sami way of life, to which their racial characteristics and disposition predetermined them to belong. The idea of protection built also on a perception of the Sami as not capable of taking care of themselves: They were in need of guidance from above. Ideas of injuring and spoiling the Sami with the modern were numerous in the Swedish discourse on the Sami in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Tanner was working in the Reindeer pasture commissions. The ideas resulted in lesser rights in comparison to the Swedish population [24, p. 11-16; 36, p. 29-75]. As I have already been into, the Swedish Sami policies were known to Tanner.

On scale of integration-segregation-assimilation, the eager tendency to define the correct way to be a Sami led in the Swedish case to a combination of segregation and assimilation. The Lapp hut schools were geared up to not to wean the Sami children from the nomad way of life, by decreasing amount of schooling and denying the modern cons, such as proper housing and other pleasantries. Reserving and protecting reindeer nomadism as the righteous subsistence form for the Sami was undertaken through many protective measures, e.g. the cultivation border, resulting in mostly unsuccessful efforts of segregating the Sami from the modern impulses. On the other hand, the Sami, who had for several reasons abandoned reindeer herding or practiced different kinds of subsistence forms, were an anomaly, not fulfilling the strict criteria of "real" Saminess. They were to be assimilated to the Swedish folk, since that was going to take place anyway. The protective and down-grading attitudes led to a strict control of the Sami, in the form of the Lapp Service (Lappväsendet), an authority meant to administer the "the Sami question" and implement



the Sami policy. In the period of Tanner's early Swedish contact, the institution was mostly implementing the different aspects of the segregationist "Lapp shall remain a Lapp"-policy [24, p. 16-17, 141; 25, p. passim]. In his wording of the Finnish Sami policies, Tanner supported the segregation, but, as we will see, not necessarily the assimilation of the Sami.

If the Swedish was humanistic in rhetoric, hierarchizing in practice as well as eager to use power of definition, the Norwegian variant was more straight-forward in their wish to merge and "civilize" the Sami. The take on reindeer herding was one of tolerance to a subsistence form about to vanish. Consequently, the future Sami adaptation of agriculture would mean a leap upwards in cultural hierarchies and a merging into the Norwegian culture. The gaze was permeated by Social Darwinism: Nomadism, an outdated relic, was going to vanish in the encounter with stronger subsistence forms. The Norwegianization-policies were based in addition on (unfounded) fears of Sami and the Kven as fifth columns teaming with hostile and expanding Finns and Russians/Soviets in northern Norway. School was to become the most important institution in administering this national threat. Teacher-staff and language of instruction was to be Norwegian. In addition, the nationalist-conformist Norwegianization policies were carried out between the years 1850 and 1950s in venues like road building, land-sale policies, church building and extensive control of the "foreign nationalities". As one of the variant of the global efforts of civilizing and assimilating the indigenes, Norwegianization-policy stands out as exceptionally long-lasting policy, which left lasting marks in the minority communities, most evidently in the language loss/chance [26, p. 26ff; 27, p. 8-17; 28, passim].

The economic argument and goal-setting of creating an active labor-reserve, to which Tanner referred to, has been deemed as an inferior goal-setting in relation to the most important one, the national security, by Knut Einar Eriksen and Einar Niemi in their seminal work on Norwegianization-policies, *Den finske fare* (The Finnish Menace, 1981). The ideologists targeted the minority cultures, languages and feeling of togetherness, which was to be substituted with a Norwegian self-feeling and identity. Regnor Jernsletten has discussed the economic background of the land-lease policies, which reserved the land ownership only to those with command over Norwegian language. The economic factor, to which Tanner referred to, was present most evidently in the *poor success* of land-lease politics, as the the restriction of land-sales to the Norwegian citizens remained mostly unused, since the old prioritization of economic consolidation of Finnmark and sedentarization of the nomad Sami stood out more important. In the land lease policies, the fear of foreign nationalities was strongest and the actual discrimination most blatant against the Kvens,

but the policies did not hinder Sami and Kven settlement. Rather than creating a work-reserve, the rhetoric and argumentation on the question was according to Eriksen and Niemi imbued with Kven-as-a-national-threat-to-be-tethered-discourse. And, sedentary agricultural settlement was seen as a solution for dissolving the anomaly, Sami reindeer nomadism once and for all [26, p. 22-24, 60-61, 69-81, 119, 126-128, 228-237; 27, p. 17-18].

