

Dikka Storm

Pietistic Mission to Senja and Vesterålen in the Early Eighteenth Century¹

Introduction

This article analyzes the complex religious situation resulting from the introduction of the pietistic mission to Senja and Vesterålen in Northern Norway. It focuses on the interactions and confrontation between the missionaries, the ecclesiastical representatives, and the Sámi population. Earlier, I examined various perspectives of the Danish-Norwegian missionary efforts among the Sámi population in the so-called sixth missionary district of Senja and Vesterålen.² Here, I will sum up the results from these studies and elaborate on some themes and perspectives.

A broad theoretical and methodological approach has been used when studying the missionary and ecclesiastical networks and the missionaries' work in order to understand the religious situation in the two missionary districts in the early eighteenth century. I have used a processual approach to the concept of space as introduced by the social geographer Doreen Massey³ (1944–2016), supplemented by a biographical approach inspired by the Sámi scholar Johan Albert Kalstad⁴ (1946–2008) in tracing the missionaries and clergy, and a critical approach and analysis of the sources in relation to the confrontations between missionaries and the Sámi inspired by the religious historian, Håkan Rydving.⁵

The Pietistic Mission

The absolute monarch King Frederik IV became increasingly aware of the northern territories' value as "resource areas" for trade and taxation, and thus sought ways to secure the Danish crown's rule vis-à-vis Swedish interests.⁶ One way to secure the Sámi people's loyalty to the Danish-Norwegian King was to strengthen the national religion and the Church. The King therefore organized a pietistic form of missionary work headed by the Veøy vicar Thomas von Westen (1682–1727).⁷

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² Storm 2014, 2016, 2017.

³ Massey 1994 pp. 155–156; Massey 2005; Castree 2016.

⁴ Kalstad 1994, 1997; Bjørklund, Brantenberg and Storm 2008.

⁵ Rydving 1993, 1995; Massey 2015 p. 9.

⁶ Gilje and Rasmussen 2002 p. 334; Hansen and Olsen 2014.

⁷ Steen 1954; Gilje and Rasmussen 2002 pp. 334–335; Nørgaard 2005 p. 41; Hansen and Olsen 2014 p. 327; Storm 2014 pp. 193–194.

The establishment of a Pietist organization set the scene for the study of multiple processes related to the confrontation between the reformed Lutheran Church and the indigenous Sámi religion. By mapping the ecclesiastical and social networks of the mission organization and the parish priests of the state church, the local religious processes are clarified in relation to the national and global goals of the missionary work. It was by royal command that the Danish-Norwegian Church became a missionary church. The College of Missions (*Mission Collegium*) was established as a separate governmental department in 1714 and separated from the Danish Chancellery in Copenhagen, the capital city of Denmark-Norway.⁸ The Collegium members were appointed by the king and included two members of the clergy and three laymen.⁹ Its aim was to promote the preaching of the gospel amongst the pagans overseas and within the northern realm, and to promote the interests of the mission within the church. At that point, the king of Denmark was the only Lutheran monarch whose realm encompassed several nations with non-Christian peoples (Indians, Africans, Greenlanders, and Sámi).¹⁰ Later, in 1737, the mission to Greenland was transferred to the same department.¹¹ Thomas von Westen was appointed to a lectorate at the Cathedral School in Trondheim, which was reorganized to include a new *Seminarium Scholasticum* for the education of missionaries and teachers.¹² The administration of the missionary work amongst the Sámi was subordinated to the College of Missions.¹³ The area from Trøndelag northwards, including Finnmark, was divided into 13 missionary districts, which were organized alongside the bishop's administration of the churches of his diocese.

The process of organizing the mission, especially the tasks relating to border issues and the religious conditions in Finnmark, is but one example of a global process, which will be considered as a part of the colonizing efforts and state-consolidating measures.¹⁴ However, this process has an important local dimension since it took place within the context of Northern Norway. In this study, it will be shown how this process contributed to the inner restructuring

⁸ Steen 1954 pp. 104–105, 107; Westman 1950 pp. 142–143. The College of Missions was merged into the Chancellery in 1771, see <http://www.arkivportalen.no/side/aktor/detaljer?aktorId=no-a1450-01000002749574> (accessed 24 October 2017); Iversen 2005 pp. 17–18; Glebe-Møller 2005 p. 128.

⁹ The members of the College of Missions included a president and four assessors, all appointed by the king. The king's privy counselor, Johan Georg von Holstein, was appointed president and was assisted by the steward of the Queen's household, Wilhelm Mauritz von Buseck and Professors Hans Steenbuch and Jac. Lodberg, while Christian Wendt became the secretary; see Steen 1954 pp. 107–108.

¹⁰ Iversen 2005 p. 15; Nørgaard 2005 p. 42.

¹¹ From 1737, the College of Missions was also in control of the mission to Greenland, see <http://www.arkivportalen.no/contributor/no-a1450-01000002749574> (accessed 19 October 2018).

¹² Steen 1954 p. 156.

¹³ Steen 1954 pp. 102, 106, 163–164. The *Seminarium Scholasticum* was closed 30 March 1728 (Steen 1954 pp. 208–211; Hansen and Olsen 2014 pp. 327–328).

¹⁴ Storm 2014 p. 193.

and reorganization of the region of southern Troms.

From the beginning, Pietism was a Lutheran movement of renewal that emphasized the importance of personal faith among believers.¹⁵ Pietism contributed to a sincere and individual relationship with religion and had consequences for social, religious, and political conditions.¹⁶ Two significant ideas within Pietism were expressed by the German theologians Philipp Jakob Spener (1635–1705) and August Hermann Francke (1663–1727). Spener was the dean of the chapter in Frankfurt. His aim was to reform the church by organizing “piety groups” (*collegia pietatis*) within the Lutheran Church.¹⁷ The main activity in the meetings was to read the Bible and talk about its message in order to involve the individual believer in his or her faith.¹⁸ From 1692, Francke held the position as professor and clergyman in Halle, where he established institutions to take care of the poor and sick, and to find ways to improve religious education in accordance with pietistic ideals.¹⁹ In Denmark-Norway, Francke’s influence was exploited to develop the Lutheran Church and the autocratic state.

According to the historian of ideas Jan-Erik Ebbestad Hansen, the initial history of Pietism in Norway can be divided into three phases.²⁰ The first phase occurred from the beginning of the eighteenth century until the last years of 1720s, which coincides with the period of the work done by von Westen, who died in 1727. The second phase was initiated by the great fire in Copenhagen in 1728. The fire gave rise to a religious revival, which led to the establishment of radical pietistic societies. This development led to the third phase, state Pietism (*statspietismen*), during the reign of King Christian VI (1731–1746). During this period, Pietism was implemented as a state policy in order to change both church and society. The introduction of state Pietism was followed by a series of ordinances,²¹ requiring attendance at church service on Sundays and other holy days from 1735, the rite of Confirmation in 1736, establishing elementary schools in 1739–1741, and prohibiting religious meetings without clergy presence from 1741.²² This latter act made it illegal for people to gather in small groups for private edification based on the model of the early leading Pietists.²³ Later, during the latter half of the

¹⁵ Gilje and Rasmussen 2002 p. 301.

¹⁶ J.E.E. Hansen 1998 p. 374.

¹⁷ Gilje and Rasmussen 2002 p. 302.

¹⁸ Gilje and Rasmussen 2002 p. 302.

¹⁹ Gilje and Rasmussen 2002 pp. 310–313.

²⁰ J.-E. E. Hansen 1998 pp. 374–375.

²¹ “*Forordning*” = an ordinance, act by royal prerogative used in the period of autocracy (1660–1814).

²² “Sabbatsordningen av 12. mars 1735”, J.-E.E. Hansen 1998 pp. 372, 375; Gilje and Rasmussen 2002 p. 317.

²³ Gilje and Rasmussen 2002 pp. 318–319.

eighteenth century, state Pietism was moderated.²⁴ With this as a backdrop, the development of these phases of Pietism can be demonstrated with regard to the district of Senja and Vesterålen.