Argumentation resembling to that of Tanner's is also present in the discourse on schools as a progressive factor for the minorities deemed as "backward", where the argumentation downplayed the national threat-discourse and took more explicitly up the need to civilize the minorities and to incorporate them to the Norwegian society, as school director of Finnmark, Bernt Thomassen wrote in 1917. (The Sami called him [Nikolai] "Bobrikoff", referring to the governor general of Finland aiming to "russify" the Grand Duchy of Finland and murdered in 1904). The Sami and the Kven would feel unity with Norwegians, as well as share solidarity and the Norwegian culture as well as enjoy the well-being provided by the uplift and the ultimate goal, creating loyal citizens of the Sami and Kvens (the opposition of Norwegianization policies meant that kinder treatment of the minorities would result in the same). This rhetoric did not explicate the duties of the new full citizens enjoying the equality promised by the Norwegianization [26, p. 115-121], like Tanner's wording did, but it might be a source for him, because he had engaged in short correspondence on the school issue with one ardent Norwegianization-advocate, Johs. Haaheim from former Skolt Sami area in Neiden<sup>5</sup>.

This source reveals a later interest in the matter and Tanner's mildly critical stance to the Norwegianization policies at schools. Here as well Tanner showed understanding to the demands of the state, but not necessarily to a full cultural change. Reindeer herding, according to the half-nomadic model preferred by the Swedish experts and Tanner, was to be continued by the folk proven culturally competent in the environment best equipped to such an adaptation. This was clear for Tanner, as clear as it was that the modern constituted the threatening realm, as the ill-

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<sup>5</sup> As newly graduated teacher from the seminar of Tromsø, Johannes Haaheim was sent to multi-linguistic region Neiden to teach Sami and Finnish children, because he was *not* in command of the Sami languages. This was logical under the Norwegianization policies practiced in the 1880s and 1890s. Haaheim, originally from Hardanger, Vestlandet, was an active member of the Norwegian local "nobility" in Neiden, with positions of trust at least in the church and municipal administration. He became the mayor in 1901-1904 and enjoyed good reputation in the municipality, and as a teacher "who norwegianised pupils without force". Rasmussen, Sigrun: Neiden kapell og Svanvik kapell, Nasjonal oppbygging i Sør-Varanger, Hovedoppgave i kunsthistorie, våren 2007, Institutt for filosofi, ide- og kunsthistorie og klassisk språk, Universitetet i Oslo, 35, 37-38; Haaheim is depicted in *Den finske fare* as an ardent promoter of the Norwegianization policy. He initiated and administered the first school dormitory, the Fossheim dormitory in Neiden and shared his meanings of the unreliability of the Kven population in the region in the secret reports he sent to the military. Eriksen and Niemi 1981, 66, 137-138.

advised Finns advocated agriculture, poorly suited to the parts of the environment and where there did not yet exist overlaps between the niches for the different means of living. Tanner himself wished to establish a cultivation-border delimiting the area for agriculture, forestry and reindeer herding in the region, to the benefit of all the three mentioned land use forms. One of the sources for these ideas was the Swedish reasoning on the matter and one of the provocative discourses was the Finnish praising discourse on the Finnish peasant as the normative ideal [29, p. 81, 97].<sup>6</sup>

In the correspondence, Tanner expressed that he did not agree in all the points with Haaheim, without specifying the points of disagreement (the original letter from Haaheim to Tanner was not to be found in the archive), but Tanner took starting-point in Sami pupil's point of view: in the worst cases they sat in the class-room with no command over the teacher's language, and received no use of the teaching. It takes a long time, before Tanner touches upon the point of view of the national (security, best of, etc.), which was the starting point in much of the talk about the Norwegianization-policies. But eventually Tanner returned to the evolutionary universe by claiming in unison with Haaheim that the education has to match the culture of different nationalities, and that the interests of the state are best served if the individuals are bound intimately together into a solid cultural unit ("kulturförband"). The development of culture can not go on regardless of development in the existence/maintenance of the folk (folkbestånden).<sup>7</sup>

Tanner's ponderings seem to be drawing to two directions. Tanner's conception of culture and history was evolutionary, but Tanner had pondered the nationalization-questions within the school-institution<sup>8</sup> also from a point of view of equality. There are clear indications of a democratic humanism, while his discussion of the best of the state does not specify the culture, into which the pupils are to be unified: the singular form and the idea of development point out most likely to the majority culture of each host state. However, the last sentence seems to return to the somewhat more pluralistic points about Skolt Sami culture's best in facing the modern, to which they have to be prepared for, in order to not to meet it straightforwardly from a primitive stance, a point made in the *Antropogeografiska*, but into which they do not have to necessarily have to sink into, assimilate. In my reading, Tanner did not out-rightly support assimilative measures.