In Sweden during the seventeenth century, there was strong missionary activity amongst the Sámi population. Churches were built and religious books were published in the Sámi language, including the Lutheran catechism, the ABC book, and a bigger handbook with translation of the sacred writing.²⁵ Sámi clergymen (*lappeprester*) were appointed. They were to live among the Sámi population and work alongside them. It was prohibited under penalty of death to practice the indigenous religion.²⁶ Through these efforts, the state strengthened its control over the areas of Sámi settlement. In Denmark-Norway, religious books had been printed in Danish since the Reformation (the New Testament in 1524 and Christian III's Bible in 1550).²⁷ Later, other religious literature became available in Danish, which had also become the official written language in Norway. This process of Danification (*fordanskning*) also influenced the choice of language used when dealing with the Sámi population in the pietistic missionary work. On the other hand, von Westen chose to advocate that missionaries use the Sámi language when dealing with the Sámi. Both the bishops Krog and Hagerup disagreed with him and advocated continuing of the Danification of the Sámi.²⁸

Space, Networks, and the Indigenous Religion

The application of a processual approach to the concept of space has been valuable when discussing historical processes related to clarifying various perspectives of the complex religious situation in the sixth missionary district during the introduction of Pietism.²⁹ By way of a biographical approach, the reconstruction of the social and professional networks and their social and professional space enables researchers to more easily locate information about various activities. A spatial approach that reconstructs the trajectories of the missionaries and the clergy establishes a spatial perspective of the networks and their locations. Again, this leads to a growing body of local knowledge and information concerning the missionaries, which in turn informs us about the Sámi population and their contact or encounters with the mission and the

²⁴ Gilje and Rasmussen 2002 pp. 310–319.

²⁵ Kolsrud 1947 pp. 9–10.

²⁶ Christoffersson 2010 pp. 2–5; Hansen and Olsen 2014 p. 332.

²⁷ J.-E.E. Hansen 1998 p. 372; S.H. Berg 2017 p. 130; I. Berg 2017 available at <http://www.sprakradet.no/Vi-og-vart/Publikasjoner/Spraaknytt/spraaknytt-32017/kristendomen-og-sprakhistoria/> (accessed 08 November 2017).

²⁸ Steen 1954 p. 157; Lysaker 1987 p. 238 (Krog), p. 263 (Hagerup); S.H. Berg 2017 p. 130.

²⁹ Massey 1994 pp. 155–156; Massey 2005; cf. Massey in Storm 2014 pp. 186–188; Massey 2016 pp.174–178; Massey 2017 pp. 61–62.

church. Through such contacts, some information about the attitudes and practices of the indigenous Sámi religion are revealed. According to Rydving, it is a well-known fact that the majority of the sources describe the religion of the south Sámi area, and furthermore that the indigenous religion seems to have been very much alive at the time that the early missionaries arrived at their appointed places of work.³⁰ From Rydving's studies, only a limited amount of information can safely be traced to the study of the indigenous Sámi religious traditions in Senja and Vesterålen. He underlines the need to be very cautious in drawing firm conclusions about whether available information originated or can be ascribed to the area of the sixth missionary district.³¹ The statements of Kalstad concerning the evidence about the *noajde*³², “the Sámi religious specialist”, his activities, and *noajddevuolta* (the indigenous religious knowledge) by way of oral traditions in the neighbouring Lule Sámi area indicate that it is worth investigating further the historical sources in order to analyze the religious situation of Senja and Vesterålen.³³ The religious situation in this area during the first quarter of the eighteenth century can be seen as a parallel to the convergence of the indigenous religion and the Protestant Church earlier in the sixteenth century in Helgeland and the complex religious situation in the Lule Sámi area.³⁴

The Strength of the Sources

The descriptions and sources of the introduction of Pietism during the early eighteenth century are at least two-sided. To analyze the characteristics of the complex religious situation, and especially the characteristics of the indigenous Sámi religion in the area studied, a broad approach is used to examine manifold sources.³⁵ Beside the ecclesiastical sources, the main sources consist of material like censuses, reports, and correspondence collected by the mission during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.³⁶ As Kalstad demonstrated, information about traditional Sámi life is based on oral tradition and exists in different forms: the Sámi language is a cultural carrier orally as well as in print, and physical objects or remnants exist in the land-use areas of settlements, forests, and mountains on land or at sea.³⁷ The written sources originate

³⁰ Rydving 1993 p 23.

³¹ Rydving 1993 p. 23.

³² The terms “noajde”, “noajddevuolta”, “goabdes” in the Lule Sámi language and “gievrie”, “siejddie” in the South Sámi language are “noaidi”, “noaidivuolta”, “goavvdis”, “sieidi” in the North Sámi language.

³³ Kalstad 1994, 1997.

³⁴ The Lule Sámi area stretches from the Bothnian Sea on the Swedish east coast to the northwestern part of the Salten district in the county of Nordland in Norway; G. Storm 1881; Kalstad 1994, 1997; Storm 2014 pp. 185–186; Storm 2016 p. 176.

³⁵ Kjeldstadli 2005; Hansen and Olsen 2014.

³⁶ Storm 2014 p. 189; 2016 pp. 178–180.

³⁷ See Kalstad 1994, 1997.

from within the societies who held power in Northern Norway, and they present information from their perspectives on issues related to demography, economy, and religion.

In his studies of religious changes in north-eastern Sweden, Håkan Rydving characterized the Lule Sámi as the most pagan as late as the 1740s.³⁸ Besides the critical examination of the sources carried out by the religious historian Hans Mebius (1931–2013), the religious situation in the Lule Sámi area is of great importance in comparison with the area of Senja and Vesterålen.³⁹ From the perspective of historiography, of indigenous Sámi religion, rituals, and practice, and of physical and traditional knowledge, we have to rely on comprehensive works by former and present researchers working within various disciplines, such as religious history, theology, ethnography, and geography.⁴⁰ By way of a thorough comparative analysis of the primary and secondary sources of Swedish and Norwegian origin, Rydving elaborates multiple perspectives on the sources. Starting with the writings of von Westen, Jens Kildal, and Hans Skanke, Rydving considers verbal and non-verbal sources, the drum and its iconography, and other sources with the utmost caution.⁴¹

The Composite Ethnic Population of Senja and Vesterålen

The area of the missionary district of Senja and Vesterålen encompasses high mountains, large islands, valleys, and fjords, from the mountain range on the mainland, that is, “*Kjølen*”⁴² (the Keel), in the east, to the islands of Lofoten and Vesterålen along the Nordic Sea in the west. Travelling at the time was undertaken on foot, by horse or reindeer, or by boat. The distances were great, and some of the areas or locations were inaccessible during parts of the year due to weather conditions.

During this initial period of the mission, the goal within this district was to make a survey of the border areas. Instructed by the king, the missionaries reported an electoral register (*manntall*) of each “Finn”, their families, and “souls” between Varanger in the northeast to Malangen in the northwest.⁴³ The missionaries were also asked to seek information about the local “Sæder”, that is, the traditional and cultural Sámi practices, their movements, markets, and spiritual and

³⁸ Rydving 1993 p. 24; Rydving 1995.

³⁹ Mebius 1968, 2000, 2003; Rydving 1993, 1995.

⁴⁰ Such as the religious historian and bishop, Edgar Reuterskiöld (1872–1932), linguist and theologian Just Qvigstad (1853–1957), archaeologist and anthropologist Ole Solberg (1879–1946), geographer and ethnographer Ernst Manker (1893–1972), and ethnographer Ørnulv Vorren (1912–2007); Reuterskiöld 1910; Qvigstad 1924–26; Manker 1938, 1950; Vorren and Eriksen 1993.

⁴¹ Rydving 1993 pp. 19, 27–53, 1995.

⁴² “Kjølen” refers to the mountain range between Sweden and Norway.

⁴³ “Finner” [Sámi farmers and fishermen]; Skanke [ca. 1730] Falkenberg 1943 p. 17; Leem 1787 pp. 520–521.

religious development, and, related to this issue, whether they visited churches in Swedish areas.⁴⁴ If the missionary was not present, the schoolmaster should make the report. The electoral register included the adult male population, but it seems that when the people were registered, women and children were also included.⁴⁵ Gaining an overview of the demography of the Sámi population in the early part of the eighteenth century was a demanding task.