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<sup>6</sup> ATUM, AVT, Box 6, folder 1b, Muetkess, Njaudam, undated draft for a letter to Mr. Haaheim.

<sup>7</sup> ATUM, AVT, Box 6, folder 1b, Muetkess, Njaudam, undated draft for a letter to Mr. Haaheim.

<sup>8</sup> ATUM, AVT, Box 6, folder 2, Petsamon alueen paikannimiä, I Lappalaisia paikanimiä, koonnut V.Tanner, undated manus "Schnitler omtalar nämligen i sitt..."

An additional support of this attitude comes from an earlier text on the Skolt Sami place-names, where Tanner wrote about Sami in a process acculturation/assimilation as unwished for (Tanner used his own term “epäkansallistuttaminen”, which translates roughly as un-nationalizing the Sami, and which might be a translation for the term “die Denationalisierung”, used in the scholarly texts of the time [30, p. 39]). The explicit salvation motive of the article - the exceptionally nuanced and expression-full Skolt Sami tradition has to be saved for posterity before it vanishes – resembles the starting point of much of the argumentation for assimilation policies, which Tanner did not explicate, though [31, p. 3-4].

Tanner had produced another draft on the school issue, where he was more generous in sharing his thoughts. On a passage on school issue of Suenjel, he is sceptic about the desirability of placing the Sami children to the same school with pupils belonging to a different, higher race; the encounter might and has turn out be unfortunate, the school can turn out to be a “torture-institution for the child of the nature” (“tortyranstalt för naturbarnen”) and lead to Sami children abandoning school. Therefore, and because of the general dislike against school dormitories among the Sami, Tanner was in favor of own Suenjel school in the winter village. Tanner racializes another aspect in his critical discussion of the dormitories: where one can find a woman with enough cultural maturity to take care, with understanding devotion, of such amount of children belonging to a different race? The passage ends with a quotation from the first novel written by a Sami “Muitalus Samiid birra” (Story about the Sami, 1910), where the author Johan Turi airs his meanings about the pros (Sami become more difficult to lure, as they learn to read, write and do arithmetic) and cons (the inevitable cultural change from Sami culture and nature to peasant culture and nature) of the Swedish “5-year school” [32, p. 28-29].<sup>9</sup> The thought is hierarchical and racializing, yet compassionate and curiously culturally sensitive, and leans more to the culture-protecting *ethos* of the Swedish model than to the assimilative Norwegian variant. It might also actually grasp some aspects of the actual encounters of the Sami pupils already sent to schools in the north - Tanner referred to discussions between him and Swedish Sami in the passage. The racial factor is tried to use here in supportive, yet paternalistic and instrumental tone, but at least in retrospect it fails as an argument.

Besides from the general “development”, inherent and wished-for result of school-experience, Tanner did not explicate anything about wiping out, abolishing, disappearance of indigenous culture, or civilizing, enfranchising or salvaging the indigenes, all of which were typical ways to talk

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<sup>9</sup> ATUM, AVT, Box 6, folder 2, Petsamon alueen paikannimiä, I Lappalaisia paikanimiä, koonnut V.Tanner, undated manuscript in a collection titled «Upplýsningen».

about assimilation and the resulting progress of the social engineering of the indigenous groups, including the Norwegian example [28, p. 126-131; 33, p. 53-56]. Tanner used Sami sources, which mellowed down his discourse. The effort to look at the situation from the Sami pupils' point of view had the same effect.