In Senja and Vesterålen, there was a composite ethnic population of Norwegian, Kven, and Sámi. Scrutinizing information of individuals in the censuses, land registers, and reports in order to reconstruct the history of family and kin requires critical analysis, laborious and painstaking examination, and discussion of individuals in relation to associated concepts and categorization of the Norwegian, Kven, and Sámi populations.⁴⁶ To get a general view of the population throughout the eighteenth century, we shall put together the various sources from one location as an example, namely the community of Kvæfjord. Some additional information from the area of the missionary district of Senja and Vesterålen will also be included.⁴⁷

The ethnic composition of the population in the community of Kvæfjord shows that the majority of the population in the first half of the eighteenth century were categorized as Norwegian, and the settlement pattern indicates that the Sámi population was located – apart from some farms in the main fjord – in the fjords adjacent to Kvæfjord.⁴⁸ A similar pattern is found in neighbouring areas (Vesterålen, Lofoten, Lødingen, and Ofoten), and show that the Sámi population settled in areas close to the majority Norwegian population.⁴⁹

The Establishment and Organization of the Northern Mission

To reconstruct the network of the participants involved in the introduction of the pietistic mission, a spatial approach has been chosen. By tracing trajectories and localizing encounters between the ethnic composite population and the different representatives of the church and the mission, information about the religious situation and glimpses of the indigenous religion are revealed to us. A biographical perspective enables professional, religious, and social networks to be analyzed in relation to space. In the process of the introduction of Pietism in this first phase, the king, the bishop, and the missionary represented different approaches. The king was the head

⁴⁴ Religious development [“forfremmelse”], Leem 1787 pp. 520–529.

⁴⁵ Skanke [ca 1730] Falkenberg 1943 p. 17; Leem 1787 table 95; the illustration originates from a later period, shows a gendered population with both adults and children present.

⁴⁶ See Storm 2014 pp. 189–192.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Borgos 1988; Borgos and Dybwik 2003, 2004; Guttormsen 1994; Nielszen 1994; Kolsrud 1947; Evjen and Hansen 2008.

of the church, and the bishop performed the role of the local head of each diocese. Until the beginning of the eighteenth century, the bishops initiated missionary measures as one their duties, in which visitations played an important role.⁵⁰ When King Frederik IV took charge of the mission, this situation altered significantly. The newly appointed lector was given the responsibility of carrying out the pietistic missionary work among the Sámi population instead of the bishop.

A new situation arose which encompassed new perspectives on the roles of the clergy, mission representatives, the state, and not at least the ethnic composite population. The two succeeding bishops, Peder Krog (1654–1731) and Eiler Hagerup (1685–1743), had different perspectives and views on the church and missionary work. They developed professional and social networks involving the court, the clergy, and the mission organization.⁵¹ In the new position as lector, the missionary Thomas von Westen altered the responsibilities of the positions, the duties and the economy within the church and the mission.

The pietistic mission amongst the Sámi population originated among the clergy in “The Seven Stars Circle” (*Syvstjernen*) in the deanery southwest of Trondheim.⁵² They formulated plans about how to organize the missionary work in the northern areas of Denmark-Norway, which they presented to the king.⁵³ In their commitment to Pietism, the group recognized their tasks as discipline and spiritual guidance among colleagues, as well as a reformation of the church inspired by Pietism. Biographical studies show the relationships between the clergy and missionaries both professionally and by kinship, where either sisters or daughters of the clergy were married to some of the missionaries.⁵⁴ Taking a network perspective when examining this circle indicates that, from among this group, von Westen and three other representatives of the clergy or their family members can be seen as playing significant roles in the establishment and organization of the pietistic mission in Senja and Vesterålen. The members of “The Seven Stars” group served as clergy while Peder Krog was bishop in the diocese of Trondheim. His successor, Eiler Hagerup, was himself recruited from this group.⁵⁵

One of the results of the mission society was the reorganization of the church in the diocese of Trondheim, which was carried out according to the College of Missions’s initiative of 1715.

⁵⁰ Berg, Storm and Bergesen 2011 pp. 155–158; Storm 2016 pp. 186–187.

⁵¹ Storm 2016 pp. 185–186.

⁵² “The Seven Stars” is the Norwegian term for the Pleiades constellation, and in this context, it referred to the composition of the group having seven members. (Steen 1954 pp. 156–163.)

⁵³ Storm 2016 p. 185.

⁵⁴ Storm 2012 pp. 272–278.

⁵⁵ Storm 2016 p. 183.

From the regional perspective of the diocese of Trondheim, the process of organizing the missionary work was related to two independent proposals from von Westen, representing “The Seven Stars Group”, and vice rector [*konrektor*] Hans Skanke, who represented the Cathedral Latin school.⁵⁶ Due to vacancies, finance, and transactions at the Latin school in the diocese, the College of Missions wished to strengthen its educational work.⁵⁷ Both proposals were of interest to the Collegium, and led to the establishment of the Seminarium Scholasticum and the lectorate in Trondheim.⁵⁸ Proposals from Bishop Krog were not acknowledged during this process.⁵⁹ The appointment of von Westen as lector accorded with the College of Missions’s objectives, that is, it fulfilled the institution’s view of the “correct way” [*rette syn*] to organize a pietistic mission amongst the Sámi population.⁶⁰

In this first, decade-long phase of the mission, von Westen established an organization covering the area from Trondheim to Varanger in eastern Finnmark. This process encompassed the development of the organization and the production of knowledge about the areas and the ethnically composite population in the north. Viewed from a broader perspective, this approach and its associated methods of collecting information and conversion of the people can be seen as an exemplar of knowledge production, preparing the ground for the coming process of negotiating the border between Sweden and Norway in the middle of the eighteenth century.⁶¹ Within each missionary district, missionaries, schoolmasters, part-time teachers, etc., were appointed.⁶² In addition to sending reports about the population, economy, and spiritual conditions to the College of Missions, these appointees were to accomplish the tasks of educating and converting of the Sámi population.⁶³

An underlying question in the conflict between von Westen and Bishop Krog was their differing views on the size of their respective administrative areas. The historian Trygve Lysaker’s (1917–2014) perspective on this situation is worth noting; he points to the fact that the model of organization chosen by the College of Missions for the mission among the Sámi was controversial and not thoroughly considered.⁶⁴ A vicar in Trondheim representing the College was entrusted the responsibility of educating the Sámi minority. With two strong personalities

⁵⁶ Kolsrud 1938 pp. 23–24.

⁵⁷ Lysaker 1987 p. 245.

⁵⁸ Lysaker 1987 p. 245.

⁵⁹ Steen 1954; Lysaker 1987.

⁶⁰ Steen 1954 p. 372; Storm 2014 pp. 193–194.

⁶¹ Leem 1787 pp. 520–529; Storm 2009 pp. 19–20.

⁶² Steen 1954; Storm 2014 p. 194.

⁶³ Leem 1767 pp. 520–527.

⁶⁴ Lysaker 1987 p. 259.

like von Westen and Krog as leaders of the two sides of the establishment and activity of the church, the situation was at risk of an irreconcilable and implacable conflict. Lysaker asserts that responsibility for this unfortunate organizational structure and its results or consequences rests with von Westen. Lysaker points out that the large region of the diocese and the missionary districts probably should have been split up. The proposal of dividing the diocese in order to have a separate northern diocese was mentioned as a possibility.⁶⁵

Besides having acquired an extensive knowledge of languages,⁶⁶ the Dane Peder Krog⁶⁷ obtained his education from several universities in Germany, the Netherland, and England. He gained a broad knowledge of Lutheran theology from professor August Varenius in Rostock, and was exposed to Lutheran orthodoxy / conformism by Abraham Caloviks, Johann Deutschmann, and Johan Meisner in Wittenberg, and thus encountered a more liberal approach to Lutheranism and even reformed theology.⁶⁸ In Magdeburg, he stayed with Christian Scriver, who was a preacher and the author of literature on Christian faith.⁶⁹ He visited Leiden and Utrecht in the Netherlands, England, Hamburg, and Kiel, and in Hamburg he studied “rabbinica” (Judaism) with the well-known Esdras Edzardus (1629–1708), an orientalist, linguist, and one who was self-taught in theology.⁷⁰

As bishop, Peder Krog served for a period of over four decades, from 1688.⁷¹ When Pietism was introduced to the Lutheran Church in Denmark-Norway, he can be seen as an orthodox and conservative Lutheran Christian. One of his main concerns was to improve the maintenance of the churches and the cathedral school, in addition to focusing on economic affairs. He made great efforts to improve and build new churches, establish schools, and appoint new clergymen. When the College ordered him to transfer the income of the northern churches to the mission society, a conflict arose between the College of Mission and the bishop, and from then on his relationship with the king and the mission became quite strained.⁷² The issue of schools was central to the mission amongst the Sámi. His view about language was that the Sámi should abandon the use of their language and learn Norwegian instead, which he claimed they were

⁶⁵ Lysaker 1987 p. 259.

⁶⁶ Kolsrud mentions these languages: Hebrew, Chaldean, Syrian, Arabic, Samaritan, Greek, Latin, German, Danish; see Kolsrud 1938 p. 20.

⁶⁷ Storm 2016 pp. 184–185.

⁶⁸ Kolsrud 1938 p. 20.

⁶⁹ Kolsrud 1938 p. 20.

⁷⁰ Lysaker 1987 p. 218; https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Esdras_Edzardus (accessed 15 June 2018); <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz12510.html> (accessed 31 August 2018).

⁷¹ Kolsrud 1938; Steen 1954 pp. 76–81, 85–86; Lysaker 1987 pp. 217–258; Storm 2016 pp. 184–186.

⁷² Steen 1954 p. 137; Lysaker 1987 pp. 247–249.

eager to do.⁷³

Eiler Hagerup⁷⁴ was bishop from 1731 to 1743. Unlike Krog, Hagerup was a Norwegian, born at Averøy in the county of Møre and Romsdal as the son of the parish priest Hans Hagerup (ca. 1645–1697). Eiler Hagerup graduated from the Latin school in Trondheim in 1702 and passed his theological exam in 1704 at the University of Copenhagen. He returned to Trondheim and lodged with his previous teacher, Rector Andreas Ivarson Borch, assisting him on the work of a Latin encyclopaedia, and from 1707 participating in tutoring students in their fourth *lectie* (class) year at the Latin school. His first appointment was as a curate at Kvernes, Averøy, where he started his duties in 1709; he married Anna Catharina Barhow (d.1737), the daughter of his father's successor, the parish priest Amund Barhow, who was a member of "The Seven Stars Group".⁷⁵ As a curate at Kvernes, he joined this group. According to Lysaker, due to his eloquence and personal qualities, Hagerup was chosen to present, on behalf of "The Seven Stars Group", the petition to King Frederik IV in 1714 and the appointed commission to evaluate the proposals for ecclesiastical reforms.⁷⁶ Hagerup was given a warm welcome in Copenhagen by the three theologians on the commission and by the royal court. Queen Louise and the princess Charlotte Amalie were especially charmed by him, and he corresponded with the latter for the rest of his life.⁷⁷ Hagerup was appointed as parish priest at Kalundborg in 1715, due to his professional qualities and his close relationship to the court. He was overwhelmed by this appointment and filled with great remorse and doubt in relation to his previous work in "The Seven Stars Group".⁷⁸

Before Eiler Hagerup began his duties as bishop, he was appointed to the position of lector and *notarius capituli* after the death of von Westen in 1727.⁷⁹ In a letter of 1729, the situation after his inspection or examination of the missionary districts was reported.⁸⁰ From the College of Missions in Copenhagen, the instructions for the journey were to examine the situation related to spiritual knowledge and use of language among the Sámi. The intent was that the Sámi should learn the Danish language, and the clergymen should take over the missionaries' work among the Sámi population, a practice differing from the approach earlier conducted by von Westen.⁸¹

⁷³ Lysaker 1987 p. 238. Norwegian, i.e., "det norske Sprog", at this time means Danish rather than Norwegian.

⁷⁴ Lysaker 1987 pp. 259–292; Storm 2016 pp. 185–186.

⁷⁵ Storm 2016 pp. 185–186; Lysaker 1987 p. 261.

⁷⁶ Lysaker 1987 p. 261. (The cost of the journey was collected by the clergymen.)

⁷⁷ Lysaker 1987 p. 261.

⁷⁸ Lysaker 1987 p. 261.

⁷⁹ Appointed 19 December 1727 and began 5 June 1728, Lysaker 1987 pp. 263, 267.

⁸⁰ Lysaker 1987 p. 264.

⁸¹ Lysaker 1987 p. 263.

One would expect a change in the approach from the bishop of Trondheim's office when Hagerup succeeded Krog as bishop, but he continued the policy of Krog. Hagerup forced the authorities involved to entrust to him the leadership of the diocese and to continue as lector and *notarius capituli* of the mission, thus ensuring the role of the missionaries from then on continued as an ecclesiastical duty.⁸² King Christian IV placed as much emphasis on Pietism as his predecessor; he had pietistic advisors and wanted to reform the church and society according to pietistic principles.⁸³ Because Hagerup belonged to the proponents of the pietistic movement, the king approved of his policies. During this period, the rite of Confirmation was established in law, in 1736, and in 1739, a law about public schools was passed where subjects such as the Christian faith would be taught alongside reading, writing, and arithmetic.

To maintain control over and supervise religious developments, the bishops of the diocese of Trondheim travelled to the northern parts of Norway to strengthen missionary activity amongst the Sámi population.⁸⁴ From 1618, visitations were regular, when the bishop was enjoined to visit Finnmark every third year.⁸⁵ From the middle of the seventeenth century, the bishop Erik Bredal (1643–1672) obtained a better knowledge of the Sámi population and their way of life through several visitations and during his stay at Trondenes the years 1658–1659.⁸⁶ Krog and Hagerup continued this practice during their careers as bishop.

Education during the First Missionary Phase

When studying the professional representatives of the missionary district of Senja and Vesterålen participating in the first phase of the pietistic mission, various aspects of the missionary work are revealed. The establishment, organization, and execution of the mission enabled the persons involved to develop their attitudes to the Sámi people, largely based on pietistic ideals. The king displayed a keen interest in pietistic missionary work. He was concerned with questions regarding the mission's economy and how the various actors fulfilled their roles in accordance with how to deal with the Sámi population, and how they worked politically and religiously in the maintenance of church buildings and erection of new ones.

When establishing and organizing the mission, von Westen undertook three journeys to Northern Norway between 1716 and 1723.⁸⁷ Within each region, missionary districts were

⁸² Steen 1954 p. 210; Lysaker 1987 pp. 259–260, 267; Storm 2016 pp. 183–184.

⁸³ Lysaker 1987 p. 272.

⁸⁴ Berg, Storm and Bergesen 2011 p. 156.

⁸⁵ Kolsrud 1947 p. 7; *NRR IV* pp. 686–687.

⁸⁶ Berg, Storm and Bergesen 2011 pp. 156–157.

⁸⁷ Storm 2014 pp. 194–197.

organized, and a missionary, a schoolmaster, and sometimes one or two helping hands or adjuncts appointed to teach, were stationed. They were recruited either locally or from the school in Trondheim.⁸⁸ During the initial period, the missionaries came from southern Norway, as well as from Sweden and Denmark.⁸⁹ They were theologians and linguists from the University of Copenhagen and knew languages such as Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and were subsequently given lectures on the Sámi language. They were regarded as persons of great intellectual capacity. The Sámi language was regarded by von Westen as a necessary tool for dealing with the Sámi population.⁹⁰ In spite of few traces of early writings in the Sámi language, the various Sámi languages were in everyday use at the time.⁹¹ Most of the missionaries studied for some time at the Seminarium Scholasticum in Trondheim.