In his archived statements on the Norwegian policies Tanner did indeed appear uninformed of the grimmer sides to it. This for one part risks of becoming an anachronistic problem, since some of the aspects of the policies were secretive and many consequences of the Norwegianization policies have emerged and have been attached to it afterwards. The policy is attributed with a strength and coverage that might escape the real-historical situation in all of the phases of the Norwegianization-policy, spanning over a decade. This is said not as a belittlement of the Norwegianization policy, but as a methodological statement of the available knowledge historical actors possess in their timely contexts and the effect which historical phenomena are credited with in different identity political projects afterwards. Both of these realms, the historical and identity political, can be studied historically, but have to be separated, since the epistemological rules are different, under which the historical actors operate.

### **Conclusions: Tanner the Sami-friendly scholar?**

Generally, Tanner shared the Social Darwinist thought and world-view, inherent in the Swedish and more aggressive in the Norwegian variant of Sami policies. The direction of Tanner's wordings was the same, the Sami were progressing higher up in the ladders of socio-cultural evolution, and only the means and the pace of the uplift were under discussion. Tanner chose the milder, Swedish variant, the one that left room for some cultural sensitivity and room for cultural protection as well as, most importantly, for reindeer herding, the subsistence form of his choice reserved for the Sami. His cultural sensitivity was most evident in his somewhat ambivalent thoughts on school and the Sami.

Race was an explanatory and scientific factor for Tanner and he included a lengthy chapter on the physical anthropology in *Antropogeografiska*. He did not, however, include the aggressive Norwegian rhetoric on the Sami to his book. This is not necessarily yet another sign of ignorance

on the Norwegianization policies, or its' blunt rejection – the aggressive, racializing rhetoric was something that he had set out to write against in the first place, and therefore he had to omit the Norwegian voices from the book, or to write against them. For Tanner, the Norwegian rhetoric was a spoiled, un-usable discursive zone, rather than a source of influence. The book was meant to be a reply to the Finnish aggressive discourse on the Skolt Sami, rendering the Norwegian and the Scandinavian discourse on Germanic superiority useless, because of the discursive force with which it placed the Sami as lowest. As a Finland-Swede, he might have well shared the discourse of Germanic racial superiority in comparison to the Finns and other Finnish minorities, a pleasant position to take. Because of this ambivalence, and sparse wordings, *Antropogeografiska* does not provide definite answer to Tanners view on the Sami policies.

Among the discourses, which he did not chose to reproduce were the True-Finn-discourses on the oppression of the diasporic Finno-Ugrian minorities. This confirms the old notion of him as an anti-True-Finn person. This is a known fact, which resonates well with his Finland-Swedish ethnicity. The same goes for the Finnish Sami policies, which he criticized all through the *Antropogeografiska*.

Tanner's articulations on the preferred Sami policy seem to form a paradox in relation to his "Sami-friendly" stance: The Swedish policy was protested at the time by the Sami and it has definitely fallen into dis-favor among researchers. Tanner did write from an expert-stance, which sometimes resulted to paternalist attitude, sometimes even guilt-tripping the Sami of the "wrong" choices, as in making choices not suggested by Tanner. His categorizing gaze was at times harsh, as harsh as were the Swedish policies, and he advocated the "correct" form of semi-nomadic reindeer herding, being not aware of its' young age in the Skolt Sami subsistence form. The expert-role provided by the Swedish discourse was something that attracted him profoundly and affected his scholarly production as well. He labelled the Swedish policy as "humanistic-sentimental", which implies that he found the Norwegian policy more instrumental and culturally less sensitive. He was a "Sami-friend" most genuinely according to his timely standards. At the time, the paternalism inherent in the Swedish policy was understood differently, it has received a meaning of hostile undermining of the Sami rationalities and sensitivities later. The perceived benevolence in the meeting of the indigene, acting and dictating policies for and on behalf of them was part of the imperial and hygienic discourses of the times. So was the cause of the stronger part, the health of the polity, that of the state. These were two sides of the coin and did not negate each other.

Among the aspects, which continue to make Tanner approachable researcher on the Sami is the choice of “humane” policies, also concerning the thinking on race: Like in politics, he never took eugenic or deterministic views concerning race, but connected the race-discussion on wider ponderings on the viability of the folk. He ended up, famously, writing against Norwegian scholars, such as Amund Helland, that the Skolt Sami were not dying out or degenerating [7, p. 329]. For Tanner, the Sami were capable of development, but they had better to do it the way Tanner had proved them best.

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