There was wide correspondence within the mission project. The missionaries sent reports to von Westen about their work.⁹² The correspondence shows the need for detailed information about the population, the economy, the religious situation, and the material representation of religious practice and where this took place, but also displays how the missionary activities were widely discussed. Von Westen forwarded the reports directly to the College of Missions in Copenhagen. In southern Troms, the missionaries initially stayed at the farm Øvre Sæset on the island of Rolla, east of Trondenes, and not far from the medieval church of Ibestad. The farm was the location of the “thing”, the local judicial assembly, where the district bailiff had his farm from 1717 to 1753.⁹³ The missionaries had to travel both inland and further north and west to the other islands by boat and on foot to meet with the Sámi population in their settlements.

My study includes an overview of the first period of the pietistic mission within one missionary district (Senja/Vesterålen), where the focus has been on the identity of the missionaries, their professional careers within the state church, and mapping their establishment of professional and social networks.⁹⁴ In the first decade of the pietistic mission, from 1716 to the death of von Westen in 1727, the missionaries were regularly recruited to Senja and Vesterålen one after another. They served in the position as missionaries on average for a period of about two years, usually receiving a clerical post upon the completion of their missionary tasks. In this way, they combined the position of missionary with a position within the clergy as

⁸⁸ [Skanke 1730] Falkenberg 1943 p. 14; J. Kildal in Krekling 1945 pp. 124, 126.

⁸⁹ In Norway, they were from Hægeland, Sørlandet, Møre and Romsdal, Spydeberg, and Trondheim; see Storm 2012 pp. 273–278.

⁹⁰ Storm 2014 p. 203.

⁹¹ Qvigstad 1907.

⁹² Leem 1787 pp. 520–529.

⁹³ Hansen 2003 p. 390.

⁹⁴ Storm 2012.

early as the first missionary phase.

In the Senja and Vesterålen district, Kield Stub (ca. 1680–1724) was the first appointed missionary. He served during the years 1718–1720 at Ibestad.⁹⁵ Stub was from Spydeberg in Østfold, and was ordained in 1706 at Grytten in Møre and Romsdal, where he married Ingebjørg Leem, daughter of the parish priest Anders Christophersen Leem.⁹⁶ At the same time, at Lødingen, von Westen appointed a schoolmaster and interpreter to serve at Ibestad.⁹⁷ While Stub served at Ibestad, he worked closely with von Westen and accompanied him on his first (1716) and the second journeys (1718).⁹⁸ Von Westen characterized him as eager to work and to build good relationships with both old and young people and the clergy. As a result, he increasingly obtained an intimate knowledge of the Sámi and their religion. At Ibestad, Erasmus Wallund (1684–1746) from Denmark succeeded Stub.⁹⁹ He graduated as a theologian in 1705, but due to severe illness and the ill-will towards the mission held by Bishop Krog, he did not begin as missionary until as late as the spring of 1721.¹⁰⁰ While waiting for his appointment, he studied Hebrew and theology with von Westen in Trondheim.¹⁰¹ Upon finally arriving at Ibestad, he brought with him a schoolmaster. In his efforts to establish his social and professional network, Wallund first married Dorette von Westen (1692–1728), a younger sister of Thomas von Westen, and secondly, in 1729, Anna Margrethe Arentzberg, daughter of the circuit judge in Salten.¹⁰² Both Stub and Wallund continued their careers by emphasizing the task of education. Stub hired a schoolmaster, paid for by his in-laws through his position at Skjerstad, where he, upon having completed his missionary assignment, acted as resident chaplain (*vice-pastor*) (1720–1724) in the parish of Bodø in the deanery of Salten.¹⁰³ Wallund who succeeded Stub at Skjerstad, was described by von Westen thus, “he had cut a hole on the walls of idolatry, and found everything full of false gods, the hammer of Thor, altars, and sacrifices [...]”.¹⁰⁴ From Wallund’s reports, it is evident that his language employs metaphors that provide information about material and non-material traces of the indigenous Sámi religion practiced in the

⁹⁵ Steen 1954 p. 419; Hammond 1787 pp. 729–736; Storm 2016 p. 189.

⁹⁶ Steen 1954 p. 419.

⁹⁷ Hammond 1787 p. 336 (pp. 39–40).

⁹⁸ Hammond 1787 pp. 729, 733–734.

⁹⁹ Hammond 1787 pp. 831–833; Steen 1954 p. 420; Storm 2016 pp. 189–190.

¹⁰⁰ Hammond 1787 pp. 831–833.

¹⁰¹ Steen 1954 p. 209; Lysaker 1987 p. 247.

¹⁰² Steen 1954 p. 420.

¹⁰³ Hammond 1787 pp. 729, 734; Erlandsen 1857 p. 134; Steen 1954 pp. 393, 420.

¹⁰⁴ “... hugget Hull på Afguderiets Vægge og har han da fundet alting fuldt af Afguderie, Thors Hammer Altare, Ofring” (Hammond 1787 p. 832) [Translation by author]; Steen 1954 pp. 156–159 refers to some of the religious literature that von Westen studied.

Vesterålen / Senja area.

Lennart Sidenius (1702–1763) from Jämtland in Sweden succeeded Wallund as missionary at twenty-four years of age at the farm Øvre Selset in 1726.¹⁰⁵ His studies included languages and theology at the University of Copenhagen, where he became a member of the “Collegio Eilersiano”, a part of the College of Missions. At Ibestad, he corresponded with missionaries such as Jens Kildal, Thomas von Westen, and, on the Swedish side, the rural dean Johan Tornberg in Jukkasjärvi.¹⁰⁶ In a letter to Tornberg dated 1726, Sidenius enclosed a list of Sámi idols.¹⁰⁷ Scholars hold different opinions about this survey. Rydving states that it was written by Kildal, who had studied idolatry in Vesterålen and the northern part of Salten on his travels to Vesterålen in 1725 and 1726.¹⁰⁸ The list gives information about the various Sámi idols. The deities, their wives and helpers are located in several places: highest up in the starry sky, a bit further down in the air, down on earth, a distance down into the ground (earth), and quite deep, down into the earth.¹⁰⁹ This information could depict some of the religious practices among the Sámi population at Ibestad and the surrounding areas. Sidenius became resident chaplain (*vice-pastor*) in 1728 and parish priest in 1740, when Buksnes in Lofoten became an independent parish. While at Buksnes, he made a record of the idols of the indigenous Sámi religion, which he sent to Dean Henric Forbus (1674–1737) in Neder-Torneå in Sweden.¹¹⁰ That list was signed by Sidenius and confirmed by the two schoolmasters, Jens Siurssön and Niels Nielssøn, who may have been of Sámi ethnicity, specially recruited by the missionaries.¹¹¹

For a long period, the missionary duties in Vesterålen, the islands west of Hinnøya, were assigned to the missionary located in Ofoten. Jens Kildal served as a missionary from 1721 to 1767. He stayed at first in Ofoten, but after a few years, his district expanded to Tysfjord, where he lived at Tjårnes and from where he continued his work until his death.¹¹² Due to the low

¹⁰⁵ Hammond 1787 pp. 851–854; Steen 1954 pp. 418–419; Storm 2016 pp. 190–191.

¹⁰⁶ Reuterskiöld 1910 pp. 53–55, 56–60.

¹⁰⁷ Reuterskiöld 1910 p. xxxiii; see Hammond 1787 pp. 838ff; Qvigstad 1910 p. 86. Further study is necessary to determine whether it was written by Kildal or by another of the missionaries mentioned, see Reuterskiöld 1910 pp. 53–55, 56–60; Rydving 1995 pp. 34–36; see also Rasmussen 2011 pp. 65–67.

¹⁰⁸ Rydving 1995 pp. 34–35.

¹⁰⁹ “Fortegnelse på en deel oomvendte Lapp[ars Afguderij] om guder på forskjellige steder: som høyest oppe på stjernehimlen, lengre ned i luften, nede på jorden, et stykke nede i jorden, og en del svært dypt ned i jorden.” Reuterskiöld 1910 pp. 56–60.

¹¹⁰ Henric Forbus corresponded with Simon Kildal the elder (1701–1761), a younger brother of Jens Kildal, and with Lennart Sidenius (1728); see Reuterskiöld 1910 pp. 61–63. Simon Kildal was a missionary in Saltdalen in 1726 and in Lyngen and Karlsøy in 1728, see Reuterskiöld 1910 pp. 62–63; Steen 1954 p. 31; Rydving 1993 p.40; Rydving 1995 pp. 34–36.

¹¹¹ Reuterskiöld 1910 pp. 56–60.

¹¹² Kristiansen 2010 pp. 72–83; Steen 1954 pp. 231, 254–256; Hammond 1787 pp. 836–846; Storm 2014 pp. 199–203, 2016 pp. 191–192.

income received by the mission and the distances the missionary in Ofoten needed to travel, it was decided that the education and maintenance of the schools in the whole of Lofoten and Vesterålen rural deanery were to be taken care of by the parish priest at Hadsel.¹¹³ In a letter dated 1722, the College of Missions wrote that the rural deaneries of Lofoten and Vesterålen were neglected.¹¹⁴ These areas, it was emphasized, were located far from the mountains and close to the Nordic Sea and were thus difficult to visit. At Dverberg and Hadsel in Vesterålen, there were two rural deaneries or pastorates with three resident chaplains at Andenes, Øksnes, and Bø. In the parish of Dverberg, there were two churches. The main church was located in Dverberg. In this second decade of missionary work in this area, von Westen proposed to appoint the missionary Willats Bing (1668–1739) to the ecclesiastical position to strengthen the pietistic influence in the parish of Hadsel.¹¹⁵ The reports tells that the responsibilities of the parish priest should include a special duty to teach and care for the schools of the Sámi population described as “Finner” and “Lapper” – Sámi farmers and fishermen, and reindeer owners – who numbered about 42 families.¹¹⁶ In 1722, Bing was offered the position of parish priest at Hadsel. In 1735, he became the rural dean of Lofoten and Vesterålen.¹¹⁷ In the parish of Dverberg, information provides evidence that Sámi families attended the annex church at Bjørnskinn. Von Westen argues that the coastal Sámi did not have to travel far, and that both young and old understand and speak Norwegian, so it is an easy task for the clergy to teach them as well as the rest of the population without help from the mission.¹¹⁸

This remark on the use of language testifies to the fact that the Sámi language was in everyday use, and that the Sámi population knew the Norwegian language quite well. The task of the mission was then to set aside the teaching of languages – Sámi and Danish – and concentrate on the pietistic mission of conversion. This information also provides a glimpse of the process concerning the rest of the population in this area. The pietistic message was conveyed by the sermon to the attending congregations, the Norwegians, Kvens, and Sámi, by the clergyman. Relevant information is contained in a letter from von Westen to the College of Missions dated 11 August 1725, based on the correspondence between Kildal and von Westen dated 14 July

¹¹³ Hammond 1787 pp. 830–831.

¹¹⁴ [Skanke 1730] Falkenberg 1943 p. 13.

¹¹⁵ Storm 2016 pp. 191–192.

¹¹⁶ “Finner” [Sámi farmers and fishermen] and “Lapper” [reindeer owners], see Hammond 1787 p. 830.

¹¹⁷ Hammond 1787 pp. 830–831; Steen 1954 p. 394.

¹¹⁸ [Skanke 1730] Falkenberg 1943 pp. 13–14. [“men som Westeraalen er omringet af Søen, og Finnerne have der ikke langt at kunde vanke, forstaae og der baade unge og gamle Nordsk at tale, saa er ded een let Sag for Præsterne, uden Missionens hjælp og besværing, blandt deres andre Tilhørere der at underviise dem”]

1725, where von Westen recounted Kildal's missionary efforts in Vesterålen.¹¹⁹ Kildal, who still contributed to the mission in this area, arranged three meetings with the Sámi population in Vesterålen.¹²⁰ Two meetings were located at Eidet between Bø and Frøskeland, both on the island of Langøya, and Øksnes on the island of Skogsøya. He reported that he was preparing for a third meeting.¹²¹ In von Westen's report about Jens Kildal's work, Kildal is given great credit. It says:

I have already spoken with some of them, preached the word of the Bible, the word of the Lord with admonishment. In respect to the Sámi, this autumn I will send to them "Confessions-Bogen" [the book of confession]. Thank you, Lord, forever.¹²²

He ends with praising all the poor, lost souls, who that year were brought forth to the Lord, and the religious society of their other converted Sámi brethren (*Lappe-Brødre*).¹²³ The two schoolmasters, the Sámi Jens Siverson and Anders Henriksen, accompanied Kildal.¹²⁴ The Sámi in Vesterålen afterwards encouraged the schoolmasters to stay on and continue their work. The community also took responsibility for building assembly houses without any cost to the mission.¹²⁵ One assembly house, according to local tradition, was a turf hut set up at *Kavåsen* (inmost in the Romset fjord, on the island of Langøya).¹²⁶ The last missionary during this second stage of the mission was Erik Nielsen Berg (1705–1760) who was born in Aarhus, Denmark, and served in Senja and Vesterålen from 1728 to 1735.¹²⁷ Berg had two assistant Sámi teachers.¹²⁸

The reconstruction of missionary networks, together with biographical information about the missionaries' skills, competence, positions, marriage, and life, provide further insights. In addition to all their tasks, the missionaries' participation in education appears to have been emphasized. Von Westen's reports of his travels provide comprehensive information about the mission and its support of education. From a meeting during this first missionary phase on the north side of the Malangen fjord in the fifth district of Karlsøy, Lyngen, and Ulsfjord, it is reported that von Westen "worked with them" (that is, the Sámi people) for five days.¹²⁹ He had

¹¹⁹ Letter of 14 July 1725 from J. Kildal to von Westen; see Hammond 1787 p. 841.

¹²⁰ "Eidet, mellem Bøe og Øxnæs, Troskeland i Øxnæs Fierding," Hammond 1787 pp. 841, 830

¹²¹ Hammond 1787 p. 842.

¹²² "jeg har allerede talet med nogle af dem, og forkyndet Guds Ord med Formaning; Confessions-Bogen, angaaende alle disse Finner, skal jeg sende denne Høst; saa være da Gud velsignet i Evighed" Hammond 1787 p. 842.

¹²³ Hammond 1787 p. 842.

¹²⁴ Borgos 1999 pp. 8, 21; see also Steen 1954 p. 182.

¹²⁵ Hammond 1787 pp. 840–42.

¹²⁶ Borgos 1999 p. 8.

¹²⁷ Steen 1954 pp. 231, 393; Storm 2016 p. 192.

¹²⁸ [Skanke 1730] Falkenberg 1943 p. 13; [J. Kildal] Krekling 1945 pp. 124, 126; Steen 1954 p. 393.

¹²⁹ Hammond 1787 p. 334.

an intensive approach in his dealings with the Sámi, who were assembled from both sides of the fjord. It is said that he taught each of them individually in his efforts to convert them.¹³⁰ Other information from von Westen's first and second travels (1716, 1718–1719) indicates that schoolmasters and assistant teachers undertook similar tasks. Through a systematic examination of the sources during this first phase, we find that, in addition to the missionaries, teachers, assistant teachers, and representatives of other ecclesiastical positions were engaged in educating the Sámi, both adults and youth, teaching men and women reading and writing skills.

On his second journey in 1718, von Westen hired Kjell Stub as missionary to Vesterålen / Senja after he had served in Varanger / Tana for two years. He was stationed at Ibestad, where Peder Bertelsen was engaged as schoolteacher, interpreter, and translator.¹³¹ As an example of how thorough he was in completing his knowledge of the local situation, von Westen visited Lødingen, on the same travel southwards in 1718. There, he examined and hired Michel Knudsen Munch († 1724) as school master to Lødingen and Tysfjord.¹³²

The hiring of school masters were an important task also for the missionaries. Erasmus Wallund brought with him a schoolmaster recruited from “Seminario domestico,” a teaching class conducted at von Westen's home,¹³³ and at Ibestad we know about Jacob Olsen Thrane from the farm Øvre Selset, who was hired as a schoolteacher during the period from 1720 to 1726.¹³⁴ The emphasis on education obtained results. In 1723, the Wallund reported that “more than fifty among the Sámi in Ibestad could read, and some had bought books to read.”¹³⁵

When Hagerup became bishop in 1731, the administration of the church and mission was merged. In 1734, when Hagerup visited Ibestad, a relevant comment can be found in the sermon of the vicar Hr. Christian Wegener, about the youth who had not received their basic knowledge (*barnelærdom*) in spite of being able to read from the Catechism and that “religious books [were] in the hands of the common people”¹³⁶ The missionary Erich Berg and the schoolmaster were present with some Sámi people from Astafjord. They presented some boys and girls who both read and answered well, displaying their basic knowledge [*børnelærdommen*].¹³⁷ In Trondenes

¹³⁰ Hammond 1787 p. 418.

¹³¹ Hammond 1787 p. 734.

¹³² Hammond 1787 p. 842 “... he died at Christmas”.

¹³³ Steen 1954 p. 209; Lysaker 1987 p. 247.

¹³⁴ There is no confirmation that this is the same person who Wallund had with him. Hansen 2003 p. 383.

¹³⁵ Hammond 1787 p. 832; Steen 1954 pp. 156–159.

¹³⁶ Visitasprotokoll Trondhjem stift og amt: Kirker i Nord–Norge 1727–30/Misjonen i Finnmark. Ka 6. Biskop Eiler Hagerup (1731–43). Transcribed by Lars Ivar Hansen.

¹³⁷ Visitasprotokoll Trondhjem stift og amt: Kirker i Nord–Norge 1727–30/Misjonen i Finnmark. Ka 6. Biskop Eiler Hagerup (1731–43). Transcribed Lars Ivar Hansen.

in the same year, Erik Normann was the parish clerk with responsibility for teaching the youth. During the bishop's visitation to Trondenes, the Kvæfjord congregation was also present. The vicar in Kvæfjord parish, Lorentz Burchard, told that he had recruited two men, Niels Rasmussen and Erich Torsen, together with a young girl, Dorothea Nielsdatter, to hold the school in their own houses.¹³⁸

The Status of the Indigenous Religion

The mission's encounter with the indigenous Sámi religion provide further insight into the local and regional situation, despite the missionaries' biased approach. The documentation recounting the practice of the indigenous religion took place against the backdrop of the pietistic mission, which naturally affected the missionaries' views on the indigenous religion. The relevance of the drum (*Goavddis* or *Gievrie*) is central in the understanding of the indigenous religion in early Sámi societies.¹³⁹ At the beginning of the eighteenth century, each family had a drum available for religious practices. Within the religious sphere, the drum could provide insight into the spiritual world, but the way it was used probably vary according to local traditions and the *noaidi*'s capability to contact the spiritual world. The symbols painted on the skin of the drum provide information about Sámi societies from at least the sixteenth century until the nineteenth century.¹⁴⁰ The drum represented an object of communication and/or foreseeing an individual's health, future events, and whether there would be, for example, a good hunt or a nice catch of fish. The missionaries' reports provide us insight into the function of the drum and its religious world, well described by, among others, Jens Kildal.¹⁴¹ The missionaries' approach to the drum was twofold: they followed orders to attempt to put an end to ungodly practices, but they also recorded evidence about the drums and their use to acquire more information about the indigenous religion and its practices.¹⁴²

In his work on the history of the Sámi mission, Hans Skanke compared the drum in the indigenous Sámi religion to what the Catechism was to the Christians.¹⁴³ The missionaries forced many Sámi to give up their drums and other religious tools and to supply information about the sacred, as testified to by Jens Kildal and Lennart Sidenius.¹⁴⁴ From the perspective

¹³⁸ Visitasprokoll Trondhjem stift og amt: Kirker i Nord-Norge 1727–30/Misjonen i Finnmark. Ka 6. Biskop Eiler Hagerup (1731–43). Transcribed by Lars Ivar Hansen.

¹³⁹ Krekling 1945 pp. 166–167; Kjellström and Rydving 1988 p. 4; Hansen and Olsen 2014 pp. 222–225.

¹⁴⁰ Kjellström and Rydving 1988 p. 4; Hansen and Olsen 2014 pp. 222–225.

¹⁴¹ J. Kildal in Krekling 1945 p. 123 [translation by author]; Storm 2016 p. 194.

¹⁴² J. Kildal in Krekling 1945 p. 123 [translation by author].

¹⁴³ Skanke ca. 1730 [Solberg 1945] p. 181.

¹⁴⁴ Krekling 1945; Reuterskiöld 1910 pp. 53–60, 61–63.

of the missionaries, the drum was the tool of the devil. The Sámi risked much by breaking the ban on heathen practices, which carried with it the death penalty.¹⁴⁵ Von Westen nevertheless managed to convince the king to abolish the death penalty because the threat of execution made it difficult for the Sámi to confess about their religious practices.¹⁴⁶ Their religious tools were handed over to and collected by both missionaries and clergy, either to be destroyed or to be sent to the College of Missions in Copenhagen, where more than seventy drums were lost in a fire in 1728.¹⁴⁷ Documenting the drums and interpreting what they symbolized was one way for the missionaries to gain an understanding of the Sámi religion and to establish better contact with the Sámi population in order to convert them in accordance with pietistic ideas.¹⁴⁸ In the two letters to vicars, parish priest, and missionaries, Jens Kildal dedicated his enclosed sermon as a personal greeting to each of them.¹⁴⁹ He explained how the schoolmasters could use the sermon in their own work of converting “the pagan Sámi” [*afgudiske lapper*]. To his brother, Simon Kildal, he referred to his participation in the conversion of the Sámi in Folla and Saltdalen in the missionary districts of Saltdalen, Lødingen, and Gildeskål.¹⁵⁰ The information about the religious situation in these areas probably originated from von Westen’s travels during the years 1722 and 1723 in the rural deaneries from southern Troms to Trøndelag. To Sidenius, who was located at Buksnes in Lofoten, he referred to his work in 1725 and 1726 in Trondheim and Trøndelag, as well as other places northwards.¹⁵¹ For each receiver, information about the deities was included. The lists are not uniform, and a question about the aim, motive, and the purpose of these lists has not yet been fully determined. In a letter to Simon Kildal, there are a list of deities that Kildal would recognize from the areas of Folla, Saltdalen, and “Lapmarken”.¹⁵² To Sidenius, the information about the deities he gave was as follows:

Passe vare olmaj, Passe vare neyda, Passe vare sarva, Passe vare guli, Vurnes lodde, Nemo guli, Poskio akka, Mader akka, Ux akka, Jabme akka, Maylmen radien, Kiorva radien, Rana neyda, Passe vare lodde, Leyb olmaj, Sarakka, Biex olmaj, and Kias olmaj.¹⁵³

The contents of the lists of deities, their wives and helpers are similar, but they differ in

¹⁴⁵ Christofferson 2010 pp. 2–5.

¹⁴⁶ Hansen and Olsen 2014 p. 332.

¹⁴⁷ Hansen and Olsen 2014 p. 331.

¹⁴⁸ Krekling 1945 pp. 124–128; Mebius 1968 pp. 23–24; Hansen and Olsen 2014 pp. 222–225, 331.

¹⁴⁹ Jens Kildal [1730] in Krekling 1945 pp. 106–114.

¹⁵⁰ Steen 1954 pp. 389–390: The missionary districts: Lødingen VII, Saltdalen VIII and Gildeskål IX.

¹⁵¹ Jens Kildal in Krekling 1730 / 1945 pp. 112–114.

¹⁵² Jens Kildal in Krekling 1945 pp. 111–112.

¹⁵³ Jens Kildal in Krekling 1945 p. 113.

which order the deities are presented. The list enhances the female deities Máderáhká, Sáráhká and Uksáhká, beside the female deity of death Jábmeáhkka. Some of the others is connected to the Holy Mountains, hunting, fishing and good weather. The list opens up for an indepth discussion following the comparisons that Rydving earlier has done.¹⁵⁴ In 1724, this knowledge had already been forwarded from Sidenius, while he was a missionary stationed at Øvre Selset at Ibestad in the parish of Astafjord, in a letter to the rural Swedish dean, Johan Tornberg.¹⁵⁵ He introduced his letter with greetings and information about the religious situation, and in an enclosed record listed and presented information about the various deities, with an explanation for each. Based on what has been recorded by Jens Kildal, Hans Skanke, and von Westen, most of the explanations about the deities on the “*goavddis*” originate from the south Sámi area.¹⁵⁶ However, some of the explanations may reflect some of the activities in the coastal area of southern Troms and northern Nordland where fishery, farming, and reindeer herding were part of the economy. In a comprehensive study, Rydving follows up his discussion about the indigenous religion and its sources based on an analysis of regionalization and geographical provenance, and relates his analysis to information given by the brothers, Jens and Sigvard Kildal, who worked in the Salten area.¹⁵⁷

Within the area of the sixth missionary district, a drum has recently been found without the skin – a “*goavvdis*” [*skåltromme*] made of pine [*pinus sylvestris*], dated to the first part of the eighteenth century.¹⁵⁸ The drum shows signs of hard wear over a long period, and in addition to ornaments and crosses both inside and outside, two rows of holes indicate the fastening of the skin to the frame might possibly derive from two different periods. From the correspondence and reports of Jens Kildal and Lennart Sidenius, we have descriptions of the use of drums and their iconography. The symbols on the frame of the newly found drum may be compared to the information given by Kildal and Sidenius in order to give us an idea as to what kind of symbols might have been on the now lost skin.¹⁵⁹ Also, based on testimonies from contemporary witnesses and from more recent oral traditions, information from two events in the local community of Skånland can shed light on such questions. Still alive in the oral tradition, the well-documented story of the use of a drum and its owner at Renså -

¹⁵⁴ Rydving 1995 pp. 78-117.

¹⁵⁵ Reuterskiöld 1910; Rydving 1995 pp. 46-54.

¹⁵⁶ Rydving 1995 pp. 55, 61-62.

¹⁵⁷ Rydving 1995 p. 61.

¹⁵⁸ Found in Skånland 1999, radiocarbon dated to 1690-1730/1810-1920 AD (1 sigma), 1690-1770/1800-1940 AD (2 sigma), Reimer et al (2004), OxCal v3.10 Bronk Ramsey (2005) (Beta-454998); Kirchhefer 2016.

¹⁵⁹ Krekling 1945; Reuterskiöld 1910 pp. 53-60, 61-63; Christoffersson 2010.

Bealjehis Jovdna, the *noaidi* or shaman living at Renså – can shed light on practices involving Sámi drums.¹⁶⁰ The story about *Bealjehis Jovdna* and his drum falls within the period during which this article’s reconstruction of the complex religious situation occurs. There are a number of other religious objects and locations that represent the indigenous Sámi religion within the missionary district of Vesterålen and Senja. There are several *sieidis* – sacrificial sticks of wood or stone, either natural or made as sculptures or monuments to sacrifice – that testify to the presence of indigenous Sámi religion in local communities in our area of study. One example that testifies to the continuous practice of indigenous religion is the three *sieidis* made of birch found in the 1930s.¹⁶¹ Two of them date back to approximately the first part of the sixteenth century, and the third to the first part of the seventeenth century.¹⁶² The *sieidis* were found in the valley of *Ruššovággie* (Trongdal) in the community of Skånland by Nils Olsen and his father Henrik Olsen, a reindeer owner in the 1930s, and, according to the archaeologist and social anthropologist Gutorm Gjessing (1906-1979), can be compared to a “sculpted image of a wooden god, obviously of Sámi origin”.¹⁶³ Gjessing related the images to the divinities *Radien ačče* and *Radien akka*. Together with their son *Radien kiedde* (*Radien bardne*), the two sculptures may represent a sacred family (a family of gods), mother, father, and son.¹⁶⁴ Other examples of religious sites may be found in the middle of a settlement, as, for example, in the form of larger stones or other natural formations. Religious activity and sacred places such as “*basse*”¹⁶⁵ can be identified through oral traditions and place names indicating sacred mountains, forests, rivers, lakes, etc.¹⁶⁶

Confrontations and Encounters in the Context of the Pietist Mission

A spatial approach inspired by the geographer Doreen Massey’s concept of place as an historical process has been used in this article, as well as the biographical approach of the Sámi scholar Johan Albert Kalstad and the critical approach of the religious historian Håkan

¹⁶⁰ Bealjehis Jovdna, also known as Johan Øreløs; “without ear” (being deaf); see Hansen 2003 pp. 362–368. Information from Rensaa, note of Vorren, not dated; Letter to Vorren 1961, see Storm 2016 pp. 195–196.

¹⁶¹ Oral information given to the author; Vorren 1959 pp. 19–22; Hansen 2000 pp. 100–101.

¹⁶² Found in Skånland in the 1930s, radiocarbon dated to: TsA [Ts.B.] 1650–1680/1760–1810/1930–1960 AD (1 sigma), 1640–1690/1720–1810/1920–1960 AD (2 sigma) Reimer et al (2004), OxCal v3,10 Bronk Ramsey (2005) (Beta–454995); Ts.B[A] and C, 1520–1560/1630–1670 AD (1 sigma), 1510–1600/1610–1670/1780–1800 (2 sigma), Reimer et al (2004), OxCal v3,10 Bronk Ramsey (2005) (Beta–454996, Beta–454997).

¹⁶³ “Ts 3977 a–c ... I en hule, 2–3 mil fra sjøen i Trampdal i Astafjord, Ibestad, Troms, er funnet to og rester av et tredje skulptert gudebilde av tre, åpenbart samiske”, see Gjessing 1941 p. 18; Gjessing 1945 pp. 101–102 [translated by author].

¹⁶⁴ Gjessing 1945 pp. 99–105; see also Friis 1871 p. 140; Storm 2016 p. 197.

¹⁶⁵ Qvigstad 1935, 1938; *basse* (North Sámi) meaning sacred.

¹⁶⁶ Qvigstad 1924/26; Manker 1957; Vorren 1987; Vorren and Eriksen 1993.

Rydving. The varied and complex religious situation of the missionary district of Senja and Vesterålen includes a biographical perspective in relation to the participants and their networks during this first period of the mission as seen through positions, kin, and family. The analysis shows the close connections between the participants in their different positions within the church and the mission, as well as their personal knowledge, competence, and skills. The social position of the missionaries during the first stage of the mission was varied. Through an analysis of the networks, participants, and their relationships detailed in reports and correspondence, a broader picture of the religious situation emerges, including discernible traces of the indigenous Sámi religion. The relationship between the church and the king was also affected by the mission. Lector and missionary Thomas von Westen contributed to the alteration of this relationship, as later the mission became a tool used to resolve the issue of determining the border between Denmark-Norway and Sweden.

I have sought to contextualize the situation of the first phase of pietistic mission in the missionary district of Senja / Vesterålen by including biographies of a select number of missionaries and by outlining salient features of church organization, theological and religious education, and lines of communication between the monarchs in Copenhagen and the bishops in Trondheim. The varied and complex religious situation in this missionary district has been analyzed from a biographical perspective, applied to unravel the intricate professional and family networks that entangled church authorities, missionaries, local clergy, and the Sámi. This has indicated the close connections between the positions, local knowledge, and the competence of the recruited missionaries. The social position of the missionaries during the first stage of the mission has indeed varied.

Through this first phase of pietistic mission, a great emphasis on recruitment and education has been revealed. The various missionary tasks challenged members of the clergy and the missionaries, as well as local persons, including the Sámi people. The focus on education can be seen as a preliminary project coming before the introduction of the elementary school in 1739. This reconstruction and mapping of the networks of the missionaries and the clergy provides fertile ground for new studies of the indigenous Sámi religion in the area.

